

Enforced

Sunday Law

COMING SOON TO AMERICA

**Throughout history, religious laws
have always led to persecution**

**The largest coalition of churches in
America wants it enacted**

Find out what will soon follow it

**Your personal liberties
are at stake**

**This book is full of facts
you should know**



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Enforced Sunday Law

Coming soon to America

by Vance Ferrell

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***“America will never be destroyed
from outside. If we falter and lose
our freedoms, it will be because
we destroyed ourselves.”***

—Abraham Lincoln

***“A nation which does not remember
what it was yesterday does not
know where it is today.”***

—Robert E. Lee

***“When we lose the right to be differ-
ent, we lose the right to be free.”***

—Charles Evans Hughes

***“Make yourselves sheep and the
wolves will eat you.”***

—Benjamin Franklin

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***“Every man, conducting himself
as a good citizen and being
accountable to God alone for
his religious opinions, ought to
be protected in worshiping the
Deity according to the dictates
of his own conscience.”***

—George Washington

***“Religion is essentially distinct
from civil Government and ex-
empt from its cognizance; . . . a
connection between them is
injurious to both.”***

—James Madison

JAILING PEOPLE for What They Believe about Religion

When our religious freedoms were in danger

It's hard to understand.

A little over a hundred years ago in America, they were putting people in jail over religion. We had hoped that was all over with. Now plans are being worked out so they can do it again.

I am going to tell you what's happening, why it's happening,—and what you should do.

This thing makes a mockery of Bible religion, the kind our forefathers had, the kind that Jesus taught us in the Gospels.

In earlier centuries, when Sunday Laws were enacted and enforced, shops had to close and people had to be careful around their house, lest spies report on them. As late as the 1890s in America, some of the most reliable people in our communities were threatened with arrest. A number were jailed for doing things a little differently.

Mr. Judefind, of Rock Hall, Maryland, was arrested on November 20, 1892, for husking corn in his field. The sheriff, who patiently hid in the bushes near the road till Judefind began working, later admitted in court that he himself regularly did the same kind of work on Sunday. Judefind was imprisoned for 30 days; and the sheriff, safe from prosecution,

set out to find more violators.

Since it was almost impossible to not violate those Sunday laws, Sunday laws were also used to persecute whoever the local authorities wished to select for arrest.

In 1889, Day Conklin, of Bigcreek, Georgia, was arrested and found guilty of chopping wood on Sunday. The family had just finished moving to a different house and a cloudburst had soaked much of their possessions. Then the weather turned bitter cold, and Conklin chopped wood that morning to provide some heat for his suffering family. The fine and court costs amounted to \$83. Yet, as soon as the trial was over, some of those testifying and voting against him went home and, immune to arrest by friends, chopped wood for themselves the following Sunday morning.

In Tennessee, in the early 1890s, men were fined and put into chain gangs for Sunday violations. W.B. Capps, of Dresden, served ninety-seven days for doing ordinary farm work on his own property on Sunday.

If you were living in Arkansas in the 1880s, this could have happened to you:

“[Mr. Swearingen and several others] interfered with the rights of no one. But they were observed and reported to the grand jury—indicted, arrested, tried, convicted, fined; and having no money to pay the fine, these citizens of Arkansas were dragged to the county jail and imprisoned like felons for twenty-five days . . . Was this the end of the story? Alas, no sir! They were turned out; and the old man’s only horse, his sole reliance to make bread for his children, was levied on to pay the fine and costs, amounting to thirty-eight dollars. The

horse sold at auction for twenty-seven dollars.

“A few days afterward the sheriff came again and demanded thirty-six dollars—eleven dollars balance due on the fine and costs and twenty-five dollars balance due for board for himself and son while caring for the old man in jail. And when the poor man—a Christian, mind you—told him with tears that he had no money, the sheriff promptly levied on his only cow!”—*Arkansas State Senator R.W. Crockett (grandson of Davy Crockett), in an appeal to repeal the State Sunday Law, printed in Weekly Arkansas Gasette, February 10, 1887, p. 8.*

But all through those tragic years, and in the years since then, the Sunday laws that have been enacted have all been on the local or state level. The key legislation had not been passed. That legislation would be a clear-cut National Sunday Law enacted by the U.S. Congress.

But such Congressional legislation is on its way. Recent events make that clear. We will tell you about them in this book. And, when the United States of America, the most influential nation in the world, mandates a common day for rest and worship, we will all be headed for big trouble.

Chapter Two

AGAIN PLANNING Similar Laws

This time it will be extended to our entire nation

In this chapter we will discover the means to be used to coerce the U.S. Congress to enact a powerful National Sunday Law.

In order to better understand this, we need to go back over half a century.

By the late 1950s, a young Catholic priest was discovered to have a remarkably gifted intellect. He could think circles around the ablest minds of men far older than himself, and penetrate complex issues and arrive at precise solutions. By 1959, at the age of 32, he had already become a theology professor in a German university.

In 1962, the *Second Vatican Council* began. And the young man, Joseph Alois Ratzinger (who would later become Pope Benedict XVI) was called by Pope John XXIII to attend this important council as chief theological adviser to one of the cardinals. He was only 35 years old.

After Vatican II ended in 1965, Ratzinger returned to his native Germany and once again taught theology in various universities. **In June 1977, Pope Paul VI made him a cardinal.**

In 1981 Pope John Paul II named Ratzinger prefect of the *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* (formerly known as the *Holy Office* or the *Inquisition*). And the next year, he moved to Rome.

For over 20 years, prior to becoming Pope Benedict XVI on April 19, 2005, Joseph Ratzinger was in charge of preparing all doctrinal statements and positions, official and secret, of the Vatican. John Paul II was the traveler, good at meeting people. But back in Rome, Ratzinger made the decisions as to what should be written—and then wrote out the pope’s official documents. They made a good team.

Due to John Paul II's deteriorating physical condition, **by 1996, Cardinal Ratzinger was, for all practical purposes, in charge of the Vatican.** It was an enormous responsibility, yet one which for a number of years he had gradually taken more and more responsibility. Everyone recognized that Ratzinger was more brilliant than anyone else in the Vatican and entitled to be the natural leader until John Paul's death brought a new pope to the Church.

In 1998, Ratzinger wrote a startling *Apostolic Letter*, which John Paul issued on May 31 in St. Peter's Basilica. Entitled, *Dies Domini* (The Lord's Day), it was a call for all the nations of earth to enact strict National Sunday Laws.

In this document, while first reviewing the history of Sunday worship, **Ratzinger admitted that Sunday worship was "Christianized" from the day on which the pagan sun god was worshiped.** *More on that later.*

"Wise pastoral intuition suggested to the Church the Christianization of the notion of Sunday as '*the day of the sun,*' which was the Roman name for the day . . . This was done in order to draw the faithful away from the seduction of cults which worshiped the sun."—*Dies Domini*, p. 10, section 27.

The papal document then went on to state the need for Sunday laws today.

"Even in our own day work is very oppressive for many people . . . When **through the centuries, she [the Catholic Church] has made laws concerning Sunday rest, the Church has had in mind . . . greater regulation** to lighten its burden and thus enable everyone to keep the Lord's Day holy. In this matter, my predecessor Pope Leo XIII in his *Encyclical Rerum Novarum*

spoke of Sunday rest as a worker's right **which the State must guarantee.**—*Ibid.*, p. 23, section 66.

“Therefore, also in the particular circumstances of our own time, **Christians will naturally strive to ensure that civil legislation respects their duty to keep Sunday holy.**”—*Ibid.*, p. 23, section 67.

The front page headline article, in the *Detroit News* for July 7, 1998, summarized the papal document in this sentence:

“In his letter, the pope goes on to say a violator should be ‘punished as heretic,’ said [Jay] McNally who read an unofficial English translation of the letter on a Vatican website.”—*Detroit News, Tuesday, July 7, 1998.*

This papal decree startled many observers, but not those close to Ratzinger. They knew about his cherished objective. Within three years he would begin working more actively to fulfill it. Ratzinger recognized that which many did not: **There was only one way to get national Sunday laws enacted. It was by forming immense ecumenical councils, which included all the major Christian denominations—and was dominated by its Catholic organizers.** These would be able to coerce governmental authorities to enact strict national Sunday laws.

Ratzinger envisioned doing this, not only in America but, elsewhere in the world.

Only Ratzinger would have the mental capacity and determination to carry through such a scheme.

While the Catholic Church had never previously joined any ecumenical body anywhere,—this was now suddenly to change.

Ratzinger set to work to start two new ecumenical organizations, in which leading Catholics could hold important positions on the planning and executive committees:

The first was the *Global Christian Forum (GCF)*. Initially proposed at a December 1998 international ecumenical meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, it was brought into existence in **2000 during an *International Consultation held at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena in September 2000***. GCF is now worldwide in scope, immense in size, and includes Christian churches from nearly every nation on earth. This was the first time in history that the Roman Catholic Church has been part of an international ecumenical body. It had never joined the *World Council of Churches*, although it had been a voting member of its leading theological committee since 1967, two years after the end of *Vatican II*.

“Following smaller gatherings, an *International Consultation was held at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, USA, in September 2000* and another in June 2002. The latter brought together about 60 participants from the two Orthodox families of churches, from the Catholic Church, from Anglican, Protestant, Evangelical, Pentecostal, Holiness and African Independent churches, and from a number of international Christian Organizations (many representing Evangelical and Pentecostal constituencies). People came from Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Middle East, Europe and North America. They developed a Provisional Purpose Statement describing the scope and objectives that the Forum might pursue.

“Based on the previous consultations, contacts and discussions between 1998 and 2002, the *Continuation Committee* developed a four-year plan. **A series of consultations in the major regions of the world are being held, which are bringing an increasingly wide circle of people and churches.** This unfolding process is now making it possible to call together a truly representative global gathering of Christian leaders in 2007.”—*Official GCF Statement, November 2007.*

The latest GCF meeting (at Nairobi, Kenya, on November 6-9, 2007) brought together over 250 representatives of all the main Christian traditions in the world and their global organizations (*e.g.* confessional, Ecumenical, Evangelical, Pentecostal), at a high level of leadership. **Important decisions about objectives were to be decided at that meeting.**

The second new, gigantic coalition was *Christian Churches Together*, which was started here in the United States in 2001 to unite nearly all its churches in one immense coalition able to be a political powerhouse in our nation.

These are the two most important ecumenical organizations in existence, but our primary concern in this book will be with events here in America.

In the summer of 2001, Cardinal William H. Keeler of Baltimore unexpectedly sent invitations for three high-ranking churchmen to meet with him at his official residence in Baltimore. In July, two Protestant leaders and a fellow Catholic conferred with him and laid the initial plans for a star-

ting, new super ecumenical organization—which would include every major Christian church in America.

The four men at that July meeting were Cardinal William H. Keeler, of Baltimore; Robert Edgar, National Council of Churches general secretary; Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, general secretary of the Reformed Church in America; and Bishop Tod D. Brown of Orange, California, chairman of the Catholic Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs.

They then sent out an invitation for 27 key church leaders to meet with them on September 7-8, 2001, at St. Mary's Catholic Seminary and University in Baltimore.

Arriving, those leaders were excited to learn that, at last,—just as was now being done in the new *Global Christian Forum*—the Catholic Church was willing to work with them on forming a gigantic coalition of Christian churches in America—which would have the political power to get Congress to enact any legislation desired.

In order to understand this, we need to recognize that **the Catholic vote in the U.S. never falls below a solid 25%, while the Evangelical vote provides another minimum of 25%.**

But, in order to make the new organization even more powerful, these men quickly recognized that they also needed to bring in the Southern Baptist, Pentecostal, Black, and Hispanic churches—which had never been part of the *National Council of Churches*. (Minority churches in America would provide another 15% of U.S. voters.)

It was eventually agreed to not officially launch the new organization until those other churches, along with the Orthodox Church, were in this new political coalition.

Additional meetings were held in Chicago (April 4–6, 2002), in **Pasadena** (January 27–29, 2003), in **Houston** (January 7–9, 2004), **and in Los Altos** (June 1–3, 2005) **at the Jesuit Conference Center**,—each time with an ever-expanding and more diverse group of Christian leaders. So far, six meetings had been held—and three of the meetings (summer 2001, June 2005, and June 2005) in Catholic institutions.

This new organization was then given the name, *Christian Churches Together* (CCT). And, at the suggestion of the Catholics, **only a small-member “steering committee” would do all the planning and setting of objectives to be reached. The way it was arranged, the Catholic voting block had the greatest influence on all decisions which it made.** These were then presented at annual meetings to the delegates from all the churches, which generally rubber-stamped the decisions presented to them by the steering committee.

Here is an excerpt from a very important *Catholic News Service* release on November 17, 2004, which is quite revealing:

“[Catholic] Bishop Stephen E. Blaire of Stockton, Calif., chairman of the *Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs*, presented the proposal [about CCT] to the bishops [the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops, or USCCB] and urged its adoption, **noting that the Holy See [the Vatican] has also encouraged it . . .**

“Bishop Blaire emphasized that for the Catholic Church the ultimate goal of ecumenism is the full, visible unity of all Christian churches in the one apostolic faith [Catholicism].

“In that framework, the church views the CCT as an ‘interim process’ rather than a final goal [into full Catholicism] . . .

“Bishop Blaire said not only are the other churches aware of the Catholic view, but many of them also believe that full, visible unity is the ultimate goal and that organizations such as the CCT are only interim steps.”—Catholic News Service release, November 17, 2004,

Later in the same news release, we discover that **the Catholic Church is the only “church” in the CCT! Delegates from the other denominations are lumped into one or another of four “families.” This would give the Catholics one entire “family”—a dominant position in voting and decision making—both in the main assembly and in the steering committee.**

“He [Blaire] told the bishops that their membership decision was crucial to the survival of the CCT, since it will not exist without adequate membership from each of the five ‘families’ of churches—Catholic, Orthodox, historical Protestant, historical racial and ethnic, and Evangelical and Pentecostal.

“Bishop Blaire told the bishops that upon joining Christian Churches Together, the USCCB will be the only Catholic member as a church. The USCCB president will appoint the bishops’ 10 delegates to the CCT General Assembly and one of those delegates will be designated as the spokesman for the group, he said. [This is an important point: Of the five “families,” Vatican-controlled delegates will constitute one entire

“family,” and thus quite a few of the delegates.]”—*Ibid.*

At the April 7, 2006 meeting, it was finally announced that the Baptist, Black, Hispanic, and Orthodox churches were in *Christian Churches Together*. So it was officially organized.

Just how big was the CCT by the Spring of 2006? Here is the answer:

“Thirty-four churches and national Christian organizations, representing over 100 million Americans, have formed the broadest, most inclusive fellowship of Christian churches and traditions in the USA.”—U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Office of Media Relationships, press release, April 7, 2006.

But Benedict had done his homework: **In terms of the number of church members in each church that is represented in the CCT, the Catholic Church is the giant in the organization, with more adherents than the total number in the *National Council of Churches*.**

“With some 67 million members, the Catholic Church has about 22 million more adherents than all NCC member denominations combined.”—*Catholic News Service, June 10, 2005.*

Linked arm-in-arm with the other churches, this new child of the papacy will have immense political clout.

On the death of Pope John Paul II, Ratzinger, as Dean of the College of Cardinals, controlled the preparation for the entire election for the new pope in the Spring of 2005. He assigned himself the speeches to be given to the cardinals instructing them concerning the qualifications they should look for in making their selection. Pleasant, yet more

knowledgeable about the Vatican and world affairs than any of the other cardinals, they had come to look to him for guidance—and, of course, on April 19, made him the next pope. **He took the name, Benedict XVI.** His 78th birthday was only three days earlier.

By early 2007, 37 different churches had joined CCT, making it far larger in total spread of church members than the National Council of Churches had ever had.

On February 6-9, 2007, in the Lake Avenue Church in Pasadena, California, the annual session of *Christian Churches Together* convened.

During that time, in a special closed-door meeting, a set of ten goals was discussed. It was suggested that, gradually at a later time, the immense church membership of CCT could be rallied to promote one after another of these projects throughout the States and in the halls of Congress.

After careful deliberation, this list, called *Ten Point Objective*, was agreed upon. But it was decided that only one, or at most, a few points should be presented to the churches for them to take up at a time as public campaigns.

The assembly had approved, what was called, the *Ten Point Objective*. Significantly, none—**not one—of those ten goals could be fully achieved without enactment of new laws by Congress.**

They included such items as prayer in public schools, honoring the U.S. flag, elimination of abortion, and marriage only between a man and woman.—This is all intended to win public support, and all

requiring coercion of the Congress and the White House for their passage.

Many of the individuals working on this set of projects were doubtless very sincere in their concern to improve conditions in America. But, as we will learn later in this book, one point would, if enacted as the law of the land, generate immense problems.

Included among the ten is this one:

“Throughout all the land, a National Day of Rest shall be honored by governments, industrial manufacturers, and public shopping facilities.”

This objective, which would require enactment of a National Sunday Law for the entire nation, would fulfill Pope Benedict’s dream of so many years. His plan for a universal set of Sunday laws was gradually nearing reality.

Recognizing that, like turning a gigantic ship in a harbor, it would take time to prepare the member churches and their members to work on such projects, **it was obvious that a massive structure of organizational teamwork and local rallies would have to be set in place.**

So, an eleventh project was designated as the first one to be presented to the churches: the need to “fight poverty” in America. This would not require Congressional action, and was one which would have immediate, broad appeal. Approved by the general assembly at the February 2007 annual meeting, it was announced to the public as the first objective CCT would work on.

The next meeting of CCT was slated for January 8-11, 2008, in Washington, D.C.

MOVING US CLOSER to a National Sunday Law

A second important ecumenical gathering made an important decision

This meeting was held on November 14, 2007, in Washington, D.C. Significantly, it was originally planned to be held at the *Pope John Paul Cultural Center* in the northern part of the city.

But, when news leaked out that **the purpose of the gathering was to consider the feasibility of initiating a campaign to ram through Congress a bill to enact a National Sunday Law**, the location was quickly switched to a hotel elsewhere in the area.

The stated purpose for such a meeting revealed the urgency in some minds of getting such a law passed. It was recognized that **there was a necessity of not only involving the member churches of CCT,—but also bringing the leaders of the various U.S. Christian Right political action groups on board. Therefore this November 14 meeting was held, which many attended.** Representatives from *Christian Coalition* and a number of other Religious Right political leaders were present.

The special topic on the agenda at this meeting was to consider whether the time had come to push Congress to enact a full-blown, National Sunday Law here in America! Arguments in favor

of it were presented by a Roman Catholic, and a Seventh-day Adventist was invited to attend and present arguments against such a plan.

Although there was some mixed feelings, **many of those present felt that, in order to restore morality to the nation, a Sunday Law for the entire nation would greatly help solve the problem.** A follow-up meeting was held the next week.

Nearly two months later, the next annual assembly of *Christian Churches Together* convened on January 8-11, 2008. Organizational plans and networks were set in motion, in order to begin coordinating the massive number of local churches and members on the “campaign to fight poverty.”

If carefully laid plans for an enforced Sunday Law eventually succeed, it will be the crowning achievement of Pope Benedict’s papal reign. There are reasons, going back for centuries, why this would be a triumph for the Vatican. *Later in this book we will discover what they are.*

However, fulfillment of this goal cannot be postponed too long. Pope Benedict only has a few years remaining in which to accomplish his objective, to enforce Sunday observance in America and throughout the world. Born on April 16, 1927, he will turn 81 in 2008.

Those church leaders, who are intent on binding Americans with obedience to a National Sunday Law, may be very sincere—but they do not realize what it will lead to. They have not studied history—nor the disaster earlier Sunday Laws brought to families and nations. *Later in this book,*

we will discover this also.

But the Founding Fathers of our nation *did* know. And that is why they wrote the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution!

Chapter Four

Our Founding Fathers SAID NO

Religion laws in the U.S. must never be enacted

“We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity to ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.”—*Preamble to the United States Constitution.*

It was done! That grandest of all human documents. But then our founders realized that something was missing! Thomas Jefferson, writing from France, declared that the Constitution was incomplete. **A “bill of personal rights” must be added, guaranteeing to each citizen certain inalienable rights that the government could never be allowed to take from him! Other leaders agreed.** They knew past history well. Indeed, they had only but recently come out of intense personal and religious persecution of the American Colonies. They were the children not only of the persecuted but also of those who had persecuted them.

The very first meeting of the new U.S. Congress, at its first session (in New York City on September 25, 1789),

wrote and submitted to the states several amendments to the U.S. Constitution. **Among the most important of these was the First Amendment**, written, along with the others, by James Madison:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

That part of the First Amendment which is in bold print, above, is called “The Establishment Clause.” It guaranteed freedom of religion to every American!

On November 3, 1791, at Philadelphia, the first ten amendments to the United States Constitution became part of the supreme law of the land.

“I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declares that their legislature should ‘make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,’ thus building a wall of separation between church and state.”—*Thomas Jefferson, quoted in Reynolds vs. United States, 98 U.S. 145 (1878).*

At last, religious freedom could rule in America!

Who should we go to in order to learn the meaning of the First Amendment? We should learn the original objectives of the Founding Fathers of our nation. That is what leading jurists tell us:

“On every question of construction, **[we should] carry ourselves back to the time when the Constitution was adopted**, recollect the spirit manifested in the debates, and instead of trying to see what meaning may

be squeezed out of the text, or invented against it, conform to the probable one in which it was passed.”—*U.S. Supreme Court Justice William Johnson, Engel vs. Vitale; 370 U.S. 421 (1963).*

“The first and governing maxim in the interpretation of a statute is to discover the meaning of those who made it.”—*Justice James Wilson, quoted in Commissioner of Education vs. School Committee of Leyden; 267 N.E. 2d 226 (Supreme Court, Mass. 1971), cert. denied, 404 U.S. 849. [Only one of six men who signed both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, he was nominated by President George Washington as an original Justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.]*

“The first and fundamental rule in the interpretation of all instruments [legal documents] is to construe them according to the sense of the terms and the intention of the parties.”—*Justice Story, Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States, Vol. 3, p. 383. [He was the founder of Harvard Law School].*

The original objectives which the Founding Fathers had in mind when they drafted the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment were three in number:

1 - ***Religious liberty:*** The government is not to ban or restrict personal religious freedoms. **Each person has the right to select and practice his own religious worship, and practice it according to the dictates of his own conscience,** without government interference or domination.

2 - ***No State Church:*** **No one church, or group of churches working together, should be able to gain the ascendancy** by coercing the government to enact one or more laws requiring the acceptance

and practice of certain church beliefs, forms, ceremonies, practices, times, or methods of worship.

3 - *The government should not oppose religion, but encourage it: It is to do this by leaving it alone*, so that it can grow and the numbers of its adherents can increase. Neither should atheism be favored by the government above that of religious belief. Only a religious citizenry is able to benefit the prosperity of the nation.

Those are the three objectives of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. Here are several statements by the Founding Fathers:

“All men have an equal, natural and unalienable right to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and that **no particular sect or society of Christians ought to be favored or established by law in preference to others.**”—*George Mason, Bishop vs. Aronov; 926 F. 2d 1066 (11th Cir. 1991)*. [Mason was a member of the Constitutional Convention, which drafted the Constitution, and is called “the Father of the Bill of Rights” because of his importance in drafting it.]

“**The civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any national religion be established.**”—*James Madison, quoted in Duran vs. Nitsche; 780 F. Supp. 1048 (E.D. Pa. 1991)*.

“**I consider the government of the United States as interdicted [banned] by the Constitution from intermeddling with religious institutions, their doctrines, discipline, or exercises.** This results not only from the provision that no law shall be made respecting the establishment or free exercise of religion [the First Amendment] . . . Certainly, **no power to prescribe**

any religious exercise or to assume authority in any religious discipline has been delegated to the General Government.”—*Thomas Jefferson, January 23, 1808; also quoted in Doe vs. Aldine Independent School District; 563 F. Supp. 883 (U.S.D.C. S.D. Tx. 1982).*

“The real object of the [First] Amendment was not to countenance, much less to advance . . . infidelity, by prostrating Christianity; **but to exclude all rivalry among Christian sects.**”—*Justice Joseph Story, Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States, Vol. 3, p. 731. [A leading Supreme Court justice, nominated to that position by President James Madison, he was called “the foremost of American legal writers.”]*

“No power over the freedom of religion . . . is delegated to the United States by the Constitution.”—*Thomas Jefferson, Kentucky Resolution, 1798, quoted in Documents of American History (1948), p. 179.*

“In matters of religion, I have considered that **its free exercise is placed by the Constitution independent of the powers of general government.**”—*Thomas Jefferson, Second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1805; quoted in Messages and Papers of the Presidents, Vol. 1, p. 379.*

“Our excellent Constitution . . . has not placed our religious rights under the power of any public functionary.”—*Thomas Jefferson, Letter to the Methodist Episcopal Church, December 9, 1808.*

“As neither reason requires nor religion permits the contrary, **every man living in or out of a state of civil society has a right peaceably and quietly to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience** . . . The right to freedom is the gift of God.”—*Samuel Adams, “The Rights of the Colonists as Men,” November 20, 1772.*

We dare never let it occur that any of “the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions,” for then “the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.” No churches should be permitted to “seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas” (*Great Controversy*, 445 [an excellent resource book on church history]).

“You whose high prerogative it is to invest with office and authority, or to withhold them, and in whose power it is to save or destroy your country, consider well the important trust which God has put into your hands. **Let not your children curse you for giving up those rights which your fathers delivered to you.**”—*Matthias Burnet, “Warning to our Citizens,” Address given at Hartford, CT (May 12, 1803).*

We will conclude this chapter with a clear statement by George Washington, himself:

“Every man, conducting himself as a good citizen, and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshiping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience.”—*Writings of George Washington, Vol. 30, p. 321.*

Chapter Five

Why They Were FRIGHTENED

The founders of our nation knew what had occurred earlier in the Colonies

They knew only too well what had happened back in England which caused their ancestors so much anguish that they fled to the New World. They were also aware of the misery experienced in the American Colonies, when the same attempt to control religion was made.

Only two years earlier George Washington had been forbidden to continue his journey by horseback to New York City, to take the oath as the first president of the United States. **He had been stopped by a Connecticut highway official because he was traveling on Sunday.** Fortunately he had left Mount Vernon early enough to make it in time. A few days later, on April 30, 1789, at Federal Hall, New York City, he was sworn in as the first president of the United States. The Colonies had become a nation. Later, the First Amendment was enacted.

Yes, there were Sunday laws back in the colonial period. But before considering the suffering they brought, let us turn our attention to conditions in England, which caused the Pilgrims and others to take ship for America.

Cotton Mather, a leading minister in Boston, was stunned. He had just learned the news—that a shipload of heretics was headed toward the American Colonies! **They had not registered with the established Church of England as members, so something would have to be done—and quickly.** There was no doubt about it; a letter with the news had just arrived on a British ship, that “100 or more of the heretics and malignants—called Quakers, with Penn who is the chief scamp of them all—were

headed their way.” Sounded dangerous.

After meeting with the general court of Boston, a plan of action was unanimously agreed upon. In a letter to John Higginson, Mather told of their decision: The brig, *Porpoise*, would be sent out at once to waylay William Penn’s ship, the *Welcome*, on the high seas off Cape Cod. Then having taken them all as prisoners, **the plan was to sell—**

“the whole lot to Barbados, where slaves fetch good prices in rum and sugar, and [we] shall not only do the Lord great good by punishing the wicked, but we shall make great good for His minister and people” (*quoted in Frank L. Yost, Let Freedom Ring, 6*).

Ironically, the reason that William Penn was bringing a shipload of Christians to the New World was in the hope of finding religious freedom.

On the bow of the good ship, *Welcome*, Penn watched the waves splash up and flow past. They were making good headway. **Penn’s thoughts returned to earlier events in England they left far behind.**

The date was August 14, 1670, and summer was nearing its end in London. William Penn arrived at the Quaker meeting hall on Gracechurch Street, just in time to find the entrance barred by government soldiers. Not a man to be stopped by the problems, **Penn preached to the waiting congregation right there in the street in front of the church. But before he was finished, he was arrested and soon haled into court for “disturbing the peace.”**

The indictment, issued on September 1, claimed that Penn was “in contempt of the said Lord the King and His law.” He was said to be a terror, a disturber of the people, and “against the peace of

the said Lord the King, his Crown, and Dignity.”

It was business as usual, persecuting “heretics” in England in the seventeenth century. *Official British court records of that time fill in the details for us:*

When the trial convened in a few days, Penn, with his codefendant, William Meade, demanded to know what law had been violated. Unable to produce anything definite, they told him that the indictment was based on “the common law.”

“Where is that ‘common law’; what does it say?” Penn asked.

The recorder answered, “We have so many cases in the common law, I do not have to answer your curiosity.”

“If it be common, it should not be hard to produce,” said Penn.

At this, the Lord Mayor, Sir Samuel Starling, cried out, “You ought to have your tongue cut out!”

But refusing to be shaken, Penn and Meade continued to stand their ground. And soon the jury of common men of the city returned a verdict of “not guilty.”

Astounded that the jury would vote in favor of justice, the officials became desperate. The official court record tells what happened next: “Members of the court threatened the jury with fines and hinted at torture if they did not bring in a verdict to the judge’s taste—but they would not yield, nor would they ever do it!” Their foreman shouted in answer to Penn’s impassioned appeal to them to “give not away your right!”

Again and again the jury was sent out for a

new verdict. Repeatedly it came back into the courtroom with the same one, despite a threat by the Lord Mayor to keep the jury “lock’d up without meat, drink, fire, and tobacco” until they rendered the vote that the judge wanted.

When the defiant jury returned the fifth time with the same verdict, Penn stood up and said, **“What hope is there of ever having justice done when juries are threatened and their verdicts rejected?”**

At this, the judge, the Lord Mayor, went into a rage. “Stop his mouth”; the court reporter wrote his words as he spoke. “Jaylor, bring fetters and stake him to the ground!”

Penn replied, “Do your pleasure, I matter not your fetters.” At this, the court reporter, aghast at Penn’s refusal to yield his religious beliefs to an official of the government, added his own comment to the court report, **“Till now, I never understood the reason of the policy and prudence of the Spaniards, in suffering the Inquisition among them. And certainly it will never be well with us, till something like unto the Spanish Inquisition be in England!”**

What was the outcome of that farce of the trial? Penn, Meade, and all the jurors were imprisoned until each of them had paid a fine of forty marks.

So it was that William Penn determined to sail to a new land where he could find religious freedom. On behalf of several dozen humble Christians, he arranged for the sailing ship, *Welcome*, to carry them to America.

As the ship carrying Penn and other persecuted Christians neared the Western Continent, somehow they managed to elude Cotton Mather’s brig full of

soldiers sent to capture and sell them as slaves in Barbados. **But other Christians, such as Mary Dyer, were not so fortunate. By court order, she was killed in Boston by hanging—because she refused to change her Christian beliefs to those of the government church.** Exasperated with their stubbornness, legislators enacted a State law, that the “cursed sect of the Quakers” be “sentenced to banishment upon pain of death.”

Then there was Mr. Painter, a Baptist who was whipped for refusing to let his child be sprinkled instead of being baptized by immersion. And Obadiah Holmes, an “unregistered pastor” who had baptized a fellow believer and was beaten unmercifully by court order. Other churches besides the Quakers and Baptists suffered also. The general court of Massachusetts ruled that Episcopal worship “will disturb our peace in our present enjoyments.” **Men and women were beaten, thrown into prison, and hanged.**

You are reading about life in America 300 years ago! What had gone wrong? And, more important, could it happen again?

The problem was that the Church had gained control of the State. All that was required for this to happen was for one church—or a coalition of several churches—to get the government to enforce its edicts with fines, followed by imprisonment for repeated offenses.

By the 16th century, Sunday Laws in England required church attendance. **One Sunday Law, enacted during the reign of King Charles II, remained in force for 200 years,—and became the**

model for many American Colonial and later state Sunday Laws.

The first Sunday Law in the American Colonies was enacted in Virginia in 1610. It required attendance at Sunday services, with the death penalty prescribed for the third offense. **Here is an important fact: When the government requires Sunday observance,—penalties must be included for its violation.**

The Virginia Sunday law of 1610 mandated that attendance at “diuine seruice [divine service] was required of all citizens, religious or irreligious, every Sunday morning, and again in the afternoon to diuine seruice, and catechising, vpon paine [upon pain] for the first fault to lose their pronision [provision; food allotment], and allowance for the whole weeke following, for the second to lose the said allowance, and also to be whipt, and for the third to suffer death.”—“*For the Colony in Virginea Britannia, Lavves, Morall and Martiall, & c.*” in *Peter Force, Tracts Relating to the Colonies in North America, 1844, Vol. 3, No. 2, 10-11.*

Soon more laws were enacted. **These Sunday Laws forbade a variety of everyday activities**, such as working, sleeping late, or even walking and riding—except to church meetings.

There are historical records of colonists being fined, put in the stocks, or publicly whipped because of seemingly trivial violations of Sunday Laws.

Yes, there were Sunday laws back in the colonies. And, because all must obey them, a State church was the result.

But there was one man who recognized the truth of the situation: **The Church must always be kept separate from the State; that is, no church or coa-**

lition of churches was to coerce state or federal governments into enacting religious laws.

The name of that man was Roger Williams, founder of Rhode Island. In contrast with this effort to fill church pews with the irreligious and irreverent, **Roger Williams is recognized by historians as the first man in modern history to fully recognize the right of religious liberty.**

“At a time when Germany was the battlefield for all Europe in the implacable wars of religion; when even Holland was bleeding with the anger of vengeful factions; when France was still to go through the fearful struggle with bigotry; when England was grasping under the despotism of intolerance; almost half a century before William Penn became an American . . . **Roger Williams asserted the great doctrine of intellectual liberty.** It became his glory to found a state [Rhode Island] upon that principle . . . **He was the first person in modern Christendom to assert, in its plenitude, the doctrine of liberty of conscience,** the equality of opinions before the law. **Williams would permit persecution of no opinion, of no religion,** leaving heresy unharmed by law and orthodoxy unprotected by terrors of penal statutes.”—*George Bancroft, History of the United States of America, Vol, 1, pp. 254-255.*

Chapter Six

But Then It Began HAPPENING AGAIN in America

With it came the inevitable persecution

Unfortunately, although the First Amendment

had been enacted by Congress, most of the states carried over (or adopted into their state constitutions) Sunday Laws they had inherited from the Colonial charters. From time to time they have been invoked to persecute dissenters.

As early as the 1870s, a number of states had begun to enforce their Sunday Laws against Christians who kept the Bible Sabbath. Vermont, Michigan, and California each had a case of a Seventh-day Adventist arrested for Sunday labor.

In July 1878, Samuel Mitchel of Quitman (Brooks County), Georgia, was arrested and sentenced to 30 days in jail. **Because of the unsanitary conditions there, his health was affected. And he became an invalid and died seven months later, on February 4, 1879.**

Arkansas, Maryland, Missouri, and Virginia also enforced their Sunday Laws. **Persecution under state Sunday Laws relentlessly continued.** In 1892, three Seventh-day Adventists in Henry County, western Tennessee, were forced to serve in a chain gang. In Graysville (Rhea County). Three years later in 1895, 18 other Sabbathkeepers, including the principal and teachers of the school, were indicted, convicted, and sentenced to the chain gang. Elsewhere in the state, an attempt was made to prosecute every male member of the Adventist Church in Springville, Tennessee.

But there were men of principle in Congress who steadily opposed all efforts to enact a National Sunday Law.

In 1830, when a *Federal Sunday Law* was urged, it was carefully studied by a special House commit-

tee—which recognized the danger of what such a law would lead to:

“Banishment, tortures, and death were inflicted in vain to stop its [the Christian religion’s] progress. **But many of its professors, as soon as clothed with political power, lost the meek spirit which their creed inculcated, and began to inflict, on other religions and dissenting sects of their own religion, persecutions** more aggravated than those which their own apostles had endured.”—*Special House Report, U.S. House of Representatives, March 4-5, 1830.*

You will want to read that paragraph again. But that was not all. Here is more of this special report:

“The ten persecutions of Pagan [Roman] emperors were exceeded in atrocity by the massacres and murders perpetrated by Christian hands; and, in vain, we examine the records of imperial tyranny for an engine of cruelty equal to the holy Inquisition. **Every religious sect, however meek its origin, commenced the work of persecution as soon as it acquired political power** . . . Who is it that, in the full enjoyment of every principle which human laws can secure [as we have in America], wishes to wrest a portion of these principles from his neighbor?”—*Ibid.*

But in 1848, eighteen years after that Congressional report repudiated efforts to introduce Sunday legislation, the Sunday Law issue came up again.

This time it was the well-known William Lloyd Garrison who powerfully opposed Sunday Laws. In the *Garrison-Burleigh Document*, he wrote that various states in the nation had used such a law to violate personal religious freedoms.

“Conscientious and upright persons have been thrust into prison for an act no more intrinsically heinous than that of gathering in a crop of hay or selling moral or

philanthropic publications.”—*William Lloyd Garrison, “The Garrison-Burleigh Document.”*

Recalling the eventual results of Sunday laws all through earlier centuries, Garrison, in a later speech, commented on what would result if such attempts succeeded:

“If you do not obey me, I will put my hands into your pocket and take out as much as I please in the shape of a fine; or if I find nothing there, I will put you in prison; or if you resist enough to require it, I will shoot you dead. If Sunday observance be of God, it does not need legislation to uphold it.”—*William Lloyd Garrison, Speech Upon the Foregoing Resolutions, quoted in American State Papers, 212-214.*

But, on the state level, such laws—and the inevitable persecution they produced—continued. The objective was obviously religious, and frequently it was stated to be such:

“Our Puritan ancestors intended that the day should be not merely a day of rest from labor, but also a day devoted to public and private worship and to religious meditation and repose, undisturbed by secular cares or amusements. They saw fit to enforce the observance of the day by penal legislation [imprisonment].”—*Massachusetts Supreme Court Decision, 1880, in Davis vs. Somerville, 128 Massachusetts 594 (1880).*

Although often called “blue laws” in order to make them sound tame and harmless, these Sunday ordinances always resulted in trouble for the general populace.

In 1882, the ministers of San Francisco demanded that the police crack down on violators of a California State Sunday Law. Police Chief Crowley promised the arrest of any persons who might vio-

late this law next Sunday. **Fearful of the heavy political pressure being brought to bear upon him by the church pastors, he set to work—and, in less than a month's time, nearly 1,600 lawbreakers had been arrested** and the municipal court dockets were filled to overflowing with cases!

The ministers were obviously happy, for all kinds of people were now coming to church—secular activists, grumbling dissidents, the criminal minded, and lots more, all eager to have a part in running the local churches. But the city officials were not as happy about the situation. **The police had so many “one-day-in-the-week criminals” on their hands that they did not know what to do with them all.**

In 1888, a decided effort was made to enact a National Sunday Law in America. It was sponsored by one of the first ecumenical religious organizations in the nation. **The churches were discovering that it was only when they banded together in a coalition—that they would be more likely to push a National Sunday Law through Congress.** Later we will discover that this exact method is being used at the present time.

Cooperating with this Christian coalition of churches (which called itself the *National Reform Association*), **Senator H.W. Blair of New Hampshire introduced a Sunday bill into Congress, which would enforce Sunday sacredness throughout the United States and its territories as a “day of worship.”** He also introduced a religious education amendment to the Constitution.

The *National Reform Association* had ear-

lier been organized in 1863, with the specific objective of amending the U.S. Constitution, so as to declare the country “a Christian nation” and to place “all Christian laws, institutions, and usages, on an undeniable legal basis in the fundamental laws of the land” (*quoted in American Sentinel, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 1886*).

Delegates to the 1888 Convention of the National Reform Association expressed their thankfulness that, by the laws which they intended to coerce Congress into enacting, they would be instrumental in bringing “a quicker religion” to the people of America. Before that august assembly of church representatives from all over the continent, David McAllister, their leading spokesman, proclaimed the objectives of all gathered there:

“Those who oppose this work now will discover, when the religious amendment is made to the Constitution, that **if they do not see fit to fall in with the majority, they must abide the consequences or seek some more congenial clime.**”—*Dr. David McAllister’s speech before the National Reform Movement, Lakeside, Ohio, August 1887.*

As can be seen from the above paragraph, **the ultimate objective was not merely a Congressional law but a rock-solid Constitutional amendment!** Talk among the association delegates was that, **once the amendment was enacted, it could be followed by Congressional legislation of specific religious doctrines.** What would those doctrines be? It was understood that they would very likely be those of the most politically active of the various denominations.

Yet the delegates, as they assembled at these yearly association conventions, recognized that they

would have to carry on their program one step at a time. It is the work of church leaders to help direct the work of their denomination,—but some want to link the church with the state *and help direct the affairs of the nation!*

In 1888, at the urging of lobbyists for the National Reform Movement, the Blair Bill was introduced into Congress. It would have brought the desired federal Sunday edict to the United States. One of those who opposed it, Alonzo T. Jones, a Michigan history professor, testified against the bill in December of that year. Amid all the talk of a “weekly holiday” for the people, Jones clearly saw what was behind all the contention to enact a nationalized Sunday rest.

“It is the religious observance of the day that its promoters, from one end of the land to the other, have in view. In the convention, now in session in this city working in behalf of this bill, only yesterday Dr. Crafts said: **‘Taking the religion out of the day takes the rest out.’**”

In the *‘Boston Monday Lectures,’* 1887, Joseph Cook, lecturing on the subject of Sunday laws, said:

“The experience of centuries shows, however, that you will in vain endeavor to preserve it as a day of worship. **Unless Sabbath observance be founded upon religious reasons, you will not long maintain it at a high standard on the basis of economic and physiological and political reasons only.**’ In the Illinois State Sunday Convention, held in Elgin, November 8, 1887, **Dr. W.W. Everts declared Sunday to be ‘the test of all religion.’**” —*Alonzo T. Jones, The National Sunday Law, in The American Sentinel, 1892, 117.*

Because it was strongly opposed by groups

recognizing that it would violate personal religious freedoms, the law and amendment bills were defeated in committee.

But Senator Blair, at the urging of his backers, determined that he would yet get the law passed. So he later stripped it of its religious wording and re-submitted it, in December 1889, as a new bill. But, once again, those who recognized the inherent dangers in mandatory Sunday legislation were able to successfully defeat it.

In all of the Sunday Law persecution and arrests in the 19th century, it was state and local Sunday laws that brought the trouble. But **the prosecution, fines, and jailing could only be sporadic. This was because only state and local laws were involved.**

The ever present, ominous danger was that a National Sunday Law might be passed by the U.S. Congress. Only in this way could the State church arise out of legislated Sunday enforcement. But this would involve the setting aside—or ignoring—of our First Amendment freedoms.

The end of the Civil War, in 1865, had brought with it a weakening of state's rights and a strengthening of federal and individual rights. **On July 28, 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution was enacted. This had the effect of strengthening the First Amendment:**

“No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its juris-

diction the equal protection of the laws.”

But the state Sunday Laws continued. In fact, sometimes the persecution resulting from them was even worse than before.

News Item, Philadelphia, 1931: A policeman arrested a boy for kicking a football on Sunday. When the father protested, the policeman shot and killed the father.

News Item, New Jersey, 1924: A New Jersey court invoked a 1798 blue law and found it illegal to play a phonograph or listen to the radio on Sunday because this was “music for the sake of merriment.”

News Item, Georgia, 1930: The police of Clayton County protected and helped a traveling circus to land in town and put on a show; they also cooperated with airplanes which took people for rides and made much money; yet they arrested a Bible colporteur for delivering a book explaining the Bible, on Sunday, since the person who ordered the book requested that the book be delivered then because it was the only day he was home.

News Item, Alabama, 1940: In Alabama in the 1940s, it was a misdemeanor to play baseball “in any public place,”—though there was an exemption for cities with more than 15,000 population.

News Item, Virginia, 1932: A deputy sheriff, of Washington County, arrested two Seventh-day Adventists for Sunday work, one—a crippled mother who walks on crutches—for washing clothes on her own premises and the other a man who donated and hauled a load of wood to a church to heat it for religious services.

Two very important U.S. Supreme Court decisions were given in the 20th century, which greatly strengthened our individual religious liberty rights.

In 1925, the Supreme Court decreed that First Amendment guarantees were applicable to state and local governments through the provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment (*Gitlow vs. New York*, 268 U.S. 652 [1925]). And, in 1943, the high court confirmed that the freedom of religion guarantees of the First Amendment applied to the states through the Fourteenth Amendment (*Thornhill vs. Alabama*, 310 U.S. 88 [1940]; *Cantwell vs. Connecticut*, 310 U.S. 296 [1940]; *Douglas vs. Jeannette*, 319 U.S. 157 [1943]; *Murdock vs. Pennsylvania*, 319 U.S. 105 [1943]).

But, tragically, in spite of whatever progress had been made in previous decades toward Constitutional protection of religious freedom,—it was greatly eroded by three Supreme Court decisions at the end of the 19th century,—and then almost totally erased by another one in 1961!

Chapter Seven

The Supreme Court JUMPS IN

Opening the door so it can happen again in our nation

In 1892, the Supreme Court ruled that Sunday laws would be Constitutional “because they were Christian laws and America was a Christian nation” (*Soon Hing case: Pacific Exp. Co. vs.*

Seibert, 142 U.S. 339; 1892).

In 1896, recognizing that a secular approach was stronger, the same court ruled that Sunday laws were Constitutional because they were only civil “police power” laws (*Hennington case: Hennington vs. Georgia*, 163 U.S. 299; 1896).

In this second ruling favoring Sunday laws John Marshall Harlan, speaking for the court, upheld a Georgia blue law (Sunday-closing law) as acceptable under the Constitution because **the Sunday law was nothing more than “an ordinary police regulation established by the state under its general power to protect the health and morals and to promote the welfare of its people.”** That was a landmark Supreme Court decision.

Four years later, in 1900, a Minnesota Sunday-closing law against barbers was upheld by the same court. This was the *Petite case: Petite vs. Minnesota*, 177 U.S. 164 (1900).

The Supreme Court decisions in 1896 and 1900 said that State and local Sunday laws were merely “exercises of police power” and not in any way religious.

But the suggestion of police power in America in support of religious beliefs is dynamite! What its advocates do not realize is that it can work both ways: **If police power can be used to enforce a religious institution, such as Sunday sacredness, then it can also be used to enforce a religious dogma. And, in contrast, it can just as easily be used to forbid religious beliefs. For, indeed, is not that how church-state union always works?** The religious beliefs of the official church are pro-

tected and required of the people—and all other beliefs are forbidden.

The Supreme Court had ruled that Sunday laws were entirely civil, both in nature and purpose. But consider these facts:

If Sunday was intended to be a civil holiday for “public benefit and welfare,” then why should there be criminal penalties for violating it? Fourth of July and Labor Day observance carry no penalties for nonobservance. And, **if the Sunday law is needed in order to “protect labor,” then why fine or imprison the man who chooses to work on that day?** It is said that Sunday legislation is needed to give equal rest to all. But then why are some businesses arbitrarily closed on that day while others (such as liquor and tobacco stores) are kept open? **If “blue laws” are needed to “promote health,” then what is inherently more healthful about Sunday than some other day in the week?**

It has been suggested by a number of careful thinkers that it would be far wiser—and safer—to simply urge one day of rest and then let each person and family choose their own day!

But, back to this “police power” reasoning as the Constitutional basis for Sunday laws: Such nineteenth-century thinking is both dangerous and ominous; for, if accepted by the Supreme Court in the present century as the justification of such laws,—it could spell deep trouble for everyone.

But, “Oh,” someone might say, “This could never happen! Times have changed. We are more enlightened now. The court would not pave the way for such a religious police state in our own time!”

But a court decision to let it happen has already been handed down.

On May 29, 1961, the very liberal Warren Court, which had earlier handed down other unusual decisions, quickly ruled on four cases. That date became a landmark in Sunday-law history. **On that date, four different cases were decided in favor of Sunday laws!** And the reason given for them was the “police power” and “criminal law” concepts that Justice Stephen Field had pioneered on the Supreme Court in 1896 in regard to such laws!

These four Sunday law cases were: *McGowan vs. Maryland*, 366 U.S. 420 (1961); *Gallagher vs. Crown Kasher Supermarket*, 366 U.S. 617 (1961); *Braunfeld vs. Brown*, 366 U.S. 599 (1961); *Two Guys from Harrison vs. McGinley*, 366 U.S. 582 (1961).

Earl Warren, a well-known Roman Catholic, was governor of California from 1942 to 1953, when he was appointed Supreme Court chief justice. Under his leadership, a number of very startling decisions were made by the “Warren Court.” But these four May 1961 decisions—all handed down on the same day—were among the most unusual of them all.

Potter Stewart, newest and youngest member of the court, wrote a brief dissent in the Braunfeld case, which also involved a Jewish merchant who sold goods on Sunday while his competitors sold theirs on Saturday:

“Pennsylvania has passed a law which compels an Orthodox Jew to choose between his religious faith and his economic survival. That is a cruel choice. It is a choice which I think no state can constitutionally demand. For me **this is not something that can be swept under the rug and forgotten in the interest of**

enforced Sunday togetherness.”—Justice Potter Stewart, *Braunfeld vs. Brown*, 366 US 599, at pp. 611, 616 (1961).

Voting against the majority decision in every one of the four 1961 Sunday-law cases, **Justice William O. Douglas wrote a lengthy dissenting opinion,—and showed the religious nature of Sunday-law legislation and enforcement.** He believed that the blue laws before the court were in violation of both the “establishment clause” and the “free-exercise clause” of the First Amendment.

Here are a few of his statements:

“I do not see how a state can make protesting citizens refrain from doing innocent acts on Sunday because the doing of those acts offends sentiments of their Christian neighbors . . . The ‘establishment’ clause [of the First Amendment] protects citizens also against any law which selects any religious custom, practice, or ritual, or otherwise penalizes a person for not observing it . . . Every Sunday school student knows the fourth commandment: [Douglas then quotes Exodus 20:8-11.] This religious mandate for observance of the seventh day became, under Emperor Constantine, a mandate for observance of the first day . . . The fact that the Christian voluntarily keeps the first day of the week does not authorize the legislature to make that observance compulsory. The legislature cannot compel the citizen to do that which the Constitution leaves him free to do or omit . . . The question is whether a state can impose criminal sanctions on those who . . . worship on a different day or do not share the religious scruples [of those who keep Sunday holy].”—*William O. Douglas Dissent, United States Supreme Court, in McGowan vs. Maryland, U.S. Supreme Court, October Term, 1960 (May 29, 1961), 366 U.S.*

420, 561-581.

Justice William J. Brennan, in his dissent, wrote:

“The issue in this case . . . is **whether a state may put an individual to a choice between his business and his religion . . . But I dissent, believing that such a law prohibits the free exercise of religion . . .** The Court forgets a warning uttered during the congressional discussion of the First Amendment itself: ‘The rights of conscience are, in their nature, of peculiar delicacy, and will little bear the gentlest touch of governmental hand.’ ”—*Justice William J. Brennan, Ibid.*

The First Amendment is one of your best guarantees of freedom in our land. For a moment, read it again for yourself:

“**Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press or the right of the people peacefully to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.**”—*First Amendment, U.S. Constitution.*

It is clear that **some of our most basic civil and religious freedoms are to be found in the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.** And it is equally clear that **the enactment and enforcement of Sunday laws violate each one of those freedoms.**

“**The ‘establishment of religion’ clause of the first amendment means at least this: Neither a state nor the federal government can set up a church. Neither can pass laws which aid one religion, aid all religions, or prefer one religion over another . . . No person can be punished for entertaining or professing religious beliefs or disbeliefs . . . Neither a state nor the federal government can, openly or secretly, participate**

in the affairs of any religious organizations or groups and vice versa. In the words of Jefferson, the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect a wall of separation between church and state.”—*United States Supreme Court, Everson vs. Board of Education, 330, US. 1, 15-16 (February 10, 1947).*

That “wall” was erected to keep the State from controlling the Church, and keep the Church from controlling the State.

In a 60,000-word decision, longest in recent history, Chief Justice Earl Warren, speaking for the Court in the majority opinion, in an attempt to excuse their decision, admitted that “there is no dispute that the original laws which dealt with Sunday labor were motivated by religious forces.” **Later we will discover the dramatic way those earlier “religious forces” rammed through the first Sunday Law in history—and then used it to persecute and slay faithful Christians who obeyed the Bible.**

Warren also spoke of “the power of a state to establish a secular day of rest, and [this Court has] held irrelevant the fact that the day generally appointed has a religious origin and for many people a continuing religious significance.” That sentence is contrary to itself. **It is admitted that Sunday is only a rest day to certain very religious people. How then can it be mandated by the court as a “secular day of rest” which everyone should obey?**

WHO PULLED the Strings?

Bragging that they were behind that Supreme Court decision

In the fall of 1960, the Supreme Court agreed to consider these four Sunday Law cases. About three months later,—and four months before the four Supreme Court Sunday-law rulings were issued,—an unusual statement of boasting was made by someone who apparently had advance information on what those rulings would be.

Hinting that an important advance in protecting Sunday sacredness was soon to be made, he gave strong assurance that it would reveal the power of the Roman Catholic Church to accomplish its objectives on a national level in America. Apparently, the Catholic hierarchy in our country felt confident that it had access to someone important in Washington, D.C. Here is part of this statement:

“For three centuries, Protestantism was the sole guardian in America of the Christian Sabbath. To police enforcement of Sunday statutes and to resist efforts to liberalize the laws, the Lord’s Day Alliance [a Protestant church coalition] was founded . . . **In recent years, however, organized Protestantism seems to have yielded primary responsibility for guarding the Christian Sabbath to the Roman Catholic Church . . .** The Lord’s Day Alliance has become something of a stepchild of American Protestantism. **The Catholic Church has become the new champion of the Sun-**

day!—Richard Cohen, “Blue Sunday,” in *The Christian Century*, January 4, 1961, 11.

Cohen’s message, published in a major inter-faith religious journal just prior to the four May Sunday law decisions—appeared to be a signal that something important was forthcoming, and that it would be Catholic influence that brought it about.

A brief four months later, the decision on four major Sunday law cases was written by Earl Warren, a faithful Roman Catholic and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. In order to avoid more unfavorable public reaction than necessary to those four decisions, they were all handed down—publicly on the same day: May 29, 1961, rather than being spread out over a period of time. Nevertheless, they hit like a bombshell.

Paul Blanshard was, at that time, one of the leading Protestant investigators into the inner workings of the Roman Catholic Church in America. In an important book he published in 1960, **he stated that the Catholics were among the most urgent of the Sunday-law promoters in the United States:**

“One of the oddities of the situation is that the Catholic Church . . . has now become one of the chief defenders of Sunday laws in the commercial sphere . . . Today, while the Protestant-dominated Lord’s Day Alliance has declined in power, Catholicism has begun to place new emphasis on a non-commercial Sunday.”—*Paul Blanshard, God and Man in Washington, 1960, 71.*

Blanshard, the author of the well-known book, *American Freedom and Catholic Power*, then went on to mention the strong opposition that the Catholic hierarchy mounted, when the Massachusetts Federal district court earlier ruled in favor of one of those

four Sunday law cases (*Crown Kosher Supermarket*). **That adverse ruling against Sunday Laws was destined to set powerful church machinery in motion.** And it did not stop until it had effectively reached judicial ears in Washington, D.C.

“Both Cardinal Spellman and Cardinal Stritch issued special statements in 1956 championing Sunday laws. Cardinal Cushing, in 1959, severely criticized a three-judge federal court in Massachusetts for declaring the Sunday law of that state unconstitutional in a kosher market case. He said: ‘Let us ourselves eliminate from Sunday the unrestrained commercialism which the courts give deference to what they interpret to be our own wishes, are attempting to legalize.’”—*Ibid.*

As mentioned earlier, the four May 29, 1961 rulings startled thinking Americans everywhere, when they were announced to the public.

Two days after the landmark Supreme Court decision was handed down, the *Detroit Free Press* expressed utter amazement at the court’s statement that “the laws against doing business on Sunday have nothing to do with religion.” And the editorial added:

“The machinations of great minds are frequently fascinating, and not easily understood by those who rely on common sense instead of technicalities . . . **How, when the words are written into the law, the Justices can pretend they aren’t [religious rulings] is beyond our comprehension** . . . The clear wording and all past experiences indicate that blue laws are intended to enforce religious concepts. Even when providing exceptions such as Michigan’s, **they can interfere with the right of a minority to a different belief.** As of this week, they may be considered Constitutional, but that does not mean they are reasonable! The court has ruled

for the majority and totally ignored the religious rights of minorities.”—*Detroit Free Press*, June 1, 1961.

Time Magazine condemned it even more severely:

“Seldom has an issue of liberty been argued on flabbier grounds . . . U.S. blue laws are riddled with erratic contradictions. In Pennsylvania, it is legal to sell a bicycle on Sunday but not a tricycle; in Massachusetts, it is against the law to dredge for oysters but not to dig for clams; in Connecticut, genuine antiques may lawfully be sold but not reproductions. The New York blue law code is particularly messy. Bars may open at 1 p.m., but baseball games may not begin until 2 p.m. It is legal to sell fruits but not vegetables, an automobile tire but not a tire jack, tobacco but not a pipe. It is unlawful to sell butter or cooked meat after 10 a.m. except that delicatessens may sell these foods between 4 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.”—*Time Magazine*, October 25, 1963, p. 56.

The Washington Post, recognized that this would eventually lead to additional Sunday Laws.

“If, as we fear, the decision spawns a spate of such blue laws, the religious motivation will become so clear that the court will no longer be able to ignore it.”—*Washington Post*, June 18, 1961.

The religious journal, *Christian Century*, predicted the same zealous results (*Christian Century*, July 19, 1961, pp. 867-868). **And this is exactly what happened.** For example, the following Tuesday, in Michigan, the Detroit Council of Churches declared war on Sunday commerce, and tried hard to get rid of it all. Similar efforts occurred in many other places in America.

Throughout the months of behind-the-scenes work to legalize Sunday closing in Massachusetts, Northeastern dioceses worked closely with the *Lord’s*

Day League of New England in achieving their objectives. **The Lord's Day League of New England later revealed the secret lobbying, by many north-eastern church groups, to gain the victory** in the Massachusetts Crown Kosher Supermarket case.

"After many months of cooperative effort between the office of the Massachusetts attorney general and other concerned groups, the Sunday laws have been held Constitutional.

"This decision, announced by the U.S. Supreme Court on May 29, culminated much dedicated work of numerous legislators, church groups of many beliefs, and the Lord's Day League. The preservation of Sunday as a day of rest and relaxation from secular business is a welcome assurance to the entire community."—*Lord's Day League, quoted in "Love Blue Laws," in Springfield, Massachusetts, Free Press, June 3, 1963.*

Protestant and Catholic leaders all over America responded with praise for the May decision. But the most impressive approval came from the pope himself in September. He stated that government laws were needed to guard the sanctity of Sunday.

Appearing before delegates at a union convention, the pontiff pleaded "for the proper observance everywhere of Sunday as a day of rest . . . **This presupposes a change of mind in society and intervention of the powers of the state.** Sunday will really be the 'day of God' when this comes about. **It will be recognized as a social right to be enjoyed by all classes of society for the exercise of their religious duties** and the practicing of works of charity. The church will be happy when this takes

place.”—Pope John XXIII, quoted by *Religious News Service*, September 21, 1961.

It is obvious that the Roman Catholic Church has a special concern to see enactment and enforcement of Sunday laws. But why is this?

The truth of the matter, as we shall learn in the next chapter,—is that Sunday is actually their day! They are the ones that brought Sunday sacredness into the church!

Chapter Nine

WHY Do They Want It?

Why one church wants Sunday Laws so urgently

Throughout this entire controversy, **the big question is: Why is Rome so anxious to see Sunday exalted as the great national day of rest? The answer may come as a surprise.** Here it is:

“Strange as it may seem, **the state, in passing laws for the due sanctification of Sunday, is unwittingly acknowledging the authority of the Catholic Church,** and carrying out more or less faithfully its prescriptions.”—John G. Shea, *“The Observance of Sunday and Civil Laws for Its Enforcement,”* in *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, January 1883, 139.

John Shea, a high-ranking Catholic priest, then goes on to explain what he means in more detail:

“The Sunday, as a day of the week set apart for the obligatory worship of Almighty God, to be sanctified by a suspension of all servile labor, trade, and

worldly avocations and by exercises of devotion,—is purely a creation of the Catholic Church.

“It is not the Jewish Sabbath; it is, in fact, entirely distinct from it, and not governed by the enactments of the Mosaic law. **It is part and parcel of the system of the Catholic Church as absolutely as is any other of her sacraments,** her festivals and fasts, her days of joy and mourning, her indulgences, and jubilees.

“**The Catholic Church created the Sunday and made the very regulations which have come down on the statute books,** and she still constantly, from her pulpits, her catechists’ chairs, and the confessional, calls on her faithful to obey them, to sanctify the day, and refrain from all that desecrates it.

“**Protestantism, in discarding the authority of the [Catholic] Church, has no good reason for its Sunday theory, and ought, logically, to keep Saturday as the Sabbath . . .** For their present practice, Protestants, in general, have no authority but that of a church which they disown, and **there cannot be a greater inconsistency than theirs in asking the state to enforce the Sunday laws.**”—John G. Shea, “*The Observance of Sunday and Civil Laws for Its Enforcement,*” in *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, January 1883, 139, 149, 152.

Here are several more statements:

“**Sunday is a Catholic institution,** and its claim to observance can be defended only on Catholic principles . . . From beginning to end of Scripture there is not a single passage that warrants the transfer of weekly public worship from the last day of the week to the first.”—*Catholic Press, Sydney, Australia, August 1900.*

“*Ques.*—Have you any other way of proving that the [Catholic] Church has power to institute festivals of precept [to command holy days]?”

“Ans.—Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her: She could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.”—*Stephen Keenan, Doctrinal Catechism, p. 176.*

“Protestants . . . accept Sunday rather than Saturday as the day for public worship **after the Catholic Church made the change** . . . But the Protestant mind does not seem to realize that in accepting the Bible, in observing the Sunday, they are accepting the authority of the spokesman for the church, the Pope.”—*Our Sunday Visitor, February 5, 1950.*

“If Protestants would follow the Bible, they should worship God on the Sabbath Day. In keeping the Sunday they are following a law of the Catholic Church.”—*Albert Smith, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, replying for the Cardinal, in a letter dated February 10, 1920.*

“We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.”—*Peter Geiermann, CSSR, A Doctrinal Catechism, 1957 edition, p. 50.*

Protestants acquainted with history agree:

BAPTIST: “There was and is a command to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will however be readily said, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week, with all its duties, privileges and sanctions. Earnestly desiring information on this subject, which I have studied for many years, I ask, where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament—absolutely not. There is no scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day of the week.”—*Dr. E.T. Hiscox, author of the Baptist Manual.*

CONGREGATIONALIST: “It is quite clear that however rigidly or devoutly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath . . . The Sabbath

was founded on a specific divine command. We can plead no such command for the observance of Sunday . . . There is not a single line in the New Testament to suggest that we incur any penalty by violating the supposed sanctity of Sunday.”—*Dr. R.W. Dale, The Ten Commandments, pp. 106-107.*

BAPTIST: “The Scriptures nowhere call the first day of the week the Sabbath . . . There is no Scriptural authority for so doing, nor of course, any Scriptural obligation.”—*The Watchman.*

PRESBYTERIAN: “There is no word, no hint in the New Testament about abstaining from work on Sunday. The observance of Ash Wednesday, or Lent, stands exactly on the same footing as the observance of Sunday. Into the rest of Sunday no Divine Law enters.”—*Canon Eyton, Ten Commandments.*

METHODIST: “It is true that there is no positive command for infant baptism. Nor is there any for keeping holy the first day of the week. Many believe that Christ changed the Sabbath. But, from His own words, we see that He came for no such purpose. Those who believe that Jesus changed the Sabbath base it only on a supposition.”—*Amos Binney, Theological Compendium, pp. 180-181.*

AMERICAN CONGREGATIONALIST: “The current notion, that Christ and His apostles authoritatively substituted the first day for the seventh, is absolutely without any authority in the New Testament.”—*Dr. Lyman Abbot, in the Christian Union, June 26, 1890.*

BAPTIST: “To me it seems unaccountable that Jesus, during three years’ discussion with His disciples, often conversing upon the Sabbath question, discussing it in some of its various aspects, freeing it from its false [Jewish traditional] glosses, never alluded to any transference of the day; also, no such thing was intimated. Nor, so far as we know, did the Spirit, which was given to bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever that He had said unto them, deal with this question. Nor yet did the inspired apostles, in preaching the gospel, founding churches, counseling and instructing those founded, discuss or approach the subject.

“Of course I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day, as we learn from the Christian Fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of paganism, and christened with the name of the sun god, then adopted and sanctified by the Papal apostasy, and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism.”—*Dr. E.T. Hiscox, report of his sermon at the Baptist Minister’s Convention, New York Examiner, November 16, 1893.*

Now I believe you can understand why Rome claims Sunday as her own! **The Catholic Church claims to have made the day sacred, and considers that non-Catholics who keep the day holy are really honoring the Catholic Church!**

But how did all this get started?

It began over 200 years after the last book of the Bible was written and the last Apostle had died. At that time, nearly every Christian was still keeping the Bible Sabbath holy, in keeping with God's commands all through the Bible.

In the fourth century, Pope Sylvester I and Emperor Constantine worked together to bring Sunday sacredness into the Christian church. Sylvester's objective was to bring millions of the unconverted into the church, and increase both its prestige and the flow of funds into it. Constantine's objective was to strengthen the empire by uniting nearly everyone into one vast megachurch. History has proven that, at that time and down through the centuries that followed, both objectives were fulfilled by the enactment of a series of ever more restrictive National Sunday Laws.

Later in this book, we will discover much more about earlier Sunday Laws in history—and intense persecution of faithful Christians that resulted.

But, before A.D. 321, when the first Sunday Law in history was enacted, the majority of the Christians kept the Bible Sabbath—the seventh-day Sabbath. And the reason for this was simple enough: It was the only weekly Sabbath day ever

commanded by God in the Holy Scriptures! This simple fact can be tested yourself. Just open the Bible and look for the first day sacredness. It is not there—anywhere. Then see what God says about the seventh day of the week, the Bible Sabbath.

Back, when our world was first made, the sacredness of the seventh day was one of the first things given by God to mankind.

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. **And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it:** because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.”—*Genesis 2:1-3*.

This was no meaningless requirement; **the Bible Sabbath was given as the memorial of the creation of our world in six days by the Lord God, the Maker of heaven and earth. It is by keeping that day holy unto Him that we acknowledge Him as the Creator and our God!** That is the teaching of Scripture.

“**And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.**”—*Ezekiel 20:20*.

That is why the seventh-day Sabbath is in the heart of the most important set of commandments ever given by God to mankind: the *Ten Commandments*. Here is the *Fourth Commandment*:

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. **Six days shall thou labour, and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath** of the Lord thy God: **in it thou shalt not do any work,** thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy

cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. **For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.**—*Exodus 20:8-11.*

Notice that **all the other six days are, in the sight of God, nothing more than common working days.**

In keeping that day as a special day of rest and worship, we honor God as our Creator; but He also, in turn, blesses us with a deeper and closer walk with Himself. He said in Scripture, “Them that honour Me I will honour” (*1 Samuel 2:30*).

“Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.”—*Exodus 31:13.*

“Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.”—*Ezekiel 20:12.*

And this promise is for us today; for the Bible predicts that **the Sabbath, set aside for centuries because of repressive persecutions by the church of the Dark Ages, is in these last days to be restored.** The people of God are again to repair the breach (the hole) in the law of God and rebuild Sabbathkeeping in their lives and in the lives of their children. **Accompanying the prediction is the promise of God’s favor and blessing as they seek to do it.**

“And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. And **they that shall be**

of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and **thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from [stepping on] the Sabbath,** from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thing own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: **Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord;** and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”—*Isaiah 58:11-14.*

Now that is a wonderful promise, isn't it? It is a promise that I want to claim. It is a promise I am sure you want a share in also. But what about all those who do not know the precious truth about the Bible Sabbath? God understands the sincerity of their hearts and is leading them. And then, when they suddenly learn this glorious truth about the Bible Sabbath, the beauty and simplicity of this weekly day-by-day walk with God—that ends with a Sabbath blessing—thrills their hearts and they want it for themselves. **For in every command of God is enfolded a promise. As we, by faith in the enabling merits of Christ our Lord and Saviour, seek to obey the command, the blessings of the promise begin to be fulfilled in our lives.**

JESUS Made No Sunday Laws

—And for a surprising reason

In fact, He didn't keep Sunday holy. Not once.

Oh yes, Jesus went to church—but it wasn't on Sunday. That was just another working day to Him—just as it had been to the people of God all through the Bible.

Here is more information about this:

Many people ask, What about Jesus? What did He think of the Sabbath? Well, **we know from Scripture that God the Father and God the Son—Jesus—together created the world.**

“For by Him [the Son] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him.”—*Colossians 1:16*.

“God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”—*Ephesians 3:9*.

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus.”—*Ephesians 2:10*.

“God . . . hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, **by whom also He made the worlds.**”—*Hebrews 1:1-2*.

Therefore, it was Jesus who, in the beginning, made our world and gave us the seventh-day Sabbath. It was He who gave us the Ten Commandments. And it was He who died on Calvary, to forgive us our sins and enable us by His grace to do all that He commands in Scripture. God's plan

is a wonderful plan, and it is a simple plan. And it is clearly given to us in the Bible.

It is a solemn fact that Jesus honored His Father's law—and He is our great Example.

“It is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.”—*Psalm 40:7-8*.

“For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.”—*John 6:38*.

While here on earth, Jesus gave us a careful example of obedience to the Sabbath day He had earlier, at the Creation, given to mankind.

“And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.”—*Luke 4:16*.

His custom should be ours; for He is our Example. He gave us an example of obedience that we should follow.

“He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also to walk, even as He walked.”—*1 John 2:6*.

“Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps.”—*1 Peter 2:21*.

“If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.”—*John 15:10*.

“For this is the love of God; that we keep His commandments.”—*1 John 5:3*.

While here on earth, Jesus not only kept the moral law of the Ten Commandments, but He told us to keep it also.

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, **Till heaven and earth pass, one**

jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”—*Matthew 5:17-19*.

The word for “*fulfill*,” in these verses, is the same word in the original (Greek) language as in used in “that your joy may be full (fulfilled)” in 1 John 1:4 (compare John 15:11; 16:24; 2 John 12, etc.). The meaning is “to make more full.” **“Fulfill” does not mean “to destroy.”** Elsewhere, Jesus spoke about those who seek, by their traditions, to substitute God’s laws:

“And He said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.”—*Mark 7:9*.

Not only did Christ give us a careful example of obedience while here on earth,—but **He also rebuked man-made attempts to change His laws.**

“But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”—*Matthew 15:9*.

“Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.”—*Matthew 15:6*.

“But He answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?”—*Matthew 15:3*.

Throughout His life, Christ did as Scripture predicted He would do: **He magnified the law and made it honorable.**

“The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the law, and make it honourable.”—*Isaiah 42:21*.

“Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me: I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart.”—*Psalm 40:7-8 [compare Hebrews 10:5, 7]*.

Christ taught that others should obey the law of God, just as He was doing.

“Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.”—*Matthew 7:21*.

“Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And He said unto him . . . **If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.**”—*Matthew 19:16-17*.

However, God’s faithful ones fully realize that they are incapable, in their own strength, of rendering this obedience to God. We must all lay hold of the enabling grace of Christ. Only by His enabling grace can we obey His commandments.

“I am the vine, ye [are] the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in Him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for **without Me ye can do nothing.**”—*John 15:5*.

Just before His death, Jesus predicted the destruction of Jerusalem 39 years later, in A.D. 70, and the end of the world (*Matthew 24*); and **He cautioned His followers to continue to carefully observe the Sabbath, even when those terrible events should come to pass** years and even centuries later.

“But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.”—*Matthew 24:20*.

He carefully instructed His disciples to keep His day holy; for He wanted them to “remember the Sabbath day” (*Exodus 20:8-11*) long after He

returned to heaven. **His followers faithfully kept it after His death** (Luke 23:56) **and later in their missionary work** (Acts 13:14-16, 40-46; 16:12-15; 17:1-4). When brought before their enemies, they boldly declared that Christians should obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29); and the Apostle Paul could sincerely say of himself and his fellow believers: “**Do we then make void the law? God forbid. Yea, we establish the law**” (Romans 3:31)! Isaiah predicted that the day would come when Gentiles would faithfully keep the Sabbath that the Jews were desecrating (Isaiah 56:3-7).

Chapter Eleven

WHAT DAY is “the Lord’s Day”?

The Bible, our only guide, has the answer

What day is the “Lord’s Day” mentioned in Revelation 1:10? The Bible is very clear about this; in fact, so clear it will surprise you.

As mentioned earlier, **Christ was in the beginning with God the Father** (*John 1:1-2*). **Christ is the Creator, for God the Father created all things by Him** (*Ephesians 3:9; Hebrews 1:1-2; Colossians 1:16-17*).

Therefore it was Christ who, after creating the world in six days, rested on the seventh and made the Sabbath (*Genesis 2:3*).

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. **And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the**

seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.”—*Genesis 2:1-3*.

***The question we want answered is this:
What day is the “Lord’s day” in Revelation 1:10?***

“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.”—*Revelation 1:10*.

We are not told in that verse what day is the “Lord’s day.”

The Sabbath was made for man.

“The Sabbath was made for man.”—*Mark 2:27*.

And the one who made the Sabbath was Christ, our Creator. Christ is our Lord, and therefore the Sabbath is the Lord’s day.

Did you know that, repeatedly, we are told in the Bible that the Bible Sabbath is the Lord’s day? Here are several examples:

The Sabbath is the day UNTO the Lord.

“This is that which the Lord hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord . . . today is a Sabbath unto the Lord: today ye shall not find it in the field.”—*Exodus 16:23, 25*.

“Six days may work be done; but on the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord.”—*Exodus 31:15*.

“Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the Lord.”—*Exodus 35:2*.

The Sabbath is the day OF the Lord.

“The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord.”—*Exodus 20:10*.

“The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God;

in it thou shalt not do any work.”—*Deuteronomy 5:14*.

“Ye shall do no work therein; it is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.”—*Leviticus 23:3*.

The Sabbath is the Lord’s holy day.

“If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord . . .”—*Isaiah 58:13*.

The Sabbath is the day blessed and hallowed by the Lord.

“And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.”—*Genesis 2:3*.

No other day of the week is ever claimed by the Lord as His day. None. Not one.

John the Revelator, who mentioned the “Lord’s day” in Revelation 1:10, earlier heard Christ call Himself “the Lord of the Sabbath day.”

“For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day.”—*Matthew 12:8*.

“The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.”—*Mark 2:28*.

John well-knew which day was the Lord’s day.

It is the memorial day of the Creator (*Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 31:17*) and the memorial day of the Redeemer (*Ezekiel 20:12, 20*).

God blessed the Sabbath and sanctified it (*Genesis 2:3*). He also hallowed it (*Exodus 20:11*). We are commanded to hallow it (*Jeremiah 17:22, 24, 27; Ezekiel 20:20; 44:24*); just as, in the Lord’s Prayer, we are also told to hallow the name of the Lord (*Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2*).

The Sabbath is the Lord’s day, a day that God wants to share with you. He plans to keep it with

you all through eternity to come.

“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord.”—*Isaiah 66:22-23*

Come, worship Him on the best day, His day, the only day of worship your God ever gave you.

Chapter Twelve

Sunday in the BIBLE

What do the Scriptures tell us about it?

But what about Sunday sacredness? Is it not in the Bible? The astounding fact is that Sunday—the first day of the week—is nowhere called sacred in the Bible, and at no time was it ever regarded as sacred.

It was never called “the Lord’s day.” Instead, as we have just discovered, only the Bible Sabbath—the seventh day of the week—is called “the Lord’s Day.”

Sunday is only mentioned eight times in the Bible. The first instance is in Genesis 1:5, where the first day of creation week is mentioned. Genesis 1:1 to 2:3 tells us all about Creation Week. Nothing there about Sunday sacredness. **Instead, we are told that only the seventh day is holy**

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. **And on the seventh day God ended**

His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.”—*Genesis 2:1-3*.

Here are the eight texts in the New Testament that mention the first day of the week:

The next five times refer to the appearances of Jesus, on Sunday to His disciples, after His rest in the tomb on the Sabbath (*Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1, 2, 9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1, 19*). They were hiding “for fear of the Jews,” and Jesus came and told them that He was alive. Nothing here about Sunday sacredness.

Here are these first five texts in the New Testament that mention the first day of the week—in more detail:

Matthew 28:1 is the first first-day text in the New Testament. **We are here told that the Sabbath ends before the first day of the week begins,**—and that is all that this passage tells us. Matthew wrote his record several years after the resurrection of Christ.

Mark 16:1-2 is the second first-day text, and **Mark 16:9** is the third. We learn here that **the Sabbath was past before the first day began. They are two different days.** The seventh-day Sabbath is holy; the other is one of the six working days. Years after the resurrection, Mark knew of no first-day sacredness.

Luke 24:1 is the fourth one. Nothing new here. Luke does point out in the two preceding verses (*Luke 23:55-56*) that **Jesus’ faithful followers**

“rested on the Sabbath day according to the commandment” (the Fourth Commandment of Exodus 20:8-11). **In all His years of instruction, Jesus had said nothing about Sundaykeeping—or we would see His followers faithfully observing it.** But this is not to be found, for Sunday sacredness is foreign to Scripture.

John 20:1 is the fifth first-day text in the New Testament. Again, the same simple record of the early morning experience and nothing more.

John 20:19 is the sixth one. As with the others, John’s record gives no account that Jesus ever mentioned the first day of the week. **The disciples were not gathered together to keep Sunday holy. John tells us they were hiding in the upper room “for the fear of the Jews.”** He specifically points out that this was not a worship gathering. They were simply in hiding, fearful that they too would soon be killed as Jesus was. Some have suggested that the disciples were celebrating Christ’s resurrection. This is incorrect; for they did not yet believe Jesus had risen. They were frightened men; for they still believed Christ was dead. Mark says that those men, gathered in that upper room, twice refused to believe that Christ had risen—even when others came and told them (*Mark 16:11* and *16:12-13*). Later Christ appeared to them (*Luke 24:33-37*), but even He had a difficult time convincing them. Read the passage for yourself.

Acts 20:7-8 is the seventh first-day text, and the only one in the book of Acts. After having spent seven days at Troas, **Paul and his missionary company held a farewell gathering with them that**

night, which lasted till midnight.

According to the Bible, each new day begins at sunset (The Bible time is sunset to sunset. See *Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31* and *Mark 1:32*).

“From even unto even, shall ye celebrate your Sabbath.”—*Leviticus 23:32*.

The first day of the week begins Saturday evening at sunset and ends Sunday evening at sunset. Because this meeting in Acts 20:7-11 was held on the first day of the week and at night, **it must therefore have been held on a Saturday night.**

“It was the evening which succeeded the Jewish Sabbath. On the Sunday morning the vessel was about to sail.”—*Conybeare and Howson, Life and the Epistles of the Apostle Paul, Vol. 2, p. 206. [This is the most authoritative and complete book on the life of the Apostle Paul.]*

“The Jews reckoned the day from evening to morning, and on that principle the evening of the first day of the week would be our Saturday evening. If Luke reckoned so here, as many commentators suppose, the apostle then waited for the expiration of the Jewish Sabbath, and held his last religious service with the brethren at Troas . . . on Saturday evening, and consequently resumed his journey on Sunday morning.”—*Dr. Horatio B. Hackett, Commentary on Acts, pp. 221-222. [Dr. Hackett was professor of New Testament Greek in Rochester Theological Seminary.]*

After the Saturday night meeting at Troas (*Acts 20:7-11*), Paul's company immediately set to work.

They set sail that night. Paul preferred to go alone part of the way; so, the next morning, **Sunday morning, he walked nineteen miles across a point of land to Assos**, where his friends took him on board ship (*Acts 20:11-14*).

If Sunday was Paul's holy day, why then did he stay with the brethren at Troas seven days and then leave them on Sunday morning in order to walk eighteen and a half miles that day? The Bible says, "for so had he appointed" to do. That was planning quite a bit of work for Sunday.

They had spent seven days at Troas. And then, on Saturday night (after the Sabbath was past), they had a farewell gathering with the believers, "ready to depart on the morrow."

What does it mean "to break bread"? This is the common Bible expression for partaking of food. The disciples broke bread daily from house to house (*Acts 2:46*), and they "did eat their meat ["food" in the Greek] with gladness" (*2:46*). It should here be mentioned that, even if they had held an actual communion service that night, this would in no way make it a holy day. The Lord's Supper commemorates Christ's death, not His resurrection. "Ye do show the Lord's death till He come" (*1 Corinthians 11:26*).

A few verses later (*Acts 20:15-38*), he speaks to another group in the middle of the week. But that doesn't make that day any more sacred than the Sunday mentioned a few verses earlier. For only a direct command by God, in Scripture, can make any day of the week holy—and He gave that command only in regard to the seventh day.

So we see that the book of Acts is as silent on first-day sanctity as are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 is the eighth and last text. It is the final mention of the first day of the week in the New Testament—**and the only one in all of Paul's writings.** Although Paul wrote many, many letters, this is his only mention of the first day of the week. That is very significant.

In this passage, Paul instructs the believers to do their bookkeeping at home on Sunday mornings. The Sabbath is past, a new week has begun—and it is a good time to do the preceding week's financial accounting, since they were so busy preparing for the Sabbath on the preceding **Friday (called, in Scripture, the "preparation day";** see *Luke 23:54; John 19:42; etc.*). And Paul tells them to do it at home (a point which is more clearly stated in some of the newer versions). This one verse is the only mention of the first day in all of Paul's writings.

Paul wanted the folk to save aside money for the poor in Jerusalem. He was an evangelist who did not like to make calls for money in Sabbath services. "That there be no gatherings when I come," is what he said. He evidently observed that if people did not lay aside at home systematically, on a basis of weekly income, there would have to be a gathering when he came—not only a gathering of money, but gatherings of people also.

"Let every one of you lay by him in store." This plan had no connection with a weekly collection at a church service. It was to be laid aside at home.

This text also teaches us to total up our money and work up our budgets on the first day of each week, since there is not time in the sixth-day preparation on Friday afternoon to carefully give attention to such matters. For the Sabbath begins at sunset, and figuring up money totals might take longer than is expected—and run into the Sabbath. Bookkeeping and the keeping of accounts is not to be done on Sabbath; it is best not done at the end of the work week, for then we are busy preparing for the Sabbath.

So there we have it: eight texts where Sunday is mentioned in the New Testament—and no indication of a new holy day, much less a direct command by the God of heaven to observe it in the place of the seventh-day Sabbath.

Thank God every day of your life for the Bible! It is your pathway to Christ and to eternal life. Never leave the pathway for that which relatives or learned men may tell you. **If men's ideas do not agree with the Voice of God, you had better stay with the plain words of Scripture.**

Chapter Thirteen

The WEEKLY CYCLE Has Never Changed

Not even the slightest bit

The weekly cycle of a seven day week, one day after the other, has never changed—ever since the Creation of our world when God first gave us the seven-day weekly cycle. Here is the evidence:

The writings of historians, the records of chronologists, the languages of earth, the calendars of time, and the existence of the Jewish race—all testify to the fact that the weekly cycle on our calendars today is the same as in earlier centuries—going back to the time of Christ, to Moses, and beyond.

In the beginning, God gave us the weekly seven-day cycle, with the Sabbath as the last day. **That pattern has never changed.** The seventh day of the week today is the true Bible Sabbath. **Our seventh day is the Sabbath which Jesus kept; it was the Sabbath in the time of Moses when the Ten Commandments were written down. Historians and scientists all agree that this is true.**

If there had been any change in the weekly cycle, between the time of Creation and the time of Moses, a correction would have been made when the Ten Commandments were given to the Hebrews. ***From that time, on down to the present, there have always been Jews to testify as to the true Sabbath!*** It is the same seventh day of the week which is on our calendars. While all the other ancient races are now intermingled, the Jews have been kept separate so they could testify to the fact that our seventh day is the Bible Sabbath!

The yearly cycle (*not the weekly cycle*) has been changed. **In 1582, the length of the year was changed to include the leap year. This changeover resulted in October 1582 having only 21 days! But each week remained the same; each was seven days in length. Thursday, October 4, was followed**

by Friday, October 15.

God has divinely protected the weekly cycle down through the ages. If He had not done this, it would be impossible to keep the Sabbath holy, as He has commanded. But, because He has, there is no excuse for disobedience. **The seventh day is a holy day, made holy by the command of God.** All calendars agree: **The seventh day is the Sabbath. Sunday is the first day;** the day called “Saturday” in the English language is the Sabbath.

However, **in 108 of the 160 languages of mankind, the seventh day is called “the Sabbath”!** Dr. William Mead Jones of London prepared a chart proving this. (A copy of this chart can be obtained free of charge from the publisher of this book: Ask for “*The Chart of the Week.*”) **English is one of the few major languages in which the seventh day is not called “the Sabbath.”** (The word, “Sabbath,” was originally a Hebrew word and means “rest.”)

Here are ten examples; all mean “Sabbath.” Hebrew: *Shabbath* / Greek: *Sabbaton* / Latin: *Sabbatum* / Arabic: *Assabit* / Persian: *Shambin* / Russian: *Subbota* / Hindustani: *Shamba* / French: *Samedi* / Italian: *Sabbato* / Spanish: *Sabado*.

Here are several statements by astronomers that the weekly cycle has never been changed, confused, or lost:

“By calculating the eclipses, it can be proven that **no time has been lost** and the creation days were seven, divided into 24 hours each.”—Dr. Hinkley, *The Watchman*, July 1926. [*Hinkley was a well-known astronomer.*]

“The human race never lost the septenary [seven day] sequence of week days and that the Sabbath of these latter times comes down to us from Adam, though the ages, without a single lapse.”—*Dr. Totten, professor of astronomy at Yale University.*

“Seven has been the ancient and honored number among the nations of the earth. **They have measured their time by weeks from the beginning.** The origin of this was the Sabbath of God, as Moses has given the reasons for it in his writings.”—*Dr. Lyman Coleman.*

“There has been no change in our calendar in past centuries that has affected in any way the cycle of the week.”—*James Robertson, Director American Ephemeris, Navy Department, U.S. Naval Observatory, Washington, D.C., March 12, 1932.*

“It can be said with assurance that **not a day has been lost since Creation, and all the calendar changes notwithstanding, there has been no break in the weekly cycle.**”—*Dr. Frank Jeffries, Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and Research Director of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, England.*

God has given us many ways by which we can know that we today have the true Bible Sabbath, and that it is the seventh day of the week. He wants everyone to be sure, whether or not they have access to historical and astronomical records. **He has given us more than written proof—He has given us living proof—the Jewish race.** Every other Near Eastern ethnic group has disappeared: the Hitites, Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Moabites—all are gone. **The Jews remain a dis-**

tinct people—and with them the Bible Sabbath. It has been 3,400 years since the time that God gave them manna in the wilderness—but **all during that time they have been keeping the Bible Sabbath, week after week, century after century.** Ask any Jewish acquaintance what day is the Sabbath. He will tell you that it is Saturday, the seventh day.

Orthodox Jews scattered throughout the world have kept a strict record of time. They have carefully observed the seventh-day Sabbath throughout the ages. The existence and testimony of the Jewish race is alone enough to settle the matter.

It is remarkable how complete is the Biblical and historical evidences corroborating the fact that **the Bible Sabbath, on the seventh day of the week, was given to us by the God of heaven. Let us keep the Sabbath that Jesus kept!** He worshiped on the Bible Sabbath, and never told us to stop keeping it. No one else in the Bible said to either. ***The seventh day is the Sabbath, for God never changed it.***

For a copy of the 256-page book, *Beyond Pitcairn*, explaining in far more remarkable detail about the Bible Sabbath, send \$2.00 to the publisher of this book.

Chapter Fourteen

What Was ABOLISHED At The CROSS?

What ordinances ended at Calvary?

Some say that God's moral Ten Commandment law was nailed to the cross, so we no longer

need the Bible Sabbath. Here are the passages referred to:

“Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God. Above when He said, **Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldst not**, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law. Then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. **He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second.**”—*Hebrews 10:7-9*.

“**Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances**; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace.”—*Ephesians 2:15*.

What do those passages mean? They cannot mean that either the moral law of Ten Commandments or the Creation Sabbath were destroyed at Calvary. If that was true, God would approve if we now committed adultery and killed people.

Hebrews 10:7-9 is talking about the sacrificial and offering laws. It says so. **Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross eliminated the sacrificial laws (also called ceremonial laws).** The death of God’s Lamb did away with the offering of lambs on the altar. **The sacrificial laws were taken away and the moral law of Ten Commandments established** by the death of Christ.

Ephesians 2:15 is talking about “the commandments contained in ordinances.” **The ordinances were the ceremonial laws.** By His death, Christ eliminated the sacrificial laws and, as our Mediator, brought us to God.

Jesus did not come to earth to destroy the moral law! It was because that law could not be abolished that Christ had to die. Christ did not die so we could keep sinning. He died to provide us miraculous, divine grace to empower us to keep the law.

“By this we know that we love the children of God, **when we love God, and keep His commandments.**”—*1 John 5:2.*

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”—*Revelation 14:12.*

- The moral law is a perfect law (*Psalm 19:7; 119:172, 142; Romans 7:12*). The ceremonial law was imperfect (*Hebrews 7:18-19; 10:1-4*).

- The moral law is spiritual; it makes us godly people (*Romans 7:14*). The ceremonial law was not in itself spiritual (*Hebrews 9:10*).

- The moral law was spoken directly by God Himself (*Deuteronomy 4:12-13, 22-23; Exodus 20:1*). The ceremonial law was spoken by Moses (*Leviticus 1:1-2; 7:37-38; etc.*).

- The moral law was written by the Lord Himself upon two tables of enduring stone (*Deuteronomy 5:22; Exodus 31:18*). The ceremonial law was written by Moses in a book (*Exodus 34:27; Deuteronomy 31:9*).

- The moral law is eternal, requiring obedience from all (*Romans 3:31; Matthew 5:17; Luke 16:17; Matthew 19:17; 1 Corinthians 7:19; Revelation 22:14*). The ceremonial law was abolished at the cross, and therefore obedience to it is not required from anyone today (*Ephesians 2:15; Colossians*

2:14-17; Acts 15:24).

It is the Ten Commandment law of God that God's faithful ones obey. When asked, "Which law?" Jesus replied by naming several of the Ten Commandments (*Matthew 19:17-19*). And the Apostle James did likewise (*James 2:10-12*).

Some today claim that there is no law since the death of Christ. But the Bible teaches that **if there is no law, there is no sin! Indeed, without the law to identify sin, we cannot know what sin is.** Apart from the presence of the law, sin does not exist.

"Where no law is, there is no transgression."—*Romans 4:15*. "Sin is not imputed when there is no law."—*Romans 5:13*. "For by the law is the knowledge of sin."—*Romans 3:20*. "I had not known sin but by the law."—*Romans 7:7*.

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law."—*1 John 3:4*.

The only thing abolished at the cross was the ceremonial law, contained in ordinances. They were the sacrificial laws. After Christ's death, it was no longer necessary to sacrifice lambs at the temple, for Christ our Lamb had died. But after the death of Christ we were still obligated to keep the moral law.

Daniel 9:26-27 predicted that at His death, Christ would "cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease." And the Apostle Paul tells us that this is exactly what happened. When Christ died, the ceremonial ordinances were blotted out. The sacrificial services in the Temple no longer had meaning in the eyes of

God.

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.”—*Colossians 2:14*.

“Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, **even the law of commandments contained in ordinances**; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.”—*Ephesians 2:15-16*.

A leading Protestant writer, Dr. Albert Barnes, in commenting on Colossians 2:16, said this:

“But the use of the term [“sabbaths”] in the plural number, and the connection, show that he [Paul] had his eye on a great number of days which were observed by the Hebrews as festivals, which was a part of their ceremonial and typical law, but was not part of the moral law or the Ten Commandments. No part of the moral law—not one of the Ten Commandments—could be spoken of as a shadow of things to come.”—*Dr. Albert Barnes, Commentary on Colossians 2:16*.

The “shadowy laws” were the ones that foreshadowed the coming of Christ: the ordinances about the slaying of the lambs and goats, the keeping of the yearly Passover, etc. All these ceremonial laws were taken away by the death of Christ.

“For the [sacrificial] law, **having a shadow of good things to come**, and not the very image of the things, **can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year** continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they

not have cease to be offered? . . . **But in those sacrifices** there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For **it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.**—*Hebrews 10:1-4.*

These sacrificial laws included yearly holy days, or yearly “sabbaths” (plural), each of which occurred once a year. The *weekly* Sabbath was given to mankind at the foundation of the world and is the fourth of the Ten Commandments.

But **the yearly sabbaths were gatherings for special sacrificial service and foreshadowed the death of Christ.** At those services, there were special “meat offerings” and “drink offerings.” A list of the yearly sabbaths will be found in Leviticus 23:4-44.

The weekly seventh-day Sabbath is called “the Sabbath” in the Bible, but the yearly sabbaths are easily identified. When mentioned together, an “s” is added: they were the “sabbaths” or “sabbath days.” **All those yearly gatherings were abolished at the cross.** Paul calls them (and their meat and drink offerings) a “shadow.”

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: **which are a shadow of things to come;** but the body is of Christ.”—*Colossians 2:16-17.*

“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers there-

unto perfect.”—*Hebrews 10:1*.

This is because **the meaning and purpose of the Temple services ended when Christ died**. At that moment a hand reached down from heaven and tore the veil of the temple in two, thus desecrating it and destroying its significance:

“Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, **the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom**; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent.”—*Matthew 27:50-51*.

“Then said I [Christ], Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God. Above when He said, **Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldest not**, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law. **Then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second.**”—*Hebrews 10:7-9*.

The first—the shadow laws and ceremonies—were taken away by the death of Christ, that He might solidly establish by His death the principle that man must obey God—and, through the merits of Christ, he can be empowered to do it!

Over twenty years ago, the present writer offered a \$500,000 reward to anyone who could find one verse in the Bible that said that the Sabbath had been changed from the seventh day of the week to the first, and that the verse would have to be obvious in the King James Version. (For half a million dollars, someone might try to print his own edition of the Bible!)

But no one ever claimed the reward. Back around the beginning of the 20th century, a Catholic priest in Missouri made a \$1,000 offer for such a Bible verse. But he never gave away any money either.

The reason is simple: There is no such passage. **The seventh day is the Sabbath, for God never changed it.**

Chapter Fifteen

Only One WEEKLY REST DAY

All through the Bible

In order to provide a more complete understanding of this, here is a brief Bible study on what the Scriptures teach about the Bible Sabbath.

***FACT NUMBER ONE*—The Sabbath was given to all mankind at the Creation of this world.**

The seventh-day Sabbath was given to mankind on the seventh day of Creation Week.

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made.

“And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.”—*Genesis 2:1-3*.

God dedicated and set aside the Sabbath as a rest day—2,000 years before the first Jew. Abraham is considered by all to have been the first Jew. He lived about 2000 B.C. Biblical records indicate that the Creation of this world took place about

4000 B.C. So the Bible Sabbath is not Jewish! It is for mankind; it is for all the world.

“The Sabbath was made for man.”—*Mark 2:27*.

FACT NUMBER TWO—The Sabbath is a memorial of Creation and our salvation.

First, it is a memorial of Creation.

“It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.”—*Exodus 31:17*.

As a memorial of the Creation of this world, the Sabbath cannot pass away without first having this world pass away—and creating a new one! Our planet could not have a new or different Sabbath day, without having it first hurled into oblivion—and then a new planet created from nothing. But no such event has occurred.

Second, the Sabbath is a symbol of our salvation. When we keep it, we tell all the world that we belong to God and that we serve and obey Him. The seventh-day Sabbath is a sign of our conversion, sanctification, and salvation:

“Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.”—*Exodus 31:13*.

“Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.”—*Ezekiel 20:12*.

“And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.”—*Ezekiel 20:20*.

But what about Christ’s resurrection? Nowhere in Scripture were we told to keep any day in honor of Christ’s resurrection. To do so is unscriptural. On the contrary, to set aside the Creation and sanctification Sabbath of the Bible—for another day of the week—and excuse it by saying that we do so “in honor of Christ’s resurrection”—is indeed to do a very daring thing. Who dare presume to set aside the Memorial of Creation and salvation for any reason! To knowingly do so, flies in the face of repeated, direct, Biblical commands by the God of heaven. To

do so denies that He is our Creator and Redeemer.

If we abandon the Bible Sabbath and keep another day holy, in the Judgment what excuse can we offer? There is no Bible reason for keeping the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh day.

FACT NUMBER THREE—The people of God kept the Bible Sabbath before the Ten Commandments were given at Mount Sinai.

The Sabbath Truth was first given to our race in Eden before the fall of man. It was given before sin existed, and apart from it. It was given to every man to link him to his God. And if Adam needed the Sabbath, we need it all the more today.

God's people had it before Mount Sinai. Four chapters before the Ten Commandments were given on Mount Sinai, the God of heaven spoke in such a way that it is obvious that the seventh-day Sabbath was already well-known by the people of God—but not always well-kept. Read Exodus 16.

There are those who say that the seventh-day Sabbath was not commanded by God, nor kept by man before it was spoken from Mount Sinai in Exodus 20. But Genesis 2:1-3 and Exodus 16 prove otherwise.

FACT NUMBER FOUR—The seventh-day Sabbath Commandment lies in the very heart of the Moral Law of Ten Commandments.

“Remember The Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

“Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.

“For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”—*Exodus 20:8-11.*

The Sabbath Commandment is part of the Moral Law of Ten Commandments. The Apostle James tells us that if we break any part of this law, we have broken it all (James 2:10-12). We cannot tear out the Fourth Commandment without setting aside all the others as well.

They all stand together, because the God of Heaven put them all together.

We do not decide which day of the week is to be kept holy unto God; He alone is to do this. It is for Him to command; it is for us to obey.

Some say that Genesis 2:1-3 is not a command for man to keep the Sabbath, and therefore we do not obey it. But Exodus 16 and 20 clearly show that man *is* commanded to keep it holy. And who dare say that the Ten Commandments were only for the Jewish race? Are the rest of us permitted to lie, steal, cheat, and commit adultery? Are only the Hebrews to observe these ten moral principles?

The reason for the Sabbath commandment is the Creation of this world: “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth.” This is not something local, merely for a Semitic race;—it is a commandment for all in the entire world who shall bow down and worship their Creator in humble thankfulness for His plan to save them through the life and death of Jesus Christ. It was given at the Creation of this world to every man, woman, and child who shall live on this planet.

God wrote these Ten Commandments with His own finger (Ex 31:18; Deut 9:10). **He wrote them on the most enduring thing in the world,** and that is rock (Ex 31:18). And He wishes to write them also on our hearts.

“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.”—*Hebrews 10:16 (Heb 8:10; Jer 31:33)*.

And, if we will let Him, through the New Covenant He will write His holy law upon our hearts. To have the Ten Commandments written on our hearts means two things: First, a willingness to obey them and, second, letting God enable us to do so by the grace of Jesus, His Son. Obedience to God’s law is to become an integral part of our lives.

FACT NUMBER FIVE—The weekly seventh-day Sabbath is part of the Moral Law contained in the Ten Commandments. It will stand forever. The yearly sabbaths were part of the ceremonial laws that prefigured, or foreshadowed, the death and ministry of Christ.

These “shadow laws,” such as Passover and the Wave Sheaf, which were a part of the ceremonial or sacrificial law, would not endure past the death of Christ.

“For the [ceremonial] law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? . . . But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”—*Hebrews 10:1-4*.

These ceremonial laws were not written on rock, but were contained in ordinances, written on parchment. The rock was to endure, but the ordinances that foreshadowed the death of Christ were to pass away at His death. It is for this reason that we do not today observe the yearly sabbaths of the Passover and the Wave Sheaf.

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross . . . Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days. Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”—*Colossians 2:14,16-17*.

In the Greek it says, “or of the sabbaths.” **There is one weekly Sabbath; it comes down to us from the Creation of this world and will be kept in the New Earth (Isa 66:22-23). But the yearly sabbaths did not begin until Moses.** They foreshadowed and explained the coming death of Christ till it happened; and, at His death, they were nailed to His cross.

If the ordinances containing the yearly sabbaths had not been set aside at Calvary, we would need now to sacrifice animals on various occasions throughout the year. But we are not now to slay lambs; for Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed for us.

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”—*John 1:29*.

“For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.”—*1 Corinthians 5:7*.

FACT NUMBER SIX—Christ’s disciples faithfully kept the Bible Sabbath, not Sunday.

The disciples had been with Jesus for three and a half years, and had listened closely to His teachings. What they did at the time of His death on Calvary shows what He taught them. The sacred importance of the seventh-day Sabbath was of such concern to them that they would not even prepare the body of Jesus properly for burial on Friday, lest they transgress the Fourth Commandment.

“And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath . . . Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where He was laid.

“And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?”—*Mark 15:42, 47-16:1-3.*

For more on this, read Luke 23:53-24:2.

FACT NUMBER SEVEN—According to the New Testament, the Apostles of Jesus always kept the Bible Sabbath.

The Apostles kept the Bible Sabbath. Read Acts 13:42; Acts 16:13; Acts 17:1-2.

Paul supported himself by tentmaking; and then on the Sabbath, he would preach the gospel.

“Because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation, they were tentmakers. And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks . . . He continued there a year and six months, teaching the Word of God among them.”—*Acts 18:3, 4, 11.*

Paul’s manner was the same as Christ’s custom: to keep the Bible Sabbath (Acts 17:1-2; Luke 4:16).

Paul never taught that the Moral Law was, or could be, set aside.

It will ever govern the conduct of mankind:

“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid:

yea, we establish the law.”—*Romans 3:31*.

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?”—*Romans 6:1-2*.

“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.”—*Romans 7:7*.

Paul clearly saw that the problem was that we needed to obey the law; there was nothing wrong with the requirements of the law itself.

“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.”—*Romans 7:12*.

“Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but [that which is important is] the keeping of the commandments of God.”—*1 Corinthians 7:19*.

The moral standard that governs mankind was not relaxed or destroyed by the death of Christ; for, indeed, it is through the merits of Christ’s sacrifice that we can be empowered to keep that law.

“Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.”—*Matthew 1:21*.

Jesus saves us from our sins, not in our sins. And, since sin is the breaking of the Ten Commandments, it is obvious that He saves us by enabling us, strengthening us, to keep that law.

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”—*1 John 3:4*.

The other Apostles saw this same great truth, that the moral standard that governs mankind was not relaxed or destroyed by the death of Christ:

“But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass. For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

“But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of

the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed . . . For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that saith, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty . . . Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.”—*James 1:22-25; 2:10-12, 17-18.*

“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous.”—*1 John 5:2-3.*

FACT NUMBER EIGHT—God predicted in Scripture that men would later try to change the Law of God—and especially the “time law.”

The Bible Sabbath is very important—for it is the very center of our worship of God! If men were later to try to change it to another day, we should surely expect a Bible prophecy saying that it would happen.

“And he [the little horn power] shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into His hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”—*Daniel 7:25.*

The church of the Dark Ages was to rule the world for 1260 years, and during this time would try to tear out God’s holy Time Law and put a counterfeit in its place. Oh, what blasphemy men can dream up, when they are tempted by Satan to gain religious control of their fellowmen!

“For that day [the Second Coming of Christ] shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped.”—2

Thessalonians 2:3-4.

God said:

“And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.” — *Ezekiel 20:20.*

After the New Testament was finished and the Apostles had died, men tried to transfer the sacredness from the seventh to the first day of the week. They tried to change the “time law.”

Roman Catholic: “It is well to remind the Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, and all other Christians, that the Bible does not support them anywhere in their observance of Sunday. Sunday is an institution of the Roman Catholic Church, and those who observe the day observe a commandment of the Catholic Church.”—*Priest Brady, in an address at Elizabeth, N.J., March 17, 1903; reported in the Elizabeth, N.J., News of March 18, 1903.*

“You may search the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify.”—*James Cardinal Gibbon, The Faith of Our Fathers, chapter 8.*

“If Protestants would follow the Bible, they should worship God on the Sabbath day. In keeping the Sunday they are following a law of the Catholic Church.”—*Albert Smith, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, replying for the Cardinal, in a letter of February 10, 1920.*

“We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty.”—*Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter, June 20, 1894; The Great Encyclical Letters of Leo XIII, p. 304.*

“Prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone. The Bible says ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ The Catholic Church says, No. By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day and command you to keep holy the first day of the week. And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the

Holy Catholic Church.”—*Priest Thomas Enright, CSSR, President of Redemptorist College, Kansas City, MO, in a lecture at Hartford, Kansas Weekly Call, February 22, 1884, and the American Sentinel, a New York Roman Catholic journal, in June 1893, p. 173.*

“Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change was her act . . . AND THE ACT IS A MARK of her ecclesiastical power.”—*From the office of Cardinal Gibbons, through Chancellor H.F. Thomas, November 11, 1895.*

How important it is that we obey the commandments of God rather than the commandments of men.

“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?”—*Romans 6:16.*

“It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.”—*Matthew 4:10.*

“But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”—*Matthew 15:9.*

“How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him.”—*1 Kings 18:21.*

FACT NUMBER NINE—The seventh-day Sabbath, instituted by God at the Creation of this world, is the seal of His governmental authority.

God’s basic governmental code for mankind is the Ten Commandments. Of those ten, only the Sabbath commandment reveals the name of our Creator and Lawgiver.

Of all the commandments in the Decalogue, only the Fourth Commandment reveals the (1) name, (2) authority, and (3) dominion of the Author of this Law:

In six days, (1) the Lord (name) (2) made (office—the Creator) (3) heaven and earth (dominion or territory over which He rules). **This commandment alone contains the seal of God.**

Examine the seal of a notary public or any other legal seal. Each seal will always contain the above three identifying marks.

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is,

and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”—*Exodus 20:8, 11*.

The Sabbath commandment contains the seal of God. And the Sabbath itself—given in this commandment—is inseparably connected with this seal. For the Sabbath is the basis of all true worship of our Creator. And this worship lies at the heart of all our acknowledgment of His authority as our Creator and our God. The Sabbath is ever to be kept as a sign that we belong to Him. And the keeping of it brings us within the circle of this seal.

The seal is impressed in order that all may know the authority from whence it comes—and that all may know that it is not to be changed. **The seventh-day Sabbath comes from God. Let no man dare to tamper with it—for the seal of God is upon it.**

“Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed.”—*Daniel 6:8*.

“Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples.”—*Isaiah 8:16*.

“It [the Sabbath] is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.”—*Exodus 31:17*.

“And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.”—*Ezekiel 20:20*.

The Sabbath is a powerful sign of God’s creative power—not only of this earth, but within our lives as well. It requires the same power to clean our lives and redeem us as it did to create us in the first place.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God.”—*Psalms 51:10*.

“We are . . . created in Christ Jesus unto good works.”—*Ephesians 2:10*.

The Bible tells us there is to be a special sealing work in these last days, just before the return of Jesus in the clouds of heaven.

“And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four

angels . . . saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”—*Revelation 7:2-3 (Ezekiel 9:1-6)*.

“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father’s name written in their foreheads.”—*Revelation 14:1*.

The name of the Father is expressive of His character. When Moses asked to see the glory of God, the Lord passed by and told His name—that which He was like:

“The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.”—*Exodus 34:6*.

And, as we look at God’s holy law, we see another view of His character. It is a transcript of that character. It is God’s characteristics written on everlasting stone. He wants us to live it out in our lives.

When God writes His name on your forehead and right hand, this means He writes His law on your heart. This is the work of the new covenant (Heb 8:10; 10:16; Jer 31:33); and that work reaches its climax when God “seals in” His own people, just before He returns the second time in the clouds of heaven. What are those sealed ones like? They are fully obedient to the Law of God:

“And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”—*Revelation 14:5*.

But, in the final crisis before His return, there will be a people who will yield obedience to the beast instead of to God.

“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.”—*Revelation 14:9-10*.

“And he [the beast] causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads.”—*Revelation 13:16*.

Those who serve the beast and receive his mark are in contrast with those who, in the last days, will serve God and receive His seal. How can they be identified? God has told us in His Word. Here is a description of God’s remnant people at the end of time:

“And the dragon [Satan, working through his agents] was

wroth with the woman [the true church], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”—*Revelation 12:17*.

And the third angel of Revelation 14, which warns men to not receive the mark of the beast, also tells them how to avoid receiving it—by keeping the commandments of God through the faith of Jesus Christ:

“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture . . . Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”—*Revelation 14:9-10, 12*.

The final crisis will be caused by a decree by the beast, that all men must disobey a commandment of the law of God. The nations and churches of the world will not require men to steal or lie or commit adultery. The growing movement toward national Sunday laws is growing stronger every passing year. It is seen that in this point, and in this alone, will be found the heart of the crisis of Revelation 13 and 14.

The first angel of Revelation 14 calls on all men everywhere, today, to reverence God—by returning to the worship of the Creator of all things.

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people:

“Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”—*Revelation 14:6-7*.

As the crisis nears, we must prepare for it.

“The observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church.”—*Monsignor Louis Segur, Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today*, p. 213.

Already we are facing Sunday closing laws on local levels. Men are prohibited from doing business on the first working day of the week,

lest they be fined or imprisoned. And the situation will grow worse in the days just ahead.

“That the image of the beast should both speak, and cause [decree] that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark.”—*Revelation 13:15-17*.

But there is victory for those who will stand true to the God of heaven. There is overcoming power for those who will “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Rev 14:12).

“And I saw . . . them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.”—*Revelation 15:2*.

FACT NUMBER TEN—God’s remnant people will keep the Bible Sabbath. And that holy day will be kept throughout eternity.

(1) Even though there are over two thousand denominations today, the remnant people of God, living at the end of time, can be identified. God has identified them for us. After speaking about how the antichrist power in the Dark Ages tried for centuries to destroy the people of God, **we are told how to identify them in these last days, just before Christ returns in the clouds for His own:**

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”—*Revelation 12:17*.

And the third angel, after warning all men against receiving the mark of the beast, tells us clearly who will be the little group that will stand apart from this almost universal apostasy:

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”—*Revelation 14:12*.

It will be an almost universal apostasy. All around us can be seen a rising tide of rebellion against the Ten Commandments. The

colleges and universities teach that man is but an animal descended from worms and amoeba. The churches teach that God destroyed the Ten Commandments at Calvary, and that Jesus died to take sinners to heaven just as they are. Governmental agencies are relaxing moral restrictions and permitting gambling, abortion, homosexuality, and other vices.

This world is becoming a curse, but soon God will intervene. Prophecy tells us that before the end there will be a small company who will stand true to the commandments of God, by faith in Jesus Christ.

(2) And soon this present evil world will be ended suddenly by the return of Jesus Christ—and heaven will begin for the faithful.

And in that heaven the seventh-day Sabbath will be kept forever. God's people suffered and died for it down here, and they will worship God on that holy day through all ages to come.

Revelation 21 and 22 tells us about this new life with Jesus, when sin has come to an end and the wicked are no longer alive.

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea . . . And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.”—*Revelation 21:1; 22:1.*

And then **we are told who will enter that beautiful new world:**

“Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”—*Revelation 22:14.*

But there is more: **There is the promise that they will keep the holy Sabbath through all eternity:**

“For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind . . . And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of My people, and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands . . . The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall

be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, saith the Lord . .

“For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the Lord.”—*Isaiah 65:17, 21-22, 25; 66:22-23.*

Now you have seen God's plan for His people. And it is a wonderful one. It can begin for you right now. And it will continue on throughout eternity. Why not begin today—this very week? Ask God to forgive you for the past and tell Him that, by His grace, you will worship your Creator on His day! This is the best decision you can make. Go to Him just now. He will help you make it.

And next Sabbath—begin that holy walk with God on His day, the holy day of Isaiah 58. Read that chapter and see the blessings He will add, if you will but let Him take over your life.

But think not that there will be no problems or trials. Satan will bring many upon you. He hates the Sabbath and all who will stand loyal to it. Yet if you will determine to be true to God and His Word, you will have strength from above to go through all that lies ahead.

And one day soon, if faithful to the end, you with the redeemed of all ages will rejoice on the sea of glass and will receive from the hand of Jesus the overcomer's crown. And you will be given that new name, expressive of a new character. And you will begin a walk with Jesus that will last through all eternity to come.

“And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?”

“And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

“Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

“They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither

shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

“For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”—*Revelation 7:13-17*.

Chapter Sixteen

What Led to the FIRST SUNDAY LAW?

A tragic story that brought grief to many

It is totally incredible to think that any man or group of men would dare to attempt to change the Bible Sabbath to some other day! But that is what was attempted!

Historians tell us that Sunday sacredness is not in the Bible:

“It would be an error to attribute [the sanctification of Sunday] to a definite decision of the Apostles. There is no such decision mentioned in the Apostolic documents [that is, the New Testament].”—*Antoine Villien, A History of the Commandments of the Church, 1915, p. 23*.

“It must be confessed that there is no law in the New Testament concerning the first day.”—*McClintock and Strong, Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature, Vol. 9, p. 196*.

“Rites and ceremonies, of which neither Paul nor Peter ever heard, crept silently into use, and then claimed the rank of divine institutions. [Church] offices for whom the primitive disciples

could have found no place, and titles which to them would have been altogether unintelligible, began to challenge attention, and to be named apostolic.”—*William D. Killen, The Ancient Church, p. xvi.*

The great majority of the followers of Christ kept the Bible Sabbath—the seventh-day Sabbath—for several centuries after the last book of the New Testament was finished.

“Until well into the second century [a hundred years after Christ] we do not find the slightest indication in our sources that Christians marked Sunday by any kind of abstinence from work.”—*W. Rordorf, Sunday, p. 157.*

“The ancient Sabbath did remain and was observed . . . by the Christians of the Eastern Church [in the area near Palestine] above three hundred years after our Saviour’s death.”—*A Learned Treatise of the Sabbath, p. 77.*

“The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a Divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday.”—*Augustus Neander, The History of the Christian Religion and Church, 1843, p. 186.*

In order to understand how this change from Sabbath to Sunday got started, we need to realize that the Christian church changed a lot after the last book of the Bible was written.

Here is the fascinating story of what hap-

pened:

Seven Christians were brought into the judgment hall of Cyrilla, bishop of Carthage. **These men loved God, studied the Bible carefully, and tried to faithfully obey it. They kept the Bible Sabbath.** But now the crisis had come. Unless they changed their faith to that of the official State church, they would receive the death sentence.

It was during A.D. 456. Cyrilla, bishop of Carthage, was also the spiritual leader of thousands of Christians. But, like many other Christian leaders of his time, **he was determined to eliminate all who would not yield their beliefs to those dictated by the State church officials.**

At first, Cyrilla attempted to win them over by flattery and the offer of rewards. But their refusal was firm. **"We acknowledge but one Lord and one faith—that given in the Bible.** You may therefore do whatever you please with our bodies, for it is better that we suffer a few temporary pains than to die in hell."

Angered and humiliated that they would place the Bible above his own authority, Cyrilla arranged for the civil authorities to have them thrown into a dungeon and put in irons. But recognizing their quiet godliness, the keeper of the prison permitted their friends to visit them and bring them food.

Upon learning of this, Cyrilla and the government leaders backing him became so angry that they ordered the seven men to be put on board an old vessel which was then towed out of the harbor of Carthage and set on fire. The seven men that died that day were Rusticus, Liberatus, Severus, Rogatus,

Servs, Boniface, and Septimus.

We have journeyed back into history 1,500 years—and we have found “Christians” killing Christians. Such murderous terrorism existed for centuries. But already part of the mystery is being solved. **The problem begins when, by government legislation or decree, the creed of one of the churches is made the official State religion.** Then persecution of the other Christians soon follows.

Yet what is it that starts a church organization down the path toward official government sponsorship? We are going to discover that it was apostasy in the church that led to it.

When the last page in the Bible was written, an amazing story began. It is a story of faithfulness amid apostasy and persecution. **While many of God’s people stood true to Bible principles, there were others who lived like the world and soon were hardly distinguishable from the other worldlings.** But persecution by the non-Christian world kept many close to Christ and to what He had taught them in Scripture.

But apostasy entered the church. **Pagan ideas and teachings were rapidly coming into the church. By A.D. 250, worldliness was sweeping into the early church in an ever-increasing flood. Here are some of the apostate errors that were introduced.**

Because the pagan priests cut **a circular bald spot on their heads in honor of the solar disk (the sun god)**, Christian leaders in Alexandria, Egypt, and at Rome soon copied this hair style, called the *tonsure* (Leviticus 21:5; Deuteronomy 14:1). Cer-

tain monastic orders still use it today.

Ascetics, monastic hermits, and rosary beads came from India. Persia, through Mithraism, gave **the burning of candles** to the Christians. (The light in the candle was considered to be a small “sun.”)

The worship of the “Queen of Heaven, Mother of God” came directly into the Christian church from the “Mother and Child cult” in Egypt—which was the worship of *Isis* and *Horus*. Along with it came into the Christian church much of the Egyptian liturgy (the pattern of worship service). *Isis* was the Egyptian Queen of Heaven. She had an infant son called, *Horus*. Statues of *Isis* holding the baby, *Horus*, were set up and worshiped.

Here is a description of how the Egyptians worshiped Isis and Horus. This Egyptian church liturgy is the ancestor of the worship service of one of the oldest and largest churches of Christendom today.

“The daily ritual of *Isis*, which seems to have been as regular and complicated as that of the Catholic Church, produced an immense effect on the Roman mind. Every day there were two solemn offices, at which **white-robed, tonsured priests, with acolytes and assistants** of every degree, officiated. The morning litany and sacrifice was an impressive service. The crowd of worshipers thronged the space before the chapel at the early dawn. The priest, ascending by a hidden stairs, drew apart the veil of the sanctuary and **offered the holy image to their adoration**. He then made the round of altars, **reciting the litany [mystic words in an unknown tongue]**, and sprinkling the holy water from the secret spring.”—*Samuel Dill, Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius, 577-578 (2 Timothy 2:15-16; Exodus 20:3-5).*

Although **the date of Christ's birth is not known**, Scripture study indicates that it occurred in the early fall of the year, while shepherds and sheep were still out in the fields. **But back in those early centuries, December 25 was a great pagan festival to the yearly rebirth of Mithra, the sun god.** Following the winter solstice, on December 21, the sun was, by the 25th, already beginning to rise higher in the sky. So the sun worshipers celebrated that date as the yearly rebirth of the sun god. This festival had continued for centuries among the Mithrites; but, within two hundred years after the Bible was completed, it had been adopted by the more worldly Christian churches in Alexandria and Rome as the day on which they celebrated the birth of Christ.

Here is the way Epiphany and Christmas began, according to Williston Walker, a leading church historian of our time:

“About the same time, **in the early fourth century, there developed, in [Christian churches in] the West, a distinctive nativity festival on December 25.** The date was partly determined by the idea that the birth of the world occurred on the vernal equinox of the sun (March 25) and correspondingly its new birth in the Saviour would be nine months later, December 25. But, perhaps even more, the date was influenced by the fact that **December 25 was a great pagan festival, that of Sol Invictus** [“the unconquerable sun god”], which celebrated the victory of light over darkness and the lengthening of the sun's rays at the winter solstice. The assimilation [transformation] of Christ into the sun god, as Sun of Righteousness, was widespread in the fourth century and furthered by Constantine's legislation on Sunday, which is not unrelated to the fact that the sun

god was the titular divinity of his family.”—*Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church*, 54, cf. 155.

Epiphany later became the day which was celebrated when the Magi first learned about the birth of Christ. But, back in the beginning, it was but another sun-worship day. On the same page as the above quotation, Walker also explains how the other part of the Christmas celebration began.”

“The gift giving we associate with Christmas has its origin partly in the similar custom at the Roman Saturnalia (December 17-24) and partly in observances which were associated with the feast of St. Nicholas of Myra (the prototype of Santa Claus) on December 6.”—*Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church*, 155.

Then there was that greatest festival of all, the heathen spring fertility rites in the Roman Empire—called **“Easter,” in honor of the goddess Ishtar**. She was the moon goddess and her husband, *Mithra*, was the sun god. Thought to be the date on which *Mithra* had been resurrected from the dead, it became a special day of licentiousness throughout the empire. Emperor Claudius made it an official holiday during his reign. So Easter celebration began when Christians started keeping a pagan holiday sacred to a licentious pagan goddess (“Easter,” in Acts 12:4, is a mistranslation; the original Greek is “*Pascha*”: “Passover”).

“*Attis [Mithra]* awoke from his sleep of death, and the joy created by his resurrection burst out in wild merrymaking, wanton masquerades, and luxurious banquets.”—*Franz Cumont, Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism*, 56-57.

Gradually, the Christian church identified with

this pagan festival of the resurrection of spring, by keeping it in honor of the resurrection of Christ. But Christ was actually resurrected at the time of the Biblical Passover, not at the heathen Easter, which varied from it by several weeks.

Thinking that the adoption of pagan customs would “help convert the world,” Anticetus, the bishop of Rome, decreed that a Sunday festival be held yearly by Christians at the time of the Ishtar fertility rites. But, of course, the more the church drew closer to pagan ways and ideas, the more worldly it became.

Another non-Biblical carryover from paganism was the use of so-called **holy water for baptism**. But the inconvenience of obeying this teaching of Christ eventually degenerated into **sprinkling**, which is the placing of a few drops of water on the forehead. About the year A.D. 300, **prayers for the dead** began. Soon this heathen custom was being practiced while **kneeling before images and wax candles**.

Another pagan custom—one that was to become extremely influential in the church—was **the worship of the Virgin**.

“From ancient Babylon came the cult of the Virgin Mother goddess, who was worshiped as the highest of gods.”—*S.H. Langdon, Semitic Mythology*.

With the passing years, more and more inventions of paganism were gradually brought into the church.

“The belief in miracle-working objects, talismans, amulets, and formulas was dear to . . . Christianity, and they were received from pagan antiquity . . . The **vestments** of the clergy and the **papal title of Pontifex Maxi-**

mus were legacies from pagan Romanism. The church found that the rural converts still revered certain springs, wells, trees, and stones; she thought it wiser to bless these to Christian use than to break too sharply with the customs of sentiment . . . **Pagan festivals**, dear to the people, reappeared as Christian feasts, and pagan rites were transformed into Christian liturgy . . . The **Christian calendar of saints** replaced the Roman *fasti*; ancient divinities, dear to the people, were allowed to revive under the names of 'Christian saints' . . . gradually the tenderest features of Astarte, Cybele, Artemis, Diana, and Isis were gathered together in the worship of Mary."—*Will Durant, The Age of Faith, 745-746.*

Laing mentions several other corruptions by which the Mother goddess had been worshiped by heathens—and then adopted into the Christian church by worldly leaders—and continued down even to our own day: votive offerings; **elevation of sacred objects** [lifting of the host]; **priestly bells; decking of images with beautiful clothing, jewelry, and crowns; processions**; festivals; prayers for the dead; holy water; and **the worship of relics and statues** of saints (see *Gordon J. Laing, Survivals of Roman Religion, 92-95, 123-131, 238-241*).

Cardinal Newman, a well-known Catholic writer of the mid-nineteenth century, listed many examples of things of "pagan origin" which the papacy brought into Christianity from the heathen.

"The use of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints and ornamented on occasions with branches of trees; **incense**, lamps, and candles; holy water; asylums [**hermitages, monasteries, and convents**]; [**pagan**] **holydays**; processions; sacerdotal vestments; the tonsure; the **ring in marriage; turning to the East** [toward the sun]; images . . . and the *Kyrie Eleison*."—*John*

H. Newman, An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, 73 [Roman Catholic].

Summarizing the massive apostasy that was gradually enveloping much of the church, Alexander Flick, a church historian said:

“The mighty Catholic Church was little more than the Roman Empire baptized.”—A.C. Flick, *The Rise of the Medieval Church, 148.*

The crucial fact here is that, **all through those early centuries, in spite of the mounting apostasy—it was only the heathen who were persecuting the Christians!** The growing worldliness and apostasy in the church was similar to what we are experiencing today. ***But there was another step to be taken that would bring in the deadly persecuting power of a State church upon the early Christians in every part of the land.***

What we want to know now is *what was that first step* in starting a government-sponsored church.

Chapter Seventeen

Why Was Sunday SELECTED?

There was a special reason

It was by requiring all the other churches to adopt the pagan sun-worship day that the local Christian church in the city of Rome gained control over the other churches.

But why was Sunday selected, instead of some other day in the week?

First, the Roman Church adopted a variety of heathen customs from various pagan sources. Historians explain how that happened.

“The [Catholic] Church took the pagan buckler of faith against the heathen. She took the pagan Roman *Pantheon*, [the Roman] temple to all the gods, and made it sacred to all the martyrs; so it stands to this day. **She took the pagan Sunday and made it the Christian Sunday . . . The Sun was a foremost god with heathendom.** *Balder* the beautiful: the White God, the old Scandinavians called him. The sun has worshipers at this very hour in Persia and other lands . . . Hence the Church would seem to have said, **‘Keep that old pagan name. It shall remain consecrated, sanctified.’ And thus the pagan Sunday, dedicated to Balder, became the Christian Sunday,** sacred to Jesus. The sun is a fitting emblem of Jesus. The Fathers often compared Jesus to the sun; as they compared Mary to the moon.”—*William L. Gildea, “Paschale Gaudium,” in The Catholic World, p. 58, March 1894.*

“When Christianity conquered Rome, the ecclesiastical structure of the pagan church, the title and the vestments of the *Pontifex Maximus*,’ the worship to the ‘Great Mother’ goddess and a multitude of comforting divinities . . . the joy or solemnity of old festivals, and **the pageantry of immemorial ceremony, passed like material blood into the new religion,—and captive Rome conquered her conqueror.** The reins and skills of government were handed down by a dying empire to a virile papacy.”—*Will Durant,*

Caesar and Christ, p. 672.

In very ancient times, the Sun day was dedicated to the sun god.

“Sun worship was the earliest idolatry.”—*Fausset Bible Dictionary, p. 666.*

“The Church made a sacred day of Sunday . . . largely because it was the weekly festival of the sun;—for it was a definite Christian policy to take over the pagan festivals endeared to the people by tradition, and give them a Christian significance.”—*Authur Weigall, The Paganism in Our Christianity, 1928, p. 145.*

Back then, Sunday was the sacred day of Mithra, the sun god, also called Sol Invictus: the invincible sun god.

“Sun worship was one of the oldest components of the Roman religion.”—*Gaston H. Halsberge, The Cult of Sol Invictus, 1972, p. 26.*

“ ‘Babylon, the mother of harlots,’ derived much of her teaching from pagan Rome and thence from Babylon. **Sun worship—that led her to Sundaykeeping,—was one of those choice bits of paganism that sprang originally from the heathen lore of ancient Babylon:** The solar theology of the ‘Chaldeans’ had a decisive effect upon the final development of Semitic paganism . . . [It led to their] seeing the sun the directing power of the cosmic system. All the Baals were thence forward turned into suns; **the sun itself being the mover of the other stars**—like it eternal and ‘unconquerable’ . . . Such was the final form reached by the religion of the pagan

Semites, and following them, by that of the Romans . . . when **they raised ‘Sol Invictus’ [the Invincible Sun] to the rank of supreme divinity in the empire.**—*Franz F.V.M. Cummont, Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans, p. 55.*

Prior to the time of Christ, **the days of the week had been dedicated to pagan planetary gods. The first day was the high day for heathen worship: It was “dies Solis”—the day of the Sun.** All the other days were subservient to it (“*dies Lunae,*” the day of the moon, etc.).

All this was in decided contrast with the religion of the Bible—in which God’s people worship the Creator of the Universe. And His worship day is the seventh day of the week, as is commanded in the Ten Commandments.

Sunday worship is never found in the Old or New Testament, nor is it commanded there.

Here is more information about Mithra:

Mithra (also called *Mithras*) was originally an ancient god of Persia (where Iran is now located). **He had been worshiped as a god of strength and war** for centuries. Roman soldiers, sent to far places to command the peace, brought Mithra worship back to Rome; and through the soldiers it spread throughout the empire. **Mithra became the leading sun god of the Roman Empire. The Romans gave him a new name: “Sol Invictus”** (“the Invincible Sun”). **And they called his holy day “the venerable [sacred] day of the Sun.”**

Emperor Aurelian (A.D. 270-275), whose mother

was a priestess of the Sun, made this solar cult the official religion of Rome during his lifetime. His biographer, Flavius Vopiscus, wrote that **the priests of the Temple of the Sun at Rome were called “pontiffs.” They were priests of their dying-rising saviour god, Mithra, and “vicegerants” (second in command to their god, Mithra).**

It is an interesting fact that **it was the Mithrites, not the Christians, who first called their Sun day “the Lord’s day.”** Mithra was their Lord and they wanted to honor his holy day.

“The first day of each week, Sunday, was consecrated to Mithra since times remote, as several authors affirm. Because the Sun was god, the Lord *par excellence*, **Sunday came to be called the ‘Lord’s day,’ as later was done by Christianity.**”—*Agostinho de Almeida Paiva, O Mitraíomo, p. 3.*

The Christian churches at Alexandria, Egypt (which had a worldly Christian seminary), and at Rome were the most paganizing in the Empire and the first to adopt Sunday as the sacred day of Christians.

During those centuries, most of the heathen customs entered the church through Alexandria and Rome. From as early as Pope Victor in A.D. 195, the Roman Bishops tried to force the other Christian churches scattered throughout the Empire to adopt these practices, but their demands were ignored.

It was not until Constantine became emperor, in the early fourth century, that the local church in the city of Rome began to successfully dictate what all the other Christian churches must be-

lieve and practice. It was by the act of transferring sacredness from the seventh to the first day that the Roman church was able to do this.

By the time of Constantine, the old government-sponsored emperor worship had declined, and two religions contended for first place: Mithraism and Christianity.

After conferring with the bishop of Rome (the pope), **Constantine decided that the only way he could strengthen the empire was to unite the two strongest religions into one.** He publicly announced that he had become a Christian and ordered everyone to keep Sunday holy. At about this time, the titles, “*pontiff*” and “*vicegerant*,” were transferred from the high priest of Mithra to the bishop of Rome.

Here is the story of how it happened:

Chapter Eighteen

COMMANDING Sunday

The man behind the first Sunday Law

One historian summarizes how the first Sunday Law occurred:

“Modern Christians who talk of keeping Sunday as a ‘holy’ day, as in the still extant ‘Blue Laws,’ of colonial America, should know that as a ‘holy’ day of rest and cessation from labor and amusements Sunday was unknown to Jesus . . . It formed no tenet [teaching] of the primitive church and became ‘sacred’ only in the course of time. Outside the church its obser-

vance was legalized for the Roman Empire through a series of decrees starting with the famous one of Constantine in 321, an edict due to his political and social ideas.”—*W.W. Hyde, Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire, 1946, p. 257.*

And now, here is how it happened:

Rome was rapidly reaching its climax. **The year was A.D. 312. Four emperors ruled in various parts of the Roman Empire**, each bent on ultimately destroying the others. **Taking the initiative, one of the four, Constantine, made a sudden march from Gaul, France, across the Alps and into northern Italy.** Surprising an army at Turin, he defeated it—and then moved rapidly southward toward the city of Rome.

On October 27, 312, he met the forces of Maxentius at Saxa Rubra (Red Rocks), near a sleepy town just nine miles north of Rome. By superior military strategy, he compelled Maxentius to fight with his back to the River Tiber, with no retreat possible except over the Mulvian Bridge. **On the afternoon before the battle, he decided to place an “X” on the shields of his men, which some think was symbolic of “Christ”—but which was also a symbol of Mithra. He had already given his soldiers sun symbols of Mithra, the sun god, to carry before them.**

“To the worshiper of Mithras [Mithra] in Constantine’s forces, the cross could give no offense, for they had long fought under a standard bearing a Mithraic cross of light.”—*Will Durant, Caesar and Christ, 54.*

The Battle of Mulvian Bridge was one of the

crucial battles of Western history, and it was won by Constantine. Maxentius perished in the Tiber along with thousands of his troops. **Constantine entered the gates of Rome as the undisputed master of the western half of the Roman Empire.**

The next year, he conquered the emperor of the eastern half of the empire, Licinius, and took from him all his territory except Thrace. For practical purposes, Constantine already had the Roman Empire in his hands; although nine years later, in 323, he again met Licinius in battle—and wiped out his forces.

By the time Constantine ascended the throne, the Roman Empire was seriously decaying. Politically, financially, morally—there was deep trouble ahead. Overextension of credit, abortion, loose morals, riots—it all sounds like something from our own time. And the parallels are striking. Our nation today is decaying just as ancient Rome did.

But the new emperor recognized something that the other politicians of his day had not yet grasped. **It was clear to Constantine that the only hope of the empire, in resisting its enemies from within and the Gothic hordes from without, was to unite the empire into a single religion.**

At first, he tried an edict of toleration—which stopped all persecution of Christians. **When issued in 312, this *Edict of Milan* helped bring more peace into the nation.** But it was not the solution needed in such a time of national crisis.

What was needed was a way to unify—combine—the religious worship patterns of the empire. Once that was achieved, a uniting of the

churches into a single monolithic State church could be achieved. And it worked exactly as Constantine planned.

Fully 300 years after the time of Christ, the great majority of Christians still worshiped God on the seventh day, the Bible Sabbath. But the Mithrites worshiped their sun god on the first day of the week, which they called the “*venerable day of the sun god.*”

Counseling with Sylvester I, the bishop of the Christian church at Rome from 314-335, Constantine, decided that issuing an edict making the Sun day the national day of rest would have the effect of bringing the Mithrites into the Christian church.

Constantine the Great (272-337) was one of the most influential of the Roman emperors. Indeed, he was one of the most influential men of the first thousand years after Christ. **But it was what he did to Christianity that made Constantine so influential.** For the effects of his actions reach down to our own time.

Yet historians are generally agreed that he was a politician rather than a Christian. His goal was not so much helping Christianity but salvaging the Roman Empire.

After enacting his Sunday Law of A.D. 321, in addition to consulting with Sylvester, Constantine regularly obtained advice from pagan philosophers and soothsayers. He continued to worship *Sol Invictus*—“the invincible Sun god.” In later years, Constantine had his favorite son, Crispus, put to death. After that, his second wife, Fausta, was slain

at his command. To make sure he got to heaven, he postponed baptism into the Christian church until a few days before his death in May A.D. 336.

Sun worship was one of the most ancient of religions. Fausset tells us that “Sun worship was the earliest idolatry” (*Fausset Bible Dictionary*, p. 666). The Arabians appear to have worshiped it directly without the aid of statues (Job 31:26-27). Abraham was called out of all this when he went to the promised land. *Ra* was the sun god in Egypt, and On (Heliopolis, the City of the Sun) was the center of sun worship there (see the Hebrew of Jeremiah 43:13). Entering Canaan under Joshua, the Hebrews again encountered sun worship: *Baal*, of the Phoenicians; *Molech* or *Milcom*, of the Ammonites; *Shemesh*, in the Middle East; and *Aton*, the Egyptian god of the sun disc. The temple at Baalbek, in Syria, was dedicated to sun worship. You can find sun worship symbols in the worship monuments and relics of ancient England, Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.

But, by a few centuries before the time of Christ, all Eastern and Roman sun worship centered in the worship of the Persian sun god, *Mithra*.

Mithraism was an astonishing counterfeit of Christianity. It provided a highly personalized worship and included baptism (in bull’s blood), a special weekly holy day of worship, and a saviour god who, each year, died and rose from the dead. It also had a mass in which the worshipers would partake of their god in a sacred meal.

What Constantine attempted to do was to unite

the two most powerful religions of the Roman Empire into one! He sought to do this by combining the worship of Christ on the sacred worship day of Mithra. Constantine, working closely with Sylvester, the Christian bishop at Rome, succeeded remarkably well. **The results were disastrous for faithful Christians all over the East and in Europe. We are, today, laying the groundwork for a repeat performance.**

Chapter Nineteen

THE FIRST Sunday Law in History

And the persecution it produced

It happened on March 7, A.D. 321, when Emperor Constantine issued the first National Sunday Law in history. This was the first so-called “blue law” to be issued by a federal government. *Here is the text of Constantine’s Sunday law decree:*

“Let all judges and townspeople and occupations of all trades rest on the venerable of the sun [Sunday]; nevertheless, let those who are situated in the rural districts freely and with full liberty attend to the cultivation of the fields because it frequently happens that no other day may be so fitting for plowing grains or trenching vineyards, lest at the time the advantage of the moment granted by the provision of heaven be lost. Given on the Nones (seventh) of March, Crispus and Constantine, being counsuls each of them, for the second time.”—*The Code of Justinian, Book III, title 12, law 3.*

Five additional Sunday laws were to be issued, within a very few years, to buttress this, his basic

one. One made farmers rest on Sunday also.

It is of interest that, **at the very time that Constantine was issuing these Sunday laws, he was embellishing the Temple of the Sun in Rome;** and, in the same year that he proclaimed his first Sunday law, he made several decrees maintaining pagan practices. Pagan priests decided the most superstitious practices. The day after enacting his first Sunday law, quoted above, Constantine decreed that priestly examination of the entrails of freshly killed chickens should help determine government decisions.

It is also significant that a close examination of **this first Sunday law of Constantine does not mention Christianity—but does use the Mithraic expression, “venerable day of the sun” (*venerabili die solis*), which was one of the hallowed Mithraic titles for their sacred day,** Sunday, the first day of the week. It was one of the mystical names for the day of the sun god. Both the heathen and the Christians were well-aware of this.

Constantine was a compromiser, determined to bring the religions together while, at the same time, maintaining close ties with all of them. **The objective was *ecumenism*—unite the various religious beliefs in the most acceptable way.** And, in Sundaykeeping, he hoped to unite the nation in an enduring religious unity.

The first step was to require—by a national decree—one day in the week when all the religions would attend church for worship. Although this first Sunday law spoke of a weekly rest day from employment and did not mention religion or wor-

ship, yet the purpose to unite the churches was clearly there and the objective was fully met.

“Constantine labored at this time untiringly to unite the worshipers of the old and the new into one religion. All his laws and contrivances are aimed at promoting this amalgamation, and melting together a purified heathenism and a moderated Christianity . . . **Of all his blending and melting together of Christianity and heathenism, none is more easy to see through than this making of his Sunday law:** The Christians worshiped their Christ, the heathen their sun-god [so they should now be combined].”—*H.G. Heggtveit, Illustreret Kirkehistorie [Illustrated Church History], 1895, p. 202. [Heggtveit (1850-1924) was a Norwegian church historian and teacher.]*

In another of his six Sunday laws, Constantine commanded that all the troops be marched out each Sunday morning for a sunrise service. As the sun was coming up in the east, they were to face it and recite a prayer of worship composed by the emperor. This government prayer was worded in such a way that it could be addressed to any god. Stricter requirements for weekly worship services on Sunday were to follow.

Although Sunday morning sunrise services are still held in our own day, the practice is not Biblical but another gift from Mithraic worship. Carefully read Ezekiel 8:5:6, 14-18 if you would know what Heaven thinks of this custom of worshipping while facing the sun. We mentioned earlier that sun worship was the earliest idolatry. It was also one of the most widespread religions of heathenism.

“He [Constantine] sent to the legions, to be recited upon that day [Sunday], a form of prayer which could

have been employed by a worshiper of Mithra, of Serapis, or Apollo, quite as well as by a Christian believer. **This was the official sanction of the old custom of addressing a prayer to the rising sun.**—Victor Duruy, *History of Rome*, Vol. 7, 489.

Constantine's Sunday law decree was seen as a great victory by the leaders of the Christian church in the large cities of the Western empire. And so it proved to be.

“Remains of the struggle [between the religion of Christianity and the religion of Mithraism] are found in **two institutions adopted from its rival by Christianity in the fourth century, the two Mithraic sacred days: December 25, 'dies natalis solis'** [birthday of the sun], as the birthday of Jesus,—**and Sunday, 'the venerable day of the Sun,'** as Constantine called it in his edict of 321.”—Walter Woodburn Hyde, *Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire*, p. 60.

“**Unquestionably the first law**, either ecclesiastical or civil, by which the sabbatical observance of that day is known to have been ordained, is the edict of Constantine, A.D. 321.”—*Chamber's Encyclopedia*, article, “Sabbath.”

The world flocked into the church. **The way to the top—politically, socially, and otherwise—was now through the church. Hundreds and thousands quickly joined the church.** Although beliefs and standards decayed rapidly, **Christian church leaders were pleased with the apparent increase in prestige and power that they now enjoyed as a result of the Sunday legislation. They now had power to influence those making the laws of the land.**

Terrible persecution would be the result.

It was several decades before the faithful believers fully realized what had taken place. But, by then, it was too late. Constantine had won, the faithful had lost, and the church was taken over by the world.

“The retention [today] of the old pagan name, ‘Dies Solis’ [Day of the Sun] or ‘Sunday’ for the weekly Christian festival, is in great measure owing to the union of pagan and Christian sentiment, with which the first day of the week was recommended by Constantine to his subjects, pagan and Christian alike, as the ‘venerable day of the sun’ . . . **It was his mode of harmonizing the discordant religions of the empire under one common institution.**”—*Dean Stanley, Lectures on the Eastern Church, Lecture 6, p. 184.* [Stanley was an Episcopalian historian and church leader.]

“This [Constantine’s Sunday decree of March 321] is the ‘parent’ Sunday law making it a day of rest and release from labor. **For from that time to the present there have been decrees about the observance of Sunday which have profoundly influenced European and American society.**

“When the Church became a part of the State under the Christian emperors, Sunday observance was enforced by civil statutes. And later when the Empire was past, the Church in the hands of the papacy enforced it by ecclesiastical and also by civil enactments.”—*Walter W. Hyde, Paganism to Christianity in the Roman Empire, 1946, p. 261.*

The Christian church at Rome was deeply involved in making this Sunday law. Historians now know that **Sylvester I**, bishop (pope) of Rome (314-335), and **Eusebius**, bishop of Caesarea (260-340), were two of the principle church leaders who worked closely with Constantine and influenced him to en-

act Sunday laws “in order to save the nation.” **Later, in one of his writings, Eusebius mentioned, with pride, the change in Bible teaching that he and the church at Rome had a part in causing Constantine’s Sunday law to be decreed:**

“All things whatsoever that were prescribed for the [Bible] Sabbath, we have transferred them to the Lord’s day, as being more authoritative and more highly regarded and first in rank, and more honorable than the Jewish Sabbath.”—Bishop Eusebius, quoted in J.P. Migne, “Patrologie,” p. 23, 1169-1172 [Eusebius of Caesarea was a high-ranking Catholic leader during Constantine’s lifetime.]

Sylvester I, bishop of Rome (later called “pope”) said the objective of the Sunday Law was to destroy the keeping of the Bible Sabbath!

“If every Sunday is to be observed by Christians on account of the resurrection, then every Sabbath on account of the burial is to be regarded in execration [cursing] of the Jews.”—Pope Sylvester, quoted by S.R.E. Humbert, “Adversus Graecorum Calumnias,” in J.P. Migne, *Patrologie*, p. 143.

After working closely with Constantine on six National Sunday Laws, the official church edict on the subject was then issued at the Council of Laodicea in A.D. 336. **This first Christian council that decreed all Christians must keep Sunday, instead of the Bible Sabbath, was held only 16 years after Constantine’s first Sunday law. It declared that those who kept the Bible Sabbath holy were evil people.**

“Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday [in the original: ‘sabbato’—‘shall not be idle on the Sabbath’], but shall work on that day; but the

Lord's day they shall especially honour, and as being Christians, shall, if possible, do no work on that day. If, however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out [*anathema*, 'excommunicated] from Christ."—*Council of Laodicea, c.A.D. 337, Canon 29, quoted in C.J. Hefele, A History of the Councils of the Church, Vol. 2, p. 316.*

A Roman Catholic historian summarized the three "firsts" in regard to Sundaykeeping:

"Tertullian was probably the first to mention a cessation of affairs on the sun day; the Council of Laodicea issued the first conciliar legislation for that day; Constantine I issued the first civil legislation."—*Priest Vincent J. Kelly, Forbidden Sunday and Feast Day Occupations, 203 [Roman Catholic].*

Who was this Tertullian? He was one of the few Christians, before A.D. 300, who advocated Sunday-keeping. Living near Carthage, he wrote extensively about his extremely speculative, religious theories between 196-220. **He invented a number of errors, which were later eagerly adopted by the Roman Church.** One of his innovations was this: making the sign of the cross with one's hand. Many other strange errors originated with him.

After carefully studying the sun god worship services of Mitharism, Tertullian was the first to decide that Sunday sacredness should be copied from them and brought into the Christian church. According to his dreamy ideas, here is the proper way to keep Sunday and every other day:

"At every forward step and movement, at every going in and out, when we put on our clothes and shoes, when we bathe, when we sit at the table, when we light the lamps, on couch, on seat, in all the ordinary actions of

daily life—we trace upon the forehead the sign of the cross.”—*Collected Writings of Tertullian*.

—**It is from the vagaries of Tertullian’s imagination that we got Christian Sunday sacredness!**

Yet, in spite of the Sunday Law edicts of Constantine and the Council of Laodicea, outside of Rome and Alexandria (where the most liberal Christians were congregated), the great majority of Christians *remained faithful to the plain words of Scripture and continued to keep the Bible Sabbath holy until well into the following century*—a hundred years after Constantine’s first Sunday Law! —That was 400 years after the time of Christ! Oh, that Christians would be as faithful today.

“As we have already noted, **excepting for the Roman and Alexandrian Christians, the majority of Christians were observing the seventh-day Sabbath at least as late as the middle of the fifth century [A.D. 450]. The Roman and Alexandrian Christians were among those converted from heathenism.** They began observing Sunday as a merry religious festival in honor of the Lord’s resurrection, about the latter half of the second century A.D. However, **they did not try to teach that the Lord or His apostles commanded it [the keeping of Sunday holy].** In fact, no ecclesiastical writer before Eusebius of Caesarea in the fourth century even suggested that either Christ or His apostles instituted the observance of the first day of the week.

“**These Gentile Christians of Rome and Alexandria began calling the first day of the week ‘the Lord’s day.’** This was not difficult for the pagans of the Roman Empire who were steeped in sun worship to accept, because **they [the pagans] referred to their sun-god as their Lord.**”—*E.M. Chalmers, How Sunday Came*

into the Christian Church, p. 3.

The following two statements were written 100 years after Constantine's Sunday Law was passed:

"Although almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the Sabbath every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this."—*Socrates Scholasticus, quoted in Ecclesiastical History, Book 5, chap. 22 [written shortly after A.D. 439].*

"The people of Constantinople, and almost everywhere, assemble together on the Sabbath, as well as on the first day of the week, which custom [of keeping the Sabbath] is never observed at Rome or at Alexandria."—*Hermias Sozomen, quoted in Ecclesiastical History, vii, 19, in A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 2nd Series, Vol. 2, p. 390 [written soon after A.D. 415].*

"Down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church, but with a rigor and solemnity gradually diminishing until it was wholly discontinued."—*Lyman Coleman, Ancient Christianity Exemplified, chap. 26, sec. 2, p. 527.*

Do not let anyone tell you that Christians were keeping Sunday in the time of Christ or soon after His death. Nearly all Christians were still keeping the Bible Sabbath 300 years after Calvary!

And what was the inevitable consequence of Sunday Laws? Persecution of believers on a scale never before imagined possible. Beginning slowly at first, it gradually swelled with the passing years and continued for centuries. In fact, by the time of

Martin Luther, nearly everyone in Europe was Catholic. For more than a thousand years, the leaders of the established church had worked intently to crush anyone who had differing views. And they very nearly succeeded.

In the centuries which followed, ever-stricter regulations were enacted and enforced, especially as the papacy gained full political control of Rome.

“What began, however, as a pagan ordinance, ended as a Christian regulation; and a long series of imperial decrees, during the fourth, fifth, and sixth, centuries, **enjoined [decreed] with increasing stringency** abstinence from labor on Sunday.”—*Hutton Webster, Rest Days, pp. 122-123, 270.*

“About 590, Pope Gregory, in a letter to the Roman people, denounced as the prophets of Antichrist those who maintained that work ought not to be done on the seventh day.”—*James T. Ringgold, The Law of Sunday, p. 267.*

“The Jew, the Samaritan, even the Christian, were to be fused and recast into **one great system**, of which the sun was to be the central object of adoration.”—*Henry Hart Milman, The History of Christianity, Book 2, chap. 8, Vol. 22, p. 175. [Dr. Milman, 1791-1868, was an important historian of England and dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral in London.]*

“Concerning the power of the Mithras cult [on Christianity throughout later centuries], we still have evidence in the fact that it is not the Jewish Sabbath that is the sacred weekday, but Sunday, dedicated to the Sun-god, Mithra.”—*H. Lamer, “Mithras,” Wurterbuch der Antike, 2nd ed., 1933. [Hans Lamer (1873-?) was an archaeological writer and a student of ancient religions and civilizations.]*

Ironically, Mithra passed away within fifty years after the time of Constantine, for he was no longer needed. **The same happened to the worship of Isis and Horus—the Egyptian Queen of Heaven and her infant son.** Both had been worshiped widely throughout the Roman Empire, but both disappeared within half a century after the worship of Mary was required by the Papacy. Its pagan devotees had switched over to Christianity and the worship of statues of Mary of the sacred heart, holding an infant Son.

More than fifteen additional Sunday laws were enacted and enforced by the Catholic Church, or by secular governments by demand of the Papacy, over the next several centuries. These laws restricted what could be done on Sunday and forbade Sabbathkeeping. Each law was more strict, each penalty more severe. **Humble Christians who refused to yield were slain. Others fled to desolate areas** where they could worship God in peace.

Revelation 12 vividly predicted what happened. God's people had to flee into the most desolate and solitary places, to escape from their persecutors:

“And they overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

“And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

“And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”—*Revelation 12:11-17.*

As the above passage reveals, for over a thousand years, the faithful ones were identified as those who, by faith in Christ, obeyed God’s commandments. So it will be at the end of time.

Here are two other statements by Catholic leaders during the Dark Ages:

“They do not hear the masses of Christians [Catholics] . . . they flee the image of the Crucifix as the devil, they do not celebrate the feasts [Catholic holy days] of the divine Virgin and of the apostles . . . Some indeed celebrate [keep] the Sabbath that the Jews observe!”—*Translated by J.J. von Doellinger, Beitrage zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters, Vol. 2, No. 61, p. 662.*

“Convicted heretics should be put to death just as surely as other criminals.”—*Thomas Aquinas [Aquinas (1225-1275) was an extremely influential Roman Catholic theologian. Made a saint in 1323; in 1889, Pope Leo XIII decreed that every Catholic must obey and practice Aquinas’ writings.]*

But we are still looking for the key to the

puzzle. How could a “National Sunday Law” have such an effect on an entire nation? ***Here is the answer:***

What Constantine and the church leaders at Rome had actually done was to unite church and state. In the act of getting the federal government to require Sunday worship, the church and the state had united! It is as simple as that.

But notice how easily it all began, almost casually. A single national law required a weekly day of rest from employment. Legislators talked about “the health of the people” and “the need for fewer working hours” per week. **No mention was made, at first, of required worship on that day.** But soon afterward, additional laws were passed requiring such worship.

What that first National Sunday Law led to was a single unified church system—and to one of the most intense, ongoing persecutions of dissenters in the history of mankind. No one knows how to catch and kill genuine Christians as effectively as apostate Christians. This persecution was to continue over a thousand years.

The Church could now enforce its demands through the State, and the territory controlled by the State was vast. It included a large part of Europe and the East. The church had inherited the empire, and the result was both moral collapse of church leadership and zealous persecution of all who refused to bow to its mandates. **Political power always corrupts church leaders. Always.**

Historians are well-aware of the fact that **there was no real “papacy” until Constantine’s nation-**

wide Sunday law was passed,—for it united church and state. Whenever the Vatican has been able to get a civil government to do its bidding, most terrible persecution of faithful Christians have followed.

“The Church of Rome is one monarchy over all the kingdoms of the earth, and it is among temporal bodies as the mind or soul of the body of men or as God in the world. **Therefore, the Church of Rome must not only have spiritual power but also the supreme temporal power.**”—*Encyclical of Pope Leo XXIII, 1879.*

The uniting of church and state gave the church the power to enforce its dogmas. But, as we see from the above *ex cathedra* (and therefore, “infallible”) quotation by a pope of Rome, **it also gave it the idea that it had the obligation to enforce those decrees.**

“That **the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind** will be questioned by no Protestant who has competent knowledge of history . . . It is impossible to form a complete conception of the magnitude of her victims; it is quite certain that **no powers of imagination can adequately realize their sufferings.**”—*W.E.H. Lecky, History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe, Vol. 2, 32. (An excellent, though lengthy, article explaining, in detail, the right of the Roman Catholic Church to persecute heretics will be found in The Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 12, 266.)*

“For professing faith contrary to the teachings of the Church of Rome, **history records the martyrdom of more than one hundred million people.** A million Waldenses and Albigenses [French and Swiss Protestants] perished during a crusade proclaimed by Pope

Innocent III in 1208. Beginning from the establishment of the Jesuits in 1540 to 1580, nine hundred thousand were destroyed. One hundred and fifty thousand perished by the Inquisition in thirty years. Within the space of thirty-eight years, after the Edict of Charles V against the Protestants, fifty thousand persons were hanged, beheaded, or burned alive for heresy. Eighteen thousand perished during the administration of the Duke of Alva in five and a half years.”—*Brief Bible Readings*, 6.

Chapter Twenty

The MARK of Authority

Recognizing the source of its power

It was on January 18, 1562, that the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church fully recognized the secret of their power, which they had maintained over people and nations for centuries.

Here is the story of how it took place:

When the sixteenth-century Reformation began, the true Sabbath was almost unknown. Even Luther and Calvin knew little about it.

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed a sheet of paper containing 95 protests to the door of the University Church in Wittenberg, Germany. That day marks the beginning of the Great Reformation.

The Council of Trent crystallized Vatican teachings and founded the authority of the church on its earlier change of the Sabbath.

Oddly enough, although the Vatican had a hodge-podge of teachings, collected from here and there over the centuries, the beliefs had never been fully organized. **As part of its plan to counteract the Reformation, the Council of Trent was convened** and continued off and on from December 13, 1545, through December 4, 1563. The goal assigned it by the pope (Paul III, 1534-1549) was to clarify Catholic doctrine. **Every basic modern doctrine of Catholicism finds its conciliar basis in the decisions affirmed at this single council.**

“From a doctrinal and disciplinary point of view, **it was the most important council in the history of the Roman Church, fixing her distinctive faith and practise** in relation to the Protestant Evangelical churches.”—*Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, article entitled “Council of Trent.”*

A key point to be settled was the basis of Roman Catholic authority. Rome commanded many things which were not in the Bible. **All this vast heap of non-Biblical additions to Catholic doctrine were collectively termed “tradition.”** In contrast, Protestants declared that no one should accept anything not clearly stated in Scripture.

What was the basis of Roman Catholic authority? Was it the Bible or tradition? If tradition, then the Protestants were right. That was unacceptable, yet **what proof did they have that tradition was superior to Scripture?** This produced an enormous controversy at the Council of Trent.

“Tradition” is the sayings of men. It is the decisions of Roman Catholic councils, the decrees of its popes, and the words of its canonized saints,

all the pagan practices which had been adopted over the centuries. Here is a poetic description of the glories of “Tradition”:

“Like two sacred rivers flowing from paradise, the Bible and divine Tradition contain the Word of God, the precious gems of revealed truths.

“Though these two divine streams are in themselves, on account of their divine origin, of equal sacredness, and are both full of revealed truths, still, **of the two, TRADITION is to us more clear and safe.**”—*Joseph F. Di Bruno, Catholic Belief, 1884 ed., p. 45. [Di Bruno was an Italian Catholic priest and writer; full caps are his.]*

According to the above statement, the uninspired ramblings of men and the adopted practices of ancient heathenism are as divinely inspired as the Holy Bible—and more reliable! Another priest lists five of these traditions, which, he says, you will not find in the Bible:

“Some of the truths that have been handed down to us by Tradition, which are not recorded in the Sacred Scriptures, are the following:

“That there are just seven sacraments; that there is a purgatory; that, in the new law [Roman Catholic Canon Law], Sunday should be kept holy instead of the Sabbath; that infants should be baptized, and that there are precisely seventy-two books in the Bible [66 in our Bible that are inspired, plus 6 apocryphal books which contain error].”—*Francis J. Butler, Holy Family Catechism, No. 3, p. 63. [Butler (1859-?) was a Catholic priest of Boston and an author of a series of catechisms.]*

However, when the Council of Trent convened, there was a controversy over this matter. The church leaders wanted to prove tradition supe-

rior to Scripture, but they could not figure out a logical principle for doing so. *By what authority could they make the oddities they had adopted over the centuries from paganism—superior to the Bible?*

Somehow, they had to find an excuse for what they had been doing for centuries. If they repudiated tradition, they would stop being Catholics!

But then came the deciding point—and it came as a surprise. The entire problem was settled in one brief speech.

When Gaspar del Fosso, the Archbishop of Reggio, spoke on January 18, 1562, he provided the Catholic Church with a solid argument which could be used to defend tradition as superior to Scripture! True, it was a man-made argument, and not Scriptural. But then, everything in Roman Catholic tradition is man-made.

Rising to his feet and calling for attention, he began by wholeheartedly praising tradition and making bitter gibes at those who wanted to downgrade its supremacy in the church.

del Fosso reasoned that the Church of Rome was founded on tradition—and both it and their positions would crash if they did not give it supremacy over the Bible.

Then catch this: —**He told them the proof they were waiting for. The evidence that tradition was superior to Scripture—was this:**

It was the fact that, centuries before, the Church of Rome had dared to change one of God's Ten Commandments; it had changed the seventh-day Sabbath to Sunday, the first day

of the week,—and the world, and even the Protestants had accepted it!

There is an interesting logic to this: “Because we did it, and got away with it—as far as men are concerned,—therefore it must be right. **Because we can apparently change the very laws of God Himself, we are superior to those laws. And our words (traditions) are superior to God’s words in the Bible.**”

What can be more important than the Ten Commandments, spoken by the Creator Himself and then written with His own finger on solid rock? Yet, with the utmost recklessness, the Catholic Church had blasphemously dared to change the great Moral Code that God has commanded humans to obey!

A faithful Catholic historian describes the event:

“Finally, at the last opening [session] on the eighteenth of January 1562, their last scruple was set aside; the Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which he openly declared that tradition stood above Scripture. The authority of the church could therefore not be bound to the authority of the Scriptures, **because the church had changed the Sabbath into Sunday, not by the command of Christ but by its own authority.** With this, to be sure, the last illusion was destroyed, and it was declared that tradition does not signify antiquity, but continual inspiration.”—*J.H. Holtzman, Canon and Tradition, p. 263.*

Oddly enough, the Reformers had discovered the truth of the matter thirty years earlier, when they presented the *Augsburg Confession*:

“They [the Catholic bishops] allege the changing of the Sabbath into the Lord’s day, contrary, as it seemeth,

to the Decalogue; and they have no example more in their mouths than the change of the Sabbath. They will needs have the church's power to be very great, because it hath done away with a precept of the Decalogue.

“But of this question ours do thus teach: that the Bishops have no power to ordain anything contrary to the Gospel, as was showed before.”—*From the Augsburg Confession, Quoted in Library of Original Sources, Vol. 5, pp. 173-174.*

Unfortunately, shortly after that confession of faith at Augsburg, Germany in 1530, the Reformers and their followers found themselves deluged in war and bloodshed for years. **Fighting for their faith and their very lives against armies sent against them by Rome, they never later had time to return to the issue of the Bible Sabbath.**

Tragically, later generations of Protestants generally venerated what the Reformers had written, and did not go beyond them even though it was quite obvious in the Bible that Sunday was not the Bible Sabbath.

(By the way, it was not until the seventeenth century that anyone began calling Sunday the “sabbath”! The Puritans in England were the first to begin doing this.)

Ever since the Council of Trent, Catholics have declared that the change of the Sabbath is the basis of their church authority. —See quotations on pp. 55-57 of this book.

What you have been reading here is the story of men and women of earlier centuries who were losing something precious, something they loved. Rather, it was taken from them by force, on pain of

death. **It was the precious Bible Sabbath—the only weekly rest day that God ever hallowed in Scripture. They valued it; they needed it.**

They had to sit in silent grief and watch as the years passed and their children grew up, never having had it.

But there were others who resisted the deepening apostasy. And they paid the highest price for it. And there were still others who fled and sought to go into hiding in distant places, taking with them their beloved families, their Bibles, and the truths that meant so much to them.

In every instance that the present writer can locate, the few Christians advocating Sunday-keeping, prior to A.D. 400, were the very ones who were introducing pagan heresies to the brethren in the Christian church! They got them all from the same sources: the heathen religions of Egypt, Persia, and Asia Minor.

For us today, there is help only in one line: Determine by the grace of God to live right yourself. Study the Bible and obey it by the grace of Christ, your Lord and Saviour—at whatever cost. Only He can strengthen you to obey His written Word. **Back in the Dark Ages, men and women were willing to die for what the Bible said. Are you willing to suffer today for the same truths?** Will you stand for the faith of your fathers—the faith given you by the God of heaven in the Holy Bible.

In A.D. 337, Constantine died, and the new era that he had helped begin continued on for long centuries. **Because of him, the church was henceforth able to get the State to enact religious legis-**

lation. Gradually, with the passing of time, additional Sunday law decrees were passed, restricting what could be done on Sunday and forbidding religious activities on the Bible Sabbath. Included here were **governmental Sunday Law decrees** in the years 365, 386, 389, 458, 468, 554, 589, 681, 768, 789, and onward. Also included were **church council Sunday Law decrees** in 343, 538, 578, 581, 690, and onward.

Each law became stricter; each penalty was more severe. But we can understand this when we recall that the Bible Sabbath was first given at the Creation of this world by the God of heaven (Genesis 2:1-3). It was part of His will for mankind, and Satan was determined to destroy it.

We have now discovered how the pattern of church-state takeover occurs. This same pattern has been repeated several times in history. We must not let it happen again!

Yet, at the present time, we are rapidly moving in that direction!

Consider the words of wise men:

“When a religion is good, I conceive that it will support itself; and, when it cannot support itself and God does not take care to support it, so that its professors are oblig’d to call for the help of the civil power, it is a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one!”—*Benjamin Franklin, Vol. 8, 154.*

“The doctrine which, from the very first origin of religious dissensions, has been held by all bigots of all sects, when condensed into a few words and stripped of rhetorical disguise, is simply this:

“I am in the right, and you are in the wrong. When you are the stronger, you ought to tolerate me; for it is your duty to tolerate the truth. But when I am the stronger, I

shall persecute you; for it is my duty to persecute error.”—*Lord Macaulay, Essay on “Sir James Mackintosh,” in Critical and Historical Essays (1865 ed.), Vol. 1, 333-334.*

“Condemn no man for not thinking as you think. Let every one enjoy the full and free liberty of thinking for himself. Let every man use his own judgment, since every man must give an account of himself to God. Abhor every approach, in any kind or degree, to the spirit of persecution. **If you cannot reason or persuade a man into the truth, never attempt to force him into it.** If love will not compel him to come, leave him to God, the Judge of all.”—*John Wesley, “Advice to the People Called Methodists,” Works of John Wesley, Vol. 8, 357.*

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