

# Understanding the Sabbath Day



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# **Understanding the Sabbath Day**

Sunday, the first day of the week, is commonly accepted as the “Lord’s Day,” or Christian Sabbath. But does the Bible teach that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week? Was the Old Testament Sabbath law “nailed to the cross”? Does the New Testament instruct Christians to keep Sunday? God commands, “Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy!” How does this commandment apply to New Covenant believers?



## Part 1

# Should a Christian Observe the Seventh-Day Sabbath?

**T**ime is very important to God. The Bible talks about time a lot. Here's an example: The book of Daniel predicted there would someday be a power on earth so influential that it would actually attempt to change time! There are many important prophecies in the book of Daniel. Let's look at the one in Daniel 7 where it tells us about four great, world-ruling empires. These kingdoms are not of God. They are of the world. They are of Satan. Second Corinthians 4:4 says that Satan is the "god of this world." His throne is here.

And, in these four worldly kingdoms, Daniel 7 tells about one ruling system that attempts to do something incredible. Let's read verse 25:

"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out [i.e., afflict] the saints of the most High, and think to change the times and laws...."

What does it mean when it says this ruling system shall "think to change the times"? Here are three examples:

- God begins His year in the spring, but this ruling system prophesied in Daniel 7:25 starts its new year in the dead of winter.
- God begins His months at the new moon, but this ruling system begins its months at any time regardless of any lunar observation.
- God begins His day around sunset, but this ruling system begins its day in the middle of the night.

God has His way of calculating time, but (as a result of this system

that was prophesied in Daniel) the world has created a counterfeit system of calculating time. And so much of this counterfeiting revolves around which day should be observed as holy by believers of the great God of the Bible.

It's important that a Christian know whether or not God expects Christians to observe a day of rest. And if He does, which day is it? Is it Friday as most Muslims believe? Is it Sunday as most Christians believe? Is it Saturday, which most believe should be observed only by Jews? Or could God's day of rest be any day of the week that you choose?

Please ask yourself, "Do I go to the Scriptures just to 'prove' what I already believe? Or do I search the Scriptures for the truth that God has given." We should hunger and thirst for righteousness. We should never just go thru the motions of Bible study to justify some position. Hopefully, you have a genuine love for the truth. Hopefully, you're willing to change what you believe if you find that you are in error.

Now, everyone in Christianity agrees that the seventh-day Sabbath was created by God. And most agree that God's days begin and end around sunset—not at midnight.

Let's read Genesis 2:2–3:

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.

Notice that God blessed the seventh-day Sabbath. And he sanctified it. So we see that the weekly Sabbath was created by God in the first week of Creation—long before Moses ever went up to Mt. Sinai to communicate with God. The Sabbath existed before the Ten Commandments were given to the Israelite people.

Now let's read Genesis 1:5: "The evening and the morning were the first day." In other words, the beginning of God's days started at the dark part of the day, that is, around sunset.

Later in the Torah, we find God instructing the Hebrews on when the day begins. Leviticus 23:32 says, "From evening to evening, you shall celebrate your Sabbath."

We get the word "evening" from the word "even" which means to divide something evenly into two equal halves. Evening is when the sun is even on the horizon during the start of the dark part of the day. When you can see just half of the sun as it sets, it's evenly divided at that point. And when the sun is evenly divided, this is the end of one day and the beginning of another. This is not just a biblical definition of the word "evening." This is the same definition that can be found in secular dictionaries.

So we can clearly see that God created, blessed, and sanctified the seventh-day Sabbath. And we can clearly see that God's days begin around sunset—at evening.

Also, it's interesting to note that God only named one day of the week—the Sabbath. He gave no names to the other six days of the week. The Bible only refers to those days as the first day, second day, third day, etc. The names of the days we have now are man's names. And man chose to name these days after pagan gods. For example, Thursday is named after the god, Thor. Monday is named after the moon. Wednesday is named after the god, Voden. The seventh day of the week is so special to God that He named it Himself.

It is so fascinating how the word "Sabbath" has carried through to the current languages of the world today. English is not typical in how it labels the seventh day of the week. In English, we call it Saturday. We have named it after the god, Saturn. Many other languages don't come up with some artificial name like Saturn's Day for the seventh day of the week. Instead, they actually use the word "Sabbath" to label the seventh day of the week.

For example, if you talk to a Spanish speaking person about meeting him later in the week, you would say, "I'll meet you on *Sabado* at 7:00 a.m. They call the seventh day of the week *Sabado*.

Here are examples of other languages:

Italian: *Sabato*

Arabic: *Sabet*

Armenian: *Shabat*

Polish, Slovak and Czeck: *Sobota*

Croatian: *Subota*

Russian: *Subbota*

Now, let's investigate whether or not God's Sabbath was done away with or changed. We begin our investigation by looking at the life of Jesus. Let's look at Mark 1:38-39:

"And he said unto them, Let us go into the next town, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth. And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils."

We find this verified by Luke 4:16 that Jesus preached in synagogues. Well, if Jesus preached in synagogues, what day do you think He preached in those synagogues? Why, on the seventh-day Sabbath, of course. If He preached in a synagogue on a day other than the seventh-day Sabbath, it would probably be empty. Now, someone is going to say, "Of course He preached in the synagogues on the Sabbath because that's when the Jews were in those synagogues. He had to go there on the Sabbath day or He'd miss being there with the people."

Let's read on.

In Mark 2:23, we find an incident where Jesus' disciples were walking thru a field of grain and they began to pluck grain and eat it right off the plant. This action caused them to be condemned by the religious leaders who said the disciples were doing something wrong. And notice what Jesus says in response in verses 27 and 28:

"And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath."

Did Jesus say, "I have the power to do away with the Sabbath"? Did Jesus say, "The Sabbath will soon be done away with after my crucifixion and resurrection"? No. He acknowledged that the Sabbath existed! And He pointed out that He was the Lord of that day!

And this claim that Jesus made shouldn't surprise us. The first chapter of the Gospel of John shows how Jesus has existed from eternity. He didn't just come into being in Bethlehem in His earthly birth. Like His Father, Jesus has always existed. He was alive during Creation and was and is Lord of the Sabbath day that was blessed and sanctified during Creation week.

Christians are confused by this Mark 23 verse, thinking that Jesus was doing away or cancelling some Old Testament commandment that His disciples were breaking. There is no biblical command that the disciples were breaking by plucking grain just like there was no

biblical command that the lame man was breaking by carrying his mat after Jesus healed him. The Pharisees were talking about *extra-biblical* commands instituted by the Pharisees themselves. Jesus never broke or taught the breaking of any biblical commandments, but He did teach against the pharisaical commandments that men added to God's Word.

It must always be remembered that Jesus never did away with the Sabbath or the Ten Commandments. The disagreements that Jesus had with the religious leaders of His time were NEVER about His desire to do away with the teachings of the Torah. Rather, Jesus' disagreement with the Pharisees was over what they ADDED to the Torah. He took great exception to the traditions of the elders. That's why He said the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. The religious leaders had made the Sabbath a burden, when God intended it to be a delight.

Why is there so much confusion about this in the churches? Is it because we read the Scriptures from an English-speaking, Western, Gentile perspective? Why do preachers say that Jesus abolished the law when Jesus' own words said, "Think not that I came to destroy the law but to fulfill it. Heaven and earth shall pass-away but not one jot or tittle of the law shall ever pass away."

The word "fulfill" in Greek is *pleroo* (4137). It means to "fully preach." How did we get so confused that many think the word "fulfill" is the same as destroy? First John 3:8 tells us that for THIS reason was the Son of God manifested to us—here it is; wait for it—"that he might DESTROY the works of the devil." How did we ever confuse this and think that He came to destroy the Law?

Now, what does Jesus say about the Sabbath in the future? Well, His own words show that His followers would be keeping the Sabbath in AD 70 at the time of the destruction of the Temple.

In Matthew 24:20, He says, "But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day."

This verse, like many prophecies in the Bible, was given with a partial fulfillment, which was the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. But Matthew 24 is really a prophecy about the final fulfillment during the appearance of the anti-Christ during the Great Tribulation. We know that Matthew 24 is talking about the end-time tribulation (not just the events of AD 70) because right in the same chapter He says...

1. "For then will be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to that day nor ever shall be" (verse 21). The destruction of Jerusalem is not the Great Tribulation, which Jesus said will be the worst time on planet earth...ever.
2. "Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of man and all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven" (verse 30). This never happened in AD 70 because, when Jesus comes, it says in Revelation 6:16 that they will cry out to the rocks and mountains: "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of his wrath is come and who shall be able to stand?"

If Jesus' followers were to conclude that His resurrection ended Sabbath observance, He would have made no reference to the Sabbath observance by His followers over thirty years after His resurrection and during the destruction of Jerusalem and in the Great Tribulation many centuries after His resurrection, just before His Second Coming. Jesus never taught His followers to abandon the Sabbath. And neither did His apostles talk about abandoning the Sabbath in their teachings and observances following their receiving the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

Jesus' followers continued to observe the Sabbath long after His death. Notice:

Acts 17:2: "And Paul, as was his custom, went in unto them, and for three sabbath days reasoned with them from the Scriptures."

Acts 18:4: "And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks."

Acts 13:14-15: "But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."

Acts 13:44: "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God."

There is no evidence whatsoever that the earliest Christians were worshiping on Sunday. Sunday worship came to Christianity later as

Gentile influences infiltrated the Body of Christ and corrupted the teachings of Moses and the apostles.

Some say that the New Testament shows the early church keeping the first day of the week. This is not true. In the pagan Roman Empire, the most honored day was the venerable day of the sun. This was the day businesses were closed and people didn't work. Of course this would be a great day to collect money for the less fortunate since it wasn't permitted to take money to the synagogues on the Sabbath day. The New Testament mentions the first day of the week only eight times, and none of them mean anything at all about attending worship services on Sunday. (See Part 4 of this booklet for more information.)

Right now, you're probably asking this question: "Well, if Jesus and His disciples didn't do away with the Sabbath or change it to another day of the week, then why are all these churches worshipping on Sunday? Surely, two billion Christians can't be wrong. Right?"

To find our answer to this question, we have to look at history a few hundred years after the death of Jesus. During the years between 200 and about 400, AD, there was a definite bias against anything Jewish in the Roman Empire. The Roman government banned things like circumcision, sacrificing, observing the Passover on the 14th of Nisan, and the seventh-day Sabbath. Again, just as we saw in many parts of Europe in the 1930s and 1940s, anti-Semitism prevailed in the Roman Empire.

It became expedient for Christians in Rome to differentiate themselves from Jews by keeping Sunday instead of the seventh day. At that time, Christians and Jews had many similarities. For example, they both revered the Hebrew Scriptures. But many Christians decided (for their own safety and convenience) they needed to put distance between themselves and the Jews. In the process, they accepted many pagan practices of the many religions of Rome. Many decided to begin worshipping God on the day named after the sun.

By the time Emperor Constantine officially recognized Christianity as an acceptable religion in the fourth century, he put the power of the empire behind Sunday observance. From then on, Sunday became established as the "Christian Sabbath." By the time of the Protestant Reformation, Sunday was so established that even the great Reformers couldn't dislodge it from their liturgy even though they claimed authority from the Bible and the Bible alone. Today, Sunday

observance is based solely on tradition and NOT on Scripture.

As modern science continues to learn more about the human body, the more they recognize that people actually need a day of rest. Of course, they don't recommend which day we should rest, but they're coming to agreement more and more that people need a day of rest. This is one more piece of science that backs up the Bible.

Mankind was created by God, and God has provided us with a manual in the same way Ford provides a manual for each car it produces. The manual for man is the Bible. Will you follow the manual that was put together by your Creator? Will you obey His commands? Once you start obeying God's laws, it won't take you long to figure out that His laws are not a bunch of selfish do's and don'ts created by a mean god for the purpose of holding us back from what we want to do. God's laws were made to help us find the only true happiness that exists. We only find happiness thru the blood of Jesus and obedience to His Father.

The Sabbath is so important that God included a Sabbath command in the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments. Today, Christians are eager to promote the Ten Commandments by preaching against murder, adultery, bearing false witness, etc. But they stop short of promoting the Fourth Commandment as written in Exodus 20. God believed Sabbath observance was so important that He included it in the Ten Commandments that Christianity embraces. Why would He include it in the Commandments and then yank it out after Jesus' resurrection? As we saw from the Scriptures we just read, God did NOT yank the Fourth Commandment out of the Decalogue. It's still there for us today. And, like the other nine commandments, it's there for our own good—for the good of all mankind.

Jesus expects us to keep all Ten Commandments if we are to receive eternal life.

Matthew 19:17: "And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

Revelation 22:14: "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."

James 2:10–12: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not com-

mit 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."

Please don't deny yourself the blessing of celebrating and observing God's laws? And if you want more information on keeping the Sabbath, please see our message entitled, "Sabbath Keeping in the 21st Century." It's free. It's on our website (cgi.org).

Well, you're probably asking right now, "If the Bible didn't change the seventh-day Sabbath to Sunday, how did this change get made?"

Excellent question. Let's go to the churches out there that keep Sunday and let's let them answer that question for us. I'm going to read you some quotes from the literature of various churches. You'll notice that the dates of some of these quotes are quite old. That's because churches back then were more open to admitting how this Sabbath change got made. These days, it seems they really don't like to talk about how this change was made.

These quotes are from a website called SundayLaw.net. We have also included quotes from a publication done by the *Voice of Prophecy*. It was called, "Authoritative Quotations on the Sabbath and Sunday." Let's read a few and see what all these churches have said about the subject of Sabbath vs. Sunday.

## BAPTIST

"There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday.... It will be said, however, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week.... 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.

"We believe that the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government" (*Baptist Church Manual*, Art. 12).

## CATHOLIC

"From this same Catholic Church you have accepted your Sunday, and that Sunday, as the Lord's day, she has handed down as a tradition; and the entire Protestant world has accepted it a tradition, for

you have not an iota of Scripture to establish it Therefore that which you have accepted as your rule of faith, inadequate as it of course is, as well as your Sunday, you have accepted on the authority of the Roman Catholic Church" (D. B. Ray, *The Papal Controversy*, 1892, page 179).

"You may read 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 [Catholics] never sanctify" (James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*, page 111).

"There is but one church on the face of the earth which has the power, or claims power, to make laws binding on the conscience, binding before God, binding under penalty of hell-fire. For instance, the institution of Sunday. What right has any other church to keep this day? You answer by virtue of the third commandment [the Papacy changed the fourth commandment and called it the third], which says, 'Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.' But Sunday is not the Sabbath. Any schoolboy knows that Sunday is the first day of the week. I have repeatedly offered one thousand dollars to anyone who will prove by the Bible alone that Sunday is the day we are bound to keep, and no one has called for the money. It was the holy Catholic Church that changed the day of rest from Saturday, the seventh day, to Sunday, the first day of the week" (T. Enright, C.S.S.R., in a lecture delivered in 1893).

"QUESTION: What Bible authority is there for changing the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week? Who gave the pope the authority to change a command of God?

"ANSWER: If the Bible is the only guide for the Christian, then the Seventh-day Adventist is right in observing the Saturday with the Jew. But Catholics learn what to believe and do from the divine, infallible authority established by Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church.... Is it not strange that those who make the Bible their only teacher should inconsistently follow in this matter the tradition of the Church?"—*Question Box* by Conway, 1903 Edition, pages 254, 255.

"QUESTION: Which is the Sabbath day?

"ANSWER: Saturday is the Sabbath day.

"QUESTION: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

"ANSWER: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the

Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday" (Peter Geiermann, *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, Second Edition, 1910, page 50).

"It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest to the Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord. Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] church" (Mgr. Segur, *Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today*, page 213).

"Nowhere in the Bible do we find that Christ or the apostles ordered that the Sabbath be changed from Saturday to Sunday. We have the commandment of God given to Moses to keep holy the Sabbath day, that is, the seventh day of the week, Saturday. Today most Christians keep Sunday because it has been revealed to us by the church [Roman] outside the Bible" (*Catholic Virginian*, Oct. 3, 1947).

### CHURCHES OF CHRIST (also Disciples of Christ)

"There is no direct Scriptural authority for designating the first day the Lord's day" (Dr. D.H. Lucas, *Christian Oracle*, Jan. 23, 1890).

### CHURCH OF ENGLAND, or Episcopalian

"Is there any command in the New Testament to change the day of weekly rest from Saturday to Sunday? None" (*Manual of Christian Doctrine*, page 127).

"The Lord's day did not succeed in the place of the Sabbath.... The Lord's day was merely an ecclesiastical institution. It was not introduced by virtue of the fourth commandment, because for almost three hundred years together they kept that day which was in that commandment.... The primitive Christians did all manner of works upon the Lord's day even in times of persecution when they are the strictest observers of all the divine commandments; but in this they knew there was none" (Bishop Jeremy Taylor, *Ductor Dubitantium*, Part 1, Book II, Chap. 2, Rule 6, Sec. 51, 59).

"Sunday being the day on which the Gentiles solemnly adore that planet and called it Sunday, partly from its influence on that day especially, and partly in respect to its divine body (as they conceived it), the Christians thought fit to keep the same day and the same name of



it, that they might not appear causelessly peevish, and by that means hinder the conversion of the Gentiles, and bring a greater prejudice than might be otherwise taken against the gospel" (T.M. Morer, *Dialogues on the Lord's Day*, pages 22, 23).

"Where are we told in Scripture that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are nowhere commanded to keep the first day.... The reason why we keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because the Bible, but because the church has enjoined it" (Isaac Williams, B.D., *Plain Sermons on the Catechism*, Vol. 1, pages 334–336).

"We have made the change from the seventh day to the first day, from Saturday to Sunday, on the authority of the one holy Catholic Church" (Bishop Seymour, *Why We Keep Sunday*).

#### 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 Abbott, *Christian Union*, Jan. 19, 1882).

#### LUTHERAN

"The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance" (Augustus Neander, *History of the Christian Religion and Church*, Vol. I, page 186).

#### METHODIST

"The reason we observe the first day instead of the seventh is based on no positive command. One will search the Scriptures in vain for authority for changing from the seventh day to the first. The early Christians began to worship on the first day of the week because Jesus rose from the dead on that day. By and by, this day of worship was made also a day of rest, a legal holiday. This took place in the year 321.

"Our Christian Sabbath, therefore, is not a matter of positive command. It is a gift of the church" (Clovis G. Chappell, *Ten Rules For Living*, page 61).

#### MOODY BIBLE INSTITUTE

"The Sabbath was binding in Eden, and it has been in force ever since. This fourth commandment begins with the word 'remember,' showing that the Sabbath already existed when God wrote the law on the tables of stone at Sinai. How can men claim that this one commandment has been done away with when they will admit that the other nine are still binding?" (D. L. Moody, *Weighed and Wanting*, page 47).

#### PRESBYTERIAN

"The Sabbath is a part of the Decalogue—the Ten Commandments. This alone forever settles the question as to the perpetuity of the institution.... Until, therefore, it can be shown that the whole moral law has been repealed, the Sabbath will stand.... The teaching of Christ confirms the perpetuity of the Sabbath" (T. C. Blake, DD, *Theology Condensed*, pages 414, 475).

## Part 2

# The First Day of the Week in Scripture

**M**ost Christians will tell you that the resurrection of Jesus is very important to them. Why? They say it's because Jesus' resurrection proves beyond all doubt that He is the Son of God. And they say His resurrection also gives us the assurance that we will be given the free gift of eternal life.

These statements about the resurrection are absolutely correct. However, when discussing how important the resurrection is to Christians, many times these same folks will try to give you erroneous information about that very resurrection!

They tell us that, even though Jesus prophesied that he'd be in the grave for three days and three nights (that's a total of 72 hours), they say He was crucified on a Friday evening and resurrected on a Sunday morning. This statement is totally self-contradictory. There's no way you can squeeze three days and three nights into a Friday evening crucifixion and a Sunday morning resurrection. No matter how you try to make this false equation work, the truth is that Jesus was crucified late Wednesday afternoon and was resurrected late Saturday afternoon. We have more information on that at [cgi.org](http://cgi.org). It's free.

Now, once the inquiring Bible student gets past the misconception that the resurrection was on a Sunday morning, he invariably gets into asking about New Testament references to the events surrounding Jesus, the disciples, and the first day of the week.

Let's look at all the references to the first day of the week that we find in the Bible. All of them. Let's see if any of these Scriptures give credence to a Sunday resurrection or to the argument that Christians should observe Sunday as "the Lord's Day."

The first time we hear about the first day of the week in Scripture is Genesis 1:1–5:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

And what do we see here? We see the Creator working on the first day of the week! He creates the light on the first day of the week. There is nothing here to demonstrate a day of worship on the first day of the week.

Again, that's the first mention of the first day of the week in Scripture. Let's look at the second reference to the first day of the week in Scripture. Exodus 20:8–11:

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

Here God gives us a commandment. We are to work six days a week—including the first day of the week! In the entirety of the Old Testament, we don't find Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob worshiping on the first day of the week. We don't find the prophets doing it. We don't find a single righteous Old Testament person worshiping on the first day of the week. For at least 4,000 years, the Hebrews worked on the first day of the week.

Now, here's our third reference to the first day of the week.

Ezekiel 46:1: "Thus saith the Lord GOD: The gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days, but on the Sabbath it shall be opened, and on the day of the new moon it shall be opened."

Once again, God commands us to work six days a week—including the first day. In this passage, God is commanding that His people **WORK** on the first day of the week.

When Jesus lived as a mortal man on this earth, there is no implication at all that He used Sunday as a worship day instead of a work day. As the son of a carpenter, the first day of the week was just another work day for Him. Just about any reputable Bible scholar will agree on this point. In the New Testament, we find absolutely no prohibition of work on the first day of the week. The New Testament never calls the first day of the week "the Christian Sabbath." The New Testament never talks of a blessing being associated with the first day of the week. The New Testament never calls the first day of the week a rest day or a holy day. There is absolutely no record of Jesus ever mentioning the first day of the week as some kind of worship day.

The New Testament does mention "first day of the week" eight times. Let's look at them. The first four we are going to see...tell how the women came to the tomb after Jesus was resurrected. This incident is recounted in all four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Let's read all four of them:

Matthew 28:1: "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre."

Mark 16:2: "And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun."

Luke 24:1: "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them."

John 20:1: "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre."

Notice what is **NOT** said in these four Scriptures. There is **NO** mention of a church meeting, a special assembly, or a day of worship. It clearly says that the Sabbath day was over and it was drawing toward the first day of the week. Two women came to the sepulcher and saw

that Jesus was not in the tomb. It also says that the day before the first day of the week was the Sabbath. There is no indication in this Scripture that the seventh day of the week was being replaced by the first day of the week as a holy day set apart by God.

It is important to note what intentions these women had as they approached Jesus' tomb. Were they going to the tomb to have a Sunday morning worship service? No. They were going to the tomb to work! They were carrying supplies up a steep hill. They had planned to perform additional funerary functions on the body of Jesus. This would involve unwrapping the body and rubbing various salves and spices upon it. Then, they were going to re-wrap the body and place it back into the tomb. This is hard work! In these four mentionings of the women going to the tomb, there is nothing that can be taken as instruction to change the day of the Sabbath. Further, these women genuinely believed that Jesus was still dead. None of the women believed He was resurrected. They were as surprised as anyone that the stone had been rolled away and that Jesus was gone. Remember that one of them asked a man (whom she thought was a gardener), "What have you done with the body of my Lord?" When the women found an empty tomb, they assumed the body had been moved. There was no assembly for the purpose of celebrating Jesus' resurrection. They didn't know the resurrection had taken place.

(Now, the timing of the crucifixion and resurrection is something that you need to understand. We're not going to get into this topic right now. We're just examining all the mentionings of the first day of the week in Scripture. For more information on the timing of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, please contact us at [cgi.org](http://cgi.org). All our information is free.)

Now let's look at another Scripture that talks about the first day of the week.

John 20:19: "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled *for fear of the Jews*, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."

What we have here is an assembly. What was the *purpose* of the assembly? Was it a religious observance? No, no, no. These men had just seen their leader tortured and killed a few days ago. No doubt they thought they were next on the hit list of the religious leaders.

They were assembled “out of fear of the Jews.” Again, there is no way you can twist Scripture and claim this was a Sunday church service that was for the purpose celebrating the resurrection of Jesus. They didn’t even know Jesus was alive until He unexpectedly showed up *at this meeting*. Yes, this was an assembly, but it was no religious assembly that pictured the changing of the seventh-day Sabbath to the first day of the week.

Acts 20:7: “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”

So many, many churches try to twist this scripture into saying that it shows we should have weekly communion on Sunday. It says no such thing. In this situation, Paul had already preached to a group of believers a few hours before. He had preached to this group while it was the Sabbath. And he was getting ready to leave the next day. So he continued his speech until midnight. Again, God begins and ends His days around sunset. Man begins his days at midnight.

When the Bible uses the phrase “breaking bread,” the meal it’s talking about includes more than just bread. “Breaking bread” means a full meal which would include bread, meat, vegetables, beverage, and perhaps things such as fruit. So this breaking bread was just a meal that happened after sunset on what we would now call a Saturday evening. The timing of this meal was that it was in the night time part of the first day of the week. Paul’s plans were to leave at daybreak the next morning. Other men who were with Paul that day had already left because they had to make a 60-mile trip by boat in the Aegean Sea from where they were in Assos to a place called Troas. They had to sail around the bottom of a peninsula on Asia Minor. Paul was going to go on foot the next morning. His trip was a direct route of 19.5 miles by land. And Paul’s trip was going to be a hard trip. He had to trudge almost 20 miles over steep, rough roads. His trip was going to involve hard work! If the first day of the week had replaced the seventh-day Sabbath, he was working very hard on that first day of the week and, thereby, violating this “new Christian Sabbath”—“the Lord’s Day.” No, this Scripture does NOT show that the seventh day Sabbath had been replaced by the first day of the week. It actually shows these folks were assembling for worship on the Sabbath and that they were doing hard work on the first day of the week.

1 Corinthians 16:2: “Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

In this Scripture, the apostle Paul and the church is dealing with a famine. Paul is concerned about hunger for the brethren in Judea. He wanted to take up a collection for these saints. This occasion was a special collection for a special purpose. His instructions have nothing to do with regular tithes and offerings. He later boasted about how the brethren came through in this special collection for the Jerusalem brethren (2 Corinthians 9:1–2). In 1 Corinthians 16:2, Paul is telling the brethren to WORK as they collect money and foodstuffs to be transported from Corinth to Jerusalem. This was not an assembly for worship on the first day of the week. It was a food drive which would require considerable labor and lifting and transporting to get it done.

In all of the above references, there’s no indication that it was their custom to meet on the first day of the week. Nowhere in the New Testament is there an instruction to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus on the first day of the week. Nowhere in the New Testament is there an instruction to transfer the holiness of the seventh-day Sabbath to the first day of the week.

And what’s with this phrase, “the Lord’s Day”? How many times have you heard, “We go to church on the Lord’s Day [meaning Sunday]”? When we say we are going to church on the Lord’s Day, we’re twisting Scripture. This phrase, the Lord’s Day, comes from Revelation 1:10, which says, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day and heard behind me a great voice.”

Let’s put this Scripture in its proper context. The book of Revelation is John’s recounting how he is transported in a vision into the future. This time period that John enters is the Lord’s Day, which is also called the Day of the Lord in Scripture. Some translations use the phrase “the Day of the Lord” instead of “the Lord’s Day.” In his vision, John sees some incredible images. They are nothing less than cataclysmic. Other Bible writers such as Isaiah, Joel, and Micah saw these events. After this Day of the Lord vision, John sees and writes in graphic, symbolic detail what is going to happen in that great and terrible Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord is not some 24-hour day. It is a time period that goes on for at least several days—probably even several weeks or months.

There is no way that this phrase ("Lord's Day" or "Day of the Lord") can be used to say that John was speaking of the first day of the week as being a replacement day for the seventh-day Sabbath. No matter what translation of the Bible you read, you can't get that interpretation from reading Revelation 1. There is no church meeting referred to in Revelation 1. There is no transference of the seventh-day Sabbath to the first day of the week.

We have already read in Mark 2:27 that the Sabbath was made for man (not just the Hebrews), and that the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath. If we are going to call a day of the week the Lord's Day, it wouldn't be the first day of the week. The Lord's Day is without a doubt the seventh-day Sabbath. It is so clear from Mark 2:27 that the Sabbath belongs to Jesus. The seventh-day Sabbath is Jesus' day. The seventh-day Sabbath is the Lord's Day.

Finally, let's do an exercise. Let's ask some questions with just "yes" or "no." If you answer any of these questions with "yes," then we must ask if it can be backed up with a scripture.

Here are the questions:

- Does the Bible say that God blessed the first day of the week? **No!**
- Does the Bible say that God hallowed the first day of the week? **No!**
- Does the Bible say that God commands keeping the first day of the week? **No!**
- Does the Bible say that God rested on the first day of the week? **No!**
- Does the Bible say that God calls the first day of the week a holy day? **No!**
- Does the Bible say that God offers a reward for keeping the first day of the week? **No!**
- Does the Bible say that the first day of the week will be kept in the Kingdom of God? **No!**
- Does the Bible say it was Jesus' custom to keep the first day of the week? **No!**
- Does the Bible say it was Paul's manner to worship on the first day of the week? **No!**

Now, let's change the wording of these questions:

- Does the Bible say that God blessed the Sabbath? **YES! Where?** Genesis 2:3: "And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made."
- Does the Bible say that God hallowed the Sabbath? **YES! Where?** Exodus 20:11: "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."
- Does the Bible say that God commands keeping the Sabbath? **YES! Where?** Exodus 20:11: "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."
- Does the Bible say that God rested on the Sabbath? **YES! Where?** Exodus 20:11: "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."
- Does the Bible say that God calls the Sabbath a holy day? **YES! Where?** Isaiah 58:13: "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, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words."
- Does the Bible say that God offers a reward for keeping the Sabbath? **YES! Where?** Isaiah 58:13-14: "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, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine 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."
- Does the Bible say that the Sabbath will be kept in the Kingdom of God? **YES! Where?** Isaiah 66:23: "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."
- Does the Bible say it was Jesus' custom to keep the Sabbath? **YES!**

Where? Luke 4:16: "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."

- Does the Bible say it was Paul's manner to worship on the Sabbath? YES! Where? Acts 17:2: "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures." Acts 16:13: "And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither."

## Part 3

# Did the Law Exist Before Moses?

It's not uncommon for people to ask, "Why would anyone want to keep the Ten Commandments?" They say, "After all, this Decalogue was given to Moses *for the nation of Israel*. These Commandments are *for the Jews*, but they certainly aren't for Christians in the 21st century."

Is this true? Did God give the Ten Commandments only to the Hebrews? Or is it just possible that these laws were made for all people of all times?

We can answer these questions by finding out whether or not the Ten Commandments were kept before Moses. Because, if we find these laws being kept by people before Moses was born, then that clearly shows that these commandments weren't JUST for the Jews, but are instead for all people of all time. We're going to look at that right now. We're going to answer the question—Did God's law exist before Moses?

Most Christians are aware of Romans 5:12, which says, "Wherefore, as by one man...sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

And most are familiar with verse 14: "Death reigned from Adam to Moses."

Wait! We have to stop right there. These verses tell us that sin existed in the Garden of Eden. Sin? At this point, we have to define sin. How do we determine what sin is? What is sin?

According to 1 John 3:4, "Sin is transgression of the law!"

Then there was LAW during the time of Adam? What law? Was it

man's law? No. Adam and Eve hadn't been around long enough to start setting up any laws. And why would they need to set up laws for a husband and wife living in such a beautiful garden? The fact of the matter is that God's law existed during the time Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden! It says so in Romans. God had laws in place long before Moses was born.

Further, when Paul again talks about sin, he says in Romans 7:7, "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."

Paul is clearly saying that he wouldn't know he was guilty of lusting if it weren't for the commandment that says, "You shall not covet."

How could Adam and Eve sin in the Garden of Eden unless there was some law to define what sin is? When they disobeyed God (their Father) by lusting, they were breaking the commandment that says, "You shall not covet." They were also breaking the commandment not to steal. And they were breaking the commandment about honoring their Father. In Luke 3:38, Adam is called a son of God. Yes, God was indeed his Father.

And it shouldn't surprise us that the commandments about coveting, stealing, and dishonoring were in existence in the Garden of Eden, should it? After all, we know that God created the seventh-day Sabbath in the first day of Creation. This is the Fourth Commandment.

So here we have clear evidence that at least four commandments existed in the earliest days of humanity's existence! Now, let's see if we can find other examples of where people were expected to follow the Ten Commandments long before Moses.

When we examine the situation with Cain and Abel, we find out that Cain was guilty of sin. Let's read in Genesis 4:8-11:

And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand.

God did NOT try to excuse Cain's behavior by saying, "There is not yet a law against killing your brother." God didn't say, "Well, you didn't know better because people won't know about the law of murder till later on when there's going to be a guy named Moses." No, God made it very clear that what Cain did was wrong. Cain violated the commandment against murder. And how did Cain know that murder was wrong? Again, the Law tells us not to murder. The Commandments were in existence in the earliest days of mankind—long before Moses.

Let's now talk about Abraham's father. His name was Terah. We talk about how Abraham was a righteous man who had great faith. His father wasn't that way. His father worshipped idols! We read about that in Joshua 24:2:

"And Joshua said unto the people, Thus saith the Eternal God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods."

Joshua was relating a sin that was being practiced BEFORE Moses and also BEFORE Abraham—the sin of worshipping false gods. This is another violation of the Ten Commandments.

We also find that adultery was a sin long before Moses.

We have the unfortunate situation where Joseph is a slave in Egypt. He had been sold by his own brothers! He eventually ended up being owned by a man named Potiphar. In Genesis 39:7-9 we read, "And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused....," and went on to say, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

Sin against whom? Did Joseph say he didn't want to sin against his master, Potiphar? No. He says he doesn't want to sin against God! Joseph knew that God forbade adultery. Joseph knew about the commandment against adultery. Once again, this was long before Moses.

Do you want more examples? OK. Let's continue. Let's talk about stealing. Let's read Genesis 30:33, where Jacob and his father-in-law Laban are attempting to keep peace among all their family members.

When talking about their animals:

“Every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me.”

This verse is talking about stealing. Here we see that, hundreds of years before Moses, these people knew that stealing was a sin.

So you can see from these examples that God’s Law, His Great Commandments, existed long before Moses. These laws are eternal. They’re not some temporary rules for a certain racial group in the Middle East. These laws are for all people and for all times.

We read in Acts 13:42–44 that Gentiles asked Paul to preach to them ON THE SABBATH DAY—this special day that’s talked about in the Ten Commandments.

Notice that Jesus expects those who want eternal life to keep all Ten Commandments.

Matthew 19:17: “And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.”

Revelation 22:14: “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.”

James 2:10–12: “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, 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.”

Jesus is the Person in the Godhead who wrote the Ten Commandments. According to John 1 and Hebrews 1, he is our Creator. First Corinthians 10:4 tells us that he was the Rock that followed the Israelites in the wilderness:

“And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.”

This, then, makes Jesus the Creator of the Sabbath Day and (as we see in Mark 2:28) He is Lord of the Sabbath.

Hebrews 13:8 tells us that “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”

In Malachi 3:6, God says, “For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

These Commandments that we’re talking about are full of love.

They were created in love by a God of love. His desire is for us to be happy. And He knows that our keeping His Commandments brings us happiness. Conversely, breaking His Commandments brings us misery. Just think how much better off the world would be if mankind kept these wonderful Commandments of love.

Finally, we have a message on the 613 laws of the Torah. Which ones do we still keep? Which ones can no longer be kept because there is no longer a Tabernacle or a Temple? This message is free on our website ([cgi.org](http://cgi.org)).



## Part 4

# Were the Ten Commandments Abolished At Calvary?

**W**ere the Ten Commandments done away with by the crucifixion of Jesus? Many churches say this is so. They say the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross.

It's important that we understand whether or not this statement about nailing the Commandments to the cross is true. Do the Ten Commandments have any relevance for Christians today? Has the Decalogue been done away with?

Let's begin our study by reading the Scripture about nailing things to the cross. Let's turn to Colossians 2:13–14:

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 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*.

Now let's really understand what Paul is saying when he talks about nailing things to the cross. I'm sure we can agree that there were indeed certain things nailed to the cross.

First, Jesus was nailed to the cross. No problem there.

Second, we see in the Gospels that some *signs* were nailed to the cross. We find these signs mentioned in all four of the Gospels. These signs seemed to be in different languages and the gist of them was, "This is Jesus Christ, the king of the Jews." Again, no problem there. We're probably in agreement on this one that there were signs nailed to the cross.

And third, Colossians 2:13–14, which we just read, says there was

something else that was nailed to the cross.

Now, did Paul say that the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross? Absolutely not! Did someone during the time of the crucifixion take a parchment with the Ten Commandments written on it and then nail it to the cross along with Jesus? Absolutely not! If Paul were talking about the Law, he would have used the Greek word *nomos*. But the word *nomos* is not found anywhere in the entire chapter of Colossians 2. Here are the three words Paul wrote that got translated into "handwriting of ordinances."

*Cheirographon* = handwriting

*Tois* = in the

*Dogmasin* = decrees

Again, the word *nomos* is not here. Then what's Paul talking about when he uses the phrase *cheirographon tois dogmasin*?

He is saying that the handwriting of ordinances *against us* was nailed to the cross. Again, the "handwriting of ordinances against us" is NOT the Ten Commandments. Nowhere in the Old Testament or New Testament is there some formula that tells us that a definition of the Ten Commandments is some handwriting of ordinance against us. That's because the Ten Commandments are NOT synonymous with *cheirographon tois dogmasin*, which is a handwriting of ordinances against us. They are NOT the same thing.

Then what is the handwriting of ordinances? The answer: It is our a note of guilt. It is a list of our sins. It's all the evil that we have committed. It's the certificate of our debt. Once a person accepts Jesus and agrees to follow His example in his or her daily life, this note of guilt—that summary of sins and certificate of debt—is now nailed to the cross; that is, it is gone. Completely!

Isn't that beautiful? Once you accept Christ, it doesn't nullify God's holy Law called the Ten Commandments. Once you accept Christ, you are forgiven of all the horrible things that you've done. Psalm 103:12 tells us that, at that point, your sins become as far from God as east is from the west.

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

East and west can't touch. Your sins are so far removed from you and God that they are totally out of His sight and it's as though they

never existed.

That's the beauty of Colossians 2:14. There is no ugliness in Colossians 2:14 that does away with God's wonderful Ten Commandments that we should love. Once we accept Christ, this does not mean that we can (or even want to) disregard God's Law.

The apostles never preached doing away with this *nomos*. If they did, they would be *antinomian*. But, quite the opposite, the apostles kept the Law. And we're going to see some examples of that. Before we do that, let's set the stage by examining the teachings of Jesus. Let's Read Matthew 19:16–17:

And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

Now here's where so many Christians jump the track. Here's where they say, "This Scripture simply means that Jesus wants us to obey His commands about loving each other and forgiving each other."

Really? Notice that Jesus actually gave some examples of the commandments he told the man to obey! Notice in verses 18 and 19 the inquiring person asked Jesus *which* Commandments and Jesus replied by mentioning things like not murdering, not committing adultery, not stealing, not bearing false witness, and honoring your father and mother.

What commandments are these that Jesus is speaking of? Where do these commandments come from? They come from the Ten Commandments! The Commandments we find in Exodus 20!

Notice that Jesus did NOT say, "Keep these commandments for the time being until I am crucified and resurrected." No. He put no time limit on them.

At this point, the skeptic is going to say, "Ah ha! Jesus never said to keep the seventh-day Sabbath in this scripture!" That's correct. But He also didn't mention coveting or using God's name in vain or bowing down before graven images. Does the Christian who makes this argument mean that we can now covet and use God's name in vain and bow down before graven images because Jesus didn't mention

them in this passage. Of course not. They know better than to advocate these things.

Jesus' list in this passage was never meant to be comprehensive. He was simply giving *examples* of the Decalogue so that the inquiring young man would know which commandments Jesus said we should follow if we would have eternal life.

In Matthew 19:18, we read about Jesus quoting the Ten Commandments by saying, "Thou shalt do no murder." But then He goes further by saying that you are guilty of murder not only when you do it. He says you are also guilty with you think it.

Matthew 5:21–22: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, that whosoever shall be angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment."

You may attempt to twist Scripture as much as you'd like, but *you can't escape the fact that Jesus kept the Ten Commandments and He told others to keep them!*

Does Jesus want us to love Him and our neighbor? Yes. And one of the best ways to show love for God is to obey the Ten Commandments, which are all about loving God and our neighbor. When we obey the first four Commandments, we are showing love for God. When we obey the last six Commandments, we are showing love for our neighbor.

Do you want more? Okay. Let's turn to Luke 12:15:

"And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of *covetousness*: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

Here Jesus is preaching against breaking the Tenth Commandment, which condemns covetousness.

And it shouldn't surprise us that Jesus preached the Ten Commandments. Isaiah 42 is a wonderful promise of God sending a Messiah to bring peace to the earth. This prophecy goes into detail about all the things the Messiah—Jesus—will do when He rules as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Notice verse 21:

"The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable."

Does Isaiah 42:21 say that Jesus would do away with God's Law. No. It says He will magnify it. Jesus magnified the Law by setting a

perfect example of how to keep it. He magnified it by preaching it. He magnified it by expounding on it.

What about the apostle Paul? Paul was sent to the Gentiles. Did he say to the Gentiles, "We preach obedience to God's Law to the converted Jews, but to you Gentiles we preach it is done away with"? Did he say that? No. In Ephesians 4:4-6, Paul makes it clear that there weren't different rules for different races and nationalities. He says that there is one body, one spirit, one Lord, one God, one faith, and one baptism. Notice what Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus. And remember that Ephesus was a Gentile church. Let's read Ephesians 6 starting in verse 1:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."

And where did Paul get this commandment about honoring parents? Paul is clearly pointing his readers to the Ten Commandments that we find in Exodus 20.

Paul also points to the Ten Commandments in Romans 13:8-10:

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."

Does Paul then conclude by saying, "Just love one another and you have fulfilled the Law and you no longer have to obey the Ten Commandments? No. He says in verse 9:

"For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Like Jesus, Paul points his readers to the Decalogue and encourages them to obey what is written in Exodus 20.

Is this enough information to convince you? No? Here's more. Let's turn to Romans 7:7.

Paul writes, "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet.'"

Paul is clear that, if you want to know what sin is, you must understand the Law. Once you know the Ten Commandments, then you know what sin is so you can avoid sinning by keeping that Law.

It's very clearly stated in 1 John 3:4 that "sin is the breaking of the

Law."

Notice that 1 John 3:4 does not say that sin is doing something that doesn't seem quite right. Or that sin is doing something that your pastor says you shouldn't do. No. Sin is the breaking of God's Law.

Do you need more examples? Fine. Let's look at I Corinthians 10:7: "Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them...."

Again, Paul is writing to a Gentile church in the city of Corinth. And he's pointing them to the Ten Commandments of Exodus 20 when he condemns idolatry.

And, yes, the Fourth Commandment is clearly mentioned by Paul. We read in Hebrews 4:9:

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God."

When the King James scholars translated this verse, they didn't do justice to the word "rest." The Greek word for this scripture was *sabbatismos*. In other words, "Sabbath-keeping." The original Greek word was NOT *katapausis*, which simply means "rest."

Many other translations do better than the King James Version on this verse. Here are a few examples:

ASV: "There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God."

CEB: "So you see that a sabbath rest is left open for God's people."

CJB: "So there remains a Shabbath-keeping for God's people."

DLNT: "Therefore a Sabbath-rest remains for the people of God."

HCSV: "Therefore, a Sabbath rest remains for God's people."

ESV: "So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God."

Again, Jesus preached the Law. The apostles preached the Law after Jesus' crucifixion. And here are some final scriptures to ponder:

1 Peter 2:21: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps."

1 John 2:6: "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

Acts 17:2: "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures."

Acts 13:42-44: "And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. Now when the congregation was broken up,

many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God."

Acts 18:4: "And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks."

1 John 2:4: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

We hope this booklet has been helpful. If you would like more help in understanding this important topic, please contact us at [cgi.org](http://cgi.org). All our literature is free.

### About the Church of God International

*This literature is published by the Church of God International, based in Tyler, Texas. Incorporated in 1978, the CGI has ministers and congregations scattered throughout the United States and Canada. We also have churches in Jamaica, the Philippines, and Australia.*

*The CGI's mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world (Matthew 28:19). We are blessed with four basic tools to accomplish this:*

- 1. Personal and local church evangelism.*
- 2. Television and radio broadcasting.*
- 3. Booklets, brochures, and study tapes.*
- 4. The Internet.*

### How You Can Help

*All our materials and services are offered to the public free of charge. Many naturally ask us how we can afford to send out thousands of booklets and study tapes each month. The answer is simple.*

*On a regular basis, prayerful friends and members of the Church of God International voluntarily support us with tithes and offerings to further the advancement of the gospel to the world. No financial obligation is ever demanded, but if you are moved to support this work of God, tithes and donations are gratefully accepted at the addresses listed. (Contributions in the United States and Canada are tax deductible.) Giving to and through us is an effective way for people like you to help spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

### **For Further Information**

*If you would like to visit a CGI congregation, or if you would simply like to speak with a CGI minister or representative with any questions you may have, feel free to write or call us. We will be delighted to serve you in any way possible.*

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***Thank you for the opportunity to serve you!***