

Top 10 Lies You Believe

...about the Sabbath



Top 10 Lies You Believe

...about the Sabbath

Contents

Lie 1 – Under grace we don't have to keep the Sabbath.

Lie 2 – The Sabbath was made for the Jewish nation.

Lie 3 – Jesus broke the Sabbath when He was here.

Lie 4 – The Sabbath was nailed to the cross.

Lie 5 – The Sabbath ended under the new covenant.

Lie 6 – Paul preached on Sunday, the first day.

Lie 7 – Romans 14:5 says we can worship any day.

Lie 8 – Paul said to take collections on Sunday.

Lie 9 – Jesus has changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday in honor of the resurrection.

Lie – 10 All the church leaders who worship on Sunday can't be wrong about the Sabbath.

Copyright © 2022 by John Howard
All rights reserved

Unless otherwise noted, all Bible texts are from the New King James Version (NKJV), copyright © 1979, 1980, 1982 by Nelson, Inc., Publishers.

Lie – Under grace, we don't have to keep the Sabbath.

Today, whenever people are asked about the Sabbath, you are bound to hear the response, "We're under grace!" My response, however, is usually, "So is it okay for me to kill and steal?" Of course, they say, "No, but..." And the 'but' is usually where the hidden deception lies. You see, when you hear a preacher address issues like lying, idolatry, murder, or breaking any other commandment, you are bound to hear a hearty, "Amen!" If someone says they stopped stealing, using drugs, or committing some immoral act, people will shout, "Praise the Lord!" However, when someone says, "I've started to keep the true Sabbath," some will undoubtedly respond, "But we aren't under the law. We don't have to keep the old law. We are under grace!"

Many Christians today have the idea that grace somehow changes our relation to God's law, as if it turns the Ten Commandments into the ten suggestions, but Paul says, "sin shall no longer have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Rom. 6:14). Notice what Paul is saying. He is saying that once you are saved by grace, sin doesn't have power over you because God has come into your heart and given you the power to resist sin. That's what the Christian life is about. It is about power to overcome sin and obey God's law. That's why Paul goes on to say, "Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not" (Rom. 6:15)!

Just because God shows you mercy, forgives you by His grace, and will continue to forgive you, that is not an excuse to keep sinning. The modern mentality that says we cannot stop sinning or that we no longer

need to try and obey God's law is a terrible deception. Paul warns, "do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh" (Gal. 5:13). Sadly, some say, "We are delivered to do all these abominations" because we are under grace (Jer. 7:10). What a tragedy. The purpose of grace is not to make us free to break the law. It is to set us free from sin and give us power to obey the law!

You see, after grace forgives our past sins, God gives us power to overcome the present sins in our lives. While Paul says that "if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law," he immediately adds that those who practice things like fornication, idolatry, murder, drunkenness, and the like "will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:18, 21). Think about it. Paul said if you keep having sex outside of marriage or getting drunk, you won't go to heaven. If Paul said that today, many Christians would retaliate with, "I'm not under the law. I'm under grace," to which Paul would simply reply, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it" (Rom. 6:1, 2)?

In response to the idea that saved people don't have to worry about keeping God's law, Paul replies, "That's ridiculous! Just because we are under grace doesn't mean we should not talk about rules or laws! On the contrary! Now that we are saved, we should talk more about rules, and try harder to obey God's laws than ever, since we have the power of grace!"

Once we are saved, grace doesn't change our relationship to the Ten Commandments. Grace doesn't change the nature of the law. Instead, after we accept Christ, we find power through grace. What most don't realize is that grace is two-fold. The moment we accept

Christ, grace pardons our past sins, then supplies power to overcome our present sins. That's why Jesus told Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9). You see, Jesus here defines grace as power. While grace supplies pardon for past sins, once you accept Christ, grace also supplies the power to overcome sin. Since "sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4), that means grace helps us to obey the law! When we accept Christ, grace gives us the power to obey the law, to prepare us for heaven.

Think about it. If we didn't have to obey the law after we were under grace, then why did Jesus say, "if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matt. 19:17). Why did Paul say those who continue in sin "will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21)? Why does the last chapter of the entire Bible say, "Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14)? In spite of what even some pastors today are saying, obedience to the law is still a requirement for getting into heaven, even after we are under grace.

Certainly, Christians at times fall, but there is a big difference between falling in the mud and willfully jumping into the mud. Those who excuse sin by saying, "I'm under grace" have missed the point of grace. Jude warned against "ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness," yet that is what many are doing today when they use grace to excuse or make light of breaking any of God's commandments (Jude 1:4). Those who say grace changes our relationship to the law are misrepresenting grace. Under grace, we are not less obligated to keep the law but more obligated.

Lie – The Sabbath was made for the Jewish nation.

One of the popular excuses for breaking the Sabbath today is that the Sabbath was made for the Jewish nation, so it no longer applies to Christians. While this is commonly stated by many today, there are no grounds for this claim. Where are the Bible verses to support it? Actually, there is no supporting evidence for this allegation. In order to research the issue, we have to go all the way back to the beginning of time. The Bible tells us that in the beginning, after creating the earth, God instituted the Sabbath.

The Bible says, “on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made” (Gen. 2:2, 3). Here we find that in the beginning, God blessed the seventh day of the week, which is Saturday. In every place where the Bible refers to the Sabbath, it is talking about Saturday, the seventh day of the week. This was the memorial of God’s creation, but the Jewish nation did not yet exist.

Right before instituting the Sabbath, God created the first people, Adam and Eve. Out of these two people came all mankind. It wasn’t until long after this that God established His covenant with Abraham, followed by Isaac, and then by Jacob, who was later named Israel (See Gen. 15:18; 17:19; 32:28). Jacob, or Israel, then had twelve sons, which are now referred to as the original children of Jacob, or Israel. The offspring of Jacob, who continued to faithfully follow God, were then considered children of Israel.

Among the children of Jacob was Joseph, who brought Israel to Egypt. After four hundred years in bondage, God raised up Moses to bring them out of Egypt. When Moses brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, while on their journey to Canaan, God made a covenant with Israel and made them His “special treasure” (Ex. 19:5). A covenant is an agreement between two groups. God was making an agreement with Israel, affirming that He would be their God if they would obey Him. He then gave the Ten Commandments to His people.

Today, nearly every Christian will admit that the Ten Commandments were not given only to the Jewish nation. If this is true, then how can we say the Sabbath was only for the Jewish nation? The proof that this is wrong is that the Sabbath was instituted long before the Jewish nation even existed. The Sabbath was instituted for all humanity at the beginning of time. That’s why Jesus said, “The Sabbath was made for man” (Mark 2:27). Jesus could have just as easily said the Sabbath was made for the Jewish nation, but He didn’t. He said it was made for mankind because the Sabbath was instituted for Adam and Eve and anyone who chose to follow God, long before the Jewish nation even existed.

When God later gave the Ten Commandments, there was one commandment that stood out differently among God’s people. The fourth commandment begins with the word, “Remember.” God said, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Ex. 20:8). The reason God called them to “remember” the Sabbath was because this law was instituted long ago for all the generations before it. God was just calling all who are faithful to Him to remember this commandment.

The terms of this covenant were obedience to God and His law. God then “wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments” (Ex. 34:28). Again, most Christians will agree that the Ten Commandments are not only for the Jewish nation, but they claim that the Sabbath is because God called Israel “to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant” (Ex. 31:16). But just because the Sabbath was part of the covenant does not make it ‘only Jewish’ any more than it makes the other nine commandments ‘only Jewish,’ which were also part of “the covenant” (Ex. 34:28).

The Sabbath, more than any other commandment, is still valid because it was instituted before the Jewish nation even existed. If you want to throw out one of the Ten Commandments, you would be wiser to throw out the other nine and keep the Sabbath because it existed at the beginning of time as a memorial of creation. That means the only way to change the Sabbath would be to create the world all over again. Even if the Jewish nation and the world passed away, the Sabbath would still exist.

After the Jewish nation rejected Christ, the gospel was then sent to the Gentiles, or Christians. God has now made a covenant with Christians, but the covenant still involves obedience to God’s law, including His Sabbath. The New Testament, speaking of “the seventh day” Sabbath rest, says, “it remains that some must enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience... There remains therefore a rest for the people of God” (Heb. 4:4, 6, 9). Sadly, most Christians have rejected the Sabbath under the guise that it is only for the Jewish people.

Lie – Jesus broke the Sabbath when He was here.

The command to keep the Sabbath holy was established at creation and carried down through time to the time of Christ. Early in His ministry, the Bible affirms of Jesus, “as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day” (Luke 4:16). A custom is a habit or a regular practice. The point is, Jesus regularly kept the Sabbath. In spite of this, many today have been told that Jesus at times disregarded the command to keep the Sabbath holy. To support this claim, they use a few twisted texts, but upon closer investigation, we find that Jesus did not break the Sabbath at all. He simply disregarded some of the Jewish regulations that were attached to the Sabbath.

The first instance where Jesus was accused of breaking the Sabbath occurred when the disciples of Christ were walking through a wheat field, picking heads of wheat on the Sabbath day to chew on them. As the Pharisees saw this, they approached Jesus and said, “Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!” (Matt. 12:2). Of course, on the surface, this argument is impractical. God did not intend Sabbath-keeping to be as stringent as the Jewish leaders made it out to be, with so many man-made regulations about what one could or could not do. Nevertheless, many pastors will use this verse to say that Jesus broke the Sabbath, but notice how Jesus responds. Jesus asks, “have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?” (Matt. 12:5). Notice that Jesus called His disciples “blameless,” as in, without blame. If there is no blame, then there is no guilt.

Clearly, the words of Christ Himself vindicated the disciples, declaring their innocence. Christ was not saying that the Sabbath was unimportant, but rather that picking heads of grain in the field was not the same as breaking the Sabbath. The Pharisees had taken the biblical principle of the Sabbath, which says people are not to work on Sabbath, and misapplied it. They made the law say things that it did not say. Jesus was constantly trying to uphold the importance of the law while dismissing the spin the Pharisees had put on it by instituting in its place “commandments of men” (Matt. 15:9), as once more affirmed in the following incident.

Shortly after the grain picking incident, Jesus was again accused of breaking the Sabbath when He healed a man’s hand on the Sabbath. Again, the Pharisees attacked Christ, asking, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?” (Matt. 12:10). Today, even some well-meaning pastors will tell you that Christ broke God’s holy day when He healed this man’s hand on the Sabbath. However, if we consider the issue, we can see plainly that this was not a violation of the Sabbath but of the man-made Pharisaical rules surrounding the Sabbath. Clearly, healing was not a violation of what God intended the Sabbath to be. If this was true, we would have to close down hospitals and let people die on the Sabbath. Of course, Jesus tells us that this is not the case. Listen to how Christ responds to this claim.

As soon as the Pharisees made this accusation against Christ, Jesus immediately reminded them that if one of their animals fell into a pit on the Sabbath day, they would not hesitate to get it out. Here, Christ was not only revealing that the Pharisees had incorrectly interpreted the law, but also their own hypocrisy

regarding the Sabbath. They would help an animal out of a ditch because it meant the loss of money if the animal died, but they disregarded the lives of humans! After revealing their hypocrisy, Christ then said, “Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath” (Matt. 12:12). Notice the word, ‘lawful.’ Jesus said that it was lawful to do good works like this on the Sabbath. That means, in healing the man’s hand, Christ was not breaking the Sabbath of the Ten Commandments at all!

While many pastors have used these occasions to say that Christ broke the Sabbath, in both cases, Christ specifically declared His innocence, calling His disciples “guiltless” and stating that His actions were “lawful.” Those who say that Jesus broke the Sabbath are actually siding with the Pharisees, using the same argument made by the Pharisees in accusing Christ of breaking the Sabbath. Anyone who examines these occasions will see that Christ was not breaking the Sabbath but the man-made Pharisaical regulations that were placed on the Sabbath. Still today, many orthodox Jews have strict man-made regulations surrounding Sabbath observance that are not supported by the Bible.

Because the Pharisees so terribly misrepresented the Sabbath, Christ tried to show how God intended people to keep the Sabbath. Sadly, while the Pharisees were too strict in observing the Sabbath, Christians today have gone too far the other way, saying that it doesn’t matter what you do on God’s holy day. They “have not distinguished between the holy and unholy... and they have hidden their eyes from My Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them” (Ezek. 22:26). As a result, we must be careful to guard ourselves against both errors and follow Christ’s example.

Lie – The Sabbath was nailed to the cross.

The fact is, while many today have adopted this lie that the Sabbath was changed to Sunday, most people don't really care if the Sabbath was changed. In fact, most are not concerned with what day the Sabbath happens to be on because they have fallen for a greater lie. They have been told that we no longer have to keep the Sabbath under the New Covenant because the Sabbath was part of the law that was nailed to the cross. Of course, those who are willing to study the subject will see that there is no basis for this claim. All we have to do to discover the truth is to understand the nature of the two covenants.

Simply put, under the old covenant, Israel had regulations, like feasts and animal sacrifices, which symbolically pointed forward to the death of Jesus (See Heb. 9:9). After Jesus died, those Jewish regulations that were symbols of the death of Christ were no longer needed because they were “a shadow of things to come,” so they all ended when Jesus died on the cross (Col. 2:17). That's why Paul said Jesus “wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross” (Col. 2:14). Ironically, some claim that this “handwriting of requirements” which Paul speaks of was the Ten Commandments. As a result, some Christians today claim that the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross, when this was not talking about the Ten Commandments at all.

The handwriting of requirements that were “against us” was a reference to the ceremonial laws God told Moses to write. While the commandments of

God were placed inside the Ark of the Covenant, God told Moses, “Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there as a witness against you” (Deut. 31:26). These laws, written by Moses and placed on the side of the ark, were laws regarding the Jewish feasts and sanctuary sacrifices. These were the laws that ended at the cross. The proof is in the next few verses. Paul says that since these sanctuary laws ended at the cross, “let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come” (Col. 2:16, 17).

Notice that when Paul talks about these laws that ended at the cross, he refers to them as food and drink laws, new moons, and festivals, along with Sabbaths. While those who don't study the Bible may conclude that this verse is saying the Sabbath was no longer valid after the cross, those who look at the context see that this has nothing to do with the fourth commandment. Think about it. Why would Paul say that the law is nailed to the cross, then start talking about foods, drinks, new moons, festivals, and Sabbaths? What do these things have to do with the Ten Commandments? Nothing! What do they have to do with the sanctuary laws? Everything!

Included in the sanctuary ceremonial laws that Moses wrote about were the laws about food and drink offerings. These laws also talked about the Jewish feasts, which were regulated around the new moon cycles, and were also called ceremonial Sabbaths. The Passover was called a “Sabbath.” The Feast of Tabernacles was called a “Sabbath.” The Day of Atonement feast was called “a Sabbath of solemn rest,”

which was to be kept aside from the regular Sabbath: “besides the Sabbaths of the Lord” (Lev. 23:32, 38). There was even “a Sabbath of solemn rest for the land,” which had nothing to do with the fourth commandment (Lev. 25:4). These were special ceremonial Sabbaths, which were symbolic.

When Paul said that the law was nailed to the cross, so don't let anyone judge you regarding food or drink, festivals, new moons, or Sabbaths, he was referring to “grain offerings, and drink offerings, at the feasts, the New Moons, the Sabbaths, and at all the appointed seasons of the house of Israel” (Eze. 45:17). Nehemiah uses the same language when talking about the sanctuary laws, referring to “the regular grain offering, for the regular burnt offering of the Sabbaths, the New Moons, and the set feasts; for the holy things” (Neh. 10:33). Repeatedly, the Bible refers to food and drink offerings, new moons, feasts or festivals, and Sabbaths, when talking about the old Jewish sanctuary service.

The Jewish feasts, also referred to as Sabbaths, like the Passover, ended when “Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us” (1 Cor. 5:7). Since Jesus died on the cross, we are no longer required to kill animals when we sin or observe Jewish feasts, but the fourth commandment, which says, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,” remains (Ex. 20:8). While some well-meaning pastors continue twisting the Bible, when we study the subject, it becomes clear that neither the Ten Commandments nor the Sabbath were ended at the cross. The things that were nailed to the cross were the sanctuary laws and requirements, which the Bible called “a shadow,” or symbol, of Christ (Heb. 10:1).

Lie – The Sabbath ended under the new covenant.

Today, many claim that the Sabbath ended under the new covenant, but the grounds for this belief are not supported by the Bible. While some would like you to think you have to be a great pastor or theologian to understand the new covenant, this is not true. While a deeper understanding of the topic requires a deeper study, the basic principles of the covenants are easy to understand. Let me illustrate. Often, before a person dies, they write their will, telling people who they are going to give their money and all their possessions to when they die. A person's will is officially called a "last will and testament."

The last will and testament begins the moment the person dies. When they breathe their last breath, their death starts their will. The Bible is broken into two parts; the Old Testament and the New Testament, which may also be called the old covenant and the new covenant. The New Testament, or the new covenant, was like the last will and testament of Jesus. The New Testament, or new covenant, could not begin until the death of Christ. The instant Jesus died, the new covenant began. Let me give you some proof.

Just before Jesus died, as they were eating the last supper, He held up his cup and said, "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). Jesus was saying that His death was the blood of the new covenant. Why did He say that? Because in order for the new covenant to start, someone had to die. The death of Jesus started the new covenant or New Testament. This is all confirmed in the New Testament book of Hebrews.

Hebrews tells us that Jesus “is the Mediator of the new covenant,” adding, “For where there is a testament [or covenant], there must also of necessity be the death of the testator,” that is, the one who made the covenant (Heb. 9:15, 16). Again, you notice the legal language here. The testator is the one who wrote out the last will and testament, also called a covenant. When the testator dies, the will begins. That means the instant Jesus died, the new covenant began. The Bible says, “The first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary” (Heb. 9:1). The first covenant revolved around the sanctuary service and its regulations, which were all “symbolic” (Heb. 9:9).

The moment the real Lamb of God died, these symbols ended. The old covenant ended. They were no longer needed because the real thing had come. There was no longer a need for the earthly sanctuary service. That is why, the moment Jesus “breathed His last,” “the veil of the temple was torn in two” (Mark 15:37, 38). The instant Jesus died, God tore the sanctuary veil, showing that the sanctuary service of the old covenant had ended, and the new covenant had begun.

At the death of Christ, the sanctuary sacrifices and feast days ended, but this had nothing to do with the law of God. In the new covenant, we find that the disciples no longer required circumcision, or feast days, or animal sacrifices, but they still called people to obey God’s law and His Sabbath. In fact, look at the very first thing we see the moment the new covenant begins. Again, the New Testament, or new covenant, began the instant Jesus died, but right after Jesus died, the first thing His followers did was rest on “the Sabbath according to the commandment” (Luke 23:56).

Keeping the Sabbath was the first thing the disciples did under the new covenant! You see, under the old covenant, the law, or Sabbath, was a sign “that I am the Lord your God” (Eze. 20:20). Under the new covenant, God takes the same law, with the Sabbath, and puts it in the heart as a sign that “they shall be My people” (Heb. 8:10). This is still a sign, but the new covenant is a symbol of the new birth, when the law comes into our hearts. So, under the new covenant, we love the whole law, including the Sabbath.

Since the Jews rejected the Sabbath and failed to enter God’s rest, there “remains therefore a rest for the people of God” under the new covenant (Heb. 4:9). And that’s what we find. After the cross, while the disciples no longer compelled circumcision or animal sacrifices, they continued to observe the Sabbath. Paul, who wasn’t even converted until after the new covenant began, continued to keep the Sabbath every week, “as his custom was” (Acts 17:2). And he didn’t just go into the synagogue to talk to the Jews. We are told that Paul “reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks,” where he continued “a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them” (Acts 18:4, 11). The Bible further says that “when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles begged that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath” (Acts 13:42). Outside of this, Acts 16:13 says that “on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met there.” While Jewish sanctuary laws ended, there is abundant evidence that Sabbath observance continued into the new covenant.

Lie – Since Paul preached on the first day, Sunday must be the new Sabbath.

One distraction people use as so-called evidence that Sunday is the new Sabbath is found in the book of Acts. Ironically, all through the same book, we find multiple examples of Paul worshipping on the seventh-day Sabbath, but some people pick out this one verse among all the other verses and use it to claim that Paul believed Sunday was the new Sabbath, because it says, “on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight” (Acts 20:7).

Again, while there are multiple examples of Paul preaching on the Sabbath, many take this one verse and use it to justify Sunday worship. However, most Christians who attend church on a regular basis will admit that their church at times has special services on different days of the week, outside of their specified day of worship, due to special circumstances. What was the special circumstance on this occasion? The Bible says that “Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight” (Acts 20:7).

So apparently, Paul had traveled to Philippi, where he stayed for one week. He was going to leave the next morning, so he stayed up late the night before his departure and presented a special message. Does this verse give us any evidence that God changed the Sabbath? Most will admit that it does not, but if you are not convinced yet, keep looking. There are more problems with this verse.

The text does not reference a church or a church service, nor does it mention anything about the Sabbath. It simply says that the disciples “came together to break bread” on the first day of the week. The problem is, in the very beginning of the book of Acts, we are told that the disciples were “daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house” (Acts 2:46). Every day, they went from house to house, preaching and breaking bread. So, just because the verse says that Paul was breaking bread and sharing a message should not be taken as evidence that he was declaring that day to be a holy day. Paul broke bread daily, and he reasoned “in the marketplace daily” (Acts 17:17). In spite of this, some try to use this late-night message of Paul as evidence that there was no real Sabbath or that any day can be the Sabbath. You may preach every day, but that does not remove the fact that God still holds one day as a sacred day.

Those who use this verse, which says Paul gave a message on the first day of the week, before going on a long trip, as the smoking gun evidence to prove that Sunday is the new Sabbath, are using a weak argument. Still, another problem exists with this verse that most people miss because of the time change.

According to the Bible, each new day starts at sunset. We find this all the way back in the beginning of the Bible, where we are told that “the evening and the morning were the first day” (Gen. 1:5). The idea of starting the new day at midnight was invented by the Romans, but it is not supported by Christians in the Bible. According to the Bible, each new day started at sunset, which means the first day of the week started on what we refer to as Saturday at sunset. If Paul came

together and spoke “until midnight” on the first day of the week, by the biblical records, that would have taken place on Saturday evening, lasting until midnight and beyond. That makes sense on many levels.

Again, we are told that “on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight” (Acts 20:7). Breaking bread together is a reference to having a meal together. So in light of what we just learned about the day starting at sunset, it looks like the apostles spent the seventh-day Sabbath together, had an evening meal, and then Paul continued to preach into the evening because he was going to leave the next morning, which would be Sunday morning. Biblically speaking, this is more accurate.

Still, even if this was not recorded in biblical time, and if it did take place on what we refer to as Sunday, the fact that Paul gave a talk is no evidence that he was endorsing a new Sabbath. Paul and the apostles continued to spread the gospel every chance they got. Paul “reasoned in the synagogue... daily” (Acts 17:17). On this occasion, he was preparing to leave the next morning, so he held a special meeting. All this proves is that when people are desperate to believe something, they will cling to almost anything. As a result, many pastors have taken every verse that refers to the first day of the week and tried to use them as evidence that Sunday is the new Sabbath, but those who are willing to look at each of these verses with an honest heart will be compelled to admit that these would not be sufficient evidence in a court of law to prove the Sabbath has been changed.

Lie – Romans 14:5 says we can worship on any day.

People often get in trouble by reading one or two verses, then trying to build a biblical case out of them while ignoring the context and the other verses on the same subject. Here is a prime example. In Romans 14:5, Paul says, “One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.” Many have interpreted this verse to suggest that it is talking about our day of worship, saying we can worship God on any day we choose. Of course, this would not make sense since Paul previously said, “the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good” (Rom. 7:12).

While Paul said, “keeping the commandments of God is what matters,” he was not afraid to say, “I have no commandment from the Lord” on certain issues (1 Cor. 7:19, 25). This is one of those issues. Notice in Romans 14:1, Paul says this is an issue about “disputes over doubtful things,” or things that are not clear. It is an issue that Paul has not been given a clear command from the Lord on, which means it is not talking about the Sabbath, which is one of the Ten Commandments. This becomes clear when we look at the context.

The first thing that is important to notice when studying this issue is that there is no reference to the Sabbath at all. Look all through the chapter, and you’ll find no reference to the Sabbath. That means those who claim this is talking about the Sabbath are simply inserting their own interpretation into the text. In all fairness, there are times when the text is not completely clear, and we must try to figure out what is being said, but in doing so, we must be extremely careful not to

add to the text something that is not there. Let us not get caught up on opinions but look at the evidence.

When we look at the context, we find exactly what Paul is talking about. The chapter begins and ends by talking about what we “eat” (Rom. 14:2, 21). Right before Paul starts talking about observing days, he says, “Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats” (Rom. 14:3). Then right after the mention of observing days, he says, “He who eats, eats to the Lord...and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat” (Rom. 14:6). Notice that Paul is talking about eating and not eating, or fasting. In those days, it was common to pick a certain day to fast on. This is still done today by many Christians and corporately by churches.

Now, tucked right in the middle of these verses about fasting, Paul starts talking about observing days. It doesn't take much to see that Paul is talking about fasting days. This may also include feast day fasts. Often, God's people would fast on feast days. On the Day of Atonement, God's people were called to fast or “afflict your souls” (Lev. 16:29; 23:27). Since feast days were also associated with fasting, these days that Paul addresses may reference both feast days and fast days. Of course, the observance of feast days ended at the cross. Since “Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us,” we are no longer required to keep the sanctuary laws or feast days (1 Cor. 5:7). That means sanctuary fast days are no longer required either.

In the context, clearly Paul is not talking about the Sabbath, telling us to ignore the command to obey the Sabbath, or telling us that we can worship on any day we choose. If he was trying to make that point, he

would have at least made some reference to the Sabbath. Instead, we see in the context that there is no reference to the Sabbath, but the chapter is immersed in talk about eating and drinking.

Paul is talking about food and fasting, telling us not to judge someone because they choose not to fast. You may remember that Jesus was addressed on this issue as well when the disciples of John approached Him and said, “Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?” (Mark 2:18). Jesus affirmed that fasting was not mandatory.

The point is still valid today. Some people have more difficulty fasting, while others may have health issues that prevent them from fasting. Paul was simply saying that fast days were not required by God. Let each person be fully convinced in their own mind about the issue of fasting days.

One may choose to fast any day they want to, but we cannot compel others on this issue since there is no clear command in the New Testament regarding a specific fast day. He who observes a day of fasting “observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord...and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat” (Rom. 14:6). Let each person decide for themselves.

Still, don't fall into the tragic deception that this is talking about the Sabbath. Not only is there no support for that idea, but there is abundant support that this is talking about food and fasting days. In order for someone to hold onto the belief that this was talking about the Sabbath, they would have to willfully ignore the context of the entire chapter itself.

Lie – Paul said to take collections on Sunday.

Today, some people claim that Paul affirmed Sunday as the Sabbath by telling Christians to take church offerings during Sunday services. To support this, they use the verse where Paul says, “On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come” (1 Cor. 16:2). Notice first that the verse says nothing about the Sabbath, worship, or the change of the Sabbath. While some claim Sabbath worship is implied, and while a shallow surface reading might give the impression that this is talking about church offerings, a deeper study will show that a Sunday church service is not implied at all.

First, let’s take the clearest evidence that shows this is not talking about Sunday worship. Look closely. Again, Paul says, “On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper.” If you “lay something aside” and are “storing up” as you prosper, you are not putting it in the offering plate, but you are saving it for the time when you can put it in with the collection. Laying aside money and storing it up implies that one is saving their money for the time when they can put it in with the collection.

Now let’s dig a little deeper into the context of what is taking place. Some of you may notice that in your Bible, where it says, “On the first *day*,” the word “*day*” is italicized. That is because the word does not actually appear in the original Greek. That means the original text doesn’t actually say anything about Sunday, the first day of the week. Instead, it says, “On the first of the week,” or, “On the first of the weeks.”

From the context, we may conclude that what Paul is saying is to lay aside the money first, before you spend it. Whether this is on Sunday, Monday, or whatever day doesn't matter. The point is, it is not talking about a church service at all, but about storing aside collection at home.

Beyond this, there is a broader context that is taking place, which gives more evidence that this is not talking about a Sunday church service. To help understand the context of this, pay attention to the words. Paul begins his appeal by saying, "Now concerning the collection for the saints" (1 Cor. 16:1). We see that there is no actual mention of money. While money may be involved, Paul never addresses money, so we don't know that the collections are exclusively financial. The idea that this is a collection plate of money is simply implied. This collection may be food, clothing, or other items.

Still, as we investigate, we find more details about the collection in question. We notice that Paul goes on to say that when he comes, he will "bear your gift to Jerusalem," which is in Judea (1 Cor. 16:3). A little study will show that this is a direct reference to a special collection that was being made during a time of famine. Agabus prophesied that "there was going to be a great famine throughout the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea" (Acts 11:28, 29). In the context, it appears as if the collection is a collection for famine relief to Jerusalem. We find more evidence of this later in Paul's next letter to those in Corinth.

In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul follows up by saying, “I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your bountiful gift beforehand” (2 Cor. 9:5). That generous gift that Paul is speaking of is the collection that was taken previously for famine relief. In this context, we find that this is not a weekly offering in a church service but a special collection, likely involving much more than money and including things like food, which would be more essential in times of famine.

Still, ignoring all that we know and simply taking the verse at face value, we see that Paul cannot be talking about passing an offering plate because he counsels the church to “lay something aside,” “storing as he may prosper.” Even if it is talking about saving money, it is not in the context of a church service. If Paul is talking about money, he might as easily be saying that one should save up their money, laying it aside before they spend it.

The fact that the word “day” is not found in the original text means this is not a “first-day text” or a Sunday reference, as some have claimed. To say “the first of the week” is like saying “at the beginning of the week,” as opposed to saying, “on Sunday.” There’s a big difference. In addition, there is some evidence that this is a plural reference to the “first of the weeks,” which is a reference to a specific festival, which also implies that it is not talking about a weekly collection. The bottom line is Paul never mentions the Sabbath, he does not give any specific advice on how to conduct a church service, and he is not addressing the weekly offering. And to use this weak excuse as proof that God changed one of the very commandments is dangerous.

Lie – Jesus changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday in honor of the resurrection.

Some say the fact that Jesus rose on the first day of the week proves that Sunday is the new Sabbath. Of course, that would be no different than saying, “The fact that Jesus died on Friday proves that Friday is the new Sabbath.” The act alone, without any verbal confirmation, proves nothing. Now, if Jesus said He was going to change the Sabbath to the first day, then the resurrection could have confirmed His previous statement. The statement, with the act, would give us clear confirmation, just as God did in the beginning. God verbally announced that He “blessed the seventh day and sanctified it,” then He confirmed it by an act when He “rested from all His work” (Gen. 2:3).

While we have the action of the resurrection, we have no verbal confirmation where God said He was going to change the Sabbath. On the contrary! All through the Old Testament, God confirmed that the Sabbath was on “the seventh day,” which is Saturday. In light of this, instead of proving that the Sabbath was changed to Sunday, the resurrection actually proves that the Sabbath was still on Saturday, the seventh day of the week. Think about it.

It seems kind of strange that Jesus waited until Sunday to rise from the grave. He died just before the Sabbath began, and then He arose again right after the Sabbath ended. Why did He wait in the tomb during the Sabbath? There must have been a reason, but it wasn't to make a new Sabbath. It was to affirm the Sabbath He already made. It's no coincidence that Jesus rested in the tomb until the Sabbath was over. Just as God rested

on the Sabbath after the work of creation, God rested on the Sabbath after completing the work of man's redemption, which is a symbol of our re-creation.

According to the Bible, the world was created through Jesus. We are told that "by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible" (Col. 1:16). "All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:3). Since Christians know that Jesus Himself is God, we also recognize that Jesus was the creative agent in creating the world. So when we are told that God created the world, this includes Jesus. When we see that "He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done," we see that this was Jesus who rested on the Sabbath from His work (Gen. 2:2). That is why Jesus is called the "Lord of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28). The same Jesus who rested on the Sabbath after completing the work of creation also rested after completing the work of redemption, proving that the Sabbath is still binding.

The truth is that the Sabbath *was* changed in honor of the resurrection, but it was not done by Jesus, and it is not supported by the Bible. History records the fact that the early Christian Church changed the day in honor of the resurrection with no support from the Bible. This was not done until long after the disciples died off. Catholics, in their own Catechism, admit, "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... because Christ rose from the dead on a Sunday" (Rev. Geiermann, *The Convert Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, p. 50, 2nd edition, 1910). Again, "Sunday is

a Catholic institution... From the beginning to the 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*, August 25, 1900).

Cardinal Gibbons challenges, "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 never sanctify" (Gibbons, *Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 111). Again we read, "Perhaps the boldest thing, the most revolutionary change the Church ever did, happened in the first century. The holy day, the Sabbath, was changed from Saturday to Sunday. 'The day of the Lord' was chosen, not from any direction noted in the Scriptures, but from the (Catholic) Church's sense of its own power...People who think that the Scriptures should be the sole authority, should logically become 7th Day Adventists, and keep Saturday holy" (*St. Catherine Church Sentinel*, Algonac, Michigan, May 21, 1995).

The quotes supporting this are endless, and yet the irony is that, while the Catholic Church itself says, "We changed the Sabbath without any support from the Bible," many Protestants, and even modern Catholics, remain in denial over their admission. Think about it. That would be like a criminal admitting to his crime and the judge saying, "No, you didn't do it." While even some Catholics deny their history, the multitude of quotes cannot be hidden. The Sabbath was changed in honor of the resurrection, but the change was not made by Jesus. History records that it was made by the Catholic Church without any support from the Bible.

Lie – All the church leaders who worship on Sunday can't be wrong about the Sabbath.

While the bulk of evidence clearly supports the biblical seventh-day Sabbath, many ignore the weight of evidence in the Bible to follow what their pastor or some church leader has told them. This is exactly what caused the downfall of many in the days of Christ. Many blindly followed the teaching of the Pharisees instead of looking for themselves to see what the Bible taught. As a result, all the faulty interpretations of the Scriptures adopted by the religious leaders of those days were embraced by the Jewish people. That's why Jesus called them "blind leaders of the blind" (Matt. 15:14). As a result, many souls were lost.

The difficulty some have is that these church leaders are so kind, or so godly, or so intelligent that their congregation cannot imagine how such persons could be wrong. But even with the best of intentions, one can be sincerely deceived. Sincerity is not a safe guide. This does not mean all these people who are deceived are lost. Whether lost or saved, who knows? God overlooks our sins of "ignorance" (Acts 17:30), but we must not follow in the same ignorance when God is revealing new nuggets of truth to us. David had multiple wives, but we cannot do the same. We would be guilty for committing the same sin that David committed because we have been given more light than David had in his darkened cultural surroundings. We are called to rise to a higher standard.

The Bible sadly informs us that the majority will not make it to heaven. The Bible says, "narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and

there are few who find it” (Matt. 7:14). This tragic loss of souls also includes many professed believers, leading Jesus to pronounce the warning, “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” (Matt. 7:22, 23). Sadly, the Bible suggests that the majority will be lost because, as Christ said, they “practice lawlessness,” as in, don’t follow all of God’s laws and commandments.

This tragic loss is not because God is not willing to save or has not opened the door of salvation to all. The reason so many are lost is because most people do not seek salvation personally but in groups. They follow the crowd. That’s why God warns, “You shall not follow a crowd to do evil” (Ex. 23:2). History recounts the horrors of those who have foolishly followed the crowd into deception and eternal death.

When you ask, “How could all the great pastors and religious leaders be wrong,” stop for a moment and recount the horrors of history. In the days of Noah, we are told that only “eight souls” were saved (1 Pet. 3:20). Why? Is it because they had no warning? Not at all! It is estimated that Noah warned them with tears for over one hundred years. They watched the animals miraculously walk into the ark two by two, but the scientists gave them a false explanation as to how this took place, and the people followed the crowd.

Look at the days of Christ. The Bible says, “He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him” (John 1:11). Basically, an entire nation rejected Christ

and was lost. Why? Was it because there was no evidence of His divinity? Of course not! It was because they followed their leaders instead of following Christ. So, are we doing the same thing today? Are we not following our leaders when the Bible says that “the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God,” and we instead choose to follow our pastors, who twist some obscure Bible verse to say that the Sabbath was done away with (Ex. 20:10)?

The Bible warns us that salvation in the last days will be no easier than it was in the past. Just as the days of Noah and the days of Christ, so in the end, the vast majority will be lost. The Bible says that in the final deception, “all the world marveled and followed the beast” (Rev. 13:3). Ironically, the faithful are identified as those who “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12). That’s why Jesus asked, “when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth” (Luke 18:8)? The implication is—very little. Still, God takes “no pleasure in the death of one who dies” (Eze. 18:32). We must be faithful.

It is not safe to follow the words of a pastor, or a friend, no matter how wise or sincere they seem to be. As long as we do this, we are in the same danger that the Jewish nation was when they followed “the commandments of men” (Matt. 15:9). The Bible is clear. Even well-meaning Christian friends may twist verses. Even sincere pastors may explain away issues in theological words. Church leaders may try to shrug off the great importance of God’s word, but we must be faithful. Let us follow the counsel of Peter and the other apostles who said, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

Couldn't you use a little hope?

HOPE TRACTS



**FREE BIBLE
STUDIES**

**MAKE PRAYER
REQUESTS**

**WATCH VIDEOS
ONLINE**

**READ AND DOWNLOAD
BOOKS AND TRACTS**

**PURCHASE MATERIALS
AND GET INVOLVED!**

www.hopetracts.com

HOPE TRACTS

\$1.99

ISBN 978-1-946602-27-5

50199>



9 781946 602275

www.hopetracts.com