

God's Weekly Special Day

This paper was prepared to assist God's people to better understand the **Sabbath**, the special day of the week when most secular tasks are set aside and priority is given to worshipping and communing with our Savior. We begin by examining the account of creation as detailed in **Genesis chapter one**. All verses are from the King James Bible.

Creation

The first question we ask is how many days did God spend creating during the initial week of earth's history? Most people will answer: six days. But the correct answer, as you will discover, is actually seven days.

Genesis chapter one describes the first six days of creation when God made the physical earth along with its animal and human inhabitants. Note the following excerpts from the indicated verses in Genesis one that describe how God created:

- 1) **Verse 3**: "And God said, Let there be light..."
- 2) **Verse 6**: "And God said, Let there be a firmament..."
- 3) **Verse 9**: "And God said, Let the waters...be gathered together...let the dry land appear..."
- 4) **Verse 11**: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass..."
- 5) **Verse 14**: "And God said, Let there be lights..."
- 6) **Verse 20**: "And God said, Let the waters bring forth...the moving creature..."

The above pattern is obvious. God created by simply and directly speaking elements and creatures into existence.

There is another pattern in **Genesis chapter one**:

- 1) **Verse 5**: "...And the evening and the morning were the first day."
- 2) **Verse 8**: "...And the evening and the morning were the second day."

Compare the above with **verses 13, 19, 23, and 31** which continue the same pattern. Each day (24-hour period) is described as beginning at evening and then, obviously, ending (closing) the following evening. From the beginning of earth's history, a day is defined as beginning and ending at even (sundown).

The Seventh Day of Creation

Now move to **Genesis chapter two**. Verses two and three tell about the seventh day. Verse two specifies that God rested the seventh day and ended His work of **physical creation**. But God still created on the seventh day because, in verse three, He declared (made) the day blessed and sanctified, a **creative, supernatural act!**

Here's the exact text from **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. 3 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."

It's vitally important to note the contrast between the first six days and the seventh day of creation. The description of the first six days each closes with a simple statement indicating it had ended. The seventh day received much greater prominence as it was described as blessed and sanctified, and connected with rest.

Now did God really need to rest after speaking the creation into existence? We consult Scripture for our answer. **Isaiah 40:28** reads, "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?..."

So if God does not get tired, why did He highlight His resting on the seventh day of creation? Could it be that His rest was an example for mankind (beginning with Adam and Eve) to follow? Indeed the fourth commandment (**Exodus 20:8-11**, which we will examine in short order) links the command for mankind to rest on the seventh day to the fact that God rested after creating the physical world.

Here are some additional, important facts we must remember in connection with **Genesis 2:2-3**:

- 1) The blessing and sanctification God bestowed on the seventh day makes no reference to any human input or activity. God simply spoke His blessing on the day in like manner as He declared into reality the entire physical creation.
- 2) The seventh day was sanctified (set aside for a holy use) at least **2000 years before the first Jew** (Abraham) was even born. Thus, as stated in **Mark 2:27**, "...The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." Conclusion: the Sabbath was made for all mankind to observe.
- 3) The seventh-day Sabbath was instituted **before** sin entered the world. Thus, the weekly Sabbath is NOT part of the ceremonial Sabbaths (Passover, Feast of Weeks, Day of Atonement, etc.) While the ceremonial Sabbaths (see **Leviticus 23**) anticipated (looked forward to) the cross (Christ's sacrifice) and beyond, the seventh-day Sabbath looks back and celebrates the finished work of creation which established (reinforced) God as sovereign.

Unique Words That Identify God's Special Day

We have discovered, in **Genesis 2:2-3**, several unique words God used to signify His special day: blessed and sanctified, both connected with rest. Now let's examine some other verses that round out and verify the list we are compiling.

Exodus 20:8-11 reads, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the **seventh day is the sabbath** of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

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.”

Note how the fourth commandment ties back to **Genesis 2:2-3** and adds the words holy and hallowed to our list.

Exodus 16:23-25 is part of a larger story about how God provided manna to the children of Israel in the food-deficient wilderness. A daily allotment of manna fell on the first five days of each week. Then on the sixth day, a double portion was sent from heaven so that the people could collect sufficient food to provide for the seventh day (Sabbath). Within this context the verses read:

“23 And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe [boil, cook] that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning. 24 And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein. 25 And Moses said, Eat that to day; for to day is a sabbath unto the Lord: to day ye shall not find it in the field.”

Please note that this account occurred before God gave the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai (as recorded in **Exodus 20**). Thus God had previously given His laws to His people before Moses received the Ten Commandments written by God on the mountain. The above Bible passage demonstrates how God made a **big deal** about what day of the week, the seventh or last day of the week, was special (holy) to Him and His people.

So to summarize, the unique words God used to specify His special day, the Sabbath, are:

- 1) Blessed
- 2) Sanctified
- 3) Holy
- 4) Hallowed
- 5) Rest

The preceding words are only applied to the seventh day (Saturday) of the weekly cycle. They are never linked to the first day (Sunday) of the week, on a weekly basis, anywhere in the Bible.

God Expresses His Sovereignty Over the Earth via the Weekly Cycle

Humanity recognizes various units or divisions of time:

- 1) Year – determined by how long it takes the earth to make one orbit around the sun.
- 2) Month – calculated by the approximate time it takes for the moon to make one orbit around the earth.
- 3) Day – the amount of time it takes for the earth to completely rotate on its axis.

The above time frames could easily be determined by mankind all around the world, whether or not they possessed a Christian world view. But God made the **week** by speaking it into existence, without connection to the movement of celestial bodies. It's as though God desired to place His mark on man's chronological reckoning so all people might have opportunity to know that He is the creator.

The Dictionary Proclaims the True Sabbath

Have you ever looked up "Sabbath" in a **dictionary**? A dictionary often gives multiple definitions for a given word, but it always specifies the most common or most prominent definition, first. Following are the first two definitions of "Sabbath."

Sabbath:

- 1) The seventh day of the week, Saturday, as the day of rest and religious observance among the Jews and some Christians. **Exodus 20:8-11**.
- 2) The first day of the week, Sunday...

Why do you think the seventh day (Saturday) is featured in the first definition when less than 5% of Christians seek to keep holy the seventh day of the week? Could it be that the Holy Spirit has preserved this witness, even in this secular, yet reputable book?

Blessings Promised for Sabbath Keeping

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: 14 Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and **I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob** thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Isaiah 56:1-7: "Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. 2 Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. 3 Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. 4 For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant; 5 Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. 6 Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; 7 **Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful** in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people."

Note, the "sons of strangers" (non-Israelites) were also to observe the Sabbath.

Jeremiah 17:21-25: “Thus saith the Lord; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem; 22 Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the **sabbath day**, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers. 23 But they obeyed not, neither inclined their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction. 24 And it shall come to pass, if ye diligently hearken unto me, saith the Lord, to bring in no burden through the gates of this city on the sabbath day, but hallow the sabbath day, to do no work therein; 25 Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David, riding in chariots and on horses, they, and their princes, the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: **and this city shall remain for ever.**”

Yes, God promises good things to those who honor and keep His weekly Sabbath on the seventh day of the week.

Consequences for Breaking the Sabbath

Numbers 15:32-36: “And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. 33 And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. 34 And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. 35 And the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. 36 And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and **stoned him with stones, and he died;** as the Lord commanded Moses.”

Jeremiah 17:27: “But if ye will not hearken unto me to hallow the sabbath day, and not to bear a burden, even entering in at the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day; then will **I kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem,** and it shall not be quenched.”

Nehemiah 13:15-18: “In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the **sabbath day**: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals. 16 There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. 17 Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? 18 Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? **Yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.**”

There are negative consequences predicted for those who fail to keep holy the Sabbath of the Lord.

The True Sabbath is a Sign that Differentiates God's People from all Others

Exodus 31:16-17: “Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the **sabbath** throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. 17 It is a sign

between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.”

Ezekiel 20:12-13: “Moreover also I gave them my **sabbaths**, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them. 13 But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them.”

Keeping the weekly seventh-day Sabbath demonstrates our connection and affiliation with the true God.

New Testament Sabbath Observance

Luke 4:16: “And he [Jesus] 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.”

Jesus habitually kept the seventh-day Sabbath and worshipped at the synagogue.

Mark 6:1-3: “And he [Jesus] went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him. 2 And when the **sabbath day** was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary...”

Since both these texts connect the Sabbath with attendance at the Jewish synagogue, we can know for sure that the seventh day (Saturday) is in view.

But many will say that the Sabbath was changed to Sunday only after the death of Jesus. So we now turn to the testimony of the Apostle Paul. Paul became converted to Christianity at least five years after Christ’s death and resurrection. Yet Paul, at least six times, is described as attending and customarily speaking in the synagogue on the **Sabbath** (obviously on the day we call Saturday as this was connected to the Jewish house of worship):

Acts 13:14: “But when they [includes Paul, see verse 13] departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the **sabbath day**, and sat down.”

Acts 13:42: “And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.”

(See verse 16 for identification of Paul.) Especially note that Paul preached to the gentiles. If the **gentiles** were supposed to attend church on Sunday, Paul surely would have spoken to them in a place other than the synagogue, as the synagogue was devoted to worship on the seventh day of the week! Also, Paul would have preached to them on Sunday, not on Sabbath (what we call Saturday, as Paul was preaching in the synagogue).

Acts 13:44: “And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of god.” The setting was in the synagogue, as per verse 42. See verse 16 for identification of Paul.

Acts 17:2: “And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and **three sabbath days** reasoned with them out of the scriptures.” Notice the emphasis on Paul’s custom of Sabbath keeping.

Acts 18:4: “And he [Paul, see verse 1] reasoned in the synagogue **every sabbath**, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.” Again, Paul is reaching out to non-Jews (in this case, the Greeks) in the synagogue, thus indicating that Paul did not reckon Sunday as the New Testament Sabbath. Additionally, the words “every Sabbath” (see above verse) signify **78 consecutive Sabbaths** as confirmed in **verse 11 of Acts 18** which states: “And he [Paul] continued there a year and six months...” (A year and six months equals 78 [52 + 26] weeks and thus 78 Sabbaths.)

Acts 16:13: “And on the sabbath we (see verse 9 for identification of Paul) 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.”

We must logically conclude that Paul’s habitual practice was to observe the seventh-day Sabbath.

Proportionally, the Word “Sabbath” is Found More Times in the New Testament than in the Old Testament

The word “Sabbath” is found 112 times in the Old Testament and 60 times in the New Testament. **But** the Old Testament is much longer than the New Testament. It’s quite interesting that the word “Sabbath” is found:

- 1) Once, on average, every 6.24 pages...in the Old Testament.
- 2) Once, on average, every 3.6 pages...in the New Testament.

Thus, **proportionately**, the word “Sabbath” occurs almost twice as often in the New Testament as it does in the Old Testament. So don’t let anyone tell you that the Sabbath is mainly an Old Testament concept that is no longer valid for the New Testament Christian.

Who or What can Change God’s Laws (Including the Sabbath)?

- 1) The church board? **NO!**
- 2) Christian ministers? **NO!**
- 3) TV evangelists? **NO!**
- 4) The World Council of Churches? **NO!**
- 5) The United Nations? **NO!**
- 6) The Pope? **NO!**
- 7) God? **Yes! But He would only expect us to worship on another day (Sunday) if He directly and plainly told us about the change!**

It is interesting that both God the Father and Jesus declare themselves to be eternally consistent:

Malachi 3:6: “For I am the Lord, I change not...”

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

Thus, the default is that the seventh day (Saturday) is still the Sabbath unless God specifically tells us otherwise in His Holy Word.

Attacks Against the Truth were Predicted Long Ago in Scripture

Daniel 7:23-27: “Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and **think to change times and laws**: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”

Acts 20:29-32: “For I know this, that after my (Paul) departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, **I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace**, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”

1 John 2:18-19: “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

Ecclesiastes 1:9: “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.”

The devil is at constant war with the truth and practices (including Sabbath keeping) of God. Just look to past history to see how God's people will be persecuted in the future for keeping the true Sabbath! Remember **1 Peter 5:8:** “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

New Testament Scriptures that Speak about the First Day (Sunday) of the Week

Note: Remember that the most common reason offered for Sunday keeping is that Jesus' resurrection occurred on the first day of the week.

God has the authority to change His holy day from Saturday to Sunday (or any other day). But if He desired for Christians to hallow another day of the week, God would have surely and specifically declared the change and provided instruction on how the new "Sabbath" was to be kept. Let us examine the verses in the New Testament that speak about the first day of the week.

Note: The next five references basically duplicate each other! Three of them make it quite clear that the Sabbath is the day (Saturday) before the first day of the week (Sunday).

Matthew 28:1: "In the end [Greek "opse" = late in the day] 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 sepulcher."

Mark 16:1-2; "And when the Sabbath was past (Greek "diagenomenou" = through), Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint Him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came to the sepulcher at the rising of the sun."

Mark 16:9: "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven devils."

Luke 23:54 – 24:1: "And the day was the preparation, and the **Sabbath** drew on. And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how His body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment. Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher, bringing spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them."

This passage speaks volumes! Here we have a group of women, close followers of Jesus, who desired to serve their master even during His death. They sought to embalm His body. Yet they delayed a whole day because they rested on the Sabbath in observance of the fourth commandment.

Just think, if there was ever an excuse to violate the **Sabbath**, surely this scenario would warrant a little "bending of the rules." After all, the women were not going to make any money for their service. They surely would gain no social status by their efforts. There were no selfish motives to cloud their work. Yet they gave priority to keeping the Sabbath holy, even though such devotion prevented them from preparing their Lord's dead body in a timely manner.

Now consider that the women were perfectly comfortable in “embalming” Jesus’ body on Sunday morning. Thus these women certainly did not consider resurrection Sunday as a new Sabbath day. (So why should you?)

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

The previous verses, instead of supporting the transfer of the Sabbath to the first day of the week, actually confirm that the Sabbath is the day before Sunday, that is Saturday.

Note: Later, on that same resurrection Sunday, the disciples – grieving and afraid – assemble together, not to worship, but “for fear of the Jews.” (That is, they were **hiding**.) See the following verse.

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.”

Note **John 20:26** says that “after eight days again...” (that would be Monday night [Roman time]) the above scenario was repeated. Thus, if verse 19 was meant to declare Sunday as the new Sabbath, then the next week the Sabbath was changed again to Monday!

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 till midnight.”

Consider these points:

Nowhere in this passage is the day called holy, hallowed, sacred, blessed, sanctified, or anything similar. No language even comes close to declaring that this day is now a “new Sabbath.”

+An individual can preach on any day of the week. Preaching is not limited to the Sabbath day. Indeed many denominations today put on evangelistic campaigns where they conduct preaching services on four or five different days of the week for several weeks running.

+Paul’s visit to Troas (see **Acts 20:6**) was part of a larger missionary journey (review **Acts 20:1-13**) where Paul ministered in a number of places including Madedonia, Greece, Syria, Asia, and Troas, etc. Paul undoubtedly preached/exhorted on every day of the week, at some point. So preaching certainly does not, of itself, indicate that the given day is the Sabbath.

+The above verse itself indicates that “Paul was ready to depart on the morrow.” This was a last opportunity for him to preach to this group of individuals for some time. Why wouldn’t he take advantage of the occasion?

+The act of “breaking bread” could indicate observance of the Lord’s supper or it could refer to the common, daily practice of eating as indicated in the following two verses:

---**Acts 2:46-47**: “And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

---**Matthew 15:33-36**: “And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude? 34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? 35 And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. 36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and **brake them**, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.” (4,000 men besides women and children)

Following is an example where “breaking bread” refers to what some call the Lord’s Table or the Lord’s Supper:

Luke 22:19: “And he [Jesus] took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.” But this particular event occurred on Thursday night, which in Bible parlance is considered Friday. Yet no Bible researcher uses this text to try to prove that the Sabbath was changed to Friday!

Here’s our next “Sunday” passage:

1 Corinthians 16:1-3: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 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. 3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.”

See the underlined words above: “lay by him in store.” No where in the text is the slightest hint that this phrase/text has to do with giving an offering on the church premises. Commenting on the phrase “lay by him,” two prominent Greek specialists render these words:

- 1) “put by at home” (Vincent Word Studies)
- 2) “by himself, in his home” (Robertson’s New Testament Word Pictures)

Essentially the words “lay by him in store” signify “to amass items at home.”

Again, the above text says absolutely nothing about the first day of the week being holy, hallowed, sacred, blessed, sanctified, or anything similar. Instead it actually says just the opposite. It says to do your bookkeeping and manage the details of your finances on the first of the week. Don’t defile the sabbath (7th day) with such activity.

Paul was simply asking Christians to put aside some resources so that they would be “at the ready” for him to pick up for transport to Jerusalem to help provide for the temporal needs of the Jerusalem believers who were facing financial hardship.

Remember, the purpose for collecting these emergency funds ENDED over 1900 years ago. The designated recipients of the emergency funds (the impoverished saints in Jerusalem) and the collector (Paul) of the donations are all dead! Thus the above verse no longer applies to us, except the continuing general principle of assisting our brethren during harsh, economic times.

Note: A corollary passage to **1 Corinthians 16:2** is **Romans 15:26**: “For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.”

Finally, our original verse above, **1 Corinthians 16:2**, says nothing about:

- The first day being a new Sabbath.
- People gathering at church.
- Worshipping God.
- Support for apostles, elders, or evangelism.

Two Other Texts Commonly Used to “Prove” that Sunday is the New Testament Sabbath

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

This verse speaks about the apostle John’s experience when he was banished on the Isle of Patmos (see **verse 9**). This verse, of itself, does not specify what day of the week John is referring to. This is the only verse in the New Testament that uses the exact phrase, “Lord’s day.” And just like other texts we have reviewed, the day is not called holy, blessed, hallowed, or sanctified. The passage certainly does not discuss any transfer of holiness from the seventh day to the first day of the week.

It’s likely that the Phrase “Lord’s day” refers to the seventh-day Sabbath based on **Matthew 12:8**: “For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.” (See **Mark 2:28** for a similar verse.)

Acts 2:1-41: (You will need to look up this passage on your own.) These verses describe the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended in a dramatic way and 3,000 people were baptized. This event likely happened on Sunday since Pentecost occurred 50 days after the Sabbath when Christ rested in the tomb.

But once again, **Acts 2** does not speak of that day being holy, nor does it call that day the Sabbath, even though the lengthy passage includes 41 verses. In fact, Pentecost occurred on a different day each year, cycling through the days of the week (just like your birthday). Pentecost just happened to fall, that year, on Sunday.

As we consider the above texts that mention the first day of the week, it's interesting to note the following quote from Easton's Bible Dictionary that closes a discussion about the supposed transfer of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. It reads:

"True, we can give no text authorizing the change in so many words. We have no express law declaring the change. But there are evidences of another kind. We know for a fact that the first day of the week has been observed from apostolic times, and the necessary conclusion is, that it was observed by the apostles and their immediate disciples."

Our reaction: We give a hearty "amen" to the first two sentences which correctly state there is indeed no express biblical command that declares Sunday (the first day of the week) as the New Testament Sabbath. But the rest of the paragraph contains terribly flawed logic! It effectively says that because later generations esteemed Sunday, the apostles must have kept that day holy. This reasoning is about as ridiculous as saying that because young children are found playing unsupervised in the street, their parents must have told them to do so.

Isn't it interesting that **none** of the New Testament "first day" verses we have examined declare the first day (Sunday) to be the new Sabbath. Also, **none** of the "first day" texts people commonly use to try to prove the "Sunday Sabbath" include or even refer to our Lord's resurrection.

God's Ten-Commandment Law: It's All or Nothing (Baby!)

James 2:10-12: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. 11 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. 12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."

These verses proclaim that the Ten Commandments are essentially a non-divisible unit. You and I do NOT have liberty to pick and choose which of the Ten Commandments we will endeavor to follow. It's all or nothing. Many so-called Christian churches have sought to put away the Ten Commandments (we are under grace now) in their effort to sever themselves from the obligation to keep the fourth commandment (the seventh-day Sabbath).

DEMONSTRATION: Fill a balloon with air. Next take a felt pen and write on the balloon all the numerals from one to ten. Pretend that the balloon represents the Ten Commandments. Then say that you believe all the Ten Commandments are still binding (valid), except the fourth! Now take a needle and push it into the numeral four...and watch what happens (kaboom!). Review again the above passage (**James 2:10-12**). When you do away with the Saturday Sabbath, you effectively destroy all the Ten Commandments. Then think of the new world you would thus create...one where Christians could freely steal, kill, and commit adultery, etc..!

Romans 3:31: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." New Testament faith does not nullify the law of God.

Romans 6:14-15: “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.” Notice that “being under **grace**” does NOT give us permission to sin. Now combine this fact with the message of the following verse:

1 John 3:4: “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” Now since sin is defined as breaking God’s law, then the above verse (**Romans 6:14-15**) could read, “shall we break God’s law...God forbid”

So if we combine the content of the four above passages, we understand that an individual sins if he or she does not keep holy God’s seventh-day Sabbath since the Sabbath is part of God’s eternal law which is still valid today.

Let’s Keep God’s Law, Including the Seventh-Day Sabbath

Acts 5:27-29: “And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, 28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us. 29 Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.”

When the apostles were brought before **corrupt church leaders**, the apostles declared they would follow the word of God, no matter what.

Mark 7:7-9: “Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. 8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. 9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Without truth, our worship of God is in vain (Greek meaning: invalid, useless, futile).

Human tradition must not replace the express commands of God!

Matthew 7:13-14: “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

Truth is not determined by what the majority (even Christian leaders) believe. The words of Scripture supersede all of mankind’s thinking and pronouncements.

Commandment Keeping Linked to Love for Jesus

John 15:10-11: “If ye keep my [Jesus’] commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.”

John 14:15: “If ye love me [Jesus], keep my commandments.”

You see, commandment keeping isn't for everyone. Obeying God's commandments is **only** for those who love Jesus!

The Sabbath to be Kept After Christ's Resurrection, Even in Heaven

Matthew 24:1-2, 17-20: "And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down [...] 17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day." (Review again verses one and two.)

Jerusalem was destroyed (once again) in 70 A.D., around 39 years after Christ's death.

Isaiah 66:22-23: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. 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."

The above verses indicate that the **Sabbath** will be observed in heaven. (Notice the timing connected with God's future creation of "new heavens and the new earth").

Question: Why would God designate the seventh day as the Sabbath in the Old Testament...and then change the Sabbath to Sunday in the New Testament...and then change the Sabbath back to the seventh day once His people are taken to heaven, per the above text? (This approach would amount to "spiritual whiplash!")

Conclusion

Throughout the Bible, including **both** the Old & New Testaments, God's people are commanded to keep holy the seventh-day Sabbath. Jesus observed the seventh-day Sabbath and so did Paul, even after Christ's death and resurrection. There is not a directive in the entire Bible to keep the first day (Sunday) holy. If we love Jesus, we will seek to keep all of the Ten Commandments, including the fourth commandment, which authorizes the seventh-day Sabbath. May God give you grace and strength to follow His complete will.

For those who are spiritual leaders, please think carefully, once again, about the following passage:

Mark 7:7-9: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For **laying aside the commandment of God**, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition."

Feel free to contact the author if you have any questions or if you simply want to discuss this paper: andrew.manthe@att.net.