



Truth For These Times



12. THE SABBATH



Some Christians keep Saturday as a day of rest, and worship, while others keep Sunday. In both groups can be found many sincere Christians, but there are many who have never stopped to consider why they keep a certain day. It is really a custom; something handed down from one generation to another, but in most cases, no personal examination has been made to discover the reason why. God's word, the Bible, is the Christian's authority, so here we will find the answer to the question, "Which day should Christians keep?"

Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on THE LORD'S DAY, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet.

One thing is certain, Christ has a special day in the New Testament era, and here it is referred to as the "Lord's Day". But which day is the Lord's day? This text does not say; it simply states that He has a day. The answer becomes clear in other texts of Scripture.

Matthew 12:8 **For the Son of Man is LORD EVEN OF THE SABBATH.**

If Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath as this text clearly states, then the Sabbath is the Lord's day. No other day has been set aside for worship other than the Sabbath, which today is commonly called Saturday. In Isaiah 58:13, the Sabbath is called "MY HOLY DAY"

Exodus 20:8-11 REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH of the LORD your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates. FOR *IN SIX DAYS* THE LORD MADE THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

There are many who say all is well providing we worship one day in seven, but God is specific. He says; "Remember the SABBATH day", not any other day. He further states, "The SEVENTH DAY is the Sabbath". A Look at most calendars shows Saturday to be the seventh day. Some modern calendars have made a change in the order of the days of the week, but this is a very recent change.

John 1:1-3 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and THE WORD WAS GOD. He was in the beginning with God. ALL THINGS WERE MADE THROUGH HIM, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

The "Word" in this chapter is Christ (see verse 14). Here we see that nothing was made without Christ. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit all co-operated in the creation of this world. If Christ therefore is responsible for the existence of all things, then He also made the Sabbath.

Many say the Sabbath is Jewish, but in fact, the Sabbath came into being at least 2,500 years before the Jewish race was born. Because Christ made the Sabbath, it would be more correct to say that the Sabbath is Christian, not Jewish. (Also see Ephesians 3:9).

Luke 4:16 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And AS HIS CUSTOM WAS, HE WENT INTO THE SYNAGOGUE ON THE SABBATH DAY, and stood up to read.



It was the practice of Jesus to attend church on Sabbath all His earthly life.

When Christ was in the flesh, and lived on this earth, how did He regard the Sabbath? This text shows His habit of Sabbath observance and church attendance. He made it, but He also kept it. He is our example.

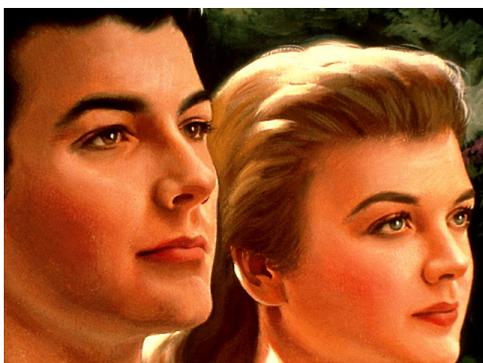
Hebrew 13:8 JESUS CHRIST IS THE SAME yesterday, today, and FOREVER.

Man changes his views and ideas, but God is perfect – He never changes. In His sight good is always good and evil is always evil. His principles of righteousness are eternal.

Genesis 2:1-3 Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. And 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.

Here is this world's first Sabbath. God set the example by working six days and resting on the seventh. Notice how He blessed this day. To bless means to make happy, but obviously it has a deeper meaning than the mere surface happiness – it involves real satisfaction. Secondly, God sanctified it, or “set it apart” for a holy use. It was a day different from all other days. No matter how sincerely a person may keep another day other than the Sabbath, it does not make it a holy day. Only God can make a day holy. Thirdly, it is a rest day.

Mark 2:27 And He said to them, **THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN, and not man for the Sabbath.**



God gave the Sabbath to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

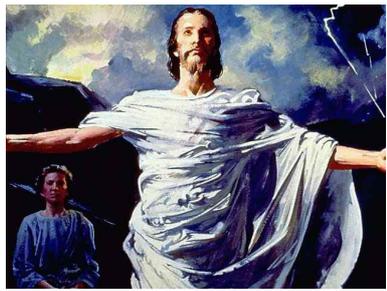
The Jews had placed many man-made requirements on Sabbath observance, and made it a burden instead of a happy day. Jesus came to show them how to keep it. He pointed out that it was made FOR man. It was made to be a blessing to him, not a burden. He also said it was made for MAN. It was not made for the Jew only, but for mankind.

How can we locate the seventh day in the Bible?

Mark 15:42; 16:1,2 Now when evening had come, because it was the PREPARATION DAY, that is, THE DAY BEFORE THE SABBATH. Now WHEN THE SABBATH WAS PAST, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. Very early in

the morning, on THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen.

The day before the Sabbath is called the preparation. The day after the Sabbath is called the first day of the week. The Sabbath is the seventh day. Today we call the preparation – Friday, and the first day – Sunday, so Saturday is the seventh day of the Bible.

PREPARATION DAY FRIDAY	SABBATH SATURDAY	FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK SUNDAY
		
<i>Christ on the Cross</i>	<i>Christ in the Tomb</i>	<i>Christ Resurrected</i>

Some feel that time has been lost and we cannot be certain. This is a good observation, but let us consider evidence from three areas:

1. The Jews have always been very strict regarding Sabbath observance and would never change. Today they still observe Saturday. They were wrong in rejecting the true Messiah – Christ, but are right regarding the day of worship.
2. The calendar underwent a change when transferring from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar. A number of days were omitted in the new calendar, thus changing the dates – but the SEQUENCE OF THE DAYS OF THE WEEK DID NOT CHANGE. The same weekly cycle continued from Sunday through to Saturday.
3. Archaeologists have uncovered many clay tablets, and on some are recorded eclipses. These are Babylonian Tablets, made many years before Christ. Any astronomer will testify to the accurate timing of the movements of heavenly bodies such as the sun, moon and stars. An eclipse can be predicted with split second timing. Examining the Babylonian tablets it can be calculated that we have not lost one thousandth of a second in time, let alone a whole day.

Luke 23:54,56; 24:1 That day was the PREPARATION, and the SABBATH DREW NEAR. Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they RESTED ON THE SABBATH ACCORDING TO THE COMMANDMENT. Now on THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, very early in the morning, they, and certain *other women* with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.



Even when Jesus was crucified, they waited until after the Sabbath to embalm His body.

Once again the Sabbath is located. The book of Luke was written twenty-eight years after the resurrection, but still the record says they “rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment”. If a change was made in the day of worship, here is the ideal place to record it.

Leviticus 23:32 It *shall be* to you a sabbath of *solemn* rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth *day* of the month at evening, FROM EVENING TO EVENING, YOU SHALL CELEBRATE YOUR SABBATH.

Even refers to evening, or the first part of darkness after the sunsets. God commanded His people to observe the sabbaths, not from midnight to midnight as we do today, but from sunset to sunset. When the sun sets on Friday evening, Sabbath opens. When the sun sets on Saturday evening the Sabbath closes. (See Nehemiah 13:19 note the word *dark*).

Ezekiel 20:12 Moreover I also gave them My SABBATHS, TO BE A SIGN BETWEEN THEM AND ME, that they might know that I *am* the LORD who sanctifies them.

To keep the true Sabbath is a sign that we belong to the true God of heaven. Sabbath observance indicates to the world that we are giving our allegiance to the Creator. It was true of literal Israel and is true of Spiritual Israel (i.e. those who accept Christ. Galatians 3:29.); for no change in the day of worship has been recorded.

Isaiah 66:22,23 “For as the new heavens and the NEW EARTH Which I will make And it shall come to pass *that* from one New Moon to another, and FROM ONE SABBATH TO ANOTHER, ALL FLESH SHALL COME TO WORSHIP BEFORE ME,” says the LORD.



We will keep the Sabbath in the New Earth.

In the new earth, which God has promised to the faithful, the Sabbath will be observed. The Sabbath was made before man sinned and it was kept by God and sinless man. When man sinned he still kept the day. The Israelites kept it; Jesus Christ kept it and so did His followers. There is no record of a change. Then when sin is finished forever, man will still be keeping the Sabbath.

Many people follow the crowd. They keep Sunday as a day of worship because most others do. Surely it is better to do what is right. It is better to obey God rather than man. What did Christ want us to do with His holy day? He asks us to remember it. He is the Creator, the Lawgiver and the Redeemer. He said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments”. John 14:15.

Today God is calling men back to keep the commandments. Friend, is your Sabbath-keeping in harmony with God’s commandments? God has given the Sabbath to be a blessing, and rightly kept, it will bring happiness both now, and in eternity. Remember the words of our Saviour, “If ye love me, keep my commandments”.

Review Sheet – The Sabbath

Assignment: Read the Bible study carefully before answering the following questions.

1. What special day did John speak of in the book of Revelation? Revelation 1:10
And I was in the Spirit on _____.
2. Of what special day does Christ claim to be Lord? Matthew 12:8
“For the Son of man is _____”
3. Which day did God command should be kept? Exodus 20:8
Remember _____ ... But the _____.
4. Who made all things, including the Sabbath? John 1:1-3
The Word ... All things _____.
5. Which day did Jesus observe as the Sabbath? Luke 4:16
As His custom was, _____.
6. What three things did God do when He first made the Sabbath? Gen 2:1-3
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____.
7. For whom did God make the Sabbath? Mark 2:27
And He said to them “_____”
8. What is the day before, and the day after the Sabbath called? Mark 15:42; 16:1,2
Friday: 1. The _____.
Sunday: 2. _____.
9. What did Jesus’ followers do on the Sabbath He was in the tomb? Luke 23:54,56; 24:1
Spices and fragrant oils. And they _____
_____.
10. When should the Sabbath commence and finish? Leviticus 23:32
From evening (sunset) _____, _____.”
11. How is Sabbath observance a distinguishing factor in favour of the child of God? Ezekiel 20:12
I gave them _____, _____.
12. How long will Sabbath observance continue? Isaiah 66:22,23
The new earth which I will make ... from one Sabbath _____,
_____.”

Do you believe Saturday is the true Sabbath? YES _____ NO _____
Is it your plan to keep God’s Sabbath day holy? YES _____ NO _____