

Is Sabbath Keeping Essential to Be a Real Christian? sermonaudio.com

Former SDA Pastor Answers This

Is Sabbath Keeping Essential

By Larry Wessels

Bible Text: Acts 15:19-20; Acts 2:46-47

Preached on: Tuesday, August 19, 2014

Christian Answers of Austin, Texas

9009 Martha's Drive

Austin, TX 78717

Website: www.biblequery.org

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/christiananswers

Larry Wessels. Greetings and welcome to our program. I'm Larry Wessels, Director of Christian Answers and I want to thank you for being with us today. Well, we have a very special guest in studio and someone who I'm greatly happy to have here with us, Dale Ratzlaff. Dale, great to have you here, brother.

Dale Ratzlaff. Good to be here.

Larry. Dale, you were a fourth generation Seventh Day Adventist.

Dale. That's right.

Larry. And so obviously anyone that's watched our shows, and we have over 500 of them now on the internet on YouTube, anyone that's watched our shows or pays attention to our CAnswersTV YouTube channel knows that we get experts on a lot of subjects speaking on things that they specialize in, so I think it's pretty obvious at this point that since you are a fourth generation Seventh Day Adventist, that your expertise is in that religion so what we'd like to know is I get ready to have you start speaking about this and also you're a prolific author, you have a ministry of your own, website, magazine, we're going to get into all that, but before we get into that, I'd like to mention to our viewers that we have newsletters of our ministry right here free to anyone that wants to get a copy of these magazines, not really magazines but newsletters, and if you need any other help, we have three websites as you can see on your screen, and you're free to call or email us for any assistance you might need.

With that said, Dale, I'd like you to tell our viewers, and this is the main purpose for this, a lot of viewers may not know who you are, may not know what you've done and all these things, and that's the whole purpose of this. Please, inform us as to who you are.

Dale. Alright, I'll do my best. Well, I come from a very strong Adventist family. My grandfather was one of the vice presidents of the General Conference. My grandmother was a denominationally employed evangelistic Bible worker. My grandfather, I should say my grandmother's brother was the vice president of the General Conference. My

grandfather was a pastor. My uncle was a pastor. My mother and father both were missionaries in Panama and raised up a little Adventist church in the Panamanian jungle. So we have strong Adventist roots. I was married to Carolyn M. who was a fourth generation or fifth generation Seventh Day Adventist. It was interesting, we knew each other in the third and fourth grades and then we met again in high school and became boyfriend and girlfriend and got married after one year of college. I was pastoring in Sedona Christian Fellowship. One of my members wanted me to give a Bible study to some Adventists and I said, "Let them lead," at first and get acquainted with them. They brought out the Clear Word Adventist Bible and it just so happened it was on Daniel 8:14 which I knew, I had studied that thoroughly, and I read that Clear Word Bible and they had added a whole bunch of Ellen White stuff right in the text in the quotes from an angel in Daniel 8.

Larry. They just added to the word of God.

Dale. They just added to the word of God and something rose up in me, the Holy Spirit or something, and I said, "This must stop," because this is an outright lie. I knew, I mean, I had studied that subject well, okay, and I knew that was an outright lie. So that's when I wrote "Cultic Doctrine," and I did it in six months, 700 footnotes, and it's an indepth study of the whole beginnings of the Adventist Church, the "shut door" which most Adventists don't know about and "investigative judgment" and that Ellen White is a false prophet.

So that's how I wrote "Cultic Doctrine," and then I kept getting emails, I had sold quite a few books, okay, of people who asked me questions, why I left the Adventist Church and so on, and I finally decided rather than answering all these emails, I'd write "Truth Led Me Out," all my story which I basically told here.

Larry. Right, right, right.

Dale. Then people were, evangelicals were saying, "Can you give me a little summary of the problems of Adventism?" and that's why I wrote "Truth about Adventist Truth," and that lists the 10 main problems of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, we might call them the same, the 10 major differences between Adventism and Evangelical Christianity and it's just a summary, it's 88 pages long, easy read, but it's documented well enough so you can do more study to do it.

Larry. Now I've got a book here in my hand called "Sabbath in Christ," could you tell the people at home about this book?

Dale. Sure. "Sabbath in Christ" is the result of a group study that took us seven months in a church that I pastored shortly after I left the Seventh Day Adventist Church and it's a thorough study of the topic of the Sabbath, the covenants and the Gospel, and many theologians have endorsed it. It's our number one bestseller. We have received thousands of emails and letters from people who have been blessed by that book. It's been revised

three times and I think it's in its fifth printing and it will help you answer all the questions you have regarding the topic of the Sabbath.

Larry. Well, praise God for that. Okay now, here's a very special book. It's a book that you haven't written. It's called "My Cup Overflows" by Carolyn Ratzlaff, so what can you tell us here?

Dale. Well, this is interesting. Carolyn has been my girlfriend since the third and fourth grade, okay, in high school and so on, and she wanted to write her experience of leaving the Adventist Church but she wanted to include a lot about our own personal journey in Adventism. And an interesting thing in this book was that when we were having our 50th wedding anniversary, my wife was going, Carolyn was going through some things that my mother had left after she died, she died in '06, and she found a little card there that was a Valentine's card and it said, it showed a blindfolded girl chasing a boy and it said, "Even though I can't see you, I can seize you." And Carolyn said, "Why in the world did your mom keep that?" She turned it over and on the back it says "Carolyn M." She wrote that to me in the third grade when I was in the fourth grade.

So she picks up there and shares our life together in school and high school and so on, and a lot of people have said that's an easy reading book and they really enjoyed it. It's not an ebook, the rest of them are ebooks too on Amazon and Barnes & Noble. That had too many pictures in it so all the pictures of our journey together are there.

Larry. And speaking of publications and things, you've got a very special publication here called the "Proclamation Magazine." This particular one I'm looking at has new Adventist president affirms the Adventist gospel. So basically what can you tell us about the "Proclamation Magazine" overall, its history, how often do you publish it, circulation, things like that, and then you had mentioned to me before we started filming that this was a very good issue.

Dale. It's a good issue for a couple of things. "Did Adventist leaders lie to Walter Martin?" You see, most Evangelicals will say, well, Adventists aren't cults because what Walter Martin said.

Larry. Right, right.

Dale. They don't know that Adventists deceived him.

Larry. Right.

Dale. Okay.

Larry. In fact, I, you know just from my own ministry, I actually on YouTube I have done a lot of shows on Seventh Day Adventists in the past and so I've dealt with a lot of Seventh Day Adventists and I get that Walter Martin argument and because I've been

getting your "Proclamation Magazine" all these years and when I saw this one, I saved it....

Dale. That's a good one, yeah.

Larry. ...and I made copies of this and I use your material here to answer these Seventh Day Adventists about Walter Martin on YouTube and it's come in very handy because then they're speechless, they have nothing they can say because of the well-documented material you have here. Now for someone watching, can they contact your ministry to get a subscription?

Dale. Yes, it's sent free to about 30,000 homes four times a year, 32 page full color. It has a fascinating history and I'll not give that right now.

Larry. Yes, yes. I got you. Okay, and then you also with your ministry have a website. Can you tell us a little bit about your website?

Dale. We have four websites I like to mention. My website is called lifeassuranceministries.com.

Larry. And you'll see that on your screen.

Dale. lifeassuranceministries.com. A second one is lifeassuranceministries.org. Now my .com deals with the books and many different articles and I even have books they can download on my website. lifeassuranceministries.org deals with "Proclamation."

Larry. Oh, okay, the "Proclamation Magazine"?

Dale. The "Proclamation," and they can sign up free and get it, okay?

Larry. Okay.

Dale. Then there's formeradventist.com. That is a former Adventist forum and that's run by Richard and Colleen Tinker who are now the, you might say the president and the editors of "Proclamation." Okay, I was but I'm getting up in years and I wanted to hand it over to somebody who's got more energy and a longer life than I have.

Anyway, the fourth one is truthorfables.com and that is a website that was developed by someone else. It is huge. He was a former Adventist pastor and it has a huge amount of material on Ellen White and Adventist issues and you could spend hours and hours and hours there going through it and searching it. So our nonprofit corporation owns that now. So all those websites are phenomenal research for anybody that wants to know the truth about Seventh Day Adventists.

Larry. So often when I'm getting emails and phone calls off the Seventh Day Adventist programs we've already put up on YouTube and on public access tv and everything, the

people, a lot of them are coming out and they want to know more and they just have ravenous appetites. You know, I've got a bunch of tracts and things I give, I give them Xerox copies of some of your stuff and all that, but these four websites you're mentioning, it sounds like just the ticket for a lot of these people that want to really dig in and spend a lot of serious study time to really get to the bottom of this issue.

Dale. Yeah, "Proclamation" has been going since 2000 and so there is a wealth of information there and they can download it, okay?

Larry. Right, right.

Dale. lifeassuranceministries.org, you can go back and download a full color one in a pdf file you can print out on your printer, and so it's all available free.

Sabbath in Christ
Is Sabbath Keeping Required To Be A Christian?
From William Miller to Ellen G. White

with guest Dale Ratzlaff, former SDA
with host Larry Wessels, Director, Christian Answers of Austin, TX

Larry Wessels. Greetings and welcome once again to our program. I'm Larry Wessels, your host, and I'm Director of Christian Answers and I want to thank you for being here with us for Christian Answers Present.

Well, I've got a very special guest in studio as you've seen from our intro program, Dale Ratzlaff. Dale, great to have you here, brother. And as the viewers already know, we're going to be covering the subject of Seventh Day Adventism and you have written a very impressive book on the subject, very knowledgeable, have the information and I think it very helpful to a lot of people if they also have this information. So for that purpose and for the glory of God, I would like to give the show over to you now to make your "Sabbath in Christ" presentation.

Dale. Alright. What I'm going to do today is to give you an overview but an in depth overview of my book called "Sabbath in Christ." As a fourth generation Seventh Day Adventist, I understand how important the Sabbath is to Seventh Day Adventists. It is the most important doctrine. And I also recognize that a small study is not sufficient to really help them come to grips with the truth about the Sabbath. It has been so ingrained in Adventist thinking that the Sabbath is the testing truth, to think that it isn't is traumatic, okay? I recognize that because that was the way for us.

I didn't leave the Seventh Day Adventist Church because of the Sabbath, I left because of their 1844 cleansing of the sanctuary investigative judgment doctrine, and two years after I left the church, I was still pastoring, we did a seven month study of the Sabbath, the

covenants and the Gospel, and it was inductive study. So I'd like to share that with you and, again, it's only a summary, but I want to do it in depth because this subject has to be fully understood if you really are going to understand the Gospel.

Alright, I'm going to start with to follow good hermeneutics. Hermeneutics deals with the principles and presuppositions of interpretation, how to interpret the Bible, and oftentimes our own paradigm of theology may be our biggest hindrance to the discovery of truth. For example, the disciples, they couldn't get over the idea that Christ was going to set up an earthly kingdom so they had a hard time understanding the real mission of Christ, and those of us who come from Adventism, we're so bound up with that paradigm of "The Great Controversy" motif and the Sabbath that it's hard to find anything that would disagree with that because of that overriding paradigm.

The next thing is we need to study to discover, not prove. Often as a Seventh Day Adventist pastor, and I'll admit that I used to do it, I would study to prove. I would find, "I can use a proof text here. I can use a proof text there and putting them together I have a good proof." But when we go to the Bible, we should go as learners. We study to discover truth, not to prove it.

Next, we need to consider the context. As a Seventh Day Adventist, in school I was taught the "here little and there little" method of interpreting the Bible, but we're to consider the context, read it in context: notice the book, the chapter, you know, the whole context.

Next, we need to understand that the New Testament interprets the Old and if you don't have a clear understanding of that, all the Old Testament laws can be a real hindrance to knowing which ones to enforce and which ones not to enforce. So we have to look at the New Testament to understand the hermeneutical principle by which Old Testament things still apply and which don't, and you must understand the new and the old covenants. Now this was the major ya-ha moment for us. When we were doing this seventh month study, we were still worshipping on Sabbath, we had no reason to change, but we were far enough out of Adventism not to be bound by their paradigm and I remember distinctly one day I was sitting at my desk and I was making study guides and I was in Galatians and Romans, and I said, "This does not fit Adventist theology. It doesn't fit." And I said what would happen, you know, I read that the law came 430 years after Christ and lasted until Christ, and now that Christ has come, we're no longer under a tutor, so I said just for fun, I'm going to look at Paul's paradigm, that the law came in with Moses, didn't exist before then and didn't apply after the cross, and I said I'm just for fun going to see if everything else will fit, and instantly my whole paradigm shifted because I had all the texts in mind because of my study, and suddenly instead of the Sabbath being the test and truth, it was Jesus. Whoa, what an insight that was.

Next, doctrine should come from clear didactic or teaching passages of Scripture, not from apocalyptic, you know, statements like Daniel 8:14 or some of the things in Revelation. It should come from clear teaching, especially the epistles. You see, Christ,

you know, lived the Gospel. He is the Gospel, you know, at the cross, but the epistles interpret and apply the Gospel, especially for Gentile believers.

So, and then the last idea I think of hermeneutics is we must remember that Christ is the central truth of all Scripture. And when we understand and study with these good hermeneutics, we should be confident that we can end up with truth.

Alright, let's go quick now. The Bible, I should say the seventh day in Genesis. Creation was completed on the sixth day. Please don't let anybody talk to you about the week of creation. It was only six days, okay? Not seven. God did not keep the Sabbath on the seventh day as such, he just ceased creating, okay?

The seventh day in Genesis is a unique day. There is no formula. "And there was evening and there was morning, a seventh day." It is the one day in Scripture when man was in right relationship with God. Now we don't know how long the seventh day actually ended and that word "day," the Hebrew word for "day" can be translated "a 24 hour; the light part of the day; a period of time; even an epoch." So we can't nail down that too much, in fact, a lot of the Jewish understanding is the seventh day is still here, it hasn't ended yet. Some put an eschatological idea of that seventh day.

Alright, now, there is no record biblical or historical that anyone knew about or kept the Sabbath before the time of Moses. This is confirmed by Scripture, it is confirmed by Jewish scholars, and it's confirmed by scholars of antiquity. There is no record that anybody kept any day, not just the Sabbath, but any day holy before the time of Moses. There is good evidence to support the belief that the Sabbath was blessed and sanctified as a required day of rest for Israel at the time of Moses and not before.

Alright, now here is something that Adventists must understand and it was something that we had to understand, and this is going to be repetitive. You know the Bible says it needs two or three witnesses, I'm going to give you five or six, okay? The first truth is this, that the 10 Commandments are the very words of the old covenant. Now let's read them.

Exodus 34:28, "So he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread or drink water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments." Now there's no question about what that says, the words of the covenant are the Ten Commandments.

Exodus 31:18, "When He had finished speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God."

Deuteronomy 4:13, "So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Commandments; and He wrote them on two tablets of stone."

Deuteronomy 9:9, "When I went up to the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant which the LORD had made with you."

Deuteronomy 9:11, "And it came about at the end of forty days and nights that the LORD gave me the two tables of stone, the tables of the covenant."

Now that's a lot of repetition. Is that truth clear that the 10 Commandments are the words of the Sinaitic covenant that God gave Moses on Sinai? Now, the other laws, and there are 613 other laws that can be found in the writings of Moses, they expand and interpret the 10 Commandments for the nation of Israel, and understand this, they're actually part of the covenant but they're more interpretive and I'll give you some examples.

Do not steal is one of the 10 Commandments but Exodus 22:1, he deals with, well, what happens if you steal an ox, and it goes into detail, it gives you more laws how do we interpret do not steal, okay?

Exodus 22:2-4, that's about what happens if a thief gets caught while he's breaking in. You know, do you shoot him or do you, what do you do? Okay, it tells about that.

Then Exodus 22:5, you know, animal grazing in a neighbor's field. So his donkey or ox or whatever it is, he says the neighbor's clover is greener than ours, so he goes over there and eats. So in a sense, that's stealing the neighbor's pasture. So it talks about what do you do if an animal is grazing in a neighbor's field.

So the point I'm making is that the other laws explain and interpret the 10 Commandments for the nation of Israel.

Now let's go to the Sabbath. The Sabbath, it says you do not cook. Oh, by the way, as we go through these, see how many of these Adventists keep or don't keep. I might just stop there. I remember when I was a kid in North Carolina, it's when frozen peas came out and we were very strict, we never cooked on Sabbath, we always cooked all of our meals on Friday and then reheated them on Sabbath. That somehow was okay, even though you weren't supposed to build a fire. And I remember the day that my mother finally said, "You know, it is no more work for us to heat up these frozen peas than it is to cook them and they taste much better." So we compromised and we ate, we cooked our frozen peas.

Okay, Exodus 16:29, we're not to go out of our place. Now who keeps that?

Exodus 31:13, now this is very important and we'll come back to this, it's a sign between God and who? God and Israel, no one else.

Exodus 31:14, you're put to death for a violation of the Sabbath. Woe to those who want to keep the Sabbath, okay?

In Exodus 31:14, violators are cut off from the covenant people, and we'll talk more about that later too. But if you violate the Sabbath, you're to be cut off from the covenant people. Alright?

Now Exodus 35:3, you're not to kindle a fire on the Sabbath.

Larry. Wow. But didn't y'all heat up the peas?

Dale. We did.

Larry. Doesn't that require a fire?

Dale. I, yeah, Ellen White said it's okay now to build a fire on the Sabbath. Isn't that interesting?

Larry. Oh, wow. Now quick question as you go on with this. You're in this Sabbath keeping, you can't cook, you can't, you go into all these laws and things, but what if you did something that did violate it? What would be in the Seventh Day Adventist Church, what would they do to you for violating the Sabbath? It wouldn't be like every Sabbath, it would be like maybe someone found out you were out of the house, you were maybe jogging around the street or something.

Dale. They'd probably just talk against you.

Larry. So there was no real church discipline?

Dale. Not...well... Ellen White says God cannot bless churches that have Sabbath breakers in them.

Larry. Really? So...

Dale. And if you were caught working on the Sabbath, now you can work on the Sabbath in an SDA institution...

Larry. Oh, really?

Dale. ...but you can't work on the Sabbath for a non-SDA.

Larry. It sounds like it'd be hard to keep up with that.

Dale. Yeah, yeah. It's very nebulous and we'll talk about that a little bit later, okay?

And it's to be kept from evening to evening. Now by the way, Adventists are very strict on this and they publish timetables when the sun goes down. So on Saturday, you know, Friday night you get all the work done because the sun's gonna go down at 7:23 or whatever, okay? And so after that, it's Sabbath, okay, and on Saturday night when 7:23 or 24, maybe it's gone over, soon as that's over the kids say, "Sabbath's over! Now we can go play!" You know, and it was a great, you know....all hell breaks loose.

Larry. Now even when you grow up, as an adult you're sort of like when you were a kid, you're happy because you know to the minute when that Sabbath is over.

Dale. That's right. That's right. Now here's the key point: the Sabbath is the sign of the old covenant made only with Israel and finds itself in the very center of the 10 Commandments. Now let me explain. If one takes the Hebrew Bible, okay, and you start reading or look at the 10 Commandments in Hebrew word for word, and you start counting from the front and from the back, you know, one word, one word, one word, and so on, the center phrase is "Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy." So the Sabbath commandment finds itself in the very center of the 10 Commandments which is the covenant, okay, the Sinai covenant.

Now some Adventists that I've known have used that fact to accentuate the importance of Sabbath keeping but notice this, here's a key insight: it is a sign of the covenant. Now interestingly enough, in the Hittites and the other nations around Israel, they too had covenants. They had a suzerain and a sovereign and so on, I forget all the names, but a leader and those that were under the control of a leader, and they would have their own covenants and the sign of the covenant was usually arbitrary and always placed in the center of the covenant. So this follows exactly the same pattern. So the sign of the covenant is the Sabbath and it's in the very center of the covenant.

Now here's the text, Exodus 31:13-16, "You shall surely observe My sabbaths," by the way, who was the "You" there? It tells us, "for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations... So the sons of Israel shall observe the sabbath as a perpetual covenant. Everyone who profanes it shall be surely put to death for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people."

Now I want us to look at the three dimensions of the old covenant, alright? First, there's the 10 Commandments which are the very words of the basic Sinaitic covenant. That's the stone covenant, okay? The many laws of Torah also called the book of the covenant, expand and interpret the 10 Commandments for the nation of Israel. The Sabbath is also called a covenant and is the sign of the covenant and stood for the whole covenant. That's why the violators of the Sabbath were cut off from the covenant people and were put to death.

Now I'd like to give the United States as an illustration. The Constitution is the basic foundation of our government and I hope it remains, sometimes we have to worry about whether it will continue that way or not, without getting political.

Larry. Right.

Dale. And then there's the Bill of Rights, then we have judicial and case law, these expand and interpret the Constitution. So we have all of this big group or big bunch of case laws that help interpret the Constitution, you know, from the Supreme Court and other courts around, alright?

Then there's the flag. It's the Constitution reduced to a sign and stands for our government, and when we desecrate the flag, we show disrespect for all the United States

stands for. So when these people are burning the flag and tromping on it, what they're basically saying is we don't like the Constitution of the United States, we don't like America.

Well, the same thing is true of the Sabbath. If you break the Sabbath, you're saying I don't like this covenant with God or that God made with Israel. So that's why it was, you know, death for those who broke the Sabbath.

Okay, now what Israel was required to do on the Sabbath mimicked the way Adam and Eve lived before sin, and when we did that seven month study, we saw that and it was an insight at that time and I didn't know that anybody had ever discovered that, at least I hadn't read about it. Adam and Eve did no work until after they left the garden. Now they did take care of the vines or whatever it was, but it certainly wasn't servile work, okay? And the Israelites were told not to do any work on the Sabbath. When did Adam and Eve leave Eden? After they sinned, okay? And so the Israelites said don't go out of your place, just like Adam and Eve didn't go out of the garden.

Not build a fire. Now we can't prove that Adam and Eve didn't build a fire but there's pretty good evidence, we understand they didn't wear clothes before sin entered, so it couldn't have been very cold.

Larry. Probably had perfect weather conditions.

Dale. Perfect weather conditions, yeah. They didn't even have to carry sprinkler pipes, okay?

Not cook, and again we can't prove that but it's very probably they ate their fruit right off the trees, you know, and the vines or whatever.

Not carry a load. What would they have carried? I mean, they didn't have to buy or sell or anything. They didn't buy and sell, who would they have bought and sold to?

So all the things that Israel was required not to do were the very things that Adam and Eve didn't do and didn't need to do. By the way, Adam and Eve's first day was which day?

Larry. The sixth day was when he was created.

Dale. That was their first day.

Larry. That's right.

Dale. Not their, and the next day was not their seventh day.

Larry. That's right.

Dale. Okay, just by way of interest.

Okay, now it's also good to look at the Jewish understanding of the Sabbath. Adventists teach that the Sabbath was given to all mankind at creation, actually it goes back of creation. But the Sabbath was given only to Israel. This was a hard text for me to stomach when I was an Adventist when we were studying, but that's what the Bible says.

Now the Sabbath is a ritual law and some of you will say, "Oh no, Dale. The Sabbath is a moral law." Hang in here with me, please, okay? Gentiles should only observe the Sabbath when staying with a Jew. Now these are the Jewish understanding of the Sabbath and they say it's a ritual law, okay? Gentiles who observe the Sabbath without being circumcised and keeping the Torah were deserving of death. Did you know that?

Now the Sabbath and the Gentile nations. The Old Testament prophets confront the Gentile nations for worshiping idols, blaspheming the name of God, ruthless killing, injustice, immorality, and pride, but never for breaking the Sabbath. Now doesn't that seem odd if they were under the Sabbath?

Larry. That's one thing I've always liked about your books on this subject is you've got little details that most people never even notice, but that is a key point right there.

Dale. It is. It is.

Larry. Most people have never even noticed.

Dale. Well, we didn't until we did our study, okay?

Now the Gentile nations were under the laws given to Noah but not under the Torah. Now here's another insight and this is a phenomenal one if you understand its depth and it'll come a little bit later, the depth part. Christ is the new covenant. The old covenant was the 10 Commandments, Christ is the new covenant, and we'll explain this. This is a text from Isaiah 42:1,6,7, that is applied in the New Testament to Christ.

"Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. I am the LORD, I have called You in righteousness, I will also hold You by the hand and watch over You," now notice this next phrase, "And I will appoint You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the nations, To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the dungeon And those who dwell in darkness from the prison."

You see, this is applied to Christ and notice that he is the covenant. Now here's the key: the Father and Jesus are the new covenant partners. In the old covenant, who were the partners? Israel and God. In the new covenant, the partners are the Father and Jesus. Now you say, "Wait a minute, aren't Christians part of the new covenant?" We'll get to that in a second.

Hebrews 7:22 says, "Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant."

Hebrews 8:6, "He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises."

Now what are the better promises? In the old covenant the children of Israel said, "All that the Lord has said, we will do," and they didn't. In the new covenant, Jesus is the one who provides the obedience. "For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also."

Now Jesus' commandment to love as he loved is the law of the new covenant that is written on our hearts and reflects all the moral principles taught in all of Scripture. Now this is important. We want to separate laws from principles. Principles are behind the laws, the laws are specific and often limited in their application. But the commandment of love covers all those things, okay?

Hebrews 10:16-17 says, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, I will put my laws upon their heart, and on their mind I will write them." Then he says, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." And for Adventists, that's great because Adventists teach that our sins are in the books and they won't be wiped out until just before Christ comes.

Matthew 22:37-39, "You shall love the Lord with all you heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. This is the great commandment and the second is like unto it, you shall your neighbor as yourself."

Now remember in the old covenant here just earlier? We looked at, oh, I don't know, five or 10 texts that said that the covenant was the 10 Commandments. Do you remember that? A lot of them. We come to the new covenant and we find repetition again. It's something that we need to know. What is the new covenant, what is the law of the new covenant? That you shall love.

John 15:12, "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you."

John 15:17, "This I command you, that you love one another."

Romans 3:10, "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law."

John 13:35, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Now how did you know you were a member of the Old Testament community? What you ate. By keeping the Sabbath. And what you wore. Okay? How are we going to be known? By love.

Larry. By love but in the "one-anothering." We keep seeing that "one-anothering" in there and love is associated with it so that you love one another.

Dale. That's right.

Galatians 5:14, "For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

James 2, "If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to Scripture, you shall love your neighbor as yourself, you are doing well."

We enter the blessings of the new covenant when we place our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as our covenant keeper. Again, Jesus is our covenant keeper. He has kept the covenant for us. If you look at the epistles of Paul, he's always talking about "in Christ, in Christ, in Christ," and that's because our obedience, our righteousness, everything that we have is in Christ.

Romans 5:10, "We shall be saved by," our life of obedience?

Larry. His life.

Dale. "His life."

2 Corinthians 5:21, "So that we might become the righteousness of God," in our own lives?

Larry. In him.

Dale. No, "in Him."

Ephesians 3:11,12, "This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him."

Now in the Old Testament there was no boldness to come into God's presence. The high priest only came in once a year with trembling and after they had put enough incense in there so that he couldn't even see the mercy seat. He had to just feel and they had a rope tied to his leg in case the glory of the Lord killed him. But now it says we can come with boldness and confident access through Christ.

John 6:47, "He who believes has eternal life." That's present continuous in Greek. That means we have it now and we are going to continue to have it. Praise God for that.

Larry. Amen.

Dale. This is Gospel, friends. This is what we need to understand, "That if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses resulting in salvation."

Now the old covenant signs, and by the way, these are ritual laws. Please notice this, that the signs of the covenant are ritual laws, not moral laws, and we'll explain this. The ritual laws. The one-time entrance sign was circumcision. So to become a member of the covenant community, the males had to be circumcised. You couldn't participate at the Passover unless the males were circumcised and so on, okay?

Now the Sabbath that Israel was to remember or the sign that Israel was to remember was the Sabbath day. They were to remember it over and over again. Each Sabbath was a renewing of the covenant, okay? Like each Fourth of July, we wave the flag and say, you know, we're Americans, we're proud to be Americans, okay? So every Sabbath Israel waves the Sabbath sign that they're a part of the covenant community with Israel.

Now circumcision was considered more important than the Sabbath. Let me explain how this works. Circumcision, in fact, a lot of things in Israel were considered work. In the Jewish mind, almost everything was considered work and so they had a dilemma. So it says you're to circumcise the boys on the eighth day, but what if the eighth day falls on Sabbath? They had a dilemma, what are we going to do? Are we going to circumcise on the eighth day and violate the Sabbath, or are we going to circumcise on the seventh day or the ninth day and violate the eighth day rule? Well, they chose to do the eighth day, indicating that they felt that circumcision was more important than the Sabbath. But there's another reason, they weren't really in the covenant community until they were circumcised and then they were to keep the Sabbath. So notice that.

Now John 7:23, "If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the Law of Moses will not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man well on the Sabbath?" Notice how he uses that illustration about his work on the Sabbath and it's a ritual law that he refers to.

Okay, the first Church Council that's in Acts 15. The Judaizers, who were believers, wanted the Gentile Christians to come under the laws of Torah and Acts 15:5 says, "But some of the Pharisees who had believed," so these were Christians, okay? Christian Jewish Pharisees, "stood up, saying, 'It is necessary to circumcise them and direct them to observe the laws of Moses.'" Now what was the decision of the first Council? It's pretty clear: circumcision was not required of Gentile Christians. As circumcision was the entrance sign into the old covenant, by not requiring it, the Council made it clear that the Gentile Christians do not have to observe the Torah. Circumcision and Sabbath stand or fall together. Now let me say that again, circumcision and Sabbath stand and fall together.

Now what are the new covenant signs? Most of us know them. Sometimes people have called them moral laws. The one-time entrance sign into Christ is baptism. In fact, every

time you see the two words together, "into Christ," it's in connection with baptism, alright? Now the sign Christians are to remember is the Lord's Supper. Luke 22:19,20 says, "And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it them saying, 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' In the same way, He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, 'This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.'" Alright?

Now understand that in the old covenant circumcision and Sabbath, in the new covenant the signs are baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Now the new covenant is expanded and interpreted in the epistles as in the old covenant was expanded and interpreted in the rest of the laws of Torah. Now what is the New Testament teaching on old covenant law? Let's read it. Romans 7:6, "But now we have been released from Law," oh, that was hard for us to swallow. Oh, and Adventists will say then it's okay to go out and kill and steal and commit adultery, right?

Larry. I see that all the time on YouTube but now you as an Adventist, having dealt with thousands of them yourself and having been one, how did you deal with this as a Seventh Day Adventist when you saw this, or did you just never notice it? "But now we have been released from the Law."

Dale. Well, that's referring to the ceremonial law.

Larry. So that's how you get out of it?

Dale. That's how we get out of it.

Larry. Oh, okay. But now you're going to try to show that you can't get out of it that way.

Dale. Just wait and see. "Having died to that by which we were bound," okay, "so that we serve," now notice this, we're serving "in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter." Now that is pretty clear. So he says we no longer serve in the old letter of the law, we serve in the newness of the Spirit. More on this later.

Galatians 3:17, and this is the one that we struggled with in that study on the Sabbath. The law came 430 years after Abraham, that's pretty clear, and if you're going to think of Paul as an inspired writer, by the way, I don't know if you know that or not, but there are many Adventists who don't think that Paul understood the Gospel.

Larry. I didn't know that.

Dale. They do. I've had people write to me, degreed people, and say Paul did not understand Jesus.

Okay, Galatians 3:19, the law was added, that means it was not there before until Christ. Galatians 3:23, the law was a tutor until Christ. Now what does "until" mean? That means until, okay?

Larry. I mean, when you get there.

Dale. Yeah. Galatians 3:25, now we are no longer under a tutor. Now if you put those together that you're under a law until Christ and now that Christ has come you're not under the tutor, you're not under the law, that's pretty clear.

Hebrews 8:13-9:4. Now this is a key text and it was one that we wrestled with and it was kind of an ah-ha text, okay? What we're doing, we're trying to find what the New Testament teaches regarding to the old covenant and we're doing this now, okay? So we're going to look at it.

Hebrews says the new covenant makes the old obsolete. Whoa. Are you saying the new covenant makes the 10 Commandments obsolete? No, I'm not saying that, the writer of Hebrews is, okay? Let's look at it.

Hebrews 8:13-9:4 and I'd like you to look at this for a period of time, okay, because you really need to understand this. "When He said, 'A new covenant,' He has made the first obsolete." Now follow along. "But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear." So this obsolete covenant is ready to disappear. Now he's going to go back and tell us what's in the first covenant. Now that's another term for old covenant and we can see that right now as what he includes in it. "Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship," now what were they? Worship the Lord. You know, don't worship any other gods. Worship on Sabbaths and new moons and fixed festivals. Okay, those are regulations for divine worship, okay? "And the earthly sanctuary. Behind the second veil there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod," now notice this, "which budded, and the," what? "Tables of the covenant." Now understand this clearly now. Hebrews says when he said a new covenant he made the first obsolete, understand? Then he says let's look at the first covenant and he says laws of worship, the sanctuary, and the tables of the covenant.

Now that's very logical to tell you that in the new covenant we are not under the 10 Commandments. Now immediately you're going to say, "Oh, Dale, that's heresy." Hang in here. We've got to separate laws from principles. Follow along, okay? We are to cast out the old covenant and those who promote it. Whoa. This is an illustration given in Galatians 4 and I encourage you to read it on your own. Paul says that Hagar represents the old covenant and Sarah represents the new covenant. Then he says, "Cast out the bondwoman," in other words we cast out the old covenant, and we cast out her son, cast out those who promote the old covenant. I don't know that we'd cast them clear out but anyway. And the son of the bondwoman shall not be an heir with the son of the free woman, that means the covenant, the terms of the covenants are mutually exclusive. You

cannot be under both covenants. If you do, you're going to find yourselves in all kinds of theological problems and behavioral problems. We are not children of a bondwoman, that means we're not under the old covenant. We are children of a free woman, we are under the new covenant.

Now the Sabbath was a ritual law and only a shadow of Christ and that was very hard for me to swallow, and Adventists will say, "Dale, you're wrong because the Sabbath was in the middle of the 10 Commandments and all nine of them are moral laws, why isn't the 10th one?" And the answer to that is very important and we've covered it but just to review, that the Sabbath is a sign of the covenant and even though it's a ritual law and the Jews recognize that it was a ritual law, it was placed in the center of the 10 Commandments because it was a sign of the covenant and Old Testament or I should say ancient near eastern treaties always had the sign of the covenant in the very center, okay?

Now let's look at Colossians 2:16 and 17, and by the way, "Sabbath in Christ" has an in depth study of this both readable and one at the scholarly level that Jerry Gladson wrote, who is an Old Testament, has his Old Testament degree and PhD in the Old Testament.

Larry. Now Seventh Day Adventists are very used to seeing this.

Dale. Yes.

Larry. It's almost like water off a duck's back when an Evangelical Christian might quote Colossians 2:16 and 17 because the Seventh Day Adventists have really concentrated on trying to defend against the obvious meaning of that passage.

Dale. Right. Yeah, that's exactly true, and they will tell you that the Sabbath mentioned in Colossians 2 is a ceremonial Sabbath and specifically probably the Day of Atonement, and we're going to look at this. And what we did when we studied, we studied thoroughly, we were not trying to prove anything and for us this became crystal clear, and I can't tell you how many probably thousands of letters I've received, people thanking us for making it crystal clear.

Alright, let's look at it. We know the Sabbaths in Colossians 2:16 refers to the weekly Sabbaths because when the terms "festival, new moon and Sabbath" are used together, they are found in either ascending or descending order. Now let's explain that, okay? Days, months and seasons, okay, notice days, months, that's ascending order. It would be Sabbaths, new moons, and fixed festivals or it can be seasons, months, days, backward, okay? Fixed festivals, new moons, and Sabbaths. So we're going to look at every text that mentions these three things together and let's get a feel how the Bible uses these things, okay?

1 Chronicles 23:31 says, "to offer all burnt offerings to the Lord on Sabbaths," that's seventh day Sabbaths, "on new moons," that's monthly, "fixed festivals," that would be the Passover, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread and so on, "in

the number of them set by the ordinance concerning them, continually before the Lord." So we notice that pattern.

2 Chronicles 2:4, "to offer burnt offerings morning and evening, on Sabbaths, and on new moons, and on appointed feasts." So appointed feasts would be the same as fixed festivals, okay? "Of the Lord our God, this being required forever in Israel."

2 Chronicles 31:3, "for the morning and evening burnt offerings, and the burnt offerings for Sabbaths," by the way, let me just say that the offerings for Sabbath and new moon were almost identical which I find very, they were to offer so many lambs, a hin of oil and so on. It was, they were identical offerings for the Sabbaths, for new moons and Sabbaths. "For new moons and fixed festivals as written in the law of the Lord." Now this one, they're backwards and some think this is backwards because Hosea is talking to Israel after they're living in sin and it's kind of a different way. Over there in the first part, it calls it "My Sabbaths," and here it calls it "her new moons and her Sabbaths." So God is talking to Israel as if he is not, they're not his anymore in a sense. Okay, he's trying to draw them back, okay?

Hosea 2:11, "I will also put an end to all her gaiety, her feasts, her new moons and Sabbaths and all her festival assemblies." So here it's the other way around but it's still in the same order.

Okay, now, look at this very, I'm going to put these two up at the same time, okay, and it's important to get these two together if we can. These are almost identical. Ezekiel 45:17 of Ezekiel, "It shall be the prince's part to provide burnt offerings, the grain offerings, the drink offerings on feasts, on new moons, and on Sabbaths." Now compare that to Colossians 2:16 and 17, "Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day, things which are a mere shadow of what is to come but the substance belongs to Christ." In another place in Hebrews, it calls the law a shadow, okay?

So now look at these very carefully. The grain offering would correlate with food. Do you see that? The drink offering would correlate with drink in Colossians 2:16. The festival would correlate with feast. The new moon, new moon, and Sabbath, the Sabbath. So it's very clear to me that in Colossians 2:16, the way it's written, Sabbaths must be the seventh day Sabbath, and if you understand that, then you understand that this is a ritual law because these were merely a shadow of what the ritual law was and it's not a moral.

Larry. And so often when you're reading the New Testament and the writers there in Matthew and so forth, they're referencing back to the Old Testament all the time.

Dale. Right.

Larry. They're actually getting a lot of their phraseology from the Old Testament...

Dale. Exactly. Exactly.

Larry. ...and they're putting it right into the New Testament. So anyone that's familiar with the Old Testament can see that easily in the New Testament and all you're doing here is pulling this out perfectly clear in correlation with Colossians 2.

Dale. Exactly. Alright, now again, if you want more study on this, get "Sabbath in Christ" and you'll find a big study on it.

Walter Martin, who was author of "Kingdom of the Cults," said this about the interpretation of Colossians 2:16, he said this, "It is significant that in a 59 out of the 60 occurrences in the New Testament, Adventists affirm that sabbatawn, that's Sabbaths, refer to the weekly Sabbath, but in the 60th occurrence, they maintain it does not, although all grammatical authors contradict this." Isn't that interesting? So Adventists are all by themselves out there.

Larry. It's interesting that you would say that because the Adventists also use Walter Martin here as a way to defend themselves, but as we've already discussed, your magazine "Proclamation" actually points out that the Seventh Day Adventist Church didn't tell Walter Martin the truth at the time he was doing an investigation.

Dale. Yeah, I encourage you to go to lifeassuranceministries.org and look up the "Proclamation" July/September 2010, and if you get that, you'll have a good study on Walter Martin, and the Church actually admits that they deceived him. They use different words but that's what they mean, okay?

Now, in the Old Testament the Sabbath is associated two times with moral laws. Okay, this would be in the 10 Commandments given in Exodus, and also in Deuteronomy 5, okay, and the rest of those laws are moral. We admit that, and those all continue into the New Testament but they are the principles rather than the laws, and I can explain that a little later. But notice this also, that the Sabbath is associated with ritual laws a dozen times. So where Adventist would say, "Well, the Sabbath's got to be a moral law because it's associated with the moral laws," they don't tell you that the Sabbath is associated with ritual laws 12 times. So if you're going to determine whether the Sabbath is moral or ritual by its association, by a 6:1 ration it would be a ritual law, okay?

When defending his questionable Sabbath activities, it's about seven of them, Jesus always used Old Testament ritual laws as his defense but never moral laws. For example, you remember one time the priests in the temple were, they had to work, they had to offer sacrifice and so on, and he says they broke the Sabbath but it was okay because they were involved in the work. So that's a ritual law. And then David ate consecrated bread only for priests. Well, why was that okay for David? Well, because David was a coming king of Israel, Jesus is the coming King. I mean, you see a real correlation there, okay? And then circumcision done on the Sabbath. Jesus used all of those to defend his Sabbath breaking, okay?

Larry. Right.

Dale. Now, Jesus broke several of the old covenant ritual laws. Now at this point some people are going to say, "Well, Jesus couldn't break any laws because he was perfect." Now listen: it's okay to break ritual laws and I'll tell you why in a minute, okay, but he broke them. He touched a leper. That's very clear and it's in the Gospels, and a person who touched a leper was considered unclean, alright? Sometimes I think if you look between the lines, they considered Jesus unclean. He touched a dead person, Mark 5:41. The person who touched a corpse was considered unclean, Numbers 19:11-13. Jesus broke the Sabbath. Whoa, this is heavy. "Dale, you don't believe that, do you?"

Well, let's see what John thinks. This is regarding the pool of Bethesda, okay? You know the story and this is in John 5. This man had been laying there for 38 years and Jesus comes along one Sabbath day and says, "Do you want to get well?" And he says, "Well, I don't have anybody to put me in the pool when the waters are troubled." They thought an angel came down, which I think it's added, it's not there in the original manuscripts, but that tells them why they were doing that. He said, "I don't have anybody to put me in the water. Somebody else goes in first." And Jesus says, "Rise, pick up your pallet or your bedroll and walk." Now I have backpacked literally hundreds of miles in the Sierras, we've been on 100 mile backpacks with our kids and my wife, and so I know what carrying the load is all about. But Jerusalem was cold in the winter time, stone floor, had been there 38 years. I can imagine he had a pretty good pad beneath him that his friends probably had, you know, and wool is heavy. You just roll up a half a dozen wool blankets and put them on your back, it's a load, okay? And they were told not to carry a load on the Sabbath. So Jesus asked this man to do something that is obviously breaking the Sabbath so they accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath.

Now notice carefully John's answer, "For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. He answered to them, 'My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.'" Now if he wasn't working, he should have said this is not Sabbath breaking because it's okay to do these things on the Sabbath, you see? But he doesn't, he says, "I'm working and My Father is working. For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath but calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God." Who wrote that? John, his closest disciple. And notice it does not say, and the Jews may have been saying that, but John says for this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, they didn't say because they thought he was breaking the Sabbath, but it says because he was breaking the Sabbath and calling God his own Father. So both of those statements are true.

Larry. And John is the one interpreting the events.

Dale. Exactly.

Larry. He's not saying, "Well, they thought this or they thought..." John is interpreting for you what was going on.

Dale. Exactly. Now they teach us Greek, and praise God the Adventist Church taught me Greek, okay? I'm not, I'm rusty on my Greek and I wouldn't call myself a Greek scholar but I can still use it a little bit, okay? Let's look at some of this.

Kittle's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, and I have it, it's a big multivolume set, it's considered the premiere Greek dictionary, this dictionary gives the following possible translations for "was breaking the Sabbath" as used in John 5:17. So it's saying that in this specific verse, these are different translations that are suitable according to the Greek language, okay? Now let's look at them: to break up, you could say to break up the Sabbath; to destroy; to dismiss; to set aside; to invalidate, okay? That's pretty heavy, okay?

Now "was breaking" in Greek is the imperfect tense, signifying durative action. In Greek, the imperfect is durative action, he was doing these things. That means he was continually doing them, okay? The phrase could be accurately translated any of the following ways. He not only was continually breaking the Sabbath, and that's what the Jews, you know, told them about. He was not only continually destroying the Sabbath. He not only was continually setting aside the Sabbath. He not only was continually invalidating the Sabbath. Now I know those of you who are watching right now, you know, you say, "Dale, you can't be right. This is not right. It cannot be right." I'm just telling you the facts from Scripture as I understand them, interpreted the best way that I know how.

Larry. But now looking at that, the Scripture makes it perfectly obvious that they thought that and the thing, if a Jew broke the Sabbath in an obvious way like that, they might want to just kill him, following the law, and that's what we find that they actually did in the end.

Dale. Yeah, yeah, so they thought he was breaking the law.

Larry. Exactly.

Dale. And they set out to kill him.

Larry. That's right.

Dale. So Jesus must have had a reason to do what he did. Now he did, now here's what it is: what is the purpose of ritual law? Ritual laws were to point to the coming Messiah. Once Christ had come, they lost much but not all of their value. They still have historical significance.

Let me kind of illustrate this. In 2009, my wife and I went on about a 10,000, little over, mile trip around the United States giving presentations in different Evangelical churches, and my wife went to, before we left she had printed out maps, different sections, okay, a section here, a section there, and so we had maps the whole way that we went, and when we were driving along, she'd say, "Well, we're done with this map, I can put it down."

Well, she didn't throw it away because we could look back at that map and say, "Oh, here's where we visited So-and-so. Here's where we took this picture," and so on. So the old ritual laws still have significance and this is the significance: we can look back in the Old Testament and say, "Oh, here is a prophecy of Christ, that he's going to be the suffering servant." We can look over there and we can see that Christ is going to be from the lineage of David. We can look over here and see this death of a lamb represents Christ.

So they have historical significance pointing forward to Christ, but now this is the point: once Christ came, they lost most of their value. I mean, still the historical value is there. Now understand this: once Christ had come, the strict observance of ritual laws often hindered people from accepting him as the Messiah. Let me read that again: once Christ had come, the strict observance of ritual laws often hindered people from coming to him as the Messiah. This is the one big illustration: the Jews were in a hurry to crucify Christ so they could go home and keep the Sabbath according to the commandments and Adventists will use that to prove that they kept the commandments at the death of Christ. Well, obviously they did, they didn't know anything different at that point, but the very fact that they put keeping the commandment more important than Christ says that that ritual law blinded them to who Christ really was.

God is looking for people who will worship him in spirit and in truth, not in a ritual and shadow. John 4:23 to the woman of Samaria he said, "an hour is coming and now is when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for such people the Father seeks to be His worshiper. God is spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Now Jesus brings the true rest of which the old covenant Sabbath was only a shadow. You see, if we understand the Sabbath as a ritual law, then we have to see what does it really point forward to. And right next to a Sabbath incident, I think they're going through the grain field on Sabbath, remember that? The disciples were picking ears of grain and so on.

Larry. Right, right.

Dale. Jesus said, "Come unto Me all you who are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke," and yoke was a term for the law, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me and I am gentle and humble in heart." You will find rest for your bodies? No, "You will find rest for your souls for My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

In Hebrews 4:3, by the way, there's a whole chapter in my book, "Sabbath in Christ," on this particular text and it's worth reading. "For we who have believed, enter that rest." And in Hebrews 4, the writer goes to some extent to show that the Israelites never really did enter God's rest; that even during the time that Joshua said God gave them rest on every side, they really didn't enter God's rest. And it said David hadn't entered God's rest. And then it says, "we who have believed enter that rest," and by believing, that word "believing" is aorist tense in Greek which means it happened at a point of time. So the

moment we accept Jesus Christ, the moment we are born again, we enter into his rest and we don't have to work anymore for salvation because it's a free gift.

So the Sabbath pointed forward to the rest that we have in Jesus and that is a continuing rest much like the seventh day continued, there was no end to it. So we can see that parallel again that once we enter into his rest, we are in his rest, we have fellowship with him.

Larry. Now someone who hasn't had that born again experience and they're into religion like these Pharisees, they don't have the testimony of the Spirit within them according to Romans 8:1-17, well, it seems so easy to see what you're saying here about the Sabbath. The Sabbath then becomes a hindrance because they're thinking they can work their way into heaven by doing all these observances and keeping the Sabbath and so forth rather than just resting in Christ which someone who's born again and has the Spirit, can clearly see that.

Dale. I'll speak more of this in another program called "The Truth About Adventist Truth," okay. But, okay, we have looked at the New Testament teaching of the covenants and so on, now let's look at the New Testament teaching of the Sabbath. You say, "Haven't you covered that yet?" No. We're just getting ready here, okay? We want to do a thorough study. You know, if a person, you know, really needs to make a decision on the Sabbath, you need all the facts so we want to be thorough on this.

Okay, Acts 1:3 and you might say to yourself, "What does this have to do with the Sabbath?" Okay, let's read it. "To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of 40 days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God." So let me ask you: what does that say about Sabbath?

Larry. Not a thing. It talks about 40 days.

Dale. Okay, now let's listen carefully. There is not one instance that the risen Christ ever met with the apostles on Sabbath. Now that ought to be significant, okay? There is no evidence that the risen Christ met with his disciples on a Sabbath. Every appearance of the risen Lord when a day is mentioned, was on the first day of the week. Now, follow along here, okay? There is no command to keep the Sabbath in the New Testament. Now isn't that interesting? One would think if the Sabbath is the most important doctrine, and it is in Adventism, it's the dividing truth, you know, that Ellen White says, it's the seal of God. One would think that there ought to be a command to keep the Sabbath in the New Testament but there isn't.

Larry. What's interesting is the other nine....

Dale. ...are all there.

Larry. ...they're all there in the New Testament.

Dale. Exactly.

Larry. The other nine, but not the Sabbath.

Dale. But not the Sabbath. You've got it, okay?

Now all the Sabbath meetings in the book of Acts are in a Jewish setting. Please note that. It doesn't say the apostles kept the Sabbath, it says that they went into the synagogue to preach the Gospel, and in every one of those Sabbath meetings, Sabbath was not the topic, the Gospel was the topic, okay? So Paul starts out, you know, Jesus says go to the Jews and then Samaria and then the innermost parts of the earth. So he always goes to Jews first and they throw him out after a week or two, and then he goes to the Gentiles, okay?

So they're all in a Jewish setting. Now, there's no mention about Sabbath meetings in any Gentile churches. Now that's interesting too. You'd think that the Gentiles, they should have said, "Well, how do we do this, Paul?" There is no instruction on how to keep the Sabbath in letters written to young Gentile churches. Now this is an argument from silence, I admit, but it is a powerful argument from silence. It shouts, okay?

Larry. Well, if the Sabbath is so important, Sabbath keeping, it should be all over the place. It should just be trumpeted from the housetops.

Dale. Exactly. Now, any Adventist listening to this tape or this dvd, will know that there are many unanswered questions about the Sabbath. When I taught at Monterrey Bay Academy, it was a school of 500 boarding students, and we had to have laws, Sabbath laws for the students, okay? And it's quite interesting how you could wade in the ocean, we had a half mile private beach, but you could not go over your knees. If you went over your knees, that was too much. People would come, we had a cafeteria there and the parents would come on Sabbath. Some of them would go on Friday to get their meal ticket, others would use credit cards. Some said it's okay to eat out after church on Sabbath, others said, no, you can't, some said it's okay if you use a credit card but don't pay cash. You couldn't ride a bicycle on MBA on Sabbath, okay, and every Friday in my Bible classes I would open it up for discussion of any question they could ask, okay? And we were discussing the Sabbath one day and one of the students said, "I think scuba diving is the ideal Sabbath activity. You go down there and you float around, you know, and you just see things." I said, "Well, what about all the tanks and what about all this and, you know, getting ready? That's a lot of work." "Yeah."

Samuele Bacchiocchi, who is the, he's deceased now but he has written several books, one exactly condemning me, okay, and my book, has a dissertation on the Sabbath so he's known in Adventism as the Sabbath teacher, okay? And in his book he has about 15 pages of Sabbath laws. It's okay to work in a fire department on Sabbath as long as it's an Adventist fire department, but you shouldn't work in another fire department. And on and on. You shouldn't do funerals on the Sabbath, and yet his funeral was done on the

Sabbath. You see, anybody who has tried to keep the Sabbath know that there's tons and tons of gray areas.

Larry. There are too many idiosyncrasies to keep up with.

Dale. Yeah. Nowhere, not your own pleasure, on and on, you see? So you have to define it and the fact that there's no instruction on how to teach the Gentiles the Sabbath indicates to me that that was not even a requirement.

Now, Sabbath breaking is never mentioned in any list of New Testament sins. Now there's a number of lists and some of them have maybe 17 items. You know, you can't, I mean, you know, on and on and on. These are such, okay, in Galatians and so on. Sabbath breaking is never listed in the list of sins. Now that's significant. When the Sabbath is mentioned in the epistles, it is either in negative or an unimportant context. Now Galatians 4 it says, "I fear for you. You observe days, weeks, seasons and years." Colossians 2:16, we read that, "Let no one judge you in regard to food, drink, festival, new moon or Sabbath." Romans 14:5-6, "One man esteems one day, another man, let every man be convinced in his own...."

Larry. See, now this goes back to what you told me earlier in this presentation about how a lot of Seventh Day Adventists don't think that Paul, because I notice those texts you're bringing up right here are all written by Paul.

Dale. Absolutely.

Larry. And it even becomes obvious to Seventh Day Adventists that Paul isn't helping their cause.

Dale. No.

Larry. At all, and I just wanted to call to the attention of the viewing audience that it says here in 1 Corinthians 14:37, which is also written by Paul, "If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

Dale. Yeah, and I have this in another study but if you go to Galatians, you know, it says that Paul got his Gospel directly from Jesus Christ.

Larry. Exactly. Exactly.

Dale. And on the road to Damascus, you know, Jesus said, "I'm going to set you apart for the Gentiles."

Larry. That's right, that's right, that's Acts 9.

Dale. Yeah, and then in Peter, Peter says, "Paul writes some difficult things as those who wrest the Scriptures do with the other Scriptures."

Larry. That's 2 Peter 3:16.

Dale. Right, 3:16, you remember that easily.

Larry. That's right.

Dale. And so Peter says Paul's writings are Scripture so you have Peter and John and, you know, they're all....

Larry. But it's interesting that they would have something to say against Paul despite what the Scripture says.

Dale. Well, I used to say when I was an Adventist, I'd say, I'm going to get to heaven and I'm going to ask Paul why he wrote so many difficult passages. Now I understand.

Okay, there is, however, mentioned of first day meetings in young Gentile churches. For example, Acts 27, "On the first day of the week, when we were gathered there to break bread." Now Adventists will say this is not the communion service, they were just gathered there to, you know, whatever. But "break bread" is a term that the early church used for communion. The Jews called it "eat bread," the Christians called it "break bread." So they were gathered there to break bread so that says that is the purpose of our gathering. "Break bread" was a common expression for the communion service in the New Testament and in the early church indicating the purpose for this meeting was the stated time for Christian service. The early church records are replete with numerous statements that the Christian church met for Christian service on the first day of the week.

Now this is interesting, there is no evidence that worship on the first day of the week by Christians in the early church was in any way connected with pagan sun worship. When I was at Monterrey Bay Academy teaching Bible after I discovered the Gospel, I noticed that on Easter there was no service at all for Christ. The kids would go out and do Easter eggs which was actually the pagan part of that.

Larry. Right, right.

Dale. So I went to our principal one day and I said, "Elder, I'd like to have a religious service Sunday morning for the kids to celebrate the resurrection." And he thought for a minute and he says, "Well, if you go down to the beach on do it behind the bluff where you can't see the sun, it'll be okay because if you do it where you see the sun, the parents are going to call in and say that you're worshipping the sun." So by the beach there was a big cliff down to the beach where we were, so we walked down to the beach in the shade, we couldn't see the sun, and had a little worship service. But, you know, there's no evidence that the Christians ever worshiped on Sunday to worship the sun. That's

important. Christians are worshipping, were worshipping on the first day of the week long before there was a Catholic Church, okay?

Now here we go again on another topic, the morality taught in the new covenant is so far above the morality taught in the 10 Commandments that it can be contrasted with it. For example, Matthew 5:21, do not murder, it's an act. Then it says 22, don't even call someone a fool, an attitude. You see it's a much higher bar.

Larry. Oh yes.

Dale. Matthew 5:27, don't commit adultery, then don't even lust, a much higher bar. Many of the old covenant laws have eternal moral principles behind them, okay, even some of the strange ones. The detailed laws of the old covenant are superseded by the moral principles interpreted by the Holy Spirit to the circumstances of life. That's kind of a summary of 2 Corinthians. Not of the letter but of the Spirit. The letter kills, the Spirit gives life. The old covenant's a ministry of death, the new covenant's a ministry of the Spirit. The old covenant's a ministry of condemnation, the new one a ministry of righteousness. The old came with glory, the new abounds in glory. The glory has faded, the glory remains, okay?

The new covenant focuses on moral principles instead of detailed laws. A couple of illustrations. It says you're to take your deceased brother's wife. Are you ready to do that?

Larry. I don't think....

Dale. I don't have a brother but...

Larry. I don't think anybody in the New Testament or in the modern era or here in America where we are would do that today.

Dale. Okay.

Larry. No matter how legalistic they are.

Dale. Okay, here's the principle: if we understand that behind the law there's a moral principle, then we can look at that law and say, okay, what's the moral principle? Take care of your deceased brother....

Larry. That's right.

Dale. ...brother's wife. It might mean pay for their kids to go to a Christian school, help her meet her rent, okay?

Another one says build a parapet around your roof. That's kind of a fence around it, but we don't have to build fences around our roof. That's the law but the principle is safety

first. If you have a second story deck, make a fence around it so the kids aren't going to fall off, okay?

So there's tons of ways we can go back to the Old Testament and look at laws that don't appear to have any value but if we look at the moral principle behind them, then we take that moral principle and apply it to today. That makes more sense, okay? Safety first, build a railing around your second deck.

Okay, new covenant righteousness, and this is important, is not even associated with old covenant law. Romans 3:21, "But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been manifested."

Romans 3:21. Now 4:13 and 14, "For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the law but through the righteousness of faith. For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified."

Romans 10:3-4, "For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God." Now listen, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." Why is that? Because our righteousness now comes by faith, not by obedience to the law. It doesn't mean we're going to be disobedient but that's not how we get our righteousness.

Galatians 2:21, "I do not nullify the grace of God for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died needlessly."

Galatians 5:4, "You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace."

Now this is one of the most important texts that I have found regarding the contrast between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of faith. Philippians 3:6-9, "as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found," what? "Blameless." Paul is saying that according to the legal righteousness, he was blameless. Now in Romans 7 he talks about he tripped over the thou shalt not covenant law but apparently he overcame that, okay?

He was found blameless. Now read on, "But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish," in Greek that's manure pile, "so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law," so he's not looking to himself for obedience, "but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith." That's a powerful text, okay?

"But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. But to this day whenever

Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." And he goes on to say that by gazing at the glory of Christ, we are transformed. So the transformation takes place when we gaze at the glory of Christ at the new covenant when we know who we are in Jesus Christ.

"But we all with unveiled face, beholding in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed to the same image from glory to glory just as from the Lord."

Okay, here we are. The old covenant law focuses on, what? Do. The new covenant law focuses on done. God wants us to enter his rest which is available today. Remember in Hebrews 4 it says, "He who has believed enters God's rest," and, my friend, you can do it today. You can enter God's rest. You have the evidence now. We're saved by faith from beginning to end. Just say, "Lord, I recognize I'm a sinner. The law is there to condemn me, not to make me perfect. My perfection is Jesus Christ. He is my covenant keeper, and by placing my faith in Jesus Christ, all the blessings of the new covenant are mine. I am in Him. I have eternal life. I'm a child." In fact, the Greek word that Paul uses is mature sons and daughters. We are seated with Christ in heavenly places. We are forgiven. We have eternal life. Colossians says we are now qualified for inheritance into the saints of light. If we understand who we are in Christ, then the Holy Spirit will work out the fruits of the Spirit in our life. I invite you, my friend, if the Lord is speaking to you now and you can only come if the Holy Spirit draws you, and if he draws you, you can respond and say, "I come. I confess the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior." Amen.

Larry. Amen. Amen to that.

Alright then, that concludes our Sabbath teaching which I think was very thorough as you concluded with all those point blank Bible verses that made it very clear, gave a very clear Gospel message there at the end of how it's not the Sabbath, it's Jesus Christ.

Dale. Amen.

Larry. It's him all the way. He's the only one that can fulfill all righteousness. We can't even get close.

Dale. Nope.

Larry. I remember just the other day I had given almost every one of those verses in a comment to somebody who was giving me a hard time, one of my YouTube videos about where I was saying almost virtually what you were saying. It was with another works righteousness group, it wasn't with the Seventh Day Adventist. The Seventh Day Adventists aren't the only ones that think they can get into heaven by doing their good works. So I gave him this whole list, even other verses besides all the ones you just had there, and in a way, I guess, maybe I shouldn't have felt so confident but I said, "There's no way this guy's gonna be able to deal with this, you know?" I thought after I sent it off, posted it on YouTube, and then a few days went by and the guy didn't immediately

respond, I'm used to people just coming right back at me, but this guy, and I said, "Well, maybe, praise the Lord, maybe, maybe something happened." But anyway, the guy finally responds, I think it was two days ago, and he put just a little quick comment on there and he had two quotes out of Isaiah where it was just saying something about keeping Old Testament laws because he was arguing all along that you have to keep laws.

Dale. Right, right.

Larry. And I thought to myself, now this is interesting, I just gave him a whole bunch of New Testament passages and he comes back with two Old Testament passages. The guy's still living in the Old Testament just like what we've been discussing here, these people thinking they can be justified by their own righteousness through these Sabbath keeping and law, keeping the law, and they've just totally been blinded by the ritual of the situation.

Well anyway, brother, I want to thank you for being here to do this great presentation.

Dale. My pleasure.

Larry. Oh yes, it was providence of the Lord that he brought you here so we could do these videos and I just sincerely hope those of you out there who have watched this program will follow up and check out the websites that Dale mentioned at the beginning of this program. If you really want to get into in depth discussion and study of the things we're talking about here, check out those websites and you see them right there on your screen right now, and of course, you can always contact us. Our ministry, our phone number, our email is there and we'll be glad to help you in any way we can. We have free newsletters.

And with that said, I'd like to let you know that Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man comes to the Father except by Me." It's all about Jesus.

Dale. Amen.

Larry. It's not about you, it's all about Jesus. You just need to come to faith in him and trust him, not yourself.

Alright, with that said, join us again next time. I'm Larry Wessels from Christian Answers and Dale Ratzlaff. God bless you all. Bye.

Check out our websites:

biblequery.org – this site answers 7,700 Bible questions;
historycart.com – this site reveals early church history and doctrine, proving Roman Catholicism is not historically or doctrinally viable;

muslimhope.com – this site is a classic refutation of Islam, a counterfeit religion created by Mohammad.

Free newsletters are also available.