

# Sabbath Keeping Is Not Required For New Testament Christians: Seventh-Day Adventists

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*Sabbath Keeping Not Required*

By Larry Wessels

**Bible Text:** 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; John 5:18

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Sabbath Keeping Is not Required For New Testament Christians

Special thanks to:

Richard Storey, Former Sabbatarian, Author of "Sabbatismos: The Sabbath Under The Gospel."

Special thanks to:

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This video is a brief overview and the main argument of an article which I have written regarding the Sabbath under the new, better and eternal covenant of Christ. There are three views regarding the Sabbath, the Seventh-Day Sabbatarianism which teaches that the Sabbath continues on the seventh day of the week and has done so since creation, first-day Sabbatarianism which teaches that Christ having established the new creation and now resting from his work, changed the Sabbath to the first day of the week, and anti-Sabbatarianism or non-Sabbatarianism which teaches that the Sabbath was a shadow of Christ and the rest from all works that we have in him. I personally hold to anti-Sabbatarianism though I prefer the term non-Sabbatarianism, yet neither of these terms adequately expresses the belief that we have an eternal Sabbath to come and that we enter into the peace and eternal life of it now in Jesus Christ.

I'd like to briefly explain that nothing has caused me as much grief in my walk with Christ as this very topic. I was at one time a legalistic Seventh-Day Sabbatarian and grievously could not be convinced that the first day Sabbatarian position by dear brethren whom I loved, and I only ever found any true spiritual rest in Christ as I longed to be free from the thunder of the law upon my soul for never knowing whether I was truly doing as God would have me do. But now I've been set free in Christ from all of my works both good and bad, and my belief that this is the New Testament teaching regarding the Sabbath.

So in this video I would like to outline my main argument. Colossians 2:16 and verse 17, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink or in respect of an holy day or of the new moon or of the Sabbath days which were a shadow of things to come but the body is of Christ." The Greek word for Sabbath days here is sabbaton, which elsewhere in Scripture is used to refer to the weekly sabbath. For example, Mark 2:23-24, "And it came to pass, that he went through the cornfields on the Sabbath day." At no other instance in the Bible is this word used to represent anything other than the weekly Sabbath, yet in this verse in Colossians, we're supposed to take it to mean something completely different. The Sabbatarian would say but the word is used here in the plural sense, and is referring to all of the ceremonial Sabbaths but not the weekly Sabbath, whereas the learned Dr. Gill, who was himself a Sabbatarian, says this of the verse, "Some copies read in the singular number or of the Sabbath, which were all peculiar to

the Jews, never binding on the Gentiles, and to which believers in Christ, be they who they will, are by no means obliged nor are they to observe them, the one any more than the other, and should they be imposed upon them, they ought to reject them."

William Tyndale, architect of the English language and master of Greek and Hebrew, who gave his life that we might have a sound translation of the Bible in English, translated the word in the singular as the weekly Sabbath in his 1526 edition. "Let no man therefore trouble your consciences about meat and drink or for a peace of an holy day as the holy day of the new moon or of the Sabbath day, which are nothing but shadows of things to come, but the body is in Christ."

And even if the plural of sabbaton is used, this in no way detracts from it referring to the weekly Sabbath as we see from its usage in other verses. Luke 4:16, "And Jesus came to Nazareth where he had been brought up and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up for to read." Or Matthew 28:1, "In the end of the Sabbath as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre." Also we have an Old Testament precedent to interpret Colossians 2:16 as representing yearly feasts, the monthly new moons, and the weekly Sabbath.

Look at how the same language is used in Ezekiel and Hosea. Ezekiel 45:17, "And it shall be the prince's part to give burnt offerings and meat offerings and drink offerings in the feasts and in the new moons and in the Sabbaths, in all solemnities of the house of Israel." Hosea 2:11, "I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons and her Sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts."

There are other similar passages one could use but the point is clear. There appears to be no scriptural warrant to interpret this verse any other way. Matthew Poole, famous Puritan commentator and a Sabbatarian, admits the clear description of the weekly Sabbath in this verse, writing that Colossians 2:16 refers to festivals and Sabbaths whether annual or monthly or weekly from the Levitical institutions. Indeed, the early church unanimously interpreted this verse in the same manner. I will just present on screen a list of early church quotes regarding the Lord's Day, the first day of the week, and how this was never interpreted as the Sabbath. I could continue quoting Christian writings past the time of the Nicene Council but the point is already established and is summed up perfectly by Lutheran historian, Bishop Grimerland(ph), "The Christians in the ancient church very soon distinguished the first day of the week, Sunday, however not as a Sabbath but as an assembly day of the church to study the word of God together and to celebrate the ordinances one with another. Without a shadow of doubt, this took place as early as the first part of the second century."

Now in the New Testament even after Christ's resurrection, the seventh day Sabbath is still referred to as the Sabbath but as we see next, this was purely a time for proselytizing the Jews as we see in Acts 16:13 or Acts 17:2, "And Paul as his manner was, went in unto them and three Sabbath days reasoned with them after the Scriptures." Nowhere do we see that the Sabbath is anything more than this in the New Testament, much less do we

see that it was changed to the first day of the week. Indeed, the final and only other time it is mentioned in the New Testament is in the epistle to the Colossians as we have read. Certainly in Paul's epistles, we do not read of any person exhorted for not keeping the Sabbath correctly amidst the atrocious behavior of the Corinthians, for instance. Is it conceivable that they happened to be exemplary Sabbatharians?

The arguments I have just presented are as far as most non-Sabbatarians would normally take things and you can tell that though well intentioned, they have never had to personally and spiritually grapple with the issue of the Sabbath. They have not been greatly grieved on the matter, battling with both sides of the argument for fear of walking sinfully in the dear love and spirit of Christ for fear of grieving the Holy Spirit. Therefore for the love of the brethren and a desire to see Sabbatharians set free in Christ and to recognize that he is the rest for our souls from the covenant of the Old Testament, I shall endeavor to tackle the main arguments presented by Sabbatharians. The main arguments, as I write in my article, are a response to the Sabbath is a perpetual creation ordinance and a natural law or moral law binding on all men, that Hebrews 4:9 teaches that we are to keep the Sabbath, that Christ said that we are not to break the least commandment, that Christ said that there would be a Sabbath at the end of the world, that the Old Testament prophecies of Sabbath continuation under the Gospel, that the eighth day ceremonies in the Old Testament prefigured the change of the Sabbath to the first day, or that there was a transition period from the seventh day Sabbath to the first day. I thank you for listening and I do hope you will read that article and I pray that Almighty God would bless you and edify you in it.

Larry Wessels. This is Larry Wessels letting our viewers know that the short introduction video by Christian brother and former Sabbatharian, Richard Storey, also references to his excellent treatise "Sabbatismos: The Sabbath under the Gospel." Viewers can find this indepth 35 page analysis posted on our Christian Answers of Austin, Texas website, [www.biblequery.org](http://www.biblequery.org). Once on the homepage, scroll down to "Other beliefs" to the left side of the page. From there, scroll down to the Seventh-Day Adventism section where you can click on this document and print it out.

As you can see here, the table of contents for this research reveals that this paper will deal with major arguments made by Sabbatharians, and then the paper refutes each argument in detail. Sabbatharian argue from this question: is the Sabbath a creation ordinance? Is the Sabbath a universal moral law? Hebrews 4:19 teaches that we are to keep a Sabbath. Christ said that we are not to break the least commandment. Christ said there would be a Sabbath at the end of the world, Matthew 24:20. The Old Testament prophecies of Sabbath continuation under the Gospel. Eighth day ceremonies in the Old Testament prefigured the change of the Sabbath to the first day. And finally, there was a transition period from the seventh day Sabbath to the first day.

The paper then reveals the origins of the different forms of Sabbatarianism, reveals its fruits, and then presents its conclusion. Here's a brief example of what the reader will see. Is the Sabbath a creation ordinance? The plain reading of the text declares that no one else was doing any creating, only God, and God alone was resting. Furthermore, God did

not start creating again the following week but rested completely, just as Christ now rests perpetually from his finished work in the new creation. Hebrews 10:12, "But this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God." So there is no precedent or implication of a weekly holy day for men in Genesis. In fact, the only thing we can ascertain from other verses in Scripture is that the weekly Sabbath was introduced to men with the law given to Moses.

Is the Sabbath a universal moral law? More than this, though, the Lord Jesus Christ himself distinguishes the Sabbath commandment from the others on the tables of stone. We have already read the verse concerning the Sabbath having been made for man, but let's read the rest of it. Mark 2:27, "And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath."

Which of the other of the 9 commandments can this be said of? Let us examine them all. Deuteronomy 5:6-7, "I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other gods before me." Can we say that men were made to have one God? Yes, Adam was made in God's image and for His glory. And the list goes on.

In another reference book called "The Bible's Answer to the Sabbath Question," the author clearly shows the same distinction. Does it therefore mean the Sabbath commandment is not found in the New Testament? No, the Sabbath commandment is not found in the New Testament. The moral principles of the other nine commandments are restated in the New Testament. There is none concerning the fourth commandment. For example, we find the following restatements pertaining to the 10 Commandments in the New Testament.

First commandment, one God. 1 Timothy 2:5.  
Second commandment, idolatry. 1 Corinthians 10:7  
Third commandment, swearing. James 5:12, Matthew 5:33-37.  
Fourth commandment, Sabbath keeping. None.  
Fifth commandment, honor your parents. Ephesians 6:2.  
Sixth commandment, murder. 1 John 3:15, Matthew 5:21-22.  
Seventh commandment, adultery. Hebrews 13:4, Matthew 5:27-28, 31-32.  
Eighth commandment, stealing. Ephesians 4:28.  
Ninth commandment, lying. Colossians 3:9.  
Tenth commandment, covetousness. Ephesians 5:3.

Back to Richard Storey's research. Sabbatarians argue that Hebrews 4:9 teaches that we are to keep the Sabbath. Let's look at the key verse in the New Testament (and in reality the only verse in the New Testament) used by Sabbatarians to affirm that there is a Sabbath day to be kept under the New Covenant.

Hebrews 4:8-10, "For if Jesus [the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name for Joshua of the Old Testament] had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered

into his [God's] rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." The word 'rest,' underlined here, is a Greek noun – 'sabbatismos,' which is an entirely unique word to the Scriptures. It means 'sabbatism' (according to the major Lexicons) and can also be translated as 'Sabbath-rest' or 'Sabbath-like rest'. The Authorised Version translators, Geneva Bible translators and William Tyndale have all translated this simply as 'rest,' which is perfectly adequate when we consider that both the Sabbath and the rest that the Israelites were seeking in Canaan (Hebrews 3:18) have been used by the apostle as examples of this special rest he is describing in Hebrews chapter 4. This rest, which the Sabbath was foreshadowing, is entered into by faith (Hebrews 4:3); we are given the examples of those who had the Gospel preached to them in Moses' time but could not enter in because they didn't have saving faith. There is also a ceasing from one's own works in this rest, as we see in the context (Hebrews 4:10). The result of this context is that the overwhelming majority of expositors and exegetes of the Bible, even notable Sabbatarians, cannot with any intellectual honesty interpret Hebrews 4 as describing anything other than the Gospel rest we have in Christ and the expectation of heavenly rest; nor can they interpret the Sabbatism of verse 9 as referring to anything other than the Sabbath as an example of the rest we have in Christ.

This is why Thayer's Lexicon defines 'sabbatismos' as 'the blessed rest from toils and troubles looked for in the age to come by the true worshippers of God.'

Sabbatarians argue that Christ said that we are not to break the least commandments, quoting from Matthew 5:17-20, and so they include the Sabbath. Is that really what the Lord Jesus was teaching? Let's examine the verses in question.

Matthew 5:17-20, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

So, Jesus has stated that: The Law, i.e. the entire old Mosaic covenant, will not pass away until it is fulfilled. 2. A man's righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees to enter the kingdom of heaven, not breaking the Law at all as they do (John 7:19). 3. Jesus has come to fulfil, i.e. keep, that law as well as the prophecies. From these three premises we can only conclude that Christ alone can fulfil the law for us. Therefore, as fearful sinners seeking peace, we must desire as Paul did, Philippians 3:9, "to be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith..." Romans 10:4, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteous to every one that believeth." See also Galatians 2:21.

Sabbatarians argue that Christ said that there would be a Sabbath at the end of the world, Matthew 24:20. The line of reasoning here is that: 1. Matthew 24:20 is referring to the second coming of Christ; and 2. There would be a continuation of the Sabbath amongst Christians after Christ's resurrection and ascension into heaven.

Firstly, Matthew 24:20 is not referring to the second coming but to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. I shall not argue this point here as it is irrelevant to the conclusion that we reach. Suffice it to say that Christ is asked two questions by His disciples in Matthew 24:3, "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" And our Lord Jesus answers both questions in the chapter: the first, regarding 'these things,' i.e. the destruction of the temple which he has prophesied of in the previous verse, and the second question, regarding his second coming.

Nevertheless, the point is that a continuation of the Sabbath for Christians after Christ's ascension is assumed from verse 20. Yet, this is not what we are told in the context. Matthew 24:19-20, "And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day." Christ is warning of hindrances to fleeing from the abominable standard and idols of the armies of Roman prince Titus as they would come to conduct the most horrific siege in history. Christ explains that there would be those who would read and understand Daniel's prophecy concerning this matter.

The Sabbath, however, is listed by Christ among potential hindrances such as winter, having the burden of sucklings and even the snare of one's material possessions (verse 18). The Sabbath is listed as one of these hindrances because the Jews would enforce their rules to not exceed a Sabbath day's journey (2000 cubits). To conclude this point, this verse is in no way speaking of a continuation of the Sabbath for Christ's sheep but is a warning against those who would be zealously continuing in the weak and beggarly elements of the Law of Moses, whether Christians or not.

Sabbatarians argue Old Testament prophecies of Sabbath continuation under the Gospel using verses like Isaiah 58:13-14, Isaiah 56:6-7, and Isaiah 66:22-24, but we know that no such new moons exist now for Christians in the better covenant or in the eternal state.

Revelation 21:22-24, "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it." These verses in Revelation certainly put to silence any literal interpretation of the verses we have read in Isaiah. But more than this, one cannot consistently interpret the Sabbath as being a literal continuation of the Sabbath day from these verses in Isaiah, for then one would have to do so with the holy days of the new moon and this is something which the Sabbatarian interpretation of Colossians

2:16 simply does not allow. The only logical conclusion left is: the Sabbath day was a shadow of Christ and the Sabbath expressed in Isaiah cannot be interpreted otherwise.

Another supposed prophecy put forward by the First-day Sabbatarians is from Psalm 118:19-24, "Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD: This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter. I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." They state that this 'day which the LORD hath made' is clearly referring to the Sabbath having been changed to the first day of the week, when Christ rose from the dead and when he ascended into heaven for us. But the Sabbath is nowhere mentioned or implied in this Psalm.

Christ speaks of this Psalm as referring to the establishment of his church. Matthew 21:42-43, "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"

The paper goes on to refute first day Sabbatarians who argue eighth day ceremonies in the Old Testament prefigured the change of the Sabbath to the first day where they misinterpret Leviticus 12:3, chapter 23:35-36 and 39. This is the classic example of taking a text out of its context and making a pretext out of it for error.

As Richard Storey testifies. As a Sabbatarian, I found that an un-Christian form a legalism was nurtured in my heart as I began to develop my own arbitrary rules of how one might keep the Sabbath under the grace of the new and better covenant. Indeed, it seems that without any indication of any rules in the New Testament, a certain anarchy reigns as to how Christians keep their Sabbath, with the rules differing from church to church in a purely arbitrary manner. Some cook, some do not; some drive a car and some realize that to do so is to cause an ignition in the car's engine and is therefore lighting a fire on the Sabbath. There is even inconsistency as to the timing of the Sabbath; many Sabbatarians do not keep their Sabbath from sundown to sundown as it was established by God, supposedly as a creation ordinance (Leviticus 23:32), or from sunrise, when the Lord's tomb was found empty. Christian liberty is apparently allowed in the matter with no New Testament principles to indicate any Sabbath regulations at all. And when one desires to have a set of authoritative rules on how to keep the Sabbath, one is typically directed to the words of men in the Westminster Confession of Faith or other.

Furthermore, I found that Sabbatarianism nurtured a spirit of Pharisaic pride, superiority and a judgmental attitude in me. I found that the focus on a day caused me to be endeavoring to work to bring myself closer to God, closer to his favor by my own actions rather than ceasing from all my works in Christ.

Referencing back to the book "The Bible's Answers to the Sabbath Question," we see the restrictions placed on those who try to keep the Sabbath day holy. We see from Exodus



16:29-30 the Sabbath keeper is not to leave his place of house. This was backed up by 2 Kings 4:22-23. Other restrictions. Cooking or preparing meals. See Exodus 16:23. Or buying or selling as mentioned in Nehemiah 10:31. Jeremiah 17:21-22 mentions bearing no burdens or do any work.

How good are Sabbath keepers at doing these things? Richard Storey's research finishes with a very interesting appendix which deals with additional Sabbath day questions.

Why did God rest on the seventh day at all if the Sabbath day was only going to be significant as a day for the Hebrew people under the Mosaic covenant? Didn't Noah keep the Sabbath in Genesis 8:10 and 12? Didn't Origen of the early church teach that we must not do any servile work on the Lord's Day, calling it the Christian Sabbath? Didn't Archelaus of the early church keep the seventh day Sabbath and write that all Christians should? Doesn't Revelation 14:12 teach that the saints keep the commandments of God?

I also like what the Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry says on the question should we keep the Sabbath or not. Don't keep the Sabbath. A. Romans 14:5, "One man regardeth one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind." B. Colossians 2:16, "Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day."

It was the custom of the Jews to come together on the Sabbath, which is Saturday, cease work, and worship God. Of the 10 Commandments listed in Exodus 20:1-17, only nine of them were reinstated in the New Testament, six in Matthew 19:18, murder, adultery, stealing, false witness, honor parents and worshiping God. Romans 13:9, coveting, worshiping God properly covers the first three commandments. The one that was not affirmed was the one about the Sabbath. Instead Jesus said that he is the Lord of the Sabbath. Matthew 12:8.

In creation God rested on the seventh day but since God is all-powerful, he doesn't get tired. He doesn't need to take a break and rest so why does it say that he rested? The reason is simple, Mark 2:27 says, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." In other words, God established the Sabbath as a rest for his people, not because he needed a break, but because we are mortal and need a time of rest, a time to focus on God. In this, our spirits and bodies are both renewed.

The Old Testament system of law required keeping the Sabbath as part of the overall moral, legal, and sacrificial system by which the Jewish people satisfied God's requirements for behavior, government, and forgiveness of sins. The Sabbath was part of the law in that sense. In order to "remain" in favor with God, you had to also keep the Sabbath. If it was not kept, then the person was in sin and would often be punished. Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23; Deuteronomy 13:1-9; Numbers 35:31; and Leviticus 20:2.

But with Jesus' atonement and justification by faith, Romans 5:1, we are no longer required to keep the law and hence the Sabbath, which was only a shadow of things to come, Colossians 2:16-17. We are not under law but grace, Romans 6:14-15. The

Sabbath is fulfilled in Jesus because in him we have rest, Matthew 11:28. We are not under obligation to keep the law and this goes for the Sabbath as well.

And also I like what they had to say to the question, "Why do we worship on Sunday instead of Saturday?" Evidence of the change of days can be seen in the New Testament.

The New Testament has ample evidence that the seventh day Sabbath is no longer a requirement. Romans 14:5-6, "One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God."

The entire section of Romans 14:1-12 is worth careful study. Nevertheless, the instructions here are that individuals must be convinced in their own minds about which day they observe for the Lord. If the seventh day Sabbath were a requirement, then the choice would not be man's, but God's.

Colossians 2:16-17, "Therefore let no one 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." Notice here that time sequence mentioned. A festival is yearly. A new moon is monthly. A Sabbath is weekly. No one is to judge in regard to this. The Sabbath is defined as a shadow, the reality is Jesus. Jesus is our Sabbath.

Acts 20:7, "And on the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to depart the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight." The first day of the week is Sunday, and this is the day the people gathered. This passage can easily be seen as the church meeting on Sunday. It has two important church functions within it: breaking bread (communion) and a message (preaching). Additionally, Luke did not use the Jewish system of counting days: sundown to sundown. He used the Roman system: midnight to midnight. This is a subtle point that shows the Jewish Sabbath system was not the one utilized by Luke.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." Notice here that Paul is directing the churches to meet on the first day of each week and put money aside. It would seem that this is tithing. So, the instructed time for the church to meet is Sunday. Is this an official worship day set up by the church? You decide.

Revelation 1:10-11, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet, saying, 'Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.'" The New Bible Dictionary says regarding the term, "The Lord's Day" in [Revelation 1:10](#), "This is the first extant occurrence in Christian literature of the Greek word, 'ta kuriaka hamera.' The adjectival construction

suggests that it was a formal designation of the church's worship day. As such it certainly appears early in the second century." Ignatius, "Epistle to the Magnesians," volume 1, page 67.

In many churches today, the term "The Lord's Day" is used to designate Sunday, the same as it was in the second century.

I hope this is evidence enough to show you that the Bible does not require that we worship on Saturday. If anything, we have the freedom, Romans 14:1-12, to worship on the day that we believe we should. And, no one should judge us in regard to the day we keep. We are free in Christ, not under law, Romans 6:14.

And now we'll conclude this Sabbath study with Jackson Boyett who is the pastor of my home church here in Austin, Texas, Dayspring Fellowship, an independent Reformed Baptist church. For more information about Dayspring Fellowship, see our website [www.dayspringchapel.org](http://www.dayspringchapel.org).

Jackson Boyett. There may be some demonic temptation to go back under the law, as a matter of fact, you can almost say that when that happens it is demonic, but what Paul concludes from verses 14 and 15 when he exalts the sufficient atonement of the Lord Jesus, is that in verse 16 we should let no one judge us in food or in drink or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths.

So here is a whole lifestyle that many Christians have adopted in going back under Judaism or going under elements of Judaism. Usually no Christian goes under all the elements of Judaism, they go under the ones that are appealing to their flesh. Here it is a matter of food and in drink, in other words, in dietary laws, you should eat this, you should not eat that, or regarding a festival, a new moon or Sabbaths. These are feasts of various regularity. There were three annual festivals, Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. There was the monthly new moon festival. Then in verse 16, it says you shouldn't let someone judge you with regard to the weekly celebration either, the Sabbath. Isn't that interesting? Because there are many in the Reformed camp that think that's exactly what I'm supposed to do. I'm supposed to judge people with regard to the Sabbath, and did you know that what you are actually supposed to do is when someone begins to give you rules and regulations about Sunday as the Sabbath, Sunday being the Christian Sabbath or more correctly the Christianized Sabbath, when someone gives you directions about that, you really are supposed to quote this verse and say to them, "I'm sorry but I'm not supposed to let you judge me concerning that, and it's sinful for me to let you judge me."

Isn't that interesting? Because they, of course, think that they're upholding the moral law of God. Let me tell you, it is a grief to me that there is for all practical purposes, I'm not speaking so much theologically but for all practical purposes, there is really one issue that divides Reformed Baptists in this country and it is the Sabbath. It actually is the Sabbath because when you come right down to it, covenantal Christians who haven't gone plumb over into keeping the Mosaic law as theonomists and reconstructionists do, but

covenantal Christians whether they be Presbyterians or Baptists, are going to pretty much live the same way as new covenant Christians. They're really going to live under the same laws. Their behavior in holiness is gonna be pretty much the same, but the issue that our Sabbatarian brethren want to make about this particular doctrine of the Sabbath is the one issue that has been exalted to a major status that keeps Reformed Baptists from uniting. It was the issue that made Richard Bennett's pastor uncertain as to whether or not Richard Bennett should come and put himself under the authority of this church. This is the way that things practically work out among Reformed Baptists and yet we have a verse and they don't because they don't have a verse that says that the resting day, the seventh day of the week has been transformed and fulfilled in the first day of the week. They do not have a verse that says Sunday replaced the Sabbath. There is no verse. They have not one verse and yet we have a verse that says you're not supposed to judge me in regard to the Sabbath.

John MacArthur with his usual dismissive, terse manner says the New Testament clearly teaches that Christians are not required to keep the Sabbath and it's true, the New Testament does teach that. First of all, the New Testament is not saying you're not supposed to have a day off. The pattern of rest is in the six days of labor and the day of rest that God illustrated, and so we are to have a day off. That pattern of working six days and resting one is one that we do find embedded in creation itself. I take off Monday as my Sabbath. That is not acceptable to Sabbatarian Christians but it's acceptable to me.

The other thing is that the Sabbath was more than the Sabbath, it was the sign of the Mosaic covenant. It was the actual covenant sign and that's why if you broke it, you were put to death. So now that the old covenant has been taken out of the way as we read in verse 14, the sign has been taken out of the way as well, and therefore this is why Paul, a Jew, can say, "Let no one judge you in a Sabbath." Can you imagine a Sabbatarian minister who insists that you do not go to a restaurant on the Sabbath, on a Sunday, that you do not do all manner of things, and by the way, no two of them can ever agree on what you can't do and can do. Barbara and I took John G. to the airport on a Sunday after he preached here and good old beloved Dr. G. said, "Well, I'm hungry." He said, "Is there a restaurant at the airport?" And we said, "Yes, there is." And he said, "Well, since it's Sunday, I'll just have a hot dog." Would someone explain that logic?

Speaker. Maybe they were made the night before.

Jackson. Maybe so. Maybe so, but you know... [unintelligible] Yeah. Yeah, that's right. Since it's Sunday, yeah.

Speaker. Are you sure he wasn't asking the question to see what kind of an answer he would get from you?

Jackson. Oh, I'm sure. I'm sure. He wanted a hot dog and thought that a hot dog would be permissible.

The second thing. I was talking to a Sabbatarian father one time asking him about raising the kids and I said, "Did you let them play on Sunday?" He said, "Oh, not outside." You see, this is the kind of thing you find. Then I was in Corpus Christi to hear Greg B. and found out to my surprise that Greg B., one of the great Sabbatarians had gone out to eat on Sunday with the Sabbatarian pastor that was holding the conference, and I thought what kind of Sabbatarianism is this? You know, no.... I think that very few people can agree about the doctrine and yet the doctrine is the big dividing line, and you know, obviously you're supposed to rest after six days of labor, God did not intend man to be a machine and did not intend for us to not get a needed rest and follow his example, but when it comes down to keeping the Sabbath either as a regular Saturday or as Sunday which is the idea of the Christian Sabbath which was pretty much developed in the days of the Puritans in England, it's just not there in Scripture and I want you to just put yourself in the place of a Sabbatarian minister.

Do you know any Sabbatarian that would have written verse 16? "So let no one judge you in food or in drink or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbath." No Sabbatarian could have written that verse because Sabbatarians think that they are supposed to judge in terms of keeping the Sabbath, but what did Paul say about keeping days to the Romans? "One man esteems one day above another, another one esteems every day alike. Let each man be persuaded in his own mind." What we have in the New Testament is the first day of the week commemorating the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and on the first day of the week they gathered together for worship, and on the first day of the week they gathered together for giving, and on the first day of the week John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. So what you find is a different day, Sunday, the day commemorating weekly the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So in any event, I don't want to just go any longer on this but I do want to point out to you that as much respect as I do have for consistent Sabbatarian Christians who try to keep it, I cannot support the idea from Scripture. You know, I admire their personal devotion to God and we've never made it an issue here at Dayspring. A family came here a few years ago and they said, "Now we keep Sunday as the Sabbath," and I said, "That's wonderful. That's just fine. Keep it according to your own conscience. Let me ask you not to teach our people to keep it." They certainly may keep it if they see a good scriptural argument but as far as I can tell, there isn't one because what Paul has just said is that the law has been taken out of the way, therefore don't let anybody judge you in these things.

And he says about the law, verse 17, "which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ." The reality is in Christ. So all these things that he mentions, festivals, new moons and Sabbaths, they pointed to Christ. How is the Sabbath fulfilled in Christ? He is our rest. "Come unto me all you who labor and I will give you rest." The rest of the book of Hebrews is our Sabbath rest. He uses that term, Sabbath rest.

So this is a point of controversy that, you know, I've spent too much time on and if you feel strongly about keeping the Sabbath, God bless you but the interesting thing is that those who do feel strongly about keeping the Sabbath because it is the abiding moral law

of God, cannot do anything other than what they see as their duty. They must do their duty and their duty, seeing it as part of the moral law of God, is to judge you. So in other words, if you are a Sabbatarian who believes in keeping the Sabbath as part of the moral law of God, your duty is to defy this verse. Isn't that amazing? Your duty is to sin against Colossians 2:16.

Speaker. And that we're not to judge.

Jackson. We're not to judge them. They're doing it according to their own conscience.

Speaker. They by necessity have to....

Jackson. They of necessity have to judge us. They have to judge us and in so doing they violate Scripture. Isn't that astounding? Their theology dictates that they defy Scripture.

Speaker. [unintelligible].

Jackson. Yes. Right. It says to resist them. Now what do they say about this verse? You know they must have an answer. Well, they do. They say these were other Sabbaths other than the weekly Sabbath. These were other Sabbaths other than the weekly Sabbath. Do you see that? Do you see all those extra words? If you're a Sabbatarian, you see it but it's like John R. says about Easter eggs, you only find the Easter eggs after you've hidden them there, and you have to hide them there in order to find them. It's just that simple.

Okay, 17, "which are a shadow of things to come but the substance is of Christ." When your wife or your husband has been away from you and they fly in on a plane and they get off on the tarmac and you see their shadow, do you kiss their shadow? Some of you real gone ones might, kiss the shadow first and then kiss the substance. But this was a shadow of things to come.

What other writer makes a great deal out of the law being a shadow of things to come? Excuse me, Dave?

Dave. Apollos in Hebrews.

Jackson. Apollos in Hebrews. Yes, Apollos does that. He sure does.

Dave. I'll stand by my brother on that.

Jackson. For those of you who don't know that Apollos wrote Hebrews, you may talk to Dave after church. He'll give you the scriptural evidence for that.

Hebrews 10:1, "For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year make those who approach perfect." The law is a shadow. It, you know, it looks like it but it's not the substance.

Years ago we had a visitor from Canada that I took to the bakery for breakfast. He was a big football fan and saw a picture of Darrell Royal on the wall and he was just absolutely beside himself with excitement that he saw a picture of one of his heroes. Coach Darrell Royal of the Texas Longhorns on the wall of the bakery. Don't say anything, Dave, but anyway this guy was thrilled that he played football under Darrell. Suddenly in a moment, Darrell Royal himself walked into Cisco's. You can imagine the reaction of this guy then. He had just seen the shadow, then he saw the substance. He had something to tell everybody in Canada about. He was just, you know, dizzy with delight.

And Jesus is the reality. He is the substance to which the Old Testament points.

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Larry Wessels. 1 Corinthians 14:37, "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." And that's pretty strong and it covers all the spiritual and all the prophets and everything.

Thomas Ice. That's, in essence, saying what we've been saying, is that the Holy Spirit and the Bible are best friends and if you come up with revelation supposedly from the Holy Spirit, then it should fall in line with what the Bible has already written.

Larry. Even the Bereans who were more noble than the Thessalonians in Acts 17:11 didn't take what Paul said on surface value, they checked the Scriptures daily to see whether the things spoken of him were true or not. We've got Genesis 1 states "God said" nine times. It's interesting that in Genesis 3 the devil questions whether, "Did God really say?" You know? Malachi says, "Thus saith the Lord," 23 times. So here you have the first book in the Old Testament and the last book of the Old Testament and God speaking all the way through it. "The Lord spoke" in quotation marks appears 560 times in the first five books of the Bible alone. Isaiah claims his message came directly from God 40 times. Ezekiel, 60 times. Jeremiah, 100 times. "The Lord spoke" in quotation marks appears at least 3,800 times in the Old Testament. God's doing a lot of talking.

Point 6, Jesus quoted from 24 Old Testament books alone. The quotes are still the same today. They have not been lost in transmission. What about the question that God must always answer prayer? That's a little different but I'm sure a lot of people out there would like to know.

Thomas. Yeah, prayer is related to spiritual warfare and often the vehicle....

Larry. Exactly. So God always answers prayer no matter what?

Thomas. Well, in a sense he does always answer prayer, sometimes it's yes, no, maybe, wait, and other things but in another sense, God is sovereign, he can do what he wants. Prayer is not bossing God around or manipulating him. Prayer is asking. That's what the word means, to ask.

Larry. Not forcing him to do things.

Thomas. That's correct, and it says in 1 John that we can be confident that he'll answer our prayer when we pray according to his will.

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Larry Wessels. Hello, I'm Larry Wessels, Director of Christian Answers. Our ministry name is derived in part from 1 Peter 3:15 which states, "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." This is the goal of Christian Answers, to answer questions concerning the Christian faith in an increasingly anti-Christian society here in



America and throughout the world. The biblical commands to fight the good fight of faith, to be set for the defense of the Gospel, to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, to beware of false prophets, and to examine everything carefully, hold fast to that which is good, are but a few of the marching orders of the call of ministry. The inerrant word of God whereby the Gospel is preached, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, is the weapon of our evangelism. This is the evangelical missionary methodology of Christian Answers, to bring the biblical perspective to a culture that is almost completely ignorant of it, to bring Christian truth, Christian answers to those who as the prophet Isaiah said, have made lies and falsehoods their refuge, to smash lies and falsehoods with the hammer of God's word.

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Announcer. 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.

Hello, this is Larry Wessels, Director of Christian Answers of Austin, Texas, Christian debater. My daughter Marlana has come out with a Christian music CD entitled "Win This Fight." It has eight songs that she has written and performed herself. Some of the song titles are "Win This Fight. Love Song to My Lord. Vessel to You. Waiting to Hear From You. Jesus Is." And others. YouTube viewers can listen and see Marlana's music video, "Jesus Is," right now free. Just type "Marlana Wessels," m-a-r-l-e-n-a w-e-s-s-e-l-s in the YouTube search box and click on her video on the page that comes next. If you would like more information about getting a copy of her CD, just email us at [cdebater@aol.com](mailto:cdebater@aol.com). That's [cdebater@aol.com](mailto:cdebater@aol.com) or give us a call at (512) 218-8022. Thank you and may the Lord bless you and yours.