
"Law of the Sabbath"

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (Matthew 28:18 NASB)

How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, "Your God reigns!" (Isaiah 52:7 NASB)

~Keeping the Sabbath~

To those who have always kept the Sabbath, and were raised in families with many generations of regular Sabbath keeping, it's just an every week

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schedule for them. But for me and most of the rest of the world we need to be reminded and apprised of the Sabbath and what the Sabbath is all about. First off, it is one of God's Ten Commandments etched into stone by God's own finger.

To those who hold to the Seventh-Day Sabbath, the Sabbath is a full 24 hour time period starting at sun-set Friday and continuing for the next 24 hours and will end Saturday sun-set. The setting of the sun begins a new day as recorded in the Bible. In the book of Genesis chapter one, verse five; *God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day. (Genesis 1:5 NASB)* This is the true beginning of days as recorded in God's book. After these some 6,000 plus years we still hold to the beginning of days at sun-set as God said. Man has

and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law;

changed the times of the days as recorded in the book of Daniel. *'He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; (Daniel 7:25a NASB)*

We have many diverse worship traditions. One family will start on Friday which is known as “preparation day” to get everything in order for their Sabbath. They will attempt to have everything ready and in place by Friday sunset, the beginning of the Seventh-Day Sabbath. This family will rise Sabbath morning and all will get ready for church. After church they will

God’s Sabbath, sunset Friday until sunset Saturday. 24 hours.

spend their time, visiting family, fellowshiping with other believers, reading God’s literature, Bible studies or just plain resting from the other six days of work. Sabbath Keepers will not turn from God’s Sabbath Day until the next day, which is sunset Saturday. Remember the day has never changed; it’s etched in the fourth commandment as recorded in Exodus chapter 20.

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. (Exodus 20:8 NASB)

“Six days you shall labor and do all your work, (Exodus 20:9 NASB)

but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you.

(Exodus 20:10 NASB)

“For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy. (Exodus 20:11 NASB)

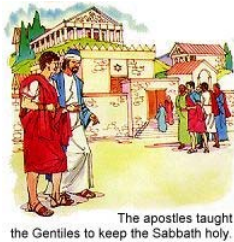
~Others~

Another family gets up on their Sabbath and gets ready for church in much the same way, but their Sabbath did not begin on the day before at sunset. Most likely their Sabbath begins Sunday morning when they arrive at church. Their Sabbath is probably the time they spend at church; an hour or two. After church they will probably do as they please, doing such activities as; shopping, golf or whatever they find they want or need to do.

Unlike the Seventh-Day Sabbath which began at creation, the Sunday worship service began somewhere around the second century A.D. One

religion, Islam, even keeps Friday as their Sabbath or holy day of the week; of course Islam will not appear until the seventh century A.D.

Sabbath worship and our activities on Sabbath reminded me of the verses in Isaiah 58 concerning the keeping of the Sabbath.



"If because of the sabbath, you turn your foot From doing your own pleasure on My holy day, And call the sabbath a delight, the holy day of the LORD honorable, And honor it, desisting from your own ways, From seeking your own

pleasure And speaking your own word, (Isaiah 58:13 NASB)

Then you will take delight in the LORD, And I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; And I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." (Isaiah 58:14 NASB)

~Which Day? ~

One question may be which day did God authorize as holy? Another

Questions, Questions, are we to obey the law of the Sabbath?

comment, some say God did not authorize first day worship! If He didn't, then who did?

Another question, are we to obey the "Laws of God" concerning the Sabbath?

We know at the outset that Jesus was given complete authority in Matthew 28:18; *And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (Matthew 28:18 NASB)* Now, by what authority has the Sabbath been changed? If Jesus has complete authority, then who or what organization besides Jesus has the authority to change times and laws?



By what authority was the Sabbath changed? Two such Bible verses that theologians refer to may be the following two verses that may be cited as biblical authority for the church to establish man's traditions are found in Matthew, where

Jesus said; *"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of*

heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven,

and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."

(Matthew 16:19 NASB)

And than Jesus also said; *"Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.* (Matthew 18:18 NASB)

The first of these statements in Matthew 16:19 were made to Peter and the second statement to the other disciples as well. I'm quoting from the New American Standard Bible (NASB). If you have another version of the Bible it may read a little different, but I believe the NASB is a safe rendering of the Word. These two verses all fall in the meaning of the "tense" of the wording used. Please note the words "shall have been," now look at the wording again, it says, "shall have been," it's "past tense." It has already happened, there is nothing new here. This does not give anyone except Christ the authority to change anything about the Word of God.

~Looking to God~

Consider the statement in Acts 5:29; *Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than men.*



Everybody in God's eternal kingdom will keep the Sabbath holy.

(Acts 5:29 KJV) Peter and the other apostles would have

nothing to do with man-made laws and traditions. They read the Bible and knew what was in it, as well as had been taught by the Master Himself, Jesus Yeshua. Just remember this; not listening to God got Adam and Eve as well as the rest of us into big trouble. Will we ever learn to depend and look to God for all our situations and our guidance?

~Changing God's Laws~

So, when men try and sometimes are successful at changing God's laws and times, they are not directed by God. When the last word of the New Testament was written, the laws, precepts, statutes, commandments were finished. We are not to add to or take away from God's Holy Word. We have this documented in both the Old and the New Testament.

"You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. (Deuteronomy 4:2 NASB)

I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; (Revelation 22:18 NASB)

and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book. (Revelation 22:19 NASB)

~Worship in vain~



Words that should matter concerning man's traditions are in Matthew 15:9; ***'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'***

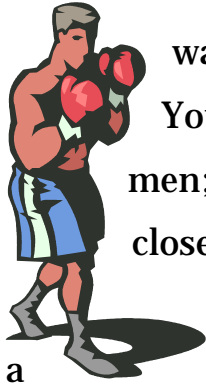
(Matthew 15:9 NASB) The phrase, 'In vain' means accomplishing nothing. As used above, "in vain' means the worship is useless. Jesus hasn't accepted it.

I'm sure you know the story of Cain and Abel from the book of Genesis! Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. Abel brought to the Lord the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. This is recorded in Genesis 4:3-5. The Lord had regard for Abel and his offering. But for Cain and his offering He had no regard. There is a lot of speculation and discussion about why Abel's offering was regarded and Cain's was disregarded. But, it has come to my light that the scripture says that the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering and disregard for Cain and his offering. I see that it may not be about the offering, it may have been about the heart of each brother. Because as you know the heart of Cain was not of God because later he killed his own brother Abel. Anyway this would be for another sermon or message, but very interesting.

The apostle Paul indicated that he didn't participate in useless activity.

Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; (1 Corinthians 9:26 NASB)

but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified. (1 Corinthians 9:27 NASB)



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Paul here illustrates that shadow boxing just won't get it, you are wasting your energy and you are boxing in vain, it's not acceptable. You won't accomplish anything worthwhile teaching the doctrines of men; you are just going through the motions without getting any closer to God. As a matter of fact you are probably getting further away from your creator and Savior Jesus Yeshua. This should be a most sobering thought for most of us.

Do we do what God instructs us to do or do we do what man says and have established as a long time tradition, disregarding our Jesus Yeshua. It all gets back to the Laws of God. First off let me tell you that the Law cannot save you, it can only show you the way to salvation through faith in Jesus Yeshua. *nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified. (Galatians 2:16 NASB)*

After coming to salvation, obeying the law shows the love we have for our Creator God. It shows us how much we love him. **"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. (John 14:15 NASB)** Speaking of which day we rest and treat as our Sabbath, there is no evidence in the Bible that God leaves it up to man to decide whether a day is sacred or not sacred. And this is what happened in the second century A.D., men began observing the first day of the week as a memorial and celebration of the resurrection instead of observing the seventh day of the week as a memorial to God's creative acts. And by the way, they disregarded what were instructions from the Bible. They put the laws on men above the Laws of God.



There are two good Old Testament verses that give us good reason not to invent our own worship practices. What are they saying in these next two Old Testament verses; “do not replace God’s commandments with our own preferences.”

"You shall not do at all what we are doing here today, every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes; (Deuteronomy 12:8 NASB)

"Be careful to listen to all these words which I command you, so that it may be well with you and your sons after you forever, for you will be doing what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God. (Deuteronomy 12:28 NASB)

~The New Testament accounts~

If you are concerned that the Old Testament may not be pertaining to our times, then Paul writes in Romans. Let us look at this verse.



For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Romans 15:4 NASB)

And here is another verse in Jude.

Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

(Jude 1:3 NASB) All true scripture has been past down through the ages.

Jesus, Paul’s mentor taught the same concept: *'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'*

(Matthew 15:9 NASB)

~Practice Obedience~

If it was important for Jesus not to speak without His Father’s direction, it is important for the church not to speak outside of the Scriptures as well, and this including all professing Christians also.

"For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.

(John 12:49 NASB)



Human beings can practice obedience, but Jesus was the one and only one that perfectly obeyed His Father. Quite a few obey Him “blamelessly.” That is, they perform as God expects them to with what He provides to them. Maybe we can practice blameless obedience. It is one thing to sin and yet another thing to practice sinning.

and he shall say, I say to you, I have not known you whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of the unrighteousness. (Luke 13:27 YLT)

"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.' (Matthew 7:23 NASB)

~Walking Blamelessly~

Many saints in the Bible walked blamelessly before God. One that I immediately think of is Noah, which was a righteous man, blameless in his time and the Bible tells us he walked with God.

These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God. (Genesis 6:9 NASB)

And another example would be Zacharias and Elizabeth, the parents of John the Baptist.

They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. (Luke 1:6 NASB)

Paul was even encouraging or some might say admonishing the church at Philippi to be blameless and innocent;

Do all things without grumbling or disputing; (Philippians 2:14 NASB)

so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation,

among whom you appear as lights in the world, (Philippians 2:15 NASB)

I don't want anyone to get the idea that keeping the law and the Sabbath will

automatically get you to heaven or declared righteous at the judgment. Paul's writing to the church in Rome helps to clarify this. Now let us review Romans 2:13; *for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified.* (Romans 2:13 NASB) Notice that Romans 2:13 does not state how we become justified, it states who will be declared righteous; those who are doers of the law. This of course assumes faith in Christ first.

Let me be clear again, Galatians writings by Paul will clarify it even more; "that we come to salvation by faith in Jesus Christ and not by works." *nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified.* (Galatians 2:16 NASB) Paul goes a little further in his writing that says that a man is justified by faith; *apart from observing the law. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.* (Romans 3:28 NASB)

You see what these verses are telling us? That it is a two-step process; its salvation or justification first and then we observe and keep the laws of God. This is the reason it's somewhat dangerous to read or quote one verse and say that's it. You have to read them in context to all the other verses. If I would read any of the above verses by itself, I could come to another conclusion. Let the Bible interpret the Bible.

If you will take the words of Jesus Yeshua as the final word, look at Matthew 7:21. *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.* (Matthew 7:21 NASB)

You see here, Jesus Yeshua spoke a simple language and right to the point where anyone should be able to understand what He is saying and what He means by His comments. So, I would say here, based on the Matthew



verse above that it is important to obey the commands of God. They express His will – for each of us. Only he who does the will of the Father will be able to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Let me read one more verse before I close, and it is Romans 3:20; *because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.* (Romans 3:20 NASB)

~Quote~

DEVIL

I heard a saying the other day that was quoted close to 150 years ago. I don't who originally said it, but the quote is;

"The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist."

I'll leave you with these words from the first chapter in Isaiah.

"Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD,

"Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow;

Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.

"If you consent and obey, You will eat the best of the land; "But if you refuse and rebel, You will be devoured by the sword.-"

Truly, the mouth of the LORD has spoken. (Isaiah 1:18-20 NASB)

I would like to thank Mr. Roy A. Marrs for writing the book, "Origin and Authority Compared Sabbath vs. Sunday." From which most of this message was written. I used many of his quotes and sayings as well as his ideas. I did add my comments here and there. Most people that know me know that I'm probably not smart enough to write very many articles without some help somewhere, preferably from above. Mr. Marrs is an ordained minister of the Church of God (Seventh Day). I would suggest this be one of the books you will read in the future.



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Dewey E. (Obed) Fox, Bond Servant of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
