

12 - MILLIONS FOOLED BY A MYTH



1

Don't Let it Happen to You.



2

Myths are easily accepted as truth if they have been around a long time. Take the case of the spider. About 350 B.C., the great Greek philosopher Aristotle classified the spider as having six legs.

And for the next 20 centuries everyone believed the spider had six legs. No one even bothered to count. After all, who would dare challenge the great Aristotle?

Well, along came Lamarck, the outstanding biologist and naturalist. He carefully counted the legs of the spider. And guess how many legs he counted? Exactly eight! The myth that had been taught as truth for centuries was destroyed because Lamarck bothered to count.



3

Could it be that a religious myth has slipped into the Christian church? Could it be that we are dealing with something much more important than a six- or eight-legged spider here?

Millions of people worship on the first day of the week believing it is the Bible Sabbath. In our last session, we discovered that the seventh-day of the week, Saturday, is God's true Sabbath.

Just like textbooks for 2,000 years taught mistakenly that spiders had six legs, so millions have accepted a myth regarding the Sabbath.

The reason you are attending this series of Bible presentations is because your heart longs for the truth. You want to know what God's word really says. You are not interested in what religious leaders teach. You want to know what God says. Let's review what we discovered in our last session.

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4

(Video: 8 sec) We have learned that God has given us a special day each week—the Sabbath day—on which we worship Him and remember His work as our Creator.

We learned the Sabbath day is not just any day—but the seventh day of the week.

And we learned that the Sabbath will still be kept when this world ends and we are in heaven with our Creator.



5

But as we look around our world, we find that many people—most people in fact—do not worship God on the seventh day.



6

Many don't even worship the God of the Bible, of course, but other gods.



7

But of those who do worship the God of the Bible, even most of those worship Him on some other day than the one He set aside as His holy day.

Why is that?

Did God change the day?

Did someone else change it?

Why do so many people keep some other day, such as Sunday, as God's day, rather than the seventh-day Sabbath?



8

We have learned that the Bible tells us that in His law, God gave all of us on earth a sign—a very special sign:

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9

(Text: Ezekiel 20:12, 20)

"Moreover I also gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between them and Me,



10

that they might know that I am the LORD who sanctifies them. . . ."



11

"Hallow My Sabbaths and they will be a sign between Me and you,



12

that you may know that I am the LORD your God." Ezekiel 20:12, 20.



13

(Video: 4 sec) The Bible, from beginning to end, testifies to the fact that God has established a Sabbath day and that the Sabbath day is the seventh day of the week.

And in no place in the Bible does God indicate that He has changed that day of worship and rest—that sign between Himself and His people.



14

(Video: 10 sec) Let us review for a moment what we have found in these messages, by a study of God's Word.

When God finished creating Planet Earth and man, He created the Sabbath

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15

as a memorial of His Creation on the seventh day of that first week and throughout earth's history.



16

When God wrote His law at Mt. Sinai, He put in the very heart of those commandments the Sabbath commandment.



17

(Video: 5 sec) This commandment was for ever to remind man that he did not just happen to come in to existence.



18

The reason He gives for asking man to keep the seventh-day is that He created the earth in six days



19

and rested the seventh day.

Concerning His commands, God, through Moses, told the people that they were not to take away from them nor add to them.



20

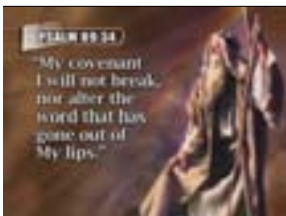
(Text: Deuteronomy 4:2)

"Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it,



21

but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you." Deuteronomy 4:2. God also told them,



22

(Text: Psalm 89:34)

"My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips." Psalm 89:34.

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23

**Jesus Himself showed the same determination to exalt the Law that He had given on Mt. Sinai.
He told the people in the Sermon on the Mount that He did not come to set aside the Law of God but to fulfill it!**



24

**(Text: Matthew 5:17-19)
Notice His words: "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.**



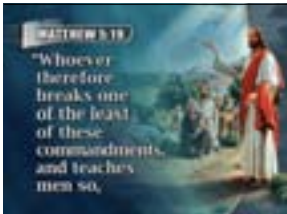
25

For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away,



26

one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.



27

Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so,



28

**shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven..."
Matthew 5:17-19.**

When God gave the Ten Commandments to His people, He also made it clear that no human being should revise or change the instruction from His holy lips.



29

Jesus Himself demonstrated by His example that He wanted to honor the day that He and the Father had made holy in the first week of this world's history.

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30

(Text: Luke 4:16)

"So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was,



31

He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read."

Luke 4:16.



32

When the religious leaders accused Jesus' disciples of violating the Sabbath, Jesus said He was the Lord of that day.



33

(Text: Mark 2:27, 28)

"The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.



34

Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

Mark 2:27, 28.



35

Not only did Jesus honor the Sabbath day, but He asked His disciples to pray that they could keep His holy day far down into the future.



36

(Text: Matthew 24:20)

We find this request in Matthew 24:20: "And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath."



37

Here Jesus was speaking of the flight out of Jerusalem by His followers just prior to

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38

its destruction in A.D. 70 by the Romans.



39

When He was crucified He expected that His followers would continue to honor the Sabbath.



40

Orthodox Jews have worshiped on the seventh day since the Exodus, more than 3,500 years ago. Wherever they are in the world, they still recognize Saturday, the seventh day of the week, as the day God set aside for worship.



41

Even if the Bible were our only source of information, we would still be able to determine which day is the seventh day, or the Sabbath.

As we turn to the account of the crucifixion, the Book of Luke summarizes the events of that weekend.

After Christ died on the cross on Friday, the Bible comments:



42

(Text: Luke 23:54-56; 24:1)

"That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near."



43

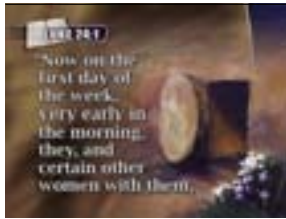
And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid.



44

Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

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45

Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them,



46

**came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. “
Luke 23:54-56; 24:1.**



47

**Most of the Christian world celebrates what is called Good Friday in memory of Christ's death.
They celebrate Easter Sunday in memory of Christ's resurrection.**



48

**The Bible tells us that the day in between is the Sabbath,
“according to the commandment.”**



49

(Video: 4 sec) Even though Luke wrote these words many years after the cross, he still referred to Sunday as “the first day of the week,”

**And he still called the seventh day “Sabbath.”
The biblical record clearly distinguishes these two days.**



50

In fact, the apostles continued to worship and preach on the seventh-day Sabbath for many years after the cross.



51

**(Text: Acts 13:14, 42, 44)
The Bible speaks of Paul and his companions when they visited Antioch they
“... went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and sat down.”**

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52

Acts 13:14. Later, "When the Jews were gone out of the synagogue,



53

the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath."



54

"And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God." Acts 13:42, 44. It was Paul's custom to worship in the synagogue every Sabbath:



55

(Text: Acts 18:4)

"And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks." Acts 18:4

From these biblical facts, one can easily see that there is no evidence that Christ or His disciples changed the day of worship.

There is no record in the Bible commanding such a change!



56

None of the New Testament writers told of any change of the Sabbath day!

It would have been the lead article in every New Testament Book of the Bible had such a momentous change occurred!



57

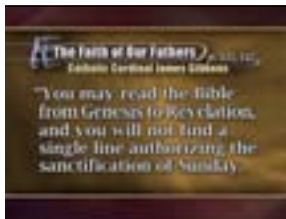
(Text: Psalm 89:34)

God said, "I will not . . . alter what my lips have uttered." Psalm 89:34.

God has not changed His Law and no one has the right to alter God's Law!

Scholars from the various Sunday-keeping groups acknowledge this.

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58

Catholic Cardinal James Gibbons once wrote:
“You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday.



59

The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday.”
– The Faith of Our fathers, pp. 111, 112.



60

Clovis G. Chappell, a Methodist, makes the same point, when he says, “The reason we observe the first day instead of the seventh is based on no positive command.



61

One will search the Scriptures in vain for authority for changing from the seventh day to the first.”
–Ten Rules for Living. p. 61.



62

There is no biblical record that Christ or His disciples kept any other day or instructed others to do so!

“Then how did Sunday keeping get started?” you might ask.



63

We learn from Socrates Scholasticus, a fifth-century historian:
“Almost all churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries [the Lord's Supper] on the Sabbath of every week,



64

yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, have ceased to do this.”
–Ecclesiastical History, as quoted by C. B. Haynes, From Sabbath to Sunday, p. 35.



65

Other historians record that many church groups observed the seventh-day Sabbath during the Middle Ages, and the practice is well documented in modern times by Christians around the world.

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66

Many church historians place the beginning of a gradual change of days sometime between A.D. 70 and 135, the dates when two bitter and bloody insurrections by the Jews were crushed by the Romans.



67

The mounting hostility of the Romans against the Jews, coupled with the conflict between Jews and Christians, encouraged a rash of anti-Jewish literature, which, in turn, created strong anti-Jewish sentiment throughout the Roman Empire.

Christians became increasingly sensitive about identification with the Jews.

Since Sabbath-keeping tended to identify them with the Jews, many Christians began minimizing its obligations.



68

“Impressive indications (suggest) that Sunday observance was introduced at this time in conjunction with Easter-Sunday,



69

as an attempt to clarify to the Roman authorities the Christian distinction from Judaism.” Ibid., p. 237.



70

With this in mind, it is easy to see how Christians living in the capital city of the Roman Empire led the way in disassociating themselves from Sabbath-keeping.

They were located at the center where hostility was the strongest!



71

(Video: 7 sec)

It is especially understandable that they might shy away from Sabbath-keeping, which was held in contempt by the Romans, in view of the fact that the church at Rome was composed predominantly of Gentiles, who were converts from paganism.



72

(Text: Romans 11:13)

It is interesting to note how Paul addressed the church in Rome: “I am talking to you Gentiles...” Romans 11:13.

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73

These Christians, recently converted from paganism, were not as well established in Sabbath-keeping as were Jewish Christians, who had always practiced Sabbath-keeping.



74

But why was Sunday chosen rather than some other day of the week?

That's a good question!

The pagans in the Roman Empire had been sun worshipers for many years, celebrating Sunday as the sun's day.



75

The Roman emperors had even represented themselves as sun gods, stamping the emblem of the sun on their coins and buildings and demanding worship from their subjects.

Some theologians believe that the church saw an advantage in compromise with paganism.

By adopting a few pagan customs, the pagans would convert to Christianity more quickly and feel more at home.

It would also benefit the empire by uniting its subjects into one great religion.



76

For centuries Sunday was celebrated, not as a holy day, but as a holiday.

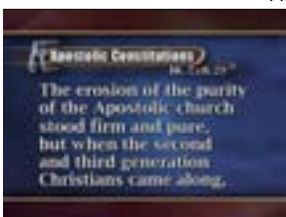
Then both days were kept as holy days.



77

We read the following from Apostolic Constitutions, chapter 23.

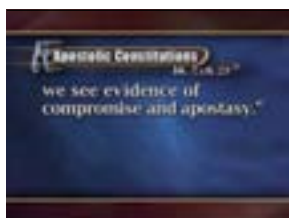
"Christians were not the only ones who became careless and gradually compromised their faith.



78

The erosion of the purity of the Apostolic church stood firm and pure, but when the second and third generation Christians came along,

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79

we see evidence of compromise and apostasy.”



80

This drift into compromise was accented by the first civil Sunday law passed by the Roman Emperor Constantine on March 7, A.D. 321.



81

While still a pagan, he legislated : “On the venerable day of the Sun let the magistrates and people residing in the cities rest, and let all workshops be closed.



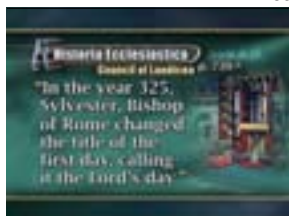
82

In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits.”
History of the Christian Church, 1902 ed., vol. 3, p. 380.



83

The next step in making Sunday-keeping an integral part of Christianity was taken by the Church of Rome in the Council of Laodicea.
It made the first religious law concerning the keeping of Sunday.



84

“In the year 325, Sylvester, Bishop of Rome changed the title of the first day, calling it the Lord’s day.”

–Historia Ecclesiastica, p. 739.

At another Council of Laodicea, held in 364, the following law was made:



85

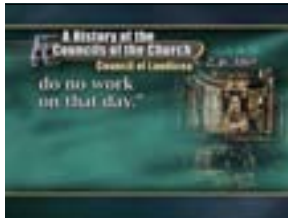
“Christians shall not Judaize [keep Sabbath] and be idle on Saturday, . . . but shall work on that day;



86

but the Lord’s day they shall especially honour, and, as being Christians, shall if possible,

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87

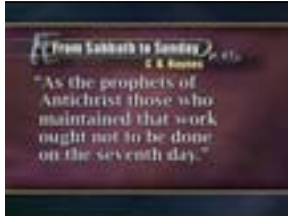
do no work on that day.”

–A History of the Councils of the Church, vol. 2, p. 316.



88

In spite of this, Christians were still observing the Sabbath in the sixth century, for Pope Gregory denounced



89

“As the prophets of Antichrist those who maintained that work ought not to be done on the seventh day.”

–The Law of Sunday, quoted in C. B. Haynes, From Sabbath to Sunday, p. 43.



90

(Video: 7 sec) Keep in mind that the Bible was not available to everyone at that time as it is now.

Doctrines were passed along by word of mouth until the laymen could scarcely distinguish between Scripture and tradition.



91

Until most people really knew the truth as it was taught by Christ and His disciples.

Centuries passed,



92

and the Protestant Reformation came, questioning many rites and traditions that had supplanted the teachings of God’s Word.



93

The cry of the reformation was, “The Bible and the Bible only as our rule of faith.”

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94

Many, like Huss and Jerome, paid for their fidelity to the Bible by being burned at the stake!



95

However, after the sixth century, the Sabbath truth lay almost dormant, hidden under centuries of tradition. Few closely examined to find out what the Scriptures taught. They accepted what had been passed along through generations, never questioning whether it was fact or fiction.

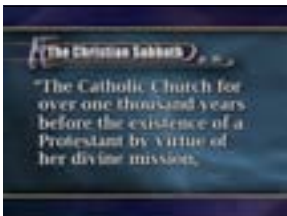


96

Sometimes people accept things without questioning. For centuries most people believed that the earth was the center of the universe. They believed the sun and all the planets revolved around the earth.

Of course, Copernicus was not changing God's heavens. He was simply exposing an aged tradition which had no solid scientific foundation. Copernicus was revealing the truth. Merely believing something for a long time does not make it true.

How was the Sabbath changed? Listen to the amazing following statements from Catholic authors whose church led the way in the change of the Sabbath to Sunday.



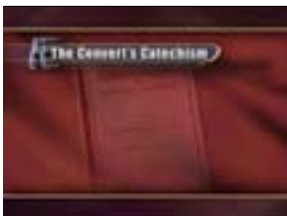
97

"The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her Divine mission,



98

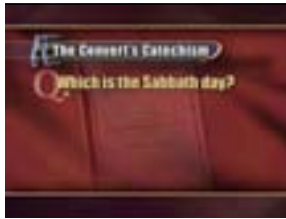
changed the day from Saturday to Sunday."
-The Christian Sabbath, p. 16.



99

From the Convert's Catechism, we read:

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100

“Question: Which is the Sabbath day?”



101

Answer: Saturday is the Sabbath day.



102

Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?



103

**Answer: ...because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.”
This change was made by the Council of Laodicea in A.D. 336.**



104

**Why, you may ask, did the Catholic Church, by its own free and open admission, institute this change?
The answer lies, at least in part, in the place of authority accorded by the Catholic Church to tradition.**



105

One of the main points of difference between Protestants and Catholics during the early days of the Reformation was over the authority of tradition in the church.

When Martin Luther declared that he must follow the Bible and the Bible only, he challenged many of the institutions of the Catholic Church that were based solely on tradition.



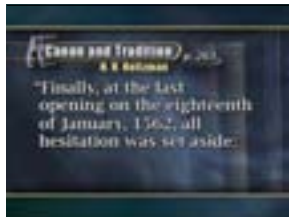
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In fact, the Council of Trent was convened to decide exactly what position the Catholic Church should take on tradition and its relationship to the Bible.

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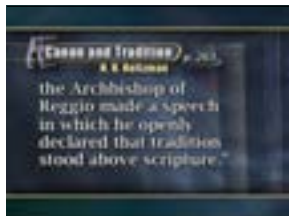
The question was finally settled.

Notice the summary given of the speech that turned the tide, as recorded by H. H. Holtzman:



107

“Finally, at the last opening on the eighteenth of January, 1562, all hesitation was set aside:



108

the Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which he openly declared that tradition stood above Scripture.”

–Canon and Tradition, p. 263.

The Bible does not support the idea that tradition is the basis for church doctrine.



109

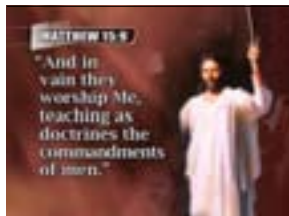
Do you remember the question Jesus asked the religious leaders of His day?



110

(Text: Matthew 15:3, 9)

He asked, “Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?”



111

And He added, “And in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.” Matthew 15:3, 9.



112

Do you see the issue?

Will you follow Christ and the Bible—or human traditions?

It is not merely a matter of days and numbers.

It is a matter of masters!

That is the real issue!

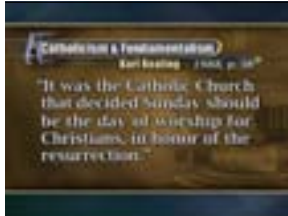
Is Jesus Christ your Master—or are the traditions of some other organization?

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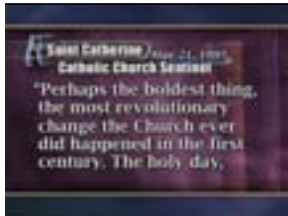
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We have cited a number of trustworthy scholars and historical works. But here are some modern statements on the change of the Sabbath.



114

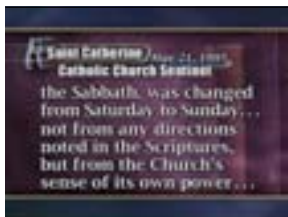
We notice this statement: "It was the Catholic Church that decided Sunday should be the day of worship for Christians in honor of the resurrection." -Karl Keating, Catholicism and Fundamentalism, 1988, p. 38.



115

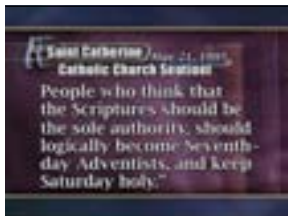
Another statement that will cause you to stop and think comes from the Saint Catherine Catholic Church Sentinel, May 21, 1995. It said,

"Perhaps the boldest thing, the most revolutionary change that the Church ever did, happened in the first century. The holy day,



116

the Sabbath, was changed from Saturday to Sunday.... not from any directions noted in the Scriptures, but from the Church's sense of its own power....



117

People who think that the scriptures should be the sole authority should logically become Seventh-day Adventists, and keep Saturday holy."



118

In the prophecy of Daniel 7, God revealed to Daniel that the "little horn" of Daniel 7:21, 25, was to



119

(Text: Daniel 7:25)

"think to change times and laws."

WHAT A PROPHECY!

Here is a clear prediction that an earthly religious power would attempt to change God's law.

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There is only one commandment in the ten that talks about time—the Sabbath commandment.



120

The Roman church thought to do this, but God is still the same today as when He made the heavens and the earth and He has not changed what He instituted in Eden.

In fact, the prophecy calls for everyone everywhere to worship the Creator, because He is the one who is going to judge mankind.



121

This prophecy is given to call out a people who will be ready to meet Jesus when He returns in the clouds of glory. The people who will respond and be ready are described this way,



122

(Text: Revelation 14:12)

**“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus.”
Revelation 14:12.**



123

It goes without saying that those who have the faith of Jesus will, out of a heart of love for God, be keeping His commandments.

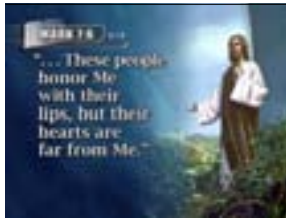


124

**Yes, God asks us to REMEMBER Him as our Creator by keeping His holy day.
To do as He asks means we show our loyalty to Him.**

**When a person keeps a man-made Sabbath, he is obeying man's traditions.
When we discover God's will, it is our joy to follow it.
God has something to say about man's traditions:**

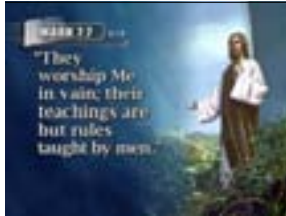
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125

(Text: Mark 7:6, 7)

“...These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.



126

They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.”

Mark 7:6, 7.



127

(Text: Mark 7:9)

And again: “...You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!”

Mark 7:9.



128

(Text: Mark 7:6)

Jesus said, “Their hearts are far from me.”

You see, it is really a matter of the heart.

A matter of love.



129

(Text: 1 John 5:3)

The Bible says, “This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome.”

1 John 5:3.



130

Jesus, as He was teaching one day, told His listeners that not everyone was going to go to heaven.

He said that you can know a tree by its fruit, whether it be good or bad fruit.



131

(Text: Matthew 7:21)

Then He said, “Not everyone who says ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven,



132

but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”

Matthew 7:21.

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133

That is very plain. God knows those who are His by looking at the fruit of their lives.

It is not just those who say they belong to God, but those who do what He has told them to do.

It is those individuals who will be welcomed into the kingdom of God.



134

If you love Him, you will let Him be the One who runs your life so that you can do His will.

When we keep the Sabbath, we not only keep God's command for us, but we open our lives to wonderful blessings.



135

As we spend that special day each week remembering our Creator and reaching out to Him, we come to know Him more and better.

Our lives are so busy these days.

Everyone seems to be in a rush.

So much to do—and so little time to get it all done!



136

In the middle of all this rushing and stress and hurry, God invites us to come away for one day a week and rest. He invites us to spend the day with Him—worshiping Him, talking with Him, listening to Him as He speaks to us through His Word, the Bible.

What a privilege—to spend a full day each week thinking about and communicating with the One who made us!



137

Let me make the issue plain to you, friend.

On one side we have truth on the other, tradition.

On one side we have the Bible on the other, human teachings.

On one side we have God's command on the other, the doctrines of men.

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On one side we have the Sabbath on the other, we have Sunday.

It is not a matter of a day – it is a matter of masters.

It is not a matter of obeying God – it is a matter of following Jesus.

Would you like to make the decision to commit your life to following God's truth rather than accepting a man-made tradition? Why not tell Jesus you will follow Him all the way as we pray.