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General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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FIRST DAY SABBATH

NOT OF

DIVINE APPOINTMENT:

WITH THE OPINIONS OF

CALVIN, LUTHER,

BELSHAM, MELANCTHON, BARCLAY, PALEY, AND OTHERS.

ADDRESSED TO THE

REV. JUSTIN EDWARDS, D. D.

AND TO THE

MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN AND FOREIGN SABBATH UNION.

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BY H. C. WRIGHT.  
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THE writer of the following pages professes to be a CHRISTIAN. Whether he is, must be decided by his spirit and life. Christ is his hope—his Redeemer from sin—his triumph in joy—his glory in affliction. That death has no sting—the grave no gloom—he owes to Christ. That he can walk calmly on his pathway down into the eternal future, is owing to the light that beams upon his course from the Sun of Righteousness. That he may have the mind and lead the life of Christ on earth, and be permitted to be with him and share his love in his eternal kingdom,—is all the glory he seeks here, and all the heaven he expects hereafter. If he may but love as Jesus loved; forgive as he forgave; and live as he lived—simply to do his heavenly Father's will—he is willing to be of no repute among men. That he may win Christ, and be a living epistle for him, and induce others to share the same glorious distinction, he would make the end and aim of his existence.

Such being his feelings and aims, he commits this little pamphlet to the attentive and kindly perusal of all who seek the truth as it is in Jesus.

BOSTON, Feb. 1, 1843.

TO REV. JUSTIN EDWARDS, D. D.

AND THE

MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN AND FOREIGN

SABBATH UNION.

FRIENDS:—You are seeking to produce in men a belief “in the divine authority and perpetual obligation of a Sabbatical observance;” that God has changed this observance from the *Seventh* to the *First* day of the week; that Christianity recognises the existence, and condemns the practice of the “sin of Sabbath-breaking;” that Sabbath-breakers are, by God, ranked with thieves, liars, drunkards, and murderers; that what is right, and may be our duty, to do on other days, is a sin to do on *Sunday*; and that men may ascertain if an act be right or wrong, by consulting the clock and calendar, and learning the hour of the day, and the day of the week.

I believe you are teaching, as the commands of God, the traditions of men; and are imposing on men a religious observance which Christ never enjoined, but which he pointedly condemns. You are guilty of judging men and arraigning them as criminals for an act, (*Sabbath-breaking*,) which Christianity nowhere condemns, but repeatedly justifies. You will, therefore, pardon me for addressing the following pages to you—commending them to your candid and serious perusal.

THE QUESTION AT ISSUE

Is not—Are men to consecrate *first day* to God? I believe they are bound to do so: also, that they are equally bound to consecrate every other day to God.

It is not—Were the Jews required to observe the *seventh* day as a Sabbath? They were; and were subjected to the penalty of death if they did any work on that day—(Ex. xxxv. 1, 2.)

It is not—Is the assembling of ourselves together for instruction and improvement in things pertaining to the kingdom of Heaven, profitable for man, and acceptable to God? I believe such meetings are useful, and adapted to our growth in grace and divine knowledge.

It is not—Is it a good regulation of society to appropriate first day to rest and relaxation from bodily toil? I believe such an appropriation of that day to be wise, and most useful, and perfectly consistent with the Christian system, and with the laws of our physical nature.

But—Does Christianity consecrate the *first*, or any other day of the week, as a *Sabbath*? Or, Is the *first day* Sabbath of human or divine appointment; and its observance based on *expediency*, or Divine authority? This, alone, is the question to which I would call attention.

THE JEWISH SABBATH.

By the consent of nearly universal Christendom, it is abolished, both as to the day and the manner of observing it. Christianity ranks that Sabbath with “beggarly elements,” with “shadows,” with “new moons and sacrifices,” that are passed away, and have no more authority over conscience, since Christ has come. The apostle expressly warns men against the observance of that Sabbath; against imposing it as a burden upon others; and against censuring others for refusing to observe it. (Col. ii. 16—23; Gal. iv. 9—11; Rom. xiv. 1—7.)

FIRST DAY SABBATH.

If it is of *Divine* obligation, the proof must be drawn from the Jewish or Christian Scriptures. Has God commanded the observance of *first day* as a Sabbath? This is the question, and the only question.

Argument from the Jewish Scriptures.—The fourth command (Ex. xx. 9—11) is quoted to prove the divine obligation of the *first day* Sabbath. Read the passage. It is seen that the *seventh* is the day there commanded to be observed, and no allusion is made to any other. Then as to the mode of observing it, *rest* from labor is the *only* thing required. In both these particulars—comprising the whole of the command—the most strenuous Sabbatarians set it aside. They do not remember to observe the *seventh* day as a Sabbath; and they habitually work, doing things

which, under the Jewish dispensation, would have subjected them to death.

To set aside a divine command in its only expressed essential points, and then to quote that same command as authority in a matter to which it makes no allusion, is manifestly unfair, if not impious. But this is done by Sabbatarians every time they quote the fourth command as authority for the observance of the *first* day as a Sabbath. For the *seventh* is the only day specified, or to which allusion is made; and *rest* the only duty enjoined; and they reject the command in both these particulars, and then insist that it binds us to observe the *first day* as a Sabbath, and to devote it to rest and to *other* purposes!

Seventh part of time.—But it is said, The command is not quoted so much to designate the *first* day, and to enforce the obligation to keep it, as to designate a *seventh part of time*, and leave it to men to decide what day to observe.

I understand what is meant by the phrase, “the *seventh* day is the Sabbath;” but how the *seventh* day can be made to mean the *first* day, or any day which men see fit to name, I cannot comprehend. I can also understand the reason given for resting on the *seventh* day; but I cannot imagine how this should prove that Christians are bound to rest on the *first* day. And there is not a hint in the Scriptures, that God ever changed the *seventh* to the *first* day, and that He requires the latter to be observed as a Sabbath, instead of the former.

They appear to me to trifle with Divine authority, and to introduce a principle of interpretation fatal to men’s regard for the Scriptures, who seek to elicit from this passage authority for the observance of the first day Sabbath. Especially when they do this by asserting that the essential element of the command is, not the seventh day of the week, as it is specified, but a seventh portion of time. They quote a command specifying the seventh day as the only day to be observed, to prove an obligation to observe a day to which no allusion is made. If this command, in its only specified duties, may be rejected, and then quoted to prove an obligation to do something to which it makes no allusion, every other precept of the Bible may be treated in the same way, and thus the written

record of divine truth be turned into a teacher of whatever absurdities men see fit to derive from it.

The declaration at the close of Creation. (Gen. ii. 1—3.) Suppose this command to have been given then, it distinctly marks the *seventh* as the only day to be observed, and *rest* as the only duty enjoined. But there is no command in the passage. It only states two facts; (1) that God completed the works of creation on the seventh day, and rested; and (2) that for this reason, God blessed and sanctified the seventh day. There is no injunction upon man to rest upon that day, unless it is implied in the expression, "and God blessed and sanctified the seventh day." If this expression is thus to be understood, it unavoidably leads to the conclusion that the writer of this record was a Jew, and was perfectly familiar with the Sabbath, and the reason assigned in the fourth commandment for its observance. There is no possibility of knowing who was used by the Divine Spirit to record this account of the creation. I incline to think that it was *Ezra*, and that it is to be read thus, "God finished the work of creation on the seventh day, and rested; and for this reason, He consecrated the seventh day to be kept as a Sabbath, as it is enjoined in the commandment." The record is—not that God instituted the seventh day Sabbath at the time of finishing Creation,—but that he instituted it for the reason that he rested from his work on that day. It is extremely absurd to adduce the fact that God rested the seventh day as a reason why Christians should rest on the first, or some other, day of the week; or to argue from the fact that "He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it," that he has blessed and sanctified the FIRST day. That he has declared the seventh day holy is no reason why we should regard the first or some other day as holy.

An attempt is made to prove from various passages in Genesis, that the seventh day Sabbath was known and observed by Noah, Abraham, and the patriarchs. This, they say, is to be inferred from the use of the number *seven*. That *seven fold* vengeance was to be taken upon the slayer of Cain; that Lamech was to be avenged *seventy* and *seven fold*; that Noah was to take beasts and fowls into the ark by *sevens*; that the waters were upon the earth after *seven* days; that the ark rested in the *seventh* month, on the *seventeenth* day of the month; that the dove was

sent forth from the ark the second time after *seven* days; the *seven* fat and the *seven* lean kine; and the *seven* years of plenty, and the *seven* years of famine; these, and other like passages, are quoted to prove that the *seventh* day Sabbath was instituted at the creation, and that it was known and observed among the Hebrews and other nations, down to the promulgation of the law from Sinai; and that a Sabbath will be binding on the world to the end of time. Having alluded to the argument, I dismiss it as undeserving of further notice. As well argue from the common use of the number *ten* in Britain, that God instituted a tenth day Sabbath at creation.

All the references to the Sabbath by the prophets, allude solely to the Jewish Sabbath, as a national institution; and by them it is uniformly classed with new moons, sacrifices, and other national rites and customs that were to pass away at the coming of the Messiah.

The New Testament.—The following allusions are made to the first day of the week in the Christian Scriptures. "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the *first day* of the week," &c. (Mat. xxviii. 1.) Each of the evangelists alludes to it in this connection. In John xx. 19, is another allusion to it. Acts xx. 7, "And upon the *first day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread," &c. 1 Cor. xvi. 2, "Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store," &c. These are the only passages that refer to *the first* day at all; and the only things to which allusion is here made is "the breaking of bread," and the "giving of alms." There is no intimation of the duty to observe the first day as a Sabbath; not a word about resting from labor, or marking the day by any distinct observance, for they brake bread and gave alms on other days as well as on this. There is not a passage in the Christian Scriptures designating any particular duty as appropriate to the first day of the week; nor a passage that teaches that any thing would be wrong on the first day, which it would be right to do on any other day. If there be such passages, they can be produced—till they are produced, there can be no argument about them.

The positions assumed by Sabbatarians are—that God has commanded us to spend the first day of the week in a certain manner; that He has specified certain acts to be

done on that day, and certain acts not to be done; that He has appropriated first day especially to religious purposes, and to a more serious and earnest preparation of the soul for eternity; in a word, that He has substituted the first day to be observed as a Sabbath instead of the seventh. Every man, who has been baptized with the baptism of the Divine Spirit, and received the kingdom of God as a little child, will devote, not only the *first* day, but every day of the week to God, and make it his aim, without regard to *times and places*, to become a temple meet for the indwelling of the Holy One—but he will seek in vain, in the Gospel, for authority to be more diligent in this work on *first* than on any other day. He will search in vain for a single passage to mark any duty that is especially appropriate to the first day of the week. Christianity is not something that can be done up and ended in a given time and place, but an ever-moving, ever-present principle of action,—equally and alike controlling all the words and actions of life, without regard to time or place. It regenerates the soul, and purifies the life of him who possesses it. If God has assigned particular, specified duties to the first day of the week—as Sabbatarians assert—let them produce the “thus saith the Lord.” They can do it, if the fact be so; and they are bound to do it. Let every humble inquirer after truth sit at the feet of Jesus—search every chapter and verse of the New Testament—and see if God has specified peculiar duties as appropriate to the first day of the week—see if He has enjoined its observance as a *Sabbath*.

True, the Disciples met to break bread on first day. So they did on other days—(Acts ii. 46, 47; vi. 1, 2, 4.) They met to pray, to prophesy, to exhort, and devise ways and means to spread the Gospel on all days, without regard to a *first* or *seventh* day Sabbath. If the fact, that they met on first day, proves that they observed that as a Sabbath, the same argument proves that they observed the seventh and every other day as a Sabbath.

One fact is worthy of notice here—that while Christ and the Apostles repeatedly quote and explain, each of the other commands of the Decalogue, they never once refer to the *fourth*, or give any explanation of it. Would they thus have been so entirely silent about it, had it contained an obligation so essential to the existence and perpetuity of the Gospel Kingdom, as Sabbatarians *say it does*?

OPINIONS OF EMINENT MEN.

Though I have but small regard for human authority, in settling this or any other question of Christianity, I wish to call your attention to the opinions of men whose writings on Christian doctrines and morals are considered of standard value among their various adherents. As to talent and learning, they were inferior to none in modern times, and thus far their views on the first day Sabbath may be said to be entitled to respect. When such men put forth opinions, they should at least receive a respectful hearing.

CALVIN.

"He (Christ) is the true completion of the Sabbath. 'We are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life.' (Rom. vi.) Hence, as the apostle elsewhere says, 'Let no man, therefore, judge you in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of THE SABBATH; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is Christ;' (Col. ii. 16, 17.) — meaning by body the whole essence of truth, as is well explained in the passage. This is not contained in *one day* in seven, but requires the *whole course of our lives*, until being completely dead to ourselves, we are filled with the life of God. Christians, therefore, should have nothing to do with a superstitious observance of days."

"We do not celebrate it with minute formality, as a ceremony by which we imagine that a spiritual mystery is typified, but we adopt it as a necessary remedy for preserving order in the church. Paul informs us that *Christians are not to be judged* in respect of its observance, because it is a shadow of something to come, (Col. ii. 16,) and accordingly he expresses a fear lest his labors among the Galatians should prove in vain, because they still *observed days*, (Gal. iv. 10, 11.) And he tells the Romans that it is superstitious to make one day differ from another. (Rom. i. 4, 5.)"

"It was not without reason that Christians substituted what we call the Lord's Day for the Sabbath. The resurrection of our Lord being the end and accomplishment of that true rest, which the ancient Sabbath typified, this day, *by which types were abolished*, serves to warn Christians against adhering to shadowy ceremonies."

"I do not so cling to the number seven as to *advise the Church to an inviolable adherence to it*; nor do I condemn Churches for holding their meetings on other days, provided they guard against superstition. This they will do if they employ the Sabbath merely for the observance of order."

"The whole may be thus summed up. As the truth was delivered typically to the Jews, so it is imparted to us without figure.

First — That during our whole lives, we may aim at constant rest from our works, in order that the Lord may work in us by his Spirit.

Secondly — That every individual, as he has opportunity, may diligently exercise himself in private meditation on the works of God: at the same time, that all may observe the legitimate order, appointed by the Church, for the hearing of the word, the administration of the sacraments and public prayer; and

Thirdly — That we may avoid oppressing those who are subject to us."

"Thus vanish all the dreams of false prophets, who in past ages have taught the people Jewish notions — *declaring that only the ceremonial part of this commandment* (which, as they say, is the appointment of the seventh day), has been abrogated, but that the *moral part of it* — that is the *observance of one day in seven* — still remains. But this is only changing the day in contempt of the Jews, while the same opinion of the *holiness of the day* is retained; for, on the same principle, the same mysterious signification would still be attributed to particular days, which prevailed among the Jews. And, in truth, we see what advantages have come of it. Those who cling to it far exceed the Jews in a gross, carnal, superstitious observance of the Sabbath; so that the reproofs we read of in Isaiah (i. 13.; lviii. 13), apply as much to those of the present day, as to those whom the prophet addressed then."

(Calvin's Institutes, Book II. Chap. 8.)

Thus Calvin, the oracle of Presbyterian divinity, affirms that the fourth commandment has no place in the Christian code; and that it is of no authority to prove that Christians are bound to observe any day as an *observance*, or that one day in seven is to be any more specially consecrated to God than all the rest. He finds no authority for a special consecration of a *seventh part of our time* to God — but he urges to entire consecration of *ourselves* to God *all the time*. He exhorts men to be filled with the life of God, not merely one day in seven, but during the whole course of their life. Calvin rejected the Divine obligation of a Sabbath, under the Christian dispensation.

I can but quote the opinion of Belsham on the subject, in connection with Calvin; for it is remarkable that while they differ heaven-wide in their theological views, they exactly agree in regard to a Christian Sabbath.

BELSHAM.

“Nothing can be more explicit than the Apostle’s declaration of the entire abrogation of the Jewish Sabbath, which is plainly no more obligatory upon Christians, than the institution of the passover. *The fourth commandment is a precept which has no place in the Christian law, and ought never to be appealed to as an argument for a Sabbatical institution.* And it behooves those who think the observation of a day of Sabbatical rest is of such high importance under the Christian dispensation, and who are so loud in their charges against those who deny, or, as they call it, *profane* the Sabbath, to show what authority they have for this imposition. I see none. The old Sabbath is expressly repealed, and no new one enjoined in its stead: always, however, keeping in mind the very obvious and important distinction between the Lord’s day as a *weekly religious festival* in joyful commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, in which way it has been universally observed from the beginning; and not as a *day of Sabbatical rest* from the common employments and innocent amusements of life, for which there is no precept in the New Testament, and no example in the primitive Church; the practice of which was universally discontinued in the primitive Church, and which, to this day, prevails only in a small proportion of the Protestant Churches in Europe, and among their descendants in America.

In Justin’s dialogue with Trypho, the Jew objects to Christians that, “pretending to excel others, they observe no Sabbaths.” Justin replies: “*The law will have you keep a perpetual Sabbath.* You, when you have passed a day in idleness, think you are religious. The Lord our God is not pleased with such things as these. If any one is guilty of perjury and fraud, let him reform; if he be an adulterer, let him repent; and he will then have kept the kind of Sabbath truly pleasing to God. You see that the elements are never idle, and keep no Sabbath. There was no need of the observation of Sabbaths before Moses, neither now is there any need of them after Christ.”

“As the law of the country requires suspension from labor on the Lord’s day, it is the duty of subjects to obey (*civil*, not religious duty). But surely this Sabbatical observation of the day can never be of that high moral importance which many apprehend; otherwise *Christ and his Apostles would never have been so totally silent upon the subject.* But will-worship was not confined to the Apostolic age; and the censures passed upon those who do not *Sabbatise* like others, are as loud and as bitter *now* as they were seventeen hundred years ago. Let those, therefore, who determine to stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made them free, *while they sanctify every day as a Sabbath, BY ABSTAINING FROM ALL EVIL, AS advised by the holy martyr, encourage themselves at the same time by the exhortation of the Apostle, and suffer no man to judge them with respect to the Sabbath day.* Regard no man’s censure, of whatever rank, or degree, or pretensions, for not receiving as of divine authority, institutions which Christ, as our

sole head, who possesses all authority and power in the Church, hath not required."

"The Sabbatical observation of the Lord's Day is, by many learned writers, placed upon the ground of expediency *alone*. And if it be expedient, let it be observed; but in the name of all that is sacred, let not expedients of human device be substituted as Injunctions of Divine authority. The plain question is, Whether the Sabbatical observation of the Lord's Day is enjoined by Divine authority? If it be, let the order be shown, and it shall be obeyed. In the New Testament, I see the Jewish Sabbath plainly abrogated; I see no Sabbatical institution appointed in its place; and I know that the primitive church explicitly denounced any such institution. I conclude therefore that Christ, our only Master, saw no necessity for appointing an institution, without which, as many now think, the Christian religion could not exist. In whose judgment may we most safely confide?"

Irenæus once said — commenting on what the Apostle says about holy days and Sabbaths,

"It was not the Apostle's mind to prescribe anything touching *holy days*, but to preach godliness and a good conversation."

The views of Luther, Melancthon, and all the leading men of the Reformation, in Germany, on this subject, are found in the celebrated Augsburg Confession of Faith, drawn up by Melancthon, and presented to the Emperor Charles V., in 1530, at the Diet of Augsburg. It is a summary statement of the distinctive doctrines of the Reformation. In this it is asked,

"What is then to be thought of the Lord's Day, and such like rites used in the Church?" (I quote from an old collection of Confessions of Faith, printed in 1656. The answer is,) "That it is lawful for bishops and pastors to appoint ordinances — not that men's consciences should be bound to esteem them necessary services, and to think that they sin when they violate any of them. So Paul ordained that women should cover their heads in the congregation; that the interpreters should be heard in course or order in the Church."

"Such like ordinances (as the first day Sabbath) the churches should keep for charity and quietness' sake, so that they offend not one another, that all things may be done in order, and without tumult in the Church; but yet with this caution, that men's consciences be not burdened, so as they should account them as things necessary to salvation, and think they did sin when they break any of them without offence of others; as no man would say that a woman doth wrong if she come abroad uncovered."

"Of this sort is the observation of the Lord's Day, of Easter, of Pentecost, and such like holy days and rites; for they that think that the observation of the LORD'S DAY was appointed by the authority of the Church INSTEAD OF THE SABBATH, as necessary, they are greatly deceived. The Scripture requireth that the observation of it should be more free; for it teacheth that the Mosaic ceremonies are not needful after the Gospel is revealed. And yet because it was requisite to appoint a certain day that the people might know when to come together, it seemeth that the Church did for that purpose appoint the Lord's Day; which day, for this cause, also seemed to have better pleased the Church, that in it men might have an example of Christian liberty, and might know that the *observation*, neither of the Sabbath, nor ANY OTHER DAY, was of necessity."

"There are extant monstrous disputations touching the change of the Sabbath, which have sprung up from a false persuasion that there should be worship in the Church like to the Levitical worship. They dispute about holy days, and prescribe *how far it is lawful to work in them*. What else are such disputations but snares for men's consciences?"

This is explicit as it can be. That Confession, embodying the leading doctrines of the Reformation, and sanctioned by those who gave up all for what they conceived

to be the truth as it is in Jesus, and drawn up by one of the purest and most learned men that adorn the history of the Church, distinctly declares that the first day Sabbath is merely a human institution; beneficial indeed, but yet human; and urges, that there is no such sin under the Christian dispensation as the sin of Sabbath desecration.

The following is translated from the Wittemberg edition of the same Confession, published in 1535:—

“As for the Sabbath, we be lords of the Sabbath, and may yet change it to Monday, or any other day as we may see need; or we may make every tenth day holy, if we see cause why. Neither was there any cause to change it from the Saturday, save only to put a difference between us and the Jews. NEITHER NEED WE ANY HOLY DAY AT ALL, if the people might be taught without it.”

LUTHER,

As quoted by Coleridge in his Table Talk, says of the Christian day of rest,

“Keep it holy, for its use sake, both to body and soul! But if anywhere the day is made holy for the mere day’s sake—if anywhere any one sets up its observance upon a *Jewish* foundation, then I order you to work on it, to ride on it, to dance on it, to do anything that shall reprove this encroachment on the Christian spirit and liberty.”

FRIENDS.

In this connection, I will quote the opinions of the Society of Friends, who, from the first, have held the view that Christians are under no obligation to keep a Sabbath,—that Christianity consecrates, not times and places, but men and women to God, and requires us not to keep *days*, but *ourselves* holy. They never use the word *Sabbath* or *Lord’s Day*—holding that life should be a Sabbath of rest from sin; and every day esteemed alike the Lord’s day. I quote from their standard authors.

BARCLAY.

“We may not think that these days are holy, being persuaded that *all days* are alike holy in the sight of God.”

“We, not seeing any ground in Scripture for it, cannot be so superstitious as to believe, that either the *Jewish Sabbath continues*, or that the *first day* of the week is the antetype thereof, or the true Christian Sabbath; which, with Calvin, we believe to have a more spiritual sense; and therefore we know *no moral obligation* by the fourth command, or elsewhere, to keep the first day of the week more than any other, or any holiness inherent in it. But, *first*, inasmuch as it is necessary that there be some time set apart for the saints to meet together to wait upon God; and that, *secondly*, it is fit at some times that they be freed from their other outward affairs; and that, *thirdly*, reason and equity doth allow that servants and beasts have some time allowed them to be eased from their continual labor; and, *fourthly*, it appears that the Apostles and primitive Christians did use the first day for these purposes; we find ourselves sufficiently moved, for these causes, to do so also; without superstitiously straining the Scriptures for another reason; which, *that it is not to be there found*, many Protestants, yea, CALVIN himself, upon the fourth command, hath abundantly evinced.”

(*Barclay’s Apology*, III^d Proposition.)

DYMOND.

"The early Christians met, not on the last but on the first day of the week. Whatever reason may be assigned as a motive for this rejection of the ancient Sabbath, I think it will tend to discountenance the observation of any day as such; for if that day did not possess perpetual sanctity, what day does possess it? And with respect to the general tenor of the Christian Scriptures, as to the sanctity of particular days, it is, I think, manifestly adverse to the opinion that one day is obligatory rather than another." (*Dymond's Essays.*)

PALEY.

"In my opinion, the transaction in the wilderness above related (Ex. xvi.), was the first actual institution of the Sabbath." "The words (Gen. ii. 2, 3.) do not assert that God *then* blessed and sanctified the seventh day, but that he blessed and sanctified it for that reason." "St. Paul evidently appears to have considered the Sabbath a part of the Jewish ritual, and not obligatory upon Christians as such." (Col. ii. 16, 17). "A cessation upon that day, from labor, beyond the time of attendance upon public worship, is not intimated in any part of the New Testament; nor did Christ or his Apostles deliver, that we know of, any commands to their Disciples for a discontinuance, upon that day, of the common affairs of their professions." "The opinion that Christ and his Apostles meant to retain the duties of the Jewish Sabbath, shifting only the day from the seventh to the first, seems to prevail without sufficient reason; nor does any evidence remain in the Scripture, (of what, however, is not improbable,) that the *first* day of the week was thus distinguished in commemoration of our Lord's death." (*Paley's Philosophy.*)

WHATELY.

Dr. Whately, the present Archbishop of Dublin, has published a work embodying the views of Calvin and the Friends on this subject; and clearly established the position, that no authority can be derived from the Bible for the observance of the first day Sabbath. He says in Note A to Essay V., on the writings of St. Paul,

"In saying that there is no mention of the Lord's day in the Mosaic law, I mean, that there is not only no mention of that specific festival which Christians observe on the first day of the week, in memory of our Lord's resurrection on the morning following the Jewish Sabbath, but that there is not any injunction to sanctify *one day in seven*. Throughout the whole of the Old Testament, we never hear of keeping holy *some one day in every seven*, but the seventh day, as the day in which God 'rested from all His works.'"

"I cannot, therefore, but think that the error was less, of those early Christians, who, conceiving the injunction relative to the Sabbath to be binding on them, obeyed it just as it was given, than those who, admitting the eternal obligation of the precept, yet presume to alter it on the authority of tradition. Surely, if we allow that the tradition of the Church is competent to change the express commands of God, we are falling into one of the most dangerous errors of the Romanists."

"But in the present case, there is not even any tradition to the purpose. It is not merely that the Apostles left us no command perpetuating the observance of the Sabbath, and transferring the day from the *seventh* to the *first*: such a change, certainly, would have been authorized by their express injunction, and by nothing short of that; since an express Divine command can be changed, or altered only by the same power, and by the same distinct revelation, by which it was delivered. But, not only is there no Apostolic *injunction*, than which nothing less would be sufficient; there is not even any *tradition* of their having made such a change; nay, more, it is even abundantly plain that they made *no* such change."

In stating his reasons for discussing this subject, Whately remarks:—

"Another reason for dwelling on the view I have thus taken is, the strong disposition in many Christians to satisfy their conscience by devoting to God *only* one day in seven, while the rest of their time is given up to the world, with little or no thought of religion."

"Christians need, therefore, to be often reminded that they are required not merely not to 'think their own thoughts' on one day in the week, but as the redeemed of Christ, to live henceforth not unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them and rose again; and whatever they do, to do all to the glory of God. Numerous early Christian Fathers, accordingly, in their commentaries on the Decalogue, describe the Jewish Sabbath as corresponding in the analogous scheme of Christianity, *not so much to the Lord's Day*, as to the whole life of the Christian, to abstinence from all works that may draw off his affections from God, and to his complete dedication of himself to his service. See Athanasius, *Hom. de Sab.*; Hieronymus, in *Decalog.*; Origin, *Tract 19*, in *Matt.*; Chrysostom, *Hom. 39*, in *Matt. xii.*; Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*; Clemens of Alexandria, *strom. lib. IV.*; and Augustine *passim*. I refer, however, to these, and other human authorities, not as *guides* to regulate our faith and practice, for I am taught to call no man Master; but merely to show that the *novelty* which has been attributed to my views lies, in fact, on the other side."

Thus my views of the Sabbath exactly coincide with those of Calvin, Luther, and Melancthon; with those of Barclay, Penn, Fox, and the whole Society of Friends; with those of Paley, long a standard author in the colleges and universities of Great Britain; with those of Whately; and above all, with the New Testament, as I have shown.

Every now and then, Presbyterians publish an edition of Calvin's Institutes. Do the people of America know that the Presbyterian Church, the Andover, New Haven, New York, and Princeton Theological Seminaries, are continually circulating the opinion, that the *first day Sabbath is not of Divine appointment*? They should not be surprised that persons should occasionally be found who believe what they publish. No man is supposed to be fitted for a Presbyterian minister till he has studied an author, (Calvin,) who strenuously insists that the Jewish Scriptures are of no authority to establish the doctrine of a *first day Sabbath*. The writer who thus teaches is a standard author in the libraries of all the ministers, and theological schools of Britain and America. Why then should it seem so strange that some men should be found to embrace the Anti-Sabbath views of an author so widely circulated, so highly applauded, and so universally regarded as a standard writer on Christian doctrine and morals? Are the professed ministers and followers of Christ aware that when they say of me, "This man cannot be a Christian, for he denies the Divine obligation of a *one-day-in-seven Sabbath*, and holds that every day should be alike consecrated to God and to rest from sin," they also cast the whole Society of Friends, with Luther,

Melancthon, CALVIN, and ST. PAUL, out of the pale of Christianity ?

There are certain phrases in common use, touching a Sabbath, which, as now understood, are peculiarly adapted to perpetuate the reign of error on this subject. Some of these I will notice.

HOLY DAY.

When used in the Jewish Scriptures, this phrase is perfectly intelligible. Holy, as connected with *day*, or Sabbath, has the same meaning as when applied to house, or garment. It means a thing set apart to a particular use, without regard to whether that use be good or evil. By holy *day* was meant a day set apart for rest from labor, and it was called *holy* because thus set apart.

But it is remarkable, that not one allusion is made in the Christian Scriptures to a holy day. We read of holy *men* and *women*, but not one word about holy times and places, except by way of condemnation. The kingdom of Christ takes no account of holy *days*, but of holy *hearts*; it attaches no importance to a holy *Sabbath*, but all importance to a holy *life*. In this kingdom, a holy *Sabbath* can never be substituted for a holy *man*.

KEEP THE DAY HOLY.

Sabbatarians frequently urge upon the people the duty to keep *first day holy*. Not one word is said by Christ or the Apostles about keeping that, or any other *day*, holy. Men are commanded and entreated to keep *themselves* holy. "Be *ye* perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." "Be *ye* holy, for *I* am holy." "As *He* who hath called you is holy, so be *ye* holy," in your daily walk and deportment. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth *himself*, even as he (Christ) is pure." Such are the earnest injunctions of Christianity. Its great concern is that men, by the Divine aid, should keep *themselves* pure and holy — declaring that the "pure in heart only shall see God;" and that "without holiness, no man shall see the Lord;" but not a thought, not a word does it bestow on keeping a *day* holy.

Why, then, do professed ministers and followers of

Christ now bestow so much anxious thought and effort to induce men to keep a *day* holy, seeing their Divine Master never alludes to it? If all this effort were expended in urging men to keep **THEMSELVES** holy and unspotted from the world, without regard to time and place, it would be far more Christian, and far more effective. It is an evil device; and enables millions to maintain a character for zeal for God by being zealous to keep a *day* holy, while they *themselves* live in the habitual commission of gross iniquity.

But you ask, Are we not bound to keep the first day holy? We are bound to *live* holy during that day; and if this is what you mean by keeping the *day* holy, I freely admit the obligation. But I would ask, How are other days to be kept? That is, How are we to *live* during the rest of the week? During the whole of first day, we are to keep *ourselves* holy, blameless, and without reproach. How are we to keep ourselves during the rest of the week? We are under as sacred an obligation to keep each and every other day holy, in this only sense in which the phrase can have any meaning to the Christian, as we are to keep the first day holy. The Christian doctrine is, that men are required to keep no *day* holy, but to keep *themselves* holy, unblameable, and abounding in the work of the Lord, during the whole of each day, having no regard to any time as holy, but prayerfully, earnestly, and in Divine strength, struggling after a **HOLY LIFE**.

No matter how the *day* is kept, provided the heart and the life are kept holy. Have no concern about the *day*; but keep the *heart* and *life* with all diligence. Bestow not a thought upon the *day*, to know whether it be first, second, or third day, so far as any sacredness is to be attached to it; but let it be an object of ceaseless prayer and solicitude to bring every feeling and thought under the control of the Divine Spirit—to keep the affections on things above—and thus to have the mind and to live the life of Christ.

Cease from labor during *first day*; complying with the custom of society because it is a good custom—useful to man and beast—but attach no more importance or holiness to rest on that than on another day, when it is needed. Have no respect to the first day as a *Sabbath*, but be anxious to glorify God every day and in all you do, and to love

and respect man in all times and places. Look not after God in a holy day, a new moon, or Sabbath; in Jerusalem, or in the mountains of Samaria: but see Him in man, his own child, thy brother. Go, see Him in the slave, bought and sold; in the drunkard; in the despised and down-trodden; in the criminal on the gallows; in the mangled victims of war on the battle-field. See Him in thine own soul. God dwells not in Sabbaths, nor in temples made with hands; but in humble hearts and contrite spirits. Keep thy heart humble, and thy spirit contrite, and God will dwell in thee. Be not concerned to dwell in first day as an outward Sabbath; but let thine all-absorbing concern be to dwell in love, that God may dwell in thee, and thou in Him. Then would every day be to thee a Sabbath; and, as Calvin says, "Thou wouldst find thy Sabbath in the whole course of thy life; for, being dead to thyself, thou wouldest be filled with the life of God."

CONSECRATING THE DAY TO GOD.

You will ask, Are we not bound to consecrate first day to God? Yes. But to whom is the rest of the week to be consecrated? I find no license in the Christian Scriptures, or elsewhere, to consecrate any portion of time to Mammon, to Moloch, or to Belial; but every day and hour is to be consecrated to God. We are under no more obligation to devote first day to Him than any other.

But you ask, Are we not to consecrate the first day *especially* to God? Yes. And to whom are we to consecrate *especially* the others? Especially to ourselves; especially to Mammon; especially to selling whiskey and making drunkards; especially to enslaving and killing men? *Every* day should be especially consecrated to God; or rather, speaking in a Christian sense, we are to consecrate no *day* to God, but *ourselves*, every day and hour. Christianity especially sanctifies and consecrates, not *days* and *temples*, but men and women; and requires us to present to God, not a first, or seventh day Sabbath, or any mere outward sacrifice; but, by the mercies of God, it beseeches us "to present *ourselves* a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service." How? We are told in the same twelfth chapter of Romans. Not by sanctifying and consecrating first day as a Sabbath, but "by love without dissimulation; by

abhorring evil and choosing good ; by kindly affection one to another ; by joy in hope, and patience in tribulation ; by returning to no man evil for evil ; by love for hate, blessing for cursing, and good for evil ; by love to enemies, and forgiveness of injuries." Let men thus consecrate *themselves* a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, during every day, and they need not be troubled about a Sabbatical observance ; for then will all time be consecrated to God in the only sense in which it can be.

But you will say, The first day of the week is to be set apart to *religious* services. TRUE ; and to what services are the other days to be set apart ? To *irreligious* and profane ? Not one word is said by Christ or the Apostles about setting apart first day, or any other day, to religious purposes ; but they urge us to set apart all our life to purposes of devotion and obedience. As well talk of setting apart a particular day to believe in Christ, to love our neighbor as ourselves, to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly, as of consecrating a day to *religious* services. Every act of life should be done as a religious service—an act of devotion, or Christian worship.

But you may ask, Are we to set apart no time for reading the Scriptures, for public conversation, and for mutual exhortation ? Yes—assuredly—these things are needful as means of grace ; and we must have times and places to attend to them. But why call that religious service which is but the *means* to incite to religious service ? Why call that *worship* which is but a means to unite our souls to Christ, and to excite us to offer true worship ? Religious service, or Christian devotion or worship, is this,—“ to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, and to have not the faith of our Lord with respect of persons”—“ to break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free—to beat the sword into a ploughshare, and learn war no more.” “ I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink ; I was a stranger, and ye took me in ; naked, and ye clothed me ; I was sick, and ye visited me ; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.” “ When, Lord, did we do these things unto thee ?” “ Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me.” This is religious service—this is *Christian* worship.

To produce in us this mind that was in Christ, and to

lead us thus to walk in the steps of Jesus, should we read the Scriptures, meditate, assemble ourselves together, exhort one another, and stir up one another's minds by way of remembrance. And to use these means, we need set times and places; but we are not to forget the great end in view, by doing homage to the means, and to the times, and places set apart for using them. To produce sanctified *men* and *women*, and not *days*, is the aim of Christianity, and to this end should all our attention and desire be directed;—but it is no more acceptable to seek this on first day than at other times; and to pray, to read the Scriptures, and to go to meeting, are as adapted to promote the great object on any other day of the week as on the first.

SABBATH DESECRATION.

What is called the sin of Sabbath breaking is an act or word which is sinful, not because it is, in itself or its effects, a violation of a moral principle, but because of the *day* in which it is done or spoken. Thus an act which is right at noon on seventh day, is said to be wrong at noon on first day, simply because of the difference of days. The only difference is this; in the former case, it was done on seventh day, and in the latter, it was done on the first or Sabbath day; and this fact is supposed to make the one sinful, and the other not. It seems to me a self-evident truth, that no action can be right or wrong simply because of the time or place in which it is done. The fact that they are, or are not, violations of moral principles, is what makes all actions right or wrong. Christianity specifies no acts as wrong because of the day in which they are done. It distinctly repudiates this Sabbatarian rule of judging human conduct.

It is remarkable that not one allusion is made by Christ or the Apostles to the sin of Sabbath desecration. They are ever warning men against defiling *themselves*, but never utter a word against desecrating a *day*. So far as their precepts and example touch upon the subject, in reference to the Jewish Sabbath, they lead to the conclusion, that there is no such sin under the Christian dispensation.

The question of a Sabbatical observance was often and strongly agitated between the Jewish and Gentile converts; the former declaring it was necessary to keep the law of

Moses in this as in other particulars; the latter denying the obligation, and refusing compliance. The Apostles met at Jerusalem to consider the matter, and in their epistle to the churches, they say not a word about resting the first day, or keeping it as a Sabbath instead of the seventh. The writings of the New Testament narrate the history of Christianity for about seventy years from its commencement on earth in the person of Christ; and they give not a hint that the fourth command contains a perpetual obligation to keep a Sabbath; nor do they allude to the substitution of the first day as a Christian Sabbath; nor do they hint at the sin of *Sabbath breaking*: but clearly teach that there is and can be no such sin under the Christian system. The pollution of human beings by drunkenness, by slavery and war, by adultery and oppression, by anger and revenge, by pride and ambition, by lust and avarice, they constantly and earnestly deprecate; but to the desecration of a *day*, they never allude.

Why, then, do men now talk so much about this sin? Societies are formed, committees are appointed, and vast sums of money are expended, to put down the sin of Sabbath desecration—a *sin that cannot exist* under the Christian dispensation—for Christianity has no Sabbath of Divine appointment to violate. Petitions are sent to Legislatures, and the strong arm of governmental violence is invoked to abolish the sin of Sabbath breaking. Tens of thousands petition government, by violence, to close whiskey, gin, and beer shops on first day—not because they believe selling intoxicating liquors degrades man—for they themselves make, drink, and sell them on other days; but because they say it desecrates the *day*, it violates the *Sabbath* to do this on first day. These very petitioners go to the liquor shops on seventh or second day, and buy and drink, and pretend that it does them good. Those days are not desecrated by such deeds. But they denounce all who enter these shops, and buy and drink on the *first day*, because that day is susceptible of being desecrated by such acts. They contend that the liquor trade does not desecrate the man, but the day. Thus sustaining the hurtful doctrine, that actions which have no power to desecrate man, have power to desecrate a day. They are more anxious to preserve a Sabbatical observance inviolate, than man.

If Christ be in us the hope of glory ; if we seek to be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke ; if, in humble reliance on Christ, as the " Lamb of God, to take away sin," we seek after " whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, and whatsoever things are just, pure, lovely, and of good report ;" if we thus receive the kingdom of God in the meekness and simplicity of a little child, and in the firmness, resolution, and perfect self-forgetfulness of martyrs ; if thus we receive Christianity, not as an observance, an institution, but as an abiding principle of action ; and God, not as a being of time and place, but as an ever-present, all-controlling law of life ; then we need have no concern about desecrating days and places, for at all times and in all places we shall live in the Divine presence ; and, though inhabitants of earth and in tenements of clay, we shall feel that we live and move amid the magnificent but delightful realities of eternity. The Christian, whose life is thus hid with Christ, and who lives but to worship God in doing good to man, need never ask the question how he has observed a day, for he knows that he cannot desecrate a Sabbath, so long as he does not desecrate himself or his fellow-men. His soul enjoys a *perpetual Sabbath*, for he dwells in God, and God in him.

Is it said, that no man can receive Christ into his heart by faith, walk in his steps, and lead a Christian life, unless he observes one day in seven as a Sabbath ? Christ and his Apostles gave many tests of Christian character ;—love to enemies—forgiveness of injuries—and many others. But where have they laid down a Sabbatical observance as a test ? They themselves paid no regard to the then existing Sabbath, and say not a word about observing any other. Are we unworthy of the Christian name if we walk in their steps ? The Sabbatarian principle says, " Consecrate one day in seven especially to God." The Anti-Sabbatarian principle says, " Consecrate every day especially to God." The former says, " Give one day in seven especially to religious service—to Divine worship—to the concerns of the soul ;" the latter says, " Devote every day and all of life, to these high and holy objects. Give *yourself* to God every day, and on one day with as much sincerity and earnestness as on another." Which of these principles is most in accordance with the mind of Christ,

and which would be most likely to lead us to walk in his steps ?

You ask, Are we not forbidden to think our own thoughts, to speak our own words, and to seek our own pleasure, on the first day of the week ? True ; and whose thoughts are we to think, whose words to speak, and whose pleasure to seek, on other days ? If in this way we are bound to observe first day, in the same way we are equally bound to observe every other day. The Divine will is to be done on first day. Whose will is to be done on second day ? We are to cherish Divine thoughts and feelings on first day. What thoughts and feelings ought we to cherish during the rest of the week ? We must speak only chosen, heavenly words on first day. What words are we to speak at other times ?

This attempt to regulate our lives by the hour is not only opposed to the genius of Christianity, but most hurtful in its influence upon the character. To the question, How ought I to deport myself at this moment ? I cannot return an answer until I ascertain the day of the week. If it is *first day*, my feelings, thoughts, words, and actions must only be so and so ; but if, on looking at the clock, I find it past the hour of midnight on first day evening, then they may at once assume a different, and even opposite character. I cannot tell what to think, until I have consulted the day and the hour. Such a standard, of necessity, calls off the mind from the only true fountain of thought and action. *Christ*, not the *clock*, is our life and light. We should look to Him and be saved, and not to the calendar.

Such are the practical results of the Sabbatarian principle, as it is but too commonly illustrated in the lives of its adherents. How different from the Christian principle ! This teaches us to dwell in love continually, that God may dwell in us and we in Him ; and thus give to our souls a *Sabbath* of perpetual rest from sin, and to make the whole of life one act of Christian worship. It teaches, not to keep *ourselves* less holy on first day, but more holy on all other days ; to sanctify and consecrate *ourselves* to the Holy One, not the less on the first day of the week, but the more entirely on that and on all others.

It will be the meat and drink of every Christian, according to the example of his Saviour, "to do the will of Him

that sent him, and to finish his work ;” and he will be as anxious to do this on the seventh as on the first day. He will feel no more bound to follow Christ, and to have His mind, on one day than on another, and he will be no more solicitous “ to bridle his tongue that he offend not in word, and to show out of a good conversation his works with meekness and wisdom,” on the day of rest, than on the days of labor. He will feel just as anxious “ to put away bitter envyings and strife, and to be pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy,” on each and every other day as on the first. Indeed, he will never ask what day of the week it is to ascertain how he shall feel, what he shall think, read, write, or speak, or how he shall act. To determine this, he will have a higher standard, even the written Record of his Father’s will, and the ever-present God within, who rules over the empire of his soul !

Instead of looking at the almanac, to ascertain the day of the week, or to the clock, to learn the hour of the day, he will look to Him who made all time, and to whom all days and hours are alike, and ask, “ Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ? ” and having learned this, he will do it, regardless of time or place.

WORKS OF NECESSITY AND MERCY.

It is said, We are to do only works of necessity and mercy on first day. What others may we do the rest of the week ? The Christian, whose delight is to do the will of his Heavenly Father, will find no time for other than works of necessity and mercy. Whether he eats or drinks, and whatsoever he does, he will do all as a work of necessity and mercy, and to the Divine glory. But who is to decide what works of necessity and mercy are to be done on first day ? Is this to be settled for each individual in the nation, by an ecclesiastical council, or by the legislature ? When councils and legislatures will assume the responsibilities of each individual, then they will have good cause to decide for him what is to be his department each day ; but so long as “ each must account for himself for all the deeds done in the body,” each must decide for himself what thoughts, words, and acts are appropriate to the passing day ; since, in the Christian Record, no instruction is given on this point, ex-

cept to forbid, on each day, all feelings, thoughts, words, and acts, that are contrary to the Divine will, and to the law of love.

What may be a work of necessity to one, may not be to another; and what may be a work of mercy in one, may be an act of cruelty in another; and the question, What is the day of the week? is it the holy day—the Sabbath? or, is it some other day? can justly have no possible weight in deciding the point whether, in a given case, this or that would be an act of mercy or charity, or otherwise. *Do no wrong at any time*, but “love one another, with a love that thinketh no evil, seeketh not her own;” that is all-hoping, all-confiding, all-forgiving, all-enduring, and that never faileth, without respect to time or place. Such is the Divine injunction; and in deciding what is wrong, the question of the day of the week, or the hour of the day, should have no influence.

LORD'S DAY.

It is said, The first day of the week is the *Lord's day*. It is. Whose are the other days? Man's? Each and every other day is the Lord's day, as really, and in the same sense, as is the first. But, Why, it is asked, is the first day called the *Lord's day* in the Christian Scriptures? It is not. In Rev. i. 10, the inspired writer says, “I was in the spirit on the Lord's day,” (ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ. The Greek word translated “Lord's” is an adjective, joined to “day” as a qualifying word, and may mean a notable or remarkable day.) Of this passage it is enough to know, that there is not a shadow of evidence that the writer had the vision on first day, or that he calls it “Lord's day,” because it was *first day*, or in reference to the resurrection of Christ on that day. It is certain the Apostles and early Christians were not accustomed so to designate first day; for the Acts and the First Epistle to the Corinthians were written nearly half a century after the Ascension, and first day is alluded to in them, but not as the “Lord's day,” nor as a Sabbath, but simply as “the first day of the week.” To use this phrase to give the impression that Christianity thus designates first day; or that it would have us regard it as a *Sabbath*; or that it attaches to it a sacredness and importance which it does not attach to other days, is obviously to utter the devices of our own hearts

as the oracles of Divine truth, and to teach as the commandments of God the traditions of men.

The Christian will regard every day as the Lord's day; and the fact that it is, will, in his estimation, impart as much sanctity and importance to one day as to another; and he will not thus designate first day to convey the impression that it belongs to the Lord in any peculiar sense, or that men are to think of Him more constantly and reverently, and to worship Him more devoutly on that than on other days.

But why, it is asked, did the writer say, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day?" He undoubtedly calls it "Lord's day," or a divine day, because on that day he was favored with the wonderful, overpowering vision. To him it was a great and wonderful day. To mark it as such, he calls it "Lord's day," — a wonderful, a divine day. This is the natural and rational interpretation demanded by the words of the text, and by the context; and justified by Hebrew idiom.

But, it is asked, Has not God himself appropriated certain duties to the first day of the week, and certain other duties to other days? And if He has, should we not attend to our duties in the order, and at the time of His appointment? Most assuredly. "Thy will be done" is the Christian's prayer — not of his *lips* only, but of his *life*. He utters it not merely in words, as a periodical observance, or *performance*, to be seen of men. It breathes in his every thought and word, and appears in his every act. "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done." This is the hidden life of his soul, and the outward expression of his life; and if God appropriates certain duties to certain times, and requires him to keep a strict account of the days of the week and hours of the day, in order to know how to regulate his life, the Christian will obey.

Has the Holy One set up this outward standard for Christians? Has He made it incumbent on us to consult the day, or the hour, to determine whether our feelings, thoughts, words, and acts, are right or wrong? This is the question. Sabbatarians affirm that He has. I search the Christian Record, and find not one allusion to the subject. But I read there of a kingdom within us — the spirit and mind of Christ, as a purifying, quickening, governing principle of life. I read of a "Comforter which is to be in

us, leading us into all truth"—of "God dwelling in us, and we in Him." To this unchanging principle — to this life of God, in the soul, aided by the written Record of His will — I am directed by the Divine teacher, in order to decide how to live; but I look in vain for a single intimation that I am to ask — Is it first day, or second, or seventh? in order to decide the right or wrong of particular words and acts.

The Sabbatarian says, "It is wrong to open that shop and sell that whisky to that trembling, tottering, emaciated wreck of humanity." Why? Not because whisky selling pollutes the *man*, and sends him, where it has sent millions of others, to the drunkard's grave and the drunkard's eternity; but, because it is the first day of the week, the *Sabbath!* It desecrates the *day!* His anxiety is for the *day*, not for the *man!*

"It is a sin," cries the Sabbatarian, "to run those railway trains on first day!" Why? The *day*, the *day!* It desecrates the day. On any other day it would be right, and a duty to run them, a convenience, and a great blessing to us all; but, oh! spare *this* day. It is "the Lord's day!" "A holy day!" It is an offence to God, and a curse to man, to travel on this day!

"Stop that mail, shut that post-office," says the Sabbatarian. Why? Not because the post-office and the mail are detrimental to society, or opposed to Christianity, but because it is a sin to receive, to read, to write, post, or carry letters on *first day*. It breaks the Sabbath!

So if we would know if it be wrong to sell and drink whisky, or right to run railway trains; to read, write, post, and carry letters, we must ask, What is the day of the week? What is the hour of the day?

When is it right to hang that brother, that *Christian* brother, by the neck till he is dead? The Sabbatarian consults the calendar, and answers—"Not to-day. It would be a heinous sin to break his neck to-day." Why? "This is the *Lord's* day," says the Sabbatarian, "a *holy* day, a Sabbath! It would desecrate the *day!*" Would it not desecrate the day to hang him to-morrow? "Oh, no," says the Sabbatarian, "for that is not the *Lord's* day, nor is it holy as this is." But would it not desecrate the man? "No," rejoins the Sabbatarian; "it would neither desecrate the man nor the day to hang him to-morrow, for

that day is set apart to such works. It would not desecrate the *man* to hang him to-day, but it would desecrate the *day*, because it is the Lord's day, and holy!" So the dreadful act of blood for blood receives all its atrocity from the day in which it happens to be done!!

When shall the battle be fought, or that town be bombarded and burned, and the women and children slaughtered? The *man-killing* Sabbatarian consults the calendar or clock, and says, "Wait a bit. It would be a great sin to do it now. It would desecrate the day. In a few moments, the Lord's holy day will be past, and we shall not incur the awful guilt of Sabbath desecration. Soon as the clock has struck the hour of midnight, then pour your cannon balls and bombshells into their nurseries, bedrooms, parlors and kitchens; burn, kill, slay, and destroy. More the better. Though it is often necessary to fight battles, and slaughter our brothers and sisters on first day, as a sacrifice of sweet-smelling savour to the god of battles, whose delight is in human sacrifices thus gloriously offered; yet it is well not to desecrate that holy day with blood, if we can help it. Our forgiving Saviour, who loved us, and shed His blood for us, is delighted to see us shed the blood of our enemies on other days; but He would rather not have us do it to-day, if we can avoid it, for fear it would desecrate the day!"

Read the following: The battle of Palo Alto was fought May 8, 1846; the battle of Monterey commenced Sept. 20, 1846; the battle of Cerro Gordo commenced April 18, 1847; Tobasco was attacked on Sunday; the battle of Buena Vista commenced Feb. 21, 1847; Vera Cruz surrendered to Scott, Feb. 28, 1847; the battle of Sacramento was fought March 28, 1847. All these bloody scenes were perpetrated on the day which you esteem holy. You have declared to the world that writing, posting and carrying letters, and that hunting and starting hares, partridges, deer and other game on Sundays, are sins against God; but not one word have you, as a Society, yet uttered against this wholesale slaughter of *innocent* men, women and children on that day. By your direct advocacy of war, and by your silence, respecting these battles, you teach the world that it is pleasant and satisfactory to God to have his children shoot one another on his "*Holy day*;" but that he regards with displeasure those who shoot hares on that day! If it is right to shoot men on Saturday, is it

not right to shoot them Sunday? You say it is. Yet, while you admit it is right to write, post and carry letters, and travel on railways, Saturday and Monday, you hold those up as among the vilest sinners, who do these things on Sunday. You allow men seven days in a week to fight and kill one another, but will allow them only six days to plough, sow and reap.

“It would be a great sin to sell those men and women at auction to-day,” cries the *slave-holding* Sabbatarian; “it is the Lord’s day and holy, and a slave-auction would desecrate it, and be very wrong; but wait a few hours, and then sell the husband and father one way; the wife and mother another; and the children another.”

Read too the following; it is an illustration of the Sabbatarian principle which you seek to establish as a perpetual law of God: i. e. *that the right and wrong of slave-trading may be determined by the clock and calendar*. It is taken from the “Eutau, Alabama Whig,” of December, 1847.

“The sale of about 160 *Negroes*, 44 Mules and Horses, 250 or 300 Pork Hogs, Stock Hogs, Cattle, Corn, Fodder, Plantation Tools, Cooking Utensils, &c. &c., will commence on *Friday*, the 10th of December, at the Plantation of John Jones, deceased, near Warsaw, Sumpter County.”

The sale continued Friday and Saturday. The Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists, and other sects of Alabama, and the nation, see no sin in herding and selling men with mules and hogs, Friday and Saturday; but Saturday night, men, women, children, mules, hogs and cattle are all locked up in a pen together, that these Sabbatarians may suspend their operations, and “keep the *day* holy.” Soon as Sunday is over, they repair to the Market, and commence the sale again, as the rest of the advertisement shows.

“The sale will be continued on *Monday*, Dec. 13th, at the late residence of John Jones, deceased, in Green County, — say 114 or 115 *Negroes*, 33 Mules and Horses, 7 yoke of Oxen, Pork Hogs, Stock Hogs, Cattle, Road Wagon, Ox Wagon, Horse-Carts, Cart Wheels, Cotton-Gins, Corn, Fodder, Nuts, Plantation Tools, &c. &c.

“The terms of sale, twelve months credit. Notes, with

two approved securites, interest to be added from sale.
All sums under \$20, cash.

WM. JONES, JUN.
JOHN P. EVANS,
Administrators."

The Sabbatarian principle authorizes those who embrace it, to herd and sell MAN with Mules, Hogs and Cattle, six days in the week, but condemns them for doing this work on the *Sabbath*. You go up and down the land, not to rescue *Man*, but a *day* from desecration. You join hands with "Wm. Jones, Jun. and John P. Evans," and those who bid for those men, and mules, and hogs at auction, to rescue a Sabbath observance from desecration. You fear not that herding and selling men with beasts will desecrate *Man*, but your anxiety is for the day. Had they continued the sale *Sunday*, you would have condemned them as *Sabbath breakers*!! But as *Slave-traders*, you receive them to your Christian fellowship!!!

The following was passed, November 10, 1847.

"An Act in relation to proceedings against persons observing as the Sabbath the day commonly called Saturday.

"The PEOPLE of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows :

"Section 1. No person whose religious faith and practice is to keep the seventh day of the week, commonly called Saturday, as a day set apart by *divine* command as the Sabbath of rest from labor, and DEDICATED TO THE WORSHIP OF GOD, shall be subject to perform *military* duty, or *jury* duty, in a Justice's Court, on such day, *except that such person shall be subject to perform military duty on such day in case of invasion, insurrection, or in time of war.*" (Three other Sections.)

You teach that the law of a Sabbatical observance is a *moral* law of God—of perpetual obligation upon all nations. The Legislature of New York has set this law aside in case of *war*. They assert that men may fight and kill the *innocent*, for the interest of those who kill them; that they may be *compelled* to hunt and shoot men, women and children; and you have never offered a word of objection. Yet, had the *people* of New York State enacted that men might hunt and shoot wolves, or ride on a railway, or till the lands, *Sunday*, your voice had been raised in condemnation.

Thus to know when hanging, war, and slavery are right, you are directed to the calendar and the clock! So the Sabbatarian sends us to the same source to decide what books and papers we may read; what are proper topics of thought and conversation; what meetings we are to attend; how far, and in what way, to travel; and in what recreations to indulge. All these things are to be decided by learning the number of the day and the hour.

God has given to Christians no such law. It is a factitious rule, and has no sanction in Christianity. This associates the Divine presence and government with man, and not with time and place; teaches us to see God in *man*, and not in Sabbaths; "to put away anger and wrath, and to be tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us;" "to follow after God as dear children;" "to be the salt of the earth, and the light of the world;" not only on first day, but on all days, and in all places. Whatever is opposed to the Divine will, it forbids to be done at any time; whatever is in accordance with this law, it allows us to do, when, and where, in our opinion, duty calls us to do it. But the Sabbatarian principle calls for a change of feeling, thought, and deportment, as days and hours roll round. This moment, the man is one being; the next, another; to-day he appears in his week-day character; to-morrow, in his holy-day character; to-day's sun sets upon him, worshipping at the shrine of Mammon, thinking his own thoughts, and seeking his own pleasure; to-morrow's sun finds him, with disfigured face, bowing at the altar of his God, striving to think His thoughts, and to seek His pleasure. His piety, his reverence for God, his worship, his Christianity, are periodical, and go and come according to the revolutions of the earth upon its axis, and as the index points to the hour. He is sober and devout by fits and starts — he feels the Divine presence and power, according to the day of the week — his repentance for sin is regulated by the dial — his religion is a performance, to be enacted in a given time.

THE SABBATARIAN PRINCIPLE TESTED BY ITS FRUITS.

But, it is asked, Does not the divinity of the Sabbatarian principle appear in the lives of those who embrace it, when contrasted with the lives of those who reject it? Keep in mind the point at issue. *Not* — Is it right and

useful to set apart one day in seven to rest from manual labor? *Not* — Is it necessary to have a recognised time for social convocation, for mutual exhortation, encouragement, comfort, and instruction in Christian duties? *Not* — Ought we to be under the government and guidance of a holy and just God on first day, and on all days? But, *Is the first day Sabbath of Divine appointment? Has God specified any duties as appropriate to that day: and signified that He is displeased when certain things are done on that day which He allows or commands to be done on other days?* The Sabbatarian principle says, He has; and appeals to the lives of Sabbatharians as proof.

The comparison is made between those who have always enjoyed the means of intellectual and moral improvement, and those who, from childhood, have been removed from all purifying and saving influences. Their character has little connection with Sabbatarian views. Yea, most of those who are cited to prove the wickedness of the Anti-Sabbatarian principle — *that all days are to be alike devoted to God* — were educated in, and now hold to the Sabbatarian principle, that one day in seven is to be more especially consecrated to religious purposes than the rest of the week, and that first day is the Lord's day, and that the others are not. The comparison is made between those who have some reverence for God and some respect for man, and those who have none.

But let the comparison be instituted between those who truly adopt and act upon the Anti-Sabbatarian principle, *i. e.* that Christians are not required to keep a first or seventh day Sabbath, but to sanctify and consecrate *themselves* every day alike, and those who hold to a special, peculiar first day consecration; let the comparison, for instance, be made between the *Friends*, as a body, and those who hold to the first day Sabbath, and see where the advantage lies.

It is now about two hundred years since the rise of the Society of Friends. From the first, they rejected the notion that the first day of the week possessed any sacredness or importance over other days. They never considered actions right or wrong because of the day in which they were done. This Sabbatarian principle they repudiated, as forming no part of the Christian system, and turned attention to the Divine will as their only unerring, unchanging standard of judgment. In their domestic and

social instructions, and public communications, they never offer as a reason why anything should or should not be done — that it is “the *Sabbath* day” — “the Lord’s day” — “a holy day.” As a body, they rejected the doctrine — that the first day Sabbath is of Divine appointment and obligation. In their families, in their schools, in their preaching, in their yearly epistles, in their approved standard writings, — they have never been accustomed to speak of the first day as “the Sabbath” — “the Lord’s day” — “a holy day;” but simply as *first day*, associating with it no more sacredness or importance than with each and every other day.

What has been the result? In reverence for the Holy One, and regard for His will as an abiding principle of action; in respect for the rights and persons of men; and in singleness of purpose, purity of motive, and general integrity of life; the Friends, as a body, will compare with any other body of professing Christians in the world. I have been accustomed to great intimacy with them in domestic and social life for fifteen years, in America and in Great Britain; and though I have oft been called to rebuke them, as a body, for what appeared to me a want of fidelity to their truly noble and Christian testimonies; yet, truth and justice compel me to say, that they come nearer to the Christian standard, and more closely walk in the steps of our Divine Master in the various relations of life, than any other religious denomination with which I am acquainted. In domestic life — Where can be found more instances of well-regulated and virtuous families? As husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, more true, self-forgetting affection, and fewer instances of dereliction from the pure and holy principles of Christian morality that should ever regulate human beings in performing the duties which grow out of those relations? How few, comparatively, of the children of Friends, are led astray by the popular seductions to vice; and how few are ever found in criminal courts, in houses of correction and penitentiaries! In the business world, whose word is more trusted? Whose truth, justice, and general integrity, less suspected? Who less addicted to fashionable folly and dissipation? But I forbear. Friends, from their origin, have stood before the world, conspicuous for the general purity of their lives, and for their strict adherence to the instructions of their Divine Teacher.

Yet Friends, as a body, deny, "that either the Jewish Sabbath now continues, or that the *first day* is the true Christian Sabbath." They have ever held that there is "no moral obligation by the *fourth command*, or ELSEWHERE, to keep the first day of the week more than any other day;" but they hold, that "all *days are alike holy in the sight of God*"—(See Barclay as above quoted,)—and that men and women are bound to consecrate themselves to a pure and holy life, without regard to time or place. This principle, so far as it has been acted upon by Friends and others, has produced its natural and necessary fruits, *i. e.* to make Christianity an abiding rule of action in every relation, and in every transaction of life; thus giving consistency to the character, inspiring confidence in Christ as the Divine Regenerator and Redeemer of this world from its wrongs and pollutions, and making Christians daily, "living epistles for Christ, known and read of all men."

But the natural fruit of the Sabbatarian principle, as it is now understood, is to associate, in the minds of its adherents, the presence and government of God with a *day*, rather than with their own hearts and lives, and with their fellow-men, and to give a fitful, periodical tone to their sobriety and devotion; to their regard for man, and their zeal for God. When first day comes round, they appear more solemn, more devout, more humble, more penitent; a more sacred and subduing reverence for God comes over their minds on this than on other days, because they regard it as the Lord's day, in a higher and holier sense than other days; and when first day is past, they are apt to feel that the "holy day," the *Sabbath*, is past, and man's secular days are commenced. Reverence for God is not on their minds on second, as it was on first day; they do not feel His controlling power to-day as they did yesterday; the "Lord's day" is gone, and much of the restraining sense of His presence is gone with it; and their minds turn with avidity to what are called secular pursuits and pleasures. Under the influence of the fatal delusion, that first day is set apart, by Divine appointment, more ESPECIALLY for religious purposes than other days, they do not associate their daily employments with their Christian character and spiritual destiny, as they do the employments which are said to be appropriate to the day of rest. They seem

to be seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness on first day; but manifestly are in pursuit of very different objects the rest of the week. What they call Christianity, instead of being in them as a fountain springing up into daily and everlasting life, goes and comes as the days roll round.

The Anti-Sabbatarian principle has this advantage over the Sabbatarian principle; that, whereas the latter only consecrates its adherents *especially* to God *one* day in a week, the former especially consecrates to Him, all who embrace it practically, *seven* days in a week; the latter considers one day in seven the Lord's day; the former considers every day the Lord's; the one considers a preparation of the soul for eternity as the peculiar business of a seventh part of time; the other considers this the peculiar and appropriate work of all time; the one connects one-seventh part of life with the soul's destiny in the future; the other, the whole of life.

Did CALVIN advocate a lax and perilous principle of morality when he said, "Christ was the true completion of the Sabbath"? That "the dreams of false prophets were vanished, who taught the people Jewish notions — declaring that only the CEREMONIAL part of the command that required the observance of the seventh day has been abrogated, but that the MORAL part of it — the observance of *one day in seven* — still remains"? Did Luther and Melancthon propose a lax rule of morals when they said, "Those are greatly deceived who think that the observance of the Lord's day was appointed by the Church *instead of the Sabbath*"? Did PAUL seek to undermine the foundation of morality and social order when he classed the Sabbath with "beggarly elements," and when he said Christ had nailed that ordinance to the cross, and now "let no man judge you in respect of a holy day, or of the Sabbath"? I believe they all taught the true principles of domestic virtue, of public morals and social order; that is, that men are to keep, not a *day*, but *themselves* holy; and to present, not *one day in seven* as a Sabbath, but *themselves*, a "living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, as their reasonable service."

But you will say, Friends do rest from labor on first day, and do assemble together and devote the day to their spiritual improvement. True; and in doing this, they do right.

But they do not rest because of any Divine command; for they expressly assert, that cessation from labor on the first day of the week is nowhere enjoined in the Christian Scripture; and they admit that when "reasonable calls are made upon us, we are at liberty to attend to them; and of the reasonableness of these calls, *every man must judge for himself.*" (Dymond.) Friends do not assemble together on the first day, because they think the Christian precept requires them to assemble on that, rather than other days. They have a fourth or fifth day meeting, which they feel as much bound in conscience to attend as they do to attend their first day meeting, and for the same reason. They deem such meetings conducive to their spiritual good. They devote first day to spiritual improvement, not because they believe that God has set apart this particular day for that purpose, but because they think this the appropriate business of every day.

Let the two principles be held responsible, each for its legitimate fruits; and it will be seen that a deep sense of obligation to live pure lives *every day*, will be less likely to result from the Sabbatarian, than from the Anti-Sabbatarian principle—the lives of those who adopt and carry out the two principles being witness.

THE SABBATH FOR MAN, AND NOT MAN FOR THE SABBATH.

This was said by our Saviour in reference to the Jewish Sabbath, (Mark ii. 23–28.) The obvious meaning is, as that Sabbath was made for man, and not man for it, it should be subservient to the good of man. Our Lord justified his disciples in plucking and eating corn on that day, and he justified the sick in coming to him to be healed, and himself, in healing them; because, as the Sabbath was made for man, it was right to do anything on it which should be necessary for human good. Even if a *sheep* is suffering, it is right to relieve it: of how much greater value is a *MAN* than a sheep! It is right, said He, who was Lord of the Sabbath, "to do well on the Sabbath;" right to do anything necessary for our own good, or the good of others.

Thus, whatever may have been the meaning attached by the Jews to their Sabbatical institution, Christ, whom we are to follow, and whose authority will be supreme with all who receive Him as their Divine Saviour, regarded it, as

He did other days, simply as a time to administer to the temporal and spiritual wants of man. The Sabbath was for the benefit of man. The man was above the institution, and never to be sacrificed to it; in the health and comfort of his body; in the development of his physical or social nature; in the purity of his affections; in the expansion of his intellect; or in the assimilation of his character to Him in whom he "lives, and moves, and has his being." This is taught respecting a Sabbatical institution, confessedly of Divine appointment. It is allowed by all, that the Being who appointed that institution has abolished it; and that the seventh day Sabbath has passed away with the types and shadows, the new moons and holy days, with which it was connected. Christ has "blotted out the hand-writing of this ordinance that was against us, and taken it out of the way, NAILING IT TO THE CROSS;" and commanded us no more "to judge one another in respect of a Sabbath."

If that institution, thus divinely appointed, was, by Christ, made subservient to human welfare and convenience, what shall we say of the first day Sabbatical observance, of whose Divine appointment not a shadow of proof is adduced from the inspired Record, and which Calvin, Luther, Melancthon, Paley, Barclay, and others of the most worthy and talented men who have lived, have clearly shown to be a merely human institution? A good one, yet of human origin, and sanctioned only by human authority. Surely this may be considered as a device of human wisdom for human convenience, and to be used solely as a human instrumentality for the promotion of human welfare, and having no value, except as it can be made to bear on the physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual improvement of men. The *day* has no sacredness, except as it conduces to the sacredness of man. As a day of rest, its sole importance is derived from its fitness to promote human welfare.

How the day can be made most subservient to individual welfare, each must decide for himself on his responsibility to God; as he decides how other days are to be spent. As Dymond justly says, "When *reasonable* calls are made upon us, we are at liberty to attend to them. Of the reasonableness of these calls, *every man must endeavor to judge for himself.*" Since God has specified no particu-

lar things to be done on *first day*, rather than on others; and since each one must give account of himself to God; every one must decide for himself how to spend this day, as he must decide for himself how to spend other days. No man has a right to dictate to another how he shall spend it. God has laid upon us restrictions, which are imperative, and which cannot be disregarded with impunity on first, or any other day. "It is lawful to do well," on first day, and it is not lawful to do ill on that day or on any other. We are to "put away all anger and wrath;" to do nothing "through strife or vain glory;" to "look not every one upon his own interests, but every one upon the interests of others;" "in lowliness of mind to esteem others better than ourselves;" and thus "to have the same mind in us that was in Christ Jesus," not only on the day of rest, but on all other days. No man has a right to benefit himself by injuring others on first day, or at any other time; to please himself by disobliging his neighbors; to enrich himself by spreading poverty, pollution, disease, and death around him; to annoy and wound the feelings or consciences of others for his own gratification or convenience; but rather to be governed by a love that is self-forgetting and self-sacrificing; and on all occasions to count it a privilege to suffer, rather than be the means of suffering to others; to die, rather than be the means of death to others, though they be his deadly enemies.

While the Christian will regard no outward observance of days as a necessary part of Christian righteousness; and while he will regard the observance of the day of rest as a human custom, having no authority over his conscience as an institution of Divine appointment; he will be careful so to spend the day as not to interfere with the rights of others; but will seek to be blameless, to "abstain from all appearance of evil," and to "follow that which is good."

To denounce any man as guilty of a breach of *Divine* law, for doing that on first day, which it is admitted to be right to do on other days, is manifestly a violation of the command of God, "not to judge one another in respect of an holy day or a *Sabbath*," and opposed to the spirit of Christianity.

The day of rest is for the use of man. It might be, and ought to be, and will ere long be, a powerful means of improvement to the great mass of the people, physically, so-

cially, mentally, and morally. It is certain that Sabbatharians, in their speeches, deliverances, and writings on this subject, often show more solicitude about the *day*, than about their fellow-creatures, to whom this is emphatically, as at present spent, a day of physical and moral death. And that the day is thus spent, may in great measure be traced to the fact that in their religious training, so much more stress was laid on their keeping the *day*, than on keeping *themselves* holy. Some seem far more anxious to prevent railway trains and steamboats running from large towns and cities into the country, than to rescue the multitudes of poor, wretched prodigals, who throng the lanes and alleys of those towns and cities, from the drunkenness and pollution into which they sink on that and on other days.

It is not true that men sink into drunkenness and degradation because they desecrate the Sabbath. They drink, get drunk, and riot in pollution during first day, because they are accustomed to do these things on other days. They do not keep first day holy, because they have not kept the rest of the week holy; they do not consecrate one day in seven to God, because they do not consecrate the other six days to Him; they do not regard first day as the Lord's day, because they have not been accustomed to regard the other six as the Lord's days. Had they consecrated **THEMSELVES** to God, and kept themselves holy during the rest of the week, then would they have consecrated themselves to Him, and kept themselves holy, during *first day*. Had they regarded themselves as the Lord's on all other days, they would have looked on themselves as **His** on first day. No man can consecrate first day to God and to religious service, who consecrates the rest of the week to any other purposes. No man can keep first day holy, who does not keep all other days equally holy. No man can think the thoughts, or seek the pleasure of God on first day, who thinks his own thoughts and seeks his own pleasure on all other days. One day dedicated to God, can never atone for six days that are dedicated to somebody else.

The day of rest is for the physical and moral improvement of man, and if it can be made conducive to draw our fellow-beings from their haunts of vice, let it be done. The blessing of God, and of thousands ready to perish,

will come upon the man who shall lead the way in this enterprise.

WHY KEEP A DAY HOLY ?

Sabbatarians insist that the sole object of the first day Sabbath is to prevent men from sinking into this degradation, and induce them to keep *themselves* pure and holy at all times. If nothing more is meant by keeping the day holy, than that men are to live holy and blameless during it, why not say so? And why not urge that they are equally bound to live holy on all other days? Why delude men with the most hurtful and wicked notion, that there is something peculiarly sacred in first day, which calls for a more pure, truthful, and holy life on that than on other days? Why urge the impious doctrine, that men are more bound to consecrate this to *religious* purposes, than other portions of time? Why pretend that God is in *first day* more than in others? Why pretend that it is "the Lord's holy day" more than others; and that therefore men are to have a stricter watch over their feelings, thoughts, words, and acts on this than on other days? **ALL** days are the Lord's days. He is present with men on one day, as really and constantly as on another. What desecrates one day, desecrates all days; or rather, what desecrates and degrades **MAN** on one day, desecrates and degrades him on all. To teach otherwise, necessarily tends to cherish and sustain a *periodical* sense of moral obligation, and of the Divine presence as a restraining power from evil. He whose moral and spiritual sense is accustomed to be called into activity mainly by the recurrence of a certain day, will find the Divine presence gradually losing its influence over his conscience and passions, till the return of his religious, holy *day* has lost all power to arouse him to a sense of his moral obligations, and he sinks into habitual forgetfulness of God, and indifference to his duties to man.

If we would forward the work of man's redemption, we must teach as **CALVIN** did, that the Christian Sabbath "is not contained in one day in seven, but requires the whole course of our lives — until being completely dead to ourselves, we are filled with the life of God"; and as **PAUL**, guided by the Holy Spirit, taught, that "the kingdom of God consists not in meats and drinks, in holy days and

Sabbaths ; and that men are to be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, not subject to ordinances, but alive to God through Christ, *always* abounding in the work of the Lord."

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

That there are many things allowed and commanded in the Jewish, which are not only not allowed, but are expressly forbidden in the Christian Scriptures, none pretends to doubt. No man who has learned in the school of Christ can help feeling, that the penal code and aggressive wars of Judaism are opposed to the spirit of Christianity. The same must be said of their priesthood and temple worship. They were "carnal ordinances, imposed till the time of reformation by Christ," who, as "the High Priest of a greater and more perfect tabernacle," "has taken them out of the way, nailing them to the cross."

The same must be said of the Sabbath. The Apostle expressly calls it "a rudiment of the world," "a carnal ordinance that is against us," which Christ has abolished. This is admitted by all Christians, so far as it bears on the *seventh day* Sabbath.

But did not Christ institute the *first day* Sabbath in its stead? If He did, by Himself, or through His Apostles, the proof can be given. So far from doing this, as it appears to me, the very nature of His kingdom, as well as the express injunctions of the Apostle, discards a Sabbatical observance as "a shadow," and set forth rest from sin, every day, and all our lives, as the substance. As CALVIN beautifully and expressively remarks upon the Christian Sabbath; it consists "not in *one day* in seven, but in being dead to ourselves, and in being filled with the life of God, during THE WHOLE COURSE OF OUR LIVES."

It is asked, Do you deny the authority of the Old Testament? No—except in cases where Christ has superseded Moses. That in many things Christianity has superseded Judaism, I have already shown. Shall the law be quoted against the gospel? Moses against Christ? The Apostle declares that "Christ was counted worthy of more glory than Moses"; that Moses exercised authority "as a servant"; "but Christ, as a Son over his house, whose house are we." And speaking of the Old and New Testaments, he says, "Had the first covenant been fault-

less, then had there been no room for a second"; but now the Lord God says, "I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, when I brought them out of Egypt; but I will write my law upon their *hearts*." "Now, by making a new covenant, he hath made the first old," *i. e.* abolished it.

Thus, in settling any question of Christianity, the Old Testament is of no authority, **WHEN IT CONFLICTS WITH THE NEW.** Christ, not Moses, is the Christian's lawgiver.

Shall we turn our backs on Christ to follow Moses? This we do, for instance, when we go to the Old Testament to find a justification for war, in opposition to the express injunctions of the gospel. "Peace on earth," was the salutation that welcomed the Son of God to earth. "Put up that sword, for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword," was the last injunction of Christ to the world when He was about to leave it. "My kingdom is not of this world; therefore my disciples cannot fight," was His explanation to his accuser. "Love your enemies;" "forgive him, if any man have aught against another;" "good for evil;" "turn the other cheek;" "I come not to destroy, but to save men's lives;" "let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus;" "learn war no more." Is it possible to obey these precepts, and make it the business of life to kill men, women, and children, at the bidding of others, and without regard to their guilt or innocence? Can men engage in a death struggle, and shoot, stab, and hang one another in *love*? Can they shoot their love into the hearts of their enemies on a bullet; or thrust their forgiveness into them on the point of the sword? By the same act, can we testify our love and forgiveness, and our desire to kill, slay, and destroy? Can we conceive of Christ, in martial array, at the head of an army, leading it on to cut and tear to pieces the bodies of those whose souls He came to save? It is clearly contrary to the spirit and precepts of Christ, for man to take the life of man, as a penalty or in defence. If it is a sin to *kill* men, it is a sin to *threaten* or *prepare* to kill them, and a sin to put ourselves into a position where we come under an express or implied obligation to kill them. This is **NON-RESISTANCE**; the beginning and end of it, — **NEVER TO KILL MEN.** All human institutions,

based upon the *man-killing* principles, must be wrong, and contain in themselves an element of certain destruction. Let men form whatever social institutions they see fit, only do not base them on the right to kill men ; provided they be not opposed to Christianity in other respects. This is ALL OF NON-RESISTANCE in principle and practice. Is it not the peaceful Kingdom of the Son of God which Christianity was meant to establish ?

Shall we cite Moses to justify our neglect of these plain precepts of Christ? Quote Moses to justify our anger and revenge, when Christ tells us to "put away anger, and to forgive one another!" Quote Moses to justify thrusting with the sword, when Christ tells us to "put up the sword!" Quote the Old Testament to sanction BLOOD FOR BLOOD, when Christ FORBIDS "EVIL FOR EVIL!" Quote Moses to authorize the maiming and killing of our enemies, when Christ tells us "to love them!" It is superseding the authority of the Son by that of a servant ; a rejection of Christianity for Judaism ; a denial of Christ for Moses.

The same may be said of all who quote the authority of the Old Testament for a Sabbatical observance, in opposition to the express injunctions of the New. As the Old Testament can be of no authority in settling the questions of War and Capital Punishment, because Christ, whom we are to "follow in all things," has commanded us to love and forgive our enemies, and not to kill them ; so, in deciding whether Christians are under obligation to observe "a holy day or *Sabbath*," Moses can be of no authority ; for Christ has decided that such an observance is "a carnal ordinance," which He has "taken away, and nailed to the cross." When Moses is adduced as evidence to prove the sin of Sabbath desecration, under the Christian dispensation, we hear Christ say, "Let no man condemn you in respect of an holy day, or of a *Sabbath*;" "let not him that esteems one day above another, despise or censure him who esteems every day alike:" and as to a Sabbatical observance, we hear Him say, "Having received Christ, how turn ye again to this weak and beggarly element? Having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Having taken the light and easy yoke of Christ upon us, and found rest and peace, must we be blamed because we do not choose again to come under "bondage to the

beggarly element" of a Sabbatical observance? Having been redeemed from "holy days, new moons, and *Sabbaths*," by the blood of Christ, must we again "be subject" to an ordinance which has no power to sanctify? Having hid our lives "with Christ in God," and found Him a strong fortress,—"the shadow of a Rock in a weary land,"—shall we now be asked to take refuge in a Sabbatical observance, which, indeed, may have a "show of wisdom in will-worship," but which can never purify and save the soul? "Christ," as CALVIN says, "is the fulfilment of the Sabbath." He is the "end of this law for righteousness;" and we are assured that, however vehemently men may declaim against Sabbath desecration, "there is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus; who walk not after *this carnal ordinance*, but after the spirit;" for, "to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

CHILDREN AND THE SABBATH.

It is asked, How ought children to be taught in reference to a Sabbath? It is said, if first day Sabbath is not of Divine appointment, would it not be wise to keep this fact a secret from our children, lest they run riot on the day of rest? Children should never be taught to receive the traditions of men as commandments of God. We need never fear to teach them what God has taught us. Has Christ taught us to point them to the day of the week, as a reason why they should do this, and should not do that?

"Hush, my dear," says the Sabbatarian, "you must not laugh and talk so loud!" "Why?" asks the child. "It is a *holy day*." "You must not have your playthings to-day," says the mother. "Why?" "It is the *Lord's day*, and it is wicked for children to laugh and play on the Lord's holy day." "I wish you would take me out to walk, to get the fresh air, and to hear the birds sing; I am weary sitting still," says the child to its parents. "It is wicked to walk out on the Lord's day—it would desecrate the day," is the answer.

Such is the lesson repeated every Sabbath, in the families of Sabbatarians. Is this Christian instruction? I believe it is most Anti-Christian, and most pernicious in its influence on the minds of children. It teaches them a falsehood. They are impressed with the idea that there is

a mysterious sacredness attached to *first day*, which belongs not to other days. They learn to think that an act which would not *desecrate* them, would desecrate the day; that an act which would be a sin this moment, would not be a sin the next, merely by reason of a change in the hour; that what would desecrate this hour, would not desecrate the next; that actions derive their good or evil qualities from the *day* in which they are performed; that it is more wicked to lie, swear, steal, get drunk, and quarrel on *first*, than on any other day; that they are to be more serious, prayerful, and devoted to God, on that than on other days; that *rest* is more holy, more religious, more pleasing to God than labor; that there is some mysterious goodness about a sober face, silence, or a subdued tone, a quiet and solemn air and manner, and that God is more pleased with these things on first day, than with the activity and bustle of labor and business during the week; and that God is nearer to them, and takes stricter account of their thoughts, words, and acts on that than on other days; and this, too, because the day is the Lord's holy day, in a sense in which others are not. Such are the unavoidable impressions made on the mind of every child that is accustomed to hear it given as a reason why one act is right and another wrong, that it is the *Sabbath*, the *Lord's day*, a *holy day*.

The inevitable result of this training is, to leave the child without the moral and religious restraints upon his passions, his words and actions, on other days, which were operative on first day. He associates the special presence, inspection and government of God with the day of rest; and the moment that day is passed, and the days of labor and active life begin, that restraint is withdrawn. At the moment of contact with his fellow-creatures, in the school, on the play-ground, in the collision of feelings and interests attendant on the intercourse of active life; when his anger, his envy, his jealousy, his revenge, his ambition, his avarice, and all his evil passions, are liable to be most stimulated; and when affection, truth, forgiveness, justice, mercy, honesty, and every loving and kindly sympathy, are subjected to the fiery ordeal of contending interests; then, when most of all the child needs the controlling, subduing influence of a deep sense of the Divine presence and government, and of the glory and grandeur of his eternal des-

tiny, this redeeming influence is wanting. These serious subjects, these saving influences are associated in his mind with the *holy day*, and not with days of activity; with *rest*, not with his amusements and his toil; and he sees God in a Sabbath, and not in his own heart and life, nor in the persons of his fellow-creatures. The presence of a *Sabbath*, rather than the presence of a *playmate*, reminds him of his God and of his moral obligations. When *first day* comes round, the child is reminded that it is wicked to lie, to swear, to deceive, to quarrel, to cheat, to be angry, envious, or revengeful; or to feel, think, speak, or do any wrong; but the presence of his companions during the week, and in the active pursuits and contending interests of daily life, does not awaken this feeling with so much distinctness and power as during the *holy day*.

Why is it that professed Christians are so generally known by their appearance on first day, rather than by their conduct during the week? In the market, and in all the business transactions of life, they are seldom to be distinguished from others. This may be traced, in part, to the fact, that they have been trained to associate Christianity with a Sabbath, rather than with the daily intercourse and business transactions of life; to regard it as an *observance*, to be performed on a given day, rather than as an abiding principle of life; and to think of the Holy One, as a Being to whom they are to pay their devotion, and to whom they owe homage, on a particular day, rather than as an omnipresent, all-controlling *principle* of action. "God is not in *all* their thoughts;" because they have not been accustomed to associate Him with all the secret emotions and devices of their souls, and with all the transactions of their lives; but rather with the day of rest.

The tendency of the Sabbatarian principle is to leave children without God, during six days out of seven; and being, to a great extent, destitute of the restraining influence of a sense of His presence and inspection during the week, they form habits of feeling and acting, which, as they grow up, and engage in the active scenes of life, soon blot Him out from their Sabbath; and leave life a blank, so far as the redeeming power of the Divine presence is concerned.

With what longing hearts do young children, who are under strict Sabbatarian discipline, look for the *Lord's*

day to pass away, that *their* days may commence! What they are taught to believe is the Lord's holy day, becomes to them the most tedious of all days. The day set apart for *religious* purposes is far more irksome than the days which, as they suppose, are set apart for other purposes; they come to dread the approach of the day, when, as they are taught to believe, they are to think God's thoughts, to speak His words, and to seek His pleasure, and they heartily wish that the days might last evermore, in which, as they suppose, it is allowable for them to think their own thoughts, to speak their own words, and to seek their own pleasure. Such a training makes the idea of religion repulsive; and Christianity seems to them a "burden grievous to be borne."

"My yoke is easy, and my burden is light," said our Divine Teacher. It is so; and that because Christianity is a principle of daily holy living, and not an observance. It calls for mercy, and not for sacrifice; it asks for holy *hearts*, and not for holy *rites*—for holy *men* and *women*, not for holy *days* and *places*; it makes life one day of rest from sin, a pleasant, joyous Sabbath, and consecrates the universe as the temple of the Holy One. "God is a spirit;" and He would have us worship Him with true and faithful spirits. "God is love;" and all who dwell in love, dwell in God, and God in them. This is Christianity. It brings the soul to dwell in love; a love that "envieth not; is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly; seeketh not her own; is not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; that is all-confiding, all-hoping, and all-enduring; and that never faileth." This is Peace; this is Heaven.

God requires us to set apart first day to the special purpose of bringing ourselves to dwell in this love; and to the same glorious, happy end, does He command us to consecrate every other day. To bring us into a perfect union of spirit with Him "who loved us, and died for us," is first day to be specially devoted; to the same end are we required to devote, with equal earnestness, all other days. We are bound to consecrate the whole of first day to the worship of God; and to the same purpose are we equally bound to consecrate the whole of every other day; and thus, to find our Sabbath, "NOT IN ONE DAY IN SEVEN, BUT IN THE WHOLE COURSE OF OUR LIVES," and to make life one act of Christian worship. Let all parents

teach their children this, not only on first day, but “when they lie down, and when they rise up; when they go out, and when they come in; when they are in the house, and when in the field.” Then may they hope that a sense of the Divine presence and government will be with them, at all times, to guard their hearts and lives from temptation.

CONCLUSION.

My work is done. I have tried to do it faithfully. I have certainly had great peace and happiness in doing it. I am aware that what I have written will be displeasing to many who are very dear to me. My answer is — I could not throw off the conviction that this was the work which my Heavenly Father gave me to do *at this time*. I ask all, into whose hands this work may fall, to receive the suggestions which it contains, in the spirit in which they are made. Let us “prove all things, and hold fast that which is good;” remembering that there is not a thought in our minds, or a word on our tongues, which is not known to the Searcher of all hearts. May we all be fearless in our inquiries after truth; and prompt to receive, and strong to practice it, when found!

Yours for truth,

HENRY C. WRIGHT.

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