

# THE CALVARY WAY

## *THE SABBATH CONTROVERSY*

Should Christians worship the Lord on the Sabbath day, (that is, Saturday)? The answer to this controversial question is absolutely yes! I am persuaded that the Christian should worship not only on the Sabbath day, but on every day!

Why, then, do some say that our assembling together should be on the Sabbath day, (Saturday), and that those churches who assemble together on Sunday violate God's Word? The argument they give is that in keeping the Sabbath day, (Saturday), they're keeping the fourth commandment which states, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

Exodus 20:8

Are we violating this commandment because we worship on Sunday? Have we, as some go so far as to suggest, taken "the mark of the beast" by meeting together on the first day of the week? Let's look at this issue in the light of God's Word!

1) Why was the Sabbath day given?

The Sabbath day was given primarily as a picture of our life in Jesus Christ. The Word "Sabbath" literally means, "cessation or rest." Under the Old Covenant, it was to be a day of physical relaxation and spiritual restoration. Now, in

Now in Jesus Christ we have relaxation from our labors for salvation.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith... not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

As believer’s we don’t have a Sabbath day but rather a Sabbath life!

“There remaineth therefore a rest (literally keeping of a Sabbath) to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.” Hebrews 4:9-10

## **2) Did Jesus keep the Sabbath day?**

Jesus was one who fulfilled the laws and ordinances perfectly. Had He failed to do so He would not have been a perfect sacrificial lamb to die in our place.

Yet in Mark 2, we see His disciples picking corn on the Sabbath day, thus violating the Sabbath ordinances. They were questioned about this and Jesus then clarified the value of the Sabbath day by declaring, “The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath” Mark 2:27

In other words, God’s intent was that a day be set aside for physical relaxation and spiritual renewal for man’s benefit, not man’s bondage! This is still a practical principle of God for us all.

## **3) Did the early church keep the Sabbath?**

The overwhelming Biblical evidence is that the early church met on “the Lord’s day” (Revelation 1:10), which was the first day of the week. (Please see Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 16:2.)

This day was chosen because it was the day our Lord Jesus rose again from the dead (John 20:19). Below is a contrast between the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Lord's day.

### **THE JEWISH SABBATH**

- 1) The seventh day of the week
- 2) Commemorates God's creation rest on the seventh day.
- 3) Commemorates a finished creation
- 4) Compulsory obedience demanded
- 5) Exodus 35:2, "Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath rest to the Lord; whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death."
- 6) Represents the old creation
- 7) Given to Israel under law

### **THE LORD'S DAY**

- 1) The first day of the week
- 2) Commemorates Christ's resurrection from the dead on the first day
- 3) Commemorates a finished redemption
- 4) Voluntary worship expected
- 5) Christ went about doing good on the Sabbath. (Matthew 12:1-8)
- 6) Represents the new creation (II Corinthians 5:17)
- 7) Given to Christians under grace

### **4) Does anyone keep the Sabbath?**

An interesting question! First, since our calendar is accurate only back to the third century A.D., we really have no idea when the Sabbath day was or is. Also, our Seventh Day Adventist friends fail to take into consideration Joshua's longest day (Joshua 10:12), which throws off the entire calendar as we know it!

Secondly, those who try to keep the Sabbath Day must keep

Secondly, those who try to keep the Sabbath day must keep it according to God's laws. That means that they cannot kindle a fire on the Sabbath day, (Exodus 35:2-3). Therefore, if they drive their cars to "Sabbath meetings" or heat and light their churches on the Sabbath day, they are actually kindling a fire and thus violating the very Sabbath rules they're trying to keep! According to the Law, the penalty for such violations is death! (Numbers 15:32-36). Thanks be to God, we are free from the curse of the Law! (Galatians 3:13)

### **5) Then is it wrong to worship on Saturday?**

Of course not! We are free to worship on any day; we are free to worship on every day. But the Scripture strongly exhorts us not to be hung up on the days which we worship and not to go back underneath the bondage of legalism.

"Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." Galatians 4:10-11

### **6) Where can I find a simple, summary statement concerning this controversy?**

"Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ."

Colossians 2:16-17 NIV

Remember, we do not have a Sabbath day, but rather a Sabbath life in Jesus Christ. The Sabbath day is a shadow, Jesus Christ is the substance. What a glorious rest we have in Him!

We are located on Long Lake Rd. (18 Mile) and John R on the NW corner.  
Service Times: 10 am on Sunday, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday  
webpage: [www.ccoaklandcounty.com](http://www.ccoaklandcounty.com)