

JESUS AND THE SABBATH

Christians who observe Sunday as the day of rest say that because Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath day he was given the authority to change the seventh-day sabbath to the first day of the week, and did so. Here are the verses on which these conformists base their theory: "**Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.**" Mark 2:28; "**For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.**" Matthew 12:8. See also Luke 6:5. No one will argue the point that Jesus was made Lord over God's seventh-day sabbath and not of the sabbath only, but of everything in the heavens and on earth until the establishment of the kingdom of God. "**Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.**" Ephesians 1:20 to 23; "**For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he [ie. God] saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he [ie. God] is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.**" I Corinthians 15:25 to 28. In loving God in the unconditional way that Jesus did, it was his one desire to please God by doing the Will of God and not his own. Loving God as the Anointed One did, he certainly would not have changed the day which his Father had made holy. Besides, Jesus would never have changed one word or iota of God's "Ten Words" (known by most as the "Ten Commandments").

Jesus taught us to be in reverence of God's Word. And he set the example of obedience to God's Will, and hoped that mankind would follow his example. "**Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.**" Matthew 7:21; "**I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.**" John 5:30; "**For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.**" Matthew 12:50; "**And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.**" Luke 16:17 (underlining added for emphasis). Note that a "tittle" is a small mark in writing, such as a dot over an "i".

When reading the preceding few verses, Jesus certainly does not sound like one that would make void any of God's Ten Words. The Ten Words ruled the life of Jesus. It was precisely why this man was chosen of God to be His voice on earth:.. "**To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious.**" I Peter 2:4. Jesus did not and would not annul any of God's laws. It is an illusion of mankind to think Jesus would annul what God had instituted as holy. "**And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it...**" Genesis 2:3a. "Sanctify" means "to make holy".

Another verse that is constantly used to try and support the supposition that Jesus had changed the day of rest from the seventh day to the first day of the week is found in Revelation 1:10a: "**I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day...**" Roman Catholics and some Protestant denominations make the unsubstantiated remark that the "Lord's day" is Sunday. This is simply mankind's imagination at work for there is no scripture to support this is referring to Sunday. As a matter of fact, this verse is not making reference to either the Sabbath or Sunday as we shall show. Note that verse one of chapter one of Revelations clearly states: "...**to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass...**" John the apostle received a vision while on the island of Patmos for "...**the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.**" Revelations 1:9 The book of Revelations is mostly a description of futuristic events with the exception of the first three chapters. The central figure in Revelations is Jesus and the book concentrates on the revelation of those things that were to come to pass, before, during and after Christ's return. The term "Lord's day" is in actually in reference to that coming day of his glory. Not only does the New Testament speak about the "Lord's day", but the term also appears in the Old Testament. Following are just a few of the many verses from scripture: "**The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.**" Zephaniah 1:14; "**Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.**" Zechariah 14:1; "**Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.**" 1 Corinthians 1:8; "**For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.**" I Thessalonians 5:2. As just shown, the "Lord's day" in Revelation 1:10 is NOT another rest day instituted by Jesus, and though he is the Lord of the Sabbath, it is by Lordship only till all be fulfilled. "**For he [God] hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he [God] is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things**

under him, that God may be all in all." I Corinthians 15:27,28. The day of the return of our Lord Jesus, is scripturally called the "Lord's day" or "day of the Lord".

Jesus preached and healed on the Sabbath and did many other good deeds, and because he did these acts of kindness and love on the sabbath, he was criticized by the Pharisees, scribes and Rabbis for his supposed trespassing of God's holy day. Today it is said by many Christians that Jesus changed the day of rest to the first day and abolished the seventh day altogether. Persons that make this latter remark do not know their scriptures. We have already quoted Jesus as saying "...**one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.**" Matthew 5:18. And in verse 17 of this same chapter he said "**Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.**" Do they not remember Jesus' answer to the rich ruler? Read Matthew 19:16,17b: "**And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?**" **And he said unto him... If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments**" The rich ruler, knowing and understanding there were two laws (ie. The Mosaic laws and the Ten Words spoken directly by God), questioned "**Which?**" (verse 18). Then in verses 18 and 19, we read that Jesus quoted to him the part of God's Ten Words which dealt with that part of the law concerning "love your neighbour". Compare with Mark 10:19: "**Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not. Honour thy father and thy mother.**" Now what Jesus had told the rich ruler was that if he kept God's Ten Words, he would receive eternal life. Now bear in mind that Jesus quoted only part of God's Ten Words to make known to the ruler which commandment he was referring to. We who know the Spirit of truth know the ruler was asking "which commandments" was he, Jesus, speaking of, that is, the one given by God and written on two tables of hewn stone OR the law of Moses. Note the following verses concerning the Ten Words: "**These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.**" Deuteronomy 5:22; "**At that time the LORD said unto me, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first..**" Deuteronomy 10:1a. Contrast this with the Mosaic law which was written in a book by the hand of man: "**And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished, That Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying, Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee.**" Deuteronomy 31:24 to 26. Contrast the placement of the Mosaic Laws (ie. In the side of the ark of the covenant) with the placement of the Ten Words written on tables of hewn stone by God (ie. Inside the ark of the covenant). "**And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I [ie. God] shall give thee.**" Exodus 25:16; "**And I [ie. God] will write on the tables the words [ie. The Ten Words] that were in the first tables which thou brakest, and thou shalt put them in the ark.**" Deuteronomy 10:2; "... and the ark of the covenant... **wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant.**" Hebrews 9:4.

The people of God understand that the Ten Words are an elaboration of the two great commandments of "love God first" and "love your neighbour". "**Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.**" Matthew 22:36 to 40. Note that the first four laws of the Ten Words pertain to our love towards God and the last six pertain to our love towards our neighbour. Many Christians claim that because Jesus quoted only part of the Ten Words referring to love towards our neighbour, this gives us the evidence that the sabbath was annulled. What an assumption to make! Cannot the conformist Christian see that Jesus left out ALL the commandments referring to the love of God? By this type of reasoning used by such Christians, this would mean mankind does not have to believe in God or have reverence towards Him, but only towards our neighbour, because the first four commandments concerning love towards God was not mentioned by Jesus in his answer to the ruler. As Christians, can we really believe that Jesus is saying all four of the Words relating to love towards God are abolished because Jesus had not mentioned the set of laws pertaining to the "love of God"? He did not have to mention every one of the Ten Words because he knew the ruler had reverence towards them and there was no question of him not keeping the sabbath as that was customary of all Jews.

As previously mentioned, many Christians say that because Jesus did healing and performed many compassionate deeds or acts on the Sabbath that he was demonstrating that the Sabbath did not have to be observed. Does it make sense that doing deeds of love with compassion and good deeds towards your fellow man on the Sabbath equate to breaking the Sabbath, and worse, annulling the Sabbath? In the New Testament, we can read what Jesus said about doing good on the sabbath, and while reading, we need to remember the Word of God was in Jesus to show us in what behavioral attitude that we were to keep the Father's law and his teachings, which included

the keeping of the Sabbath. Due to Jesus' teaching of doing good works on the Sabbath, the Jews were against Jesus, because his preaching was against the established way of Levitical traditions, instituted by men, in how to observe God's Sabbath day. We read in the scriptures how Jesus preached against the sabbath traditions of men, which numbered in the hundreds. Jesus taught that in observing those traditions, one was not following the teachings of God's Sabbath, and those hundreds of regulations attached to it by men (including Moses), made it intolerable for men to even do good for their neighbour. Read a few texts to understand what we are talking about: "*And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work; in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?"*" Luke 13:14 to 16. "*And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? That they might accuse him. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.*" Matthew 12:10 to 12; "*And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.*" Mark 3:4. Meditate on these verses to fully understand them. Read also John 5:5 to 14 and Mark 2:23 to 28. From all these texts we have not found a single instance where Jesus suggests he was annulling the Sabbath. Because of the love within him, he did not wish to allow any sort of suffering to occur where it could be prevented on God's holy sabbath, even if it meant breaking the religious laws instituted by man. God is love and wants us to love one another, thus, good deeds can be and should be done even on the sabbath day; doing good is not about doing our own selfish will and is not about work to earn our daily wage.

We need to also pay attention to what Jesus was doing on many of the sabbath days when he healed people: "*And when the sabbath day was come, he [Jesus] began to teach in the synagogue...*" Mark 6:2a; "*And he entered again into the synagogue,.. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day..*" Mark 3:1a,2a; "*And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.*" Luke 13:10; "*And it came to pass also on another sabbath, that he entered in the synagogue and taught:..*" Luke 6:6a. What we find in the preceding verses is that Jesus not only did good works on the sabbath, but that he also taught in the synagogues on the seventh-day sabbath. Do these verses sound like Jesus was encouraging his followers to observe another day other than the seventh-day Sabbath?

What is the truth about Jesus concerning God's fourth commandment? The truth is, Jesus NEVER taught that the sabbath day was annulled. To the contrary of the Mosaic teachings, he showed us that its observance should not be a day of idleness, but a day of worship and doing good deeds, fulfilling the deeds of a benevolent life by serving those less fortunate. The true sabbath of God had become burdensome to the Jews with all the regulations and rules which had been added to regularly by the Rabbis. What Jesus had made known to us by his teachings about the sabbath was that we should help lighten the burden of others in their afflictions; we should remember what Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees: "*I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the sabbath days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it?*" Luke 6:9.

After studying all that we have about Jesus and the sabbath from Gospel writings, we find Jesus entering into the synagogues on the sabbath regularly, not only to teach but also to heal. It is clear that Jesus kept the sabbath and these verses from the gospels prove to us his obedience to God's Will, that is, his adherence to the Ten Words including the fourth law which our God and Father blessed and sanctified, and of which the Son of man came into the world to fulfill. For further consideration: "*And they went into Capernaum: and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. And they were astonished at his doctrine...*" Mark 1:21,22a. "*And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and AS HIS CUSTOM WAS, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.*" Luke 4:16 [emphasis added].

Let us not be deceived by those who teach the doctrine of men. Jesus the Christ of God continuously observed the sabbath during his life and he never advocated at any time its abolishment. When men teach that the Son of God did so, the words they speak are not of the Spirit of truth, but are words from that great Deceiver, Satan.

The remark that Jesus changed the sabbath from the seventh-day to the first day of the week is one of those notions solely in the imagination of men. There is no place in the Bible where Jesus gives a command for the changing of the Sabbath day. Turn to the book of Hebrews, chapter four, and read carefully: "*For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into*

my rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief. ... For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest, [ie. Should be "keeping of a sabbath" according to most Bibles] *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 4:4-6; 8-10. The Christian day of rest is the seventh day and we should be very careful in the path we choose to follow, because one leads to eternal death and the other to eternal life. Seventh-day sabbath keeping acknowledges God's creative works and shows an understanding of the day He blessed and sanctified. Jesus understood this and so should we.