

# Refuting Sunday-Keeping X

Fred R. Coulter—February 9, 2001

In this day and age we seem to have inherited every heresy and every wrong teaching that has come down through time in history and is sort of magnifying itself right here at the end-time. It would be nice if everything were nice and smooth and the Word of God, everyone would believe and they would accept it, and we could all agree, we all follow God's way. But that's not the way it is in the world and that's not the way it is with people who want to practice their religion.

In the church at Corinth, which was the church that had the most problems that the Apostle Paul had, when you begin to analyze everything that they were doing and how they were doing it, they were beginning to construct a religion. They were following men. They were having different doctrines. They were allowing sin. They had heresies come in. They had all kinds of things taking place, if you read 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians. But I want to focus in 1-Corinthians 11, and I want to focus just on one thing, because it answers the question as to why all of these things take place. There's a reason for it. The reason is stated by the Apostle Paul.

So let's go to 1-Corinthians 11:17. Now when you read all of 1-Corinthians, you're going to find that it was really kind of a wild church. If you would enter into it, you would have a group over here speaking tongues, a group over here with their own private prophecies, a group over here that says *we follow Paul*, another group over there that says *we follow Peter*, *we follow Apollos*, *we follow Christ*. You have the tongues speakers over here; you have those who believe in amalgamating the pagan worship with the true worship. You have those who believed in eating a meal with the Passover. You had those who believed in women with short and cropped hair *vs* those with long hair, and you had long-haired men. The short-haired men would say, 'You long-haired men'—even Paul said, 'Don't you know it's a shame for a man to have long hair.'

He brings out a very important thing. 1-Corinthians 11:17: "Now *in this that* I am commanding *you*, I do not praise you, because when you assemble together, it is not for the better but for the worse." Now when churches degenerate that's what happens. And many of us have experienced that—haven't we? When we come together on the Sabbath, we hope it's going to be a good Sabbath, but it's for the worse. And that's what happened in Corinth.

Now v 18: "For first of all, I hear that there are divisions among you when you are assembled

together in the Church, and I partly believe *it....* [He says, 'I know it's true.] ...For it is **necessary** that heresies be among you... [The Greek 'must' (*KJV*) means that it's obligatory. They're going to happen. Why is it necessary to have heresies come along? And that helps answer the question concerning the Sunday/Sabbath controversy. Why is it necessary?] ...so that the ones who are approved may become manifest among you" (vs 18-19). That is, so that those who know the Word of God will get into the Word of God and they will appear approved of God by what they teach.

Since the Word of God is the greatest thing that we can have, and it's the most important thing in our lives, **God wants to know**

- Do you really love it?
- Do you really love Him?
- Do you love Christ?
- Do you love the Truth?
- Are you going to stand for the Truth at all times in every place and uphold the name of Jesus Christ and the Word of God?

That's what God wants to know and He's not going to know it unless these things come along. I have been absolutely amazed through the years, different people come up with different ideas and different teachings and different doctrines and strange doctrines as can be. It just an amazing thing!

Now let's come to 2-Timothy 2:15 again here, because this is important, because it ties in with 1-Cor. 11 about those being approved. 2-Timothy 2:15: "Diligently study to show yourself approved unto God..." So there is the same word. The way that you understand who those are who are approved of God and are rightly dividing the Word of God so that they are not ashamed—the shame is in the wrong dividing of the Word of God. Now how do you know, especially as we've seen and we've covered the Scriptures about deceitfully handling the Word of God, corrupting the Word of God, improperly using the Word of God, and all of those things that come along. So how do you know?

Let's go to the gospel of John 3 and let's see, because John wrote and made it very clear how you are to know whom God has sent. Because not everyone who says, 'I'm a minister of God,' is a minister of God. Not everyone who claims to know the Truth, knows the Truth. We're going to see that in particularly with this session that we are going to do on *Refuting Sunday-Keeping*.

John 3:33: “‘The one who has received His testimony... [Now that is, received the testimony of Jesus Christ. ‘Received the testimony’ also refers to John the Baptist, so we have the testimony of John the Baptist, which is true about Jesus Christ. We have the testimony of Jesus Christ and]...the one who has received His testimony has set his seal that God is true.” Now that’s a profound statement that God is true, because that means that

- His Word is Truth
  - His law is Truth
  - His commandments are Truth
- and it’s been true from the beginning.

Verse 34: “‘For He Whom God has sent speaks the words of God... [That’s how you know! That’s how you understand!] ...and God gives not the Spirit by measure *unto Him*.... [Referring to Christ there.] ...The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. The one who believes in the Son has everlasting life; but the one who does not obey the Son shall not see life, for the wrath of God remains on him’” (vs 34-36). So that’s how you know. You know them by their fruits. You know them

- whether they teach the Word of God
- whether they preach the Word of God
- whether they rightly divide the Word of God

—and what we have here with the Word of God are the books of the Bible that God has given us which is the Truth of God. There is none other.

We’re going to see out of this book that we’ve been going through, *Sunday Facts & Sabbath Fiction*, we are going to see that they use a different history. They use different Scriptures. And we’ve seen how many times they do not rightly divide the Word of God.

Now here’s the responsibility for every one of us, everyone who studies the Scriptures, everyone who follows God, everyone who listens to anybody speak or teach or preach. Let’s go to Acts 17. Here is what we are to do and especially in this age when there are so many disputations and arguments and problems and doctrines coming from every side—coming from Judaism, coming from Catholicism, coming from Protestantism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, native religions. We’re being assaulted on every side, so here’s what you need to do: ***You need to set aside everything and concentrate on the Scriptures.*** That’s what the Bereans did. This is what we always need to do.

Acts 17:11: “Now these... [the ones in Berea.] ...were more noble than those in Thessalonica, *for* they received the Word with all

readiness of mind *and* examined the Scriptures daily *to see* if these things were so.” That’s what we need to do. So we combine it all together. What we are going to learn, as we have seen with Sunday-keeping, it always falls back to the authority of the Catholic Church. It goes way back beyond that if you get *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop and read that. It goes clear back to Babylon and sun-worship. That’s why Sunday is called sun day, because that is the day that the sun worshipped their God.

I want to read to you—here’s his point number fifteen:

### 15. History validates Sunday worship

Now that’s an interesting thing—isn’t it? Please understand this about history, very important to realize. A historian wrote that history belongs to the victors and the victors re-write it. Historians present certain facts, ignore other facts, bear down on some facts, and ease up on other facts. Now if you don’t believe that’s true, just watch the different news reports. See how current history is presented.

So to say history validates Sunday worship, it depends on whose history you’re reading. Are you reading the history of the *true* Church of God or are you reading the history of the *apostate* Church of God? Jesse Hurlbut said that from the fall of Jerusalem until about 120<sub>A.D.</sub> ‘a dark curtain falls over the Church’ and when the veil is finally lifted, the Church is an entirely different church than what it was before the veil fell. So what I’m going to read to you is the history that was part of the veil that came down and brought the deception on the Church of God and those who were professing Christians.

Remember, there are those who profess Christ, but are not Christians. To profess is one thing, to believe and live it is another thing. Now let me read the account here (*Sunday Facts & Sabbath Fiction*). Now whenever they use the word all, you know you’re in trouble.

All of the accounts recorded in early church history reveal that the church always met, worshiped, and observed the ordinances, prayed, and fellowshiped on the first day of the week...

Now the ordinances that they observed is what later became to be called the Eucharist.

...first day of the week, Sunday, the Lord’s day. (Rev. 1:10).

Now then, when you go through the book of Acts you find that the true Word of God totally contradicts that. Paul

- worshiped on the Sabbath

- taught on the Sabbath
- taught Gentiles on the Sabbath
- commanded them to keep the Sabbath
- commanded them to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

That is New Testament history. So *all* of history that he is talking about is the history of Sunday-keepers, not the history of the New Testament nor of Sabbath-keepers.

Now let's go to Revelation 1:10, since he quoted that. There have been some translations in the past which translate this that the Lord's Day is Sunday. The Greek does not bear that out at all. Let's read it. Revelation 1:10: "I was in *the* Spirit on the day of the Lord; and I heard a loud voice like a trumpet behind me." John wrote in John 20 that on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene and the other women came to the tomb. So if this was referring to the first day of the week, that's what he would have written. This is referring to the Day of the Lord meaning the *second coming of Christ*, having nothing whatsoever to do with Sunday or as the Seventh Day Adventists try to make this read, the weekly Sabbath. Has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with Sunday or Sabbath-keeping. This has to do with the Lord's Day.

Let's go back to v 7: "Behold, He is coming... [It's talking about the coming of the Lord. That's what the book of Revelation is all about, the events which lead up to the coming of Jesus Christ in His second return. This is the context.] ...Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye shall see Him... [No question about it, every eye is going to see Him.] ...and those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen. 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the Ending,' says the Lord, 'Who is, and Who was, and Who is to come—the Almighty.'" I, John, who *am* also your brother and joint partaker in the tribulation and in the kingdom and endurance of Jesus Christ, was on the island that *is* called Patmos because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Day of the Lord... (vs 7-10).

Referring to then all the events that are going to transpire between the time of John and the second return of Christ. Now that's what it means the Lord's Day. Likewise when you go the Old Testament and it talks about the Lord's Day in the end-time. It's not talking about Sunday. People with no education or understanding in the Scriptures, and haven't been properly taught, when they hear someone say that and they read a translation of the Scriptures, a *spurious* translation of the Scriptures, which says Sunday, they believe it. What is happening they are reading *their* interpretation into it

to find a justification for Sunday-keeping. They are trying to force the Scriptures to say what they want, rather than understanding the Scriptures to understand what God wants us to understand and what they actually say.

The writings and records of the early church reveal that the practice of Sunday worship was established with the apostles...

Now we've already seen that's false. It was not established with the apostles.

...and has been continued by the faithful ever since. For instance

- 1) The Epistle of Barnabas—about 100<sub>A.D.</sub>

Please understand, Barnabas was not alive in 100<sub>A.D.</sub>. And please understand that most of these things that he quotes out of here that I'm going to read, have come from the Gnostics. The Gnostics were the apostate mystic believers in a *false* Christ and they had headquarters in Egypt and in a certain sect of them, with the Essenes, the Qumran caves and with the followers of Simon Magus and with the believers of Mithras. And all of these forces were corrupting and amalgamating the teachings of Christ into their teachings.

Now if you don't have the book, *Primitive Christianity in Crisis*, by Alan Knight, you need to write for it. That is an eye-opening book, which will explain all about the Gnostics. The Gnostics were Sunday-keepers and they were Sunday-keepers long before the New Testament church ever began. So the Epistle of Barnabas—one quote out of the whole Epistle of Barnabas.

"Wherefore also we keep the eighth day... [meaning Sunday] ...with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead."

Now, we saw that Jesus did not rise from the dead on Sunday. Now if you don't have *The Harmony of the Gospels*, you can write for it. In there we clearly show the three days and three nights and when Jesus was crucified, when He was put in the tomb, when He was resurrected, and so forth. The long and short is, suffice to say, He was resurrected just before the end of the weekly Sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the week in which he was crucified. He was not resurrected on Sunday.

Now then, when is the first day of the week ever called the eighth day? anywhere in Scripture? There's only one place where we find the eighth day mentioned and that is the Last Great Day after the seven days of Feast of Tabernacles, which is the eighth day. But that does not mean that that eighth

day is hence the first day of the week. But it's the eighth day because it follows immediately after seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles.

So how can they justify Sunday-keeping by saying, 'We worship on the eighth day'? All right, let's go to the next one.

2) The Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians—107<sub>A.D.</sub>

Ignatius was one of the early Catholic fathers, one of the early Gnostic believers and if you read in history his main claim to fame was that he organized the churches into hierarchies out of the home churches and brought them all together into what we view as churches today. Now let's read what Ignatius wrote.

Do not be deceived with strange doctrines, nor with old fables which are unprofitable. For if we still live according to the Jewish law...

Now please understand what we went through with that. Remember that? *The Code of Jewish Law* has nothing to do with the laws of God in the Old Testament. So they mix Judaism, which is not the teachings of Moses, and claim that Judaism represents Old Testament teachings, which it doesn't. We went through that very carefully.

...For if we still live according to the Jewish law we acknowledge that we have not received grace.

Yet we saw where the Apostle Paul in Acts 13 told the Gentiles to continue in the grace of God and continue Sabbath-keeping.

If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things...

It's always the psychology that if it's old, it's bad. Well, we saw that the ancient order of things what? 'Abraham obeyed the voice of God, kept His charge, His commandments, His statutes, His laws.' That's an ancient order of things. And if you're Christ's then 'if you're Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise'—right? *Yes!* Now notice what they do and this is the psychological intimidation to put a guilt trip on you, because after all if you're part of the New Covenant you don't want to do those old things.

If, therefore, those who have been brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath but living in observance of the Lord's day on which also our life has sprung again by Him and by His death. It is monstrous to talk of Jesus Christ and to practice Judaism.

Well, the truth is Christian Sabbath-keepers do not practice Judaism. We don't practice Judaism at all. We do not believe in salvation by works. We do not believe in salvation by circumcision. We believe in salvation by grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. So he's presented nothing here, except to give this quote.

3) The writings of Justin Martyr—145-150<sub>A.D.</sub>

Now Justin Martyr was right there in Alexandria, one of the good Gnostic apostate professing-Christians, if I could put it that way. Meaning, he was not a true Christian, but a counterfeit. Now he writes—now I want you to notice how much bold they get in these quotes. And whose authority is he following in this. None of these books are in the Bible. He's not following the authority of God, he's not following the authority of the Scriptures, but he's following the authority of the writings of men. Justin Martyr says:

And on the day called Sunday we all who live in cities or in the country gather together in one place. And the memories of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read. But Sunday is the day on which we all hold a common assembly, because it is the first day of the week on which God made the world...

Now we're changing the whole thing around backwards—aren't we?

...and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead.

Of course, neither one of those are true. You go back and read the creation account and what do you find? *God created the Sabbath.* We've already gone through that so many times, we won't turn back there again.

4) The apostolic constitution--church life in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century

Now, you see, the apostasy has gained a greater head of steam. There are more Sunday-keepers now than Sabbath-keepers, so they re-write the history. So they claim now this is apostolic and this is authoritative, but it's not.

On the day of the resurrection of the Lord, that is the Lord's day, assemble yourselves together without fail giving thanks to God and praising Him for all those mercies God has bestowed upon you through Christ.

Again, that's not Scripture—is it? *No!*

5) Iranius—155-202<sub>A.D.</sub>

The mystery of the Lord's resurrection may not be celebrated on any other day than the Lord's Day...

Now we're getting into dogmatic heretical theology.

"The mystery of the Lord's resurrection... [referring to the Eucharist] ...may not be celebrated on any other day than the Lord's Day, and on this alone should we observe the breaking off of the Pascal feast...

Now he's saying that we are going to quit keeping the Passover. Let's come to 1-Corinthians 5 here for just a minute. Let's review this again, because when you go to Scripture, and that's what we need to do—don't we? Now I'm reading all of these, because I want you to see and I want you to know and understand that they're not following the Scriptures. They're following the writing of men who have created their own doctrines and have created their own dogma. This is the mystery of iniquity or lawlessness which began in the days of the Apostle Paul and he prophesied would continue down to the end time.

1-Corinthians 5:7: "Therefore, purge out the old leaven, so that you may become a new lump, *even* as you are unleavened. For Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us." Now the point I want to make is this: ***If you reject the Pascal feast***, or the Passover of God, on the fourteenth day of the first month according to the calculated Hebrew calendar, ***you are rejecting Christ***. If you accept the Eucharist, or as it is often called the Lord's Supper, or as it is often called communion, then you are going back to the mystery of sun-worship and Mithraicism. This is exactly what they are now introducing with these quotes.

Verse 8: "For this reason, let us keep the Feast..." [Now these are the feasts of God. This is the Feast of Unleavened Bread. *The reason the Feast of Unleavened Bread is kept is because Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us.* Now you see what happens—let's go back and read v 6: "Your glorying is not good. Don't you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?" And that's exactly what we are seeing in the progression of these readings that the leaven of false doctrine and sin is coming in.

The mystery of the Lord's resurrection may not be celebrated... [dogmatic theology] ...on any other day than the Lord's day, which is Sunday, and on this alone should we observe the breaking off of the Pascal feast.

Now that's a very heretical statement. Quite a thing! That's his authority. His authority is not the Word of God; his authority is not in the Scriptures.

As a matter of fact, the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, was selected not in place of the Sabbath, but as a day in which to celebrate our Lord's death and resurrection.

Well, if it wasn't to replace the Sabbath, then why have you replaced the Sabbath? Can't answer that.

One writer says... [he doesn't even say who this is, but let's read it] ..."It is a day of thanksgiving and liberty to the Christians, and a day in which they delight in regarding it as unto the Lord. It is the Lord's Day, as John called it in Rev. 1:10.... [we just saw that] ...On that day Jesus rose as the head of a new creation. On the Lord's Day He appeared to His disciples, on the Lord's Day...

It doesn't say the Lord's Day. You see what they have done? You see the sleight of hand that takes place?

...and on the Lord's Day the door of the kingdom was unlocked and three thousand souls enter in.

We already covered that concerning Pentecost—didn't we?

...and on the Lord's Day the disciples came together to break bread in remembrance of Him" (Acts 20:7).

Next time we'll go through Acts 20:7 and examine that very carefully and we'll go through all the places in the New Testament where it talks about the first day of the week. So he didn't say who said this, but we're supposed to accept it as authoritative. All right, the next one. Number six:

#### 6) The Epistle to Diogenetis—150<sub>A.D.</sub>

But again, the Jewish scruples concerning meats and their superstition relating to the Sabbath...

So if you believe in keeping the Sabbath day, you believe in a superstition. You see how they choose their words to intimidate, to put down?

...and the vanity of their circumcision and the dissimulation of their fastings and new moons, I do not suppose you need to learn from me that they are ridiculous and unworthy of any consideration.

#### 7) Clement of Alexandria, 174<sub>A.D.</sub>

The old seventh day has become nothing more than a working day.

And for those Gnostic apostate Christians, that's exactly what it has become. That's what the professing Christian world does today.

8) Bardasenes—180<sub>A.D.</sub>

In his book, the Law of the Country, he states, "On one day, the first day of the week we assemble ourselves together."

Out of a whole book there's one sentence? We don't know what he says in the rest of the book—do we?

9) Tertulian

In the same way if we devote Sunday to rejoicing from a far different reason than sun-worship...

Aha! He admits Sunday is the day of sun-worship, but if we do it for a different reason—

...we have some resemblance to some of you, the Jews, who devote the day of Saturn, Saturday, to ease and luxury. He who argues for Sabbath-keeping and circumcision must show that Adam and Abel and the just of the old times observed these things."

*No, we must not!* We must read the Word of God and see what it says. Remember that Abraham kept the Sabbath in uncircumcision for how long? And you know that even Adam and Eve sinned they will still had contact with God. They could come to the gate at the east end of the Garden of Eden, and they could visit with God there. I'm sure that they kept the Sabbath. They would have to, because God created it and it was a day of assembly for them.

10) Origen—185-255<sub>A.D.</sub>

You see we're getting further and further and further away from the real true New Testament times, and we are beginning to see the growing and the amalgamation of all of the false doctrine, now collectively coming together and beginning to form the background which later became the Roman Catholic Church.

Let's go to Ephesians 4, because what we are reading right now Paul warned of, and we are seeing how the error has been systematized. That's what it means in the Greek here. Ephesians 4:13: "Until we all come into the unity of the faith..." And the unity of the faith is in Christ. Remember Jesus Christ kept the Sabbath, Jesus Christ kept the Holy Days. He never sinned. If we are to follow His example and live the way that He lived, and we are to keep them—now furthermore, let's understand this:

- When we are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit, Christ is going to be in us—correct? *Yes!*

- Would Christ in us reject the laws and commandments of God? *No!*
- Would Christ in us lead us to deliberately sin against God? *No! Absolutely not!*

So that unity of faith is in Christ. "...and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man... [That means fully mature spiritual Christian.] ...unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (v 13). So Christ is our example then—isn't He? You go back and read through all of the Gospel accounts, which we covered many, many, many, showing how that Jesus

- *healed* on the Sabbath
- *preached* on the Sabbath,
- *taught* on the Sabbath
- *honored* the Sabbath

said He was Lord of the Sabbath ; He's not Lord of any other day.

Now v 14: "So that we no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in cunning craftiness, with a view to the systematizing of the error." (KJV: whereby they lie in wait to deceive) And the Greek means there *to the systematizing of the error*. This is what we are reading with these writings. So what he is following, what he is teaching in this book, is the systematic heretical theology of men, who have rejected God's way.

Now notice, let's continue here v 15: "But holding the Truth in love... [Now the Truth is the Word of God.] ...may in all things grow up into Him... [it's all in Christ] ...Who is the Head, *even* Christ From Whom all the body, fitly framed and compacted together by *that which* every joint supplies, according to *its* inner working in *the* measure of each individual part, is making the increase of the body unto *the* edifying of itself in love" (vs 15-16).

That also is a summary of what the Sabbath day is to be. We are to

- fellowship with God
- fellowship with each other
- a day in which we understand God puts His presence

and if we're there

- to worship Him
- love Him
- serve Him,

He will be *with us* and *inspire us* and *teach us* with His Spirit through His Word. So Paul was fighting that very thing then.

(go to the next track)

11) Victoranus—300<sub>A.D.</sub>

Now we're almost up to the edicts of Constantine—aren't we?

On the Lord's day we go forth to our bread with the giving of thanks...

Now that's coming to the Eucharist

...lest we should appear to observe any Sabbath with the Jews which Christ Himself, the Lord of the Sabbath, and His body abolished.

Now notice the twisted reasoning here. Nowhere did it say in the Bible that Christ abolished the Sabbath in His body.

12) Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, 306<sub>A.D.</sub>

Again, notice, coming out of Egypt, the land of sun worship—right? *Yes!*

But the Lord's Day we celebrate as a day of joy because on it He rose again.

Now you notice how they have it all joy. It's interesting what they do. They must keep up their false spirituality with all of this praise worship and music, music, music to control the minds and the emotions and I'm sure they did it then. Here's one that says:

The early church historian, Henry Chadwick, says each Sunday they met for their thanksgiving...

Now this is their Eucharist.

...in which the baptized ate bread and drank wine in a sacred meal.

Now please understand that the worshipers of Mithras did that hundreds of years before Jesus Christ. This is Mithraism. Now let me just state it very clearly, if you worship Sunday, and that is the day which you think is the Christian day, you have accepted Mithraism. If you take the Eucharist on Sunday, you have accepted Mithraism. You are a worshiper of the sun god, Mithras, under the guise and name of Christianity or Catholicism or Orthodoxy or Protestantism.

Now he brings in Philip Schaff in his thorough *History of the Christian Church* says:

The celebration of the Lord's day in memory of the resurrection of Christ dates undoubtedly from the apostolic age.

Now this is very clever writing. There's a time to use the word 'undoubtedly' when you're trying to prove a point. However, this is a misapplication of it because it is to cover all the sins of the lack of documentation that they kept it from apostolic age. So they say 'undoubtedly.'

Nothing short of apostolic precedent can account for the universal religious observance in the churches of the second century.

**Yes, there can**—the apostasy, which all the apostles wrote of and warned would happen.

There is no dissenting voice...

*Yes, there are*, in other histories, and in other writings, but in these writings, of course, there's no dissenting voice, because these are selective to prove your own point.

This custom is confirmed by the testimonies of the earliest post-apostolic writers...

'post-apostolic'—What does that mean? *After the apostles!* And they were the ones who brought in the great conspiracy. So to trust their writings is like going to the Mafia and asking for a formal bank audit statement of their activities. If you ever got one it would be fraudulent anyway. You're going to the wrong source, you're going to criminals, etc.

This custom is confirmed by the testimonies of the earliest post-apostolic writers as Barnabas, Ignatius, Justin Martyr. It is also confirmed by the younger Pliny. The Didache calls the first day the Lord's Day of the Lord.

Now they're exalting it up even higher—aren't they? If you have no knowledge in Scriptures, if you didn't understand anything, you picked up this book and you read it; and there's a big problem when something is in print, people accept it as authentic and true.

The fathers did not regard the Christian Sunday as a continuation of, but as a substitute for the Jewish Sabbath and based it not so much on the fourth commandment, and the primitive rest of God in creation, but to which the commandment expressly refers, as upon the resurrection of Christ and the apostolic tradition.

So what they are saying very plainly is this, they are not doing this because of Scripture. They are doing this because of the resurrection of Christ and they falsely believe that it took place on Sunday.

Sunday was always regarded in the ancient church as a divine institution.

Nowhere, when we examine every one of the 'first day of the week,' we are going to see work was done on every one of those days. Now let's continue on. Here's what Tardo writes:

Thus... [in conclusion] ...the entire weight of all the early church history piles up against Sabbatarians.

But, of course, when you select the wrong history. But, of course, when you go to the Gnostic fathers of the Catholic Church. Now then he makes this outrageous statement:

Constantine did not change the Sabbath.

Now you go back to the earlier Sunday refuting that we did, and I read where Constantine *did change* the Sabbath to Sunday, where he did make it the law of the empire. Now here's what he says after that statement. Now notice how they all build up, again never quoting Scripture, quoting post-apostolic writers.

The apostles did not keep the Sabbath.

We went through and showed, **yes, they did keep the Sabbath!** Hebrews 4:9 says: **"There remains, therefore, Sabbath-keeping for the people of God."** A direct command in the New Testament for Sabbath-keeping. No question, when you understand the Truth. A great question in the minds of those who want to twist and pervert the Scriptures.

The early church did not keep the Sabbath.

An outright lie!

Therefore, Constantine could not have changed the church's worship from Saturday to Sunday in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, as Sabbatarians love to claim.

And he gives absolutely no support. None of these men that we read from were apostles. They were false apostles. They were the ones who brought in Sunday-keeping. Now let's go to 2-Corinthians 11 and let's see. Paul warned of this. He warned that it was coming. Christ warned of it.

2-Corinthians 11:13: "For such *are* false apostles—deceitful workers... [Just like we have read, deceitful working.] ...who are transforming themselves into apostles of Christ." And that's what he just did—didn't he? Transformed them all into the apostles of Christ? *Yes, he did!* They do it themselves. They're not trying to follow God. They're not trying to follow Christ. This is where all the heresy comes from, from men with their ideas, with their interpretations, instead of from the Word of God. And unfortunately in the end-time, all these things come crashing down upon us and we have mounds and piles and heaps and mountains of heresy and false doctrine and wrong teachings and religion.

Verse 14: "And *it is* no marvel, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light."

And he comes purring and glowing just like he did to Adam and Eve. And the first thing he did is the same thing that these men do who profess Sunday-keeping, is they accuse God of a lie. They accuse God of doing things that are evil and wrong. So Satan comes along and accuses God and says, 'Hey, I'm here to straighten you all out. God knows in the day that you eat of that tree your eyes are going to be open and you will become as gods, and you can determine good and evil. You don't have to depend on God to determine good and evil. You decide.' That's what they're doing with Sunday—aren't they?

"And *it is* no marvel, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore, *it is* no great thing if his servants... [And he has plenty of ministers.] ...also transform themselves as ministers of righteousness—whose end shall be according to their works" (vs 14-15). Now what we're going through we're seeing that happen right before our very eyes. Isn't that amazing?

Fourth Century, how about that? Now let's continue on with what Russell Tardo has written here.

As we have shown, all of the facts prove otherwise... [that is to Sabbath-keeping] ...because the apostles...

Now this is absolutely a lying false statement.

...because the apostles and the developing church always worshiped on the first day of the week. What Constantine did was merely a ratification of Sunday worship as a public holiday.

If it was just to ratify it, his edict would have been much different. He then would not have to have outlawed Sabbath-keeping—would he? Because he would have looked and said, 'Well, my edict is since all of you are keeping Sunday, I'm going to make it official.' But that's not what he said.

The church has sanctioned and practiced it... [Sunday] ...as the Lord's day long before the close of the 1<sup>st</sup> century.

So they're going by the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. You know I'll just have to say, at least the Catholics are more honest about Sunday and Sabbath questions than are Protestants. They say, 'We changed it because we used our authority. If you Protestants claim you get it from the Bible, you're wrong. Why don't you just bow to the Roman Catholic Church and come back home to Rome.' And that's what's happening. It didn't come from the Scriptures. It didn't come from God.

He has a footnote going to the back of the book and he didn't say who it's from here.



Sunday, the Christian day of worship, was observed from the very beginning of the Christian church. It was a radical departure from Judaism...

No, it was a radical departure from God!

...which observed the Sabbath of the seventh day of the week. The move to the first day of the week was to make a weekly reminder of the day when Jesus rose from the dead. Sunday was not observed as a public holiday until the time of Constantine in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century.

This is really something. I was just absolutely amazed and dumbfounded when I went through this.

We must remember that Constantine was the first emperor to show favor to Christianity.

But by that time it was a paganized Christianity. And how they brought together all of the pagans and all of the apostate Christians into one religious system.

Most of the previous emperors persecuted Christians forcing them to assemble secretly on Sunday in order to worship. After Constantine's alleged conversion to Christianity he abolished all persecution of the churches.

That only lasted a short while until the Council of Laodicea in 364<sub>A.D.</sub> where the Catholic Church then anathematized anybody who kept the Sabbath, because you see, they didn't get rid of Sabbath-keeping as they claimed.

Constantine actually showed them favor over other religions. His official sanction of Sunday as a day of Christian worship gave Christians the freedom to assemble openly for the first time.

Well, of course, on the wrong day! Satan will let you do that. Give you plenty of freedom to do that.

Again, he merely made official what the early church had been practicing all along. Therefore, to contend that the early church observed the Saturday Sabbath until Constantine changed it to Sunday is to be misled at best, and less than honest at worst."

My, my, have you not judged yourself out of your own mouth. Another historian writes,

From the earliest times Christians assembled regularly on the first day of the

week. They called it the Lord's Day. They also called it the eighth day.

Dear reader: The historical records of the Christian church from the first century to the present unanimously name Sunday as the day of Christian worship. Shouldn't we do likewise.

Quite a thing—isn't it? What an amazing story that is told here. None of that was from God, all from men. Now we're going to look into most of the places where the Scripture says 'the first day of the week.' Now let's ask the questions as we go along:

- What was being done?
- Were they worshipping?
- What was it they were doing?

So let's begin. Let's come to the book of Matthew 28 and let's see that where it talks about the first day of the week. Now let's understand something, this is talking about the women coming down to the grave. We're going to see in the book of Luke that they rested the Sabbath, not Sunday.

Matthew 28:1: "Now late on the Sabbath, as *the first day of the weeks* was drawing near, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to observe the sepulcher. And *in the morning* suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of *the Lord* descended from heaven, and came and rolled upon the stone from the door, and sat upon it" (vs 1-2). What were the women doing? *They came there to bring the spices.* What were they going to do? *They were going to add that to Jesus' body.* It was a workday. Work was being done on that day.

Let's come to the book of Mark 16 and let's see what Mark says in the account. Again, the first day of the week. Now we're going to find in the book of John when we get that there were some other activities on it. Mark 16:1: "Now when the Sabbath had passed... [So they waited until the Sabbath was over.] ...Mary Magdalene and Mary, the *mother* of James, and Salome bought aromatic oils... [So they bought it after the Sabbath. This tells us what? *The followers of Jesus Christ kept the Sabbath—didn't they?* Remember, we were told from early on that they were worshipping on the first day of the week. Now here they kept the Sabbath. Did Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, and the disciples believe in Jesus? *Of course they did!* And they kept the Sabbath—didn't they? *Yes, they did!*] ...so that they might come and anoint Him. And very early on the first *day* of the weeks, at the rising of the sun, they were coming to the tomb" (vs 1-2). Jesus wasn't there.

Now if you want a full explanation of that you can write for the *Harmony of the Gospels*, we'll send it to you. Let's come to Luke 23, and let's see

what happened. Let's see the activities of the women and what they did, and we are going to find nowhere was the first day of the week ever used as a day of worship. *Nowhere!*

Luke 23:55: "And *the* women also, who had come with Him from Galilee, followed *and* saw the tomb, and how His body was laid. And they returned *to the city*, and prepared spices and ointments, and *then* rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment" (vs 55-56). So they were commandment keepers—weren't they? But someone's going to say, 'Yeah, but they were Jews.' The answer is they were not Judaizing, they were keeping the commandments of God.

Now Luke 24:1: "Now on the first *day* of the weeks, they came to the tomb at early dawn, bringing *the* spices that they had prepared; and certain *others* came with them." What do you know about that? Again, work! What else happened on that day? Jesus came along and there were two of the disciples and they were talking about all these things that took place. He walked with them clear down to the village of Emmaus. And there when He blessed the meal and broke the bread, they understood that it was Christ. They ran back to the other eleven of the apostles and went in and told them what had happened, that they had seen the Lord. Now let's see what happened here.

Luke 24:36—this is on the first day of the week again: "Now as they were telling these things, Jesus Himself stood in their midst and said to them, 'Peace *be* to you.' But they were terrified and filled with fear, thinking that they beheld a spirit. Then He said to them, 'Why are you troubled? And why do doubts come up in your hearts? See My hands and My feet, that it is I. Touch Me and see *for yourselves*; for a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see Me having.' And after saying this, He showed them *His* hands and *His* feet. But while they were still disbelieving and wondering for joy, He said to them, 'Do you have anything to eat?'" (vs 36-41). So then He ate.

Now then, sundown ended that day—didn't it? *Yes, it did!* Sure enough, Jesus taught on the first day of the week. Did that mean that this was authorizing Sunday worship? *No, it doesn't!* Did Jesus teach on every day of the week during His ministry? *Yes, He did, no question about it!* Taught on the Sabbath, taught on Sunday, taught on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, etc. all the way through His ministry. So to claim that He did teaching on the first day of the week right after He was resurrected at the end of the Sabbath, and then now we're coming to the end of the first day of the week—aren't we?

And if the sun had already set on the end of the first day of the week, you have lost your argument because the days are calculated from sunset to sunset, and so Jesus was actually teaching on the second day of the week—was He not? Now no one's ever thought of that—have they? They claim He taught on the first day of the week. He did, He taught these two disciples. He came and appeared in the midst of them, as we'll see in the account of John. It was late on that Sabbath day, just before the first day of the week when He came there. Now the first day of the week is ended. He's teaching on the second day of the week. Are you going to proclaim now that we ought to keep Monday because Jesus taught on Monday? Let's be honest and let's get real with this.

Now notice what He did. He took it and ate before them. He had some fish and some honeycomb. Now v 44: "And He said to them, 'These *are* the words that I spoke to you when I was yet with you, that all *the* things which were written concerning Me in the Law of Moses and *in the* Prophets and *in the* Psalms must be fulfilled.'" So Jesus endorsed the whole Old Testament—the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. He didn't dispense with it; He didn't throw it away. Now if you don't have the series that we have done, the *Prophecies of Jesus in the Old Testament*, write for it. It's very eye opening. You cannot have the New Testament without the Old Testament. You cannot understand the Old Testament without the New Testament. We will see what Jesus did right here, that the New Testament interprets the Old Testament, because that's what Jesus did.

And something else has to happen. In order for anyone to understand the Scriptures, this must happen, v 45: "Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures." ***The Holy Spirit must open your understanding to the Scriptures***, because number one, you

- love God
- believe God
- want to obey Him
- serve Him

so therefore, God will open the understanding to you.

If you come looking for an argument, if you come looking for justifying your own ways, if you come looking to bring a heresy or false doctrine and claim it is true by looking into the Scriptures to twist and pervert the reasoning that you have to try and make it fit, you will never understand about Christ. You will never understand about the Truth of God. 'So He opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures.'

“And He said to them, ‘According as it is written, it was necessary for the Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead *the* third day. And in His name, repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. For you are witnesses of these things” (vs 46-48). And that they were.

Now let’s go to John 20. Let’s see what else happened on that first day of the week. Now we need to understand that when Jesus appeared late on the first day of the week, all of the activities began after sunset so it was really then into the second day of the week. Do you understand that?

John 20:1: “Now on the first day of the weeks, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb...” So this is in the morning. The night portion of the first day of the week already occurred from sunset until sunrise. That was the night portion, Scripturally speaking, of the first day of the week. Now she comes on the day portion, early in the morning, she got up while it was yet dark, and obviously as she was walking there it’s getting lighter and lighter as the sun is coming up. So then she comes to the tomb, we won’t go through that, we covered that on other sermons and other topics. So suffice to say that Jesus told her, “Go tell the disciples I’m going to ascend to My Father and your Father, My God and your God.” So she went and told them.

Now notice, v 19: “Afterwards, as evening... [which means it’s ending] ...was drawing near that day, the first *day* of the weeks... [right at the end of the first day of the week] ...and the doors were shut where the disciples had assembled for fear of the Jews... [They were not assembled to worship God. They were not assembled there to honor Christ. They were there because they were scared to death of the Jews, that since Jesus was no longer in the tomb, the Jews would come and get them and kill them. That’s why they were there.] ...and the doors were shut where the disciples had assembled for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, ‘Peace *be* to you.’ And after saying this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples rejoiced *because* they had seen the Lord” (vs 19-20).

All right, again. Let’s look at the next account: *first day of the week*. But I want you to understand is this: The first day of the week ends at sunset—doesn’t it? And these activities took place after sunset, meaning it was what? *The second day of the week*.

Verse 26: “Now after eight days... [That’s again late on the first day of the week.] ...His disciples again were within... [They were gathered together.] ...and Thomas with them. Jesus came after

the doors were shut, and stood in the midst and said, ‘Peace *be* to you’.... [And of course Thomas was the one that said, ‘I won’t believe until I see Him.] ...Then He said to Thomas, ‘Put forth your finger, and see My hands; and reach *out* your hand, and put *it* into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing.’ And Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and My God” (vs 26-28).

Now what are you going to do with this? Let’s come to John 21:1—it doesn’t tell us which day of the week it is: “After these things, Jesus revealed Himself to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias...” They were out fishing. Jesus came on the shore. They didn’t know it was Jesus until they looked up and saw that it was Jesus. He told them, ‘Cast your nets over,’ and they brought in this huge haul of fish, then they saw that it was Jesus. There wasn’t any Sunday-worship here. Should we go ahead and use this as authorized camp side alongside the seashore? Should we now look at this and say, ‘The only time you can have a camp out is along the seashore, because that’s where Jesus appeared to the disciples?’ That’s about the same kind of reasoning as applied to Sunday-keeping because of what we have seen here where they claim the first day of the week that all these things were done on the first day of the week.

Now let’s go to one more, 1-Corinthians 16:2. Boy, here is one that every Protestant preacher loves, because he gets up there and says that ‘in the first day of the week you are to lay in store. So you send your money, you put it into the plate when the deacon passes the plate you put it in because that’s what they did when they worshiped on the first day of the week as we find in 1-Cor. 16:1.’

Now let’s read it. Let’s see what it says; let’s see what they did. Most people have taken this totally out of context, because they want to force *their* belief into it, rather than try and find out what they should believe because of it, two different things.

1-Corinthians 16:1: “Now concerning the collection that *is being made* for the saints... [Not the church. Ha! Ha! What was the collection? Stores of food, grain, raisins, dried fruit, dried meat. Everything to be sent to Jerusalem because of the drought that was in Jerusalem.] ...concerning the **collection that *is being made* for the saints**: as I directed the churches in Galatia, so you also are to do.... [So they were gathering things together.] ...Every first *day* of the week, each one is to put aside *food* at home, storing up whatever he may be prospered in... [Now what does it mean ‘lay by him in store’? (KJV) It means it goes out into the field and gathers it in and stores it. So they had a specific day that they were to get and they were to bring it.

*This is a day of work.* This is not a day of worship. This is not a day of collecting money for the Church. How can people believe such silly things concerning the Bible? Well, because they're deceived and they don't understand the Truth.

Verse 2: "...each one is to put aside *food* at home, storing up whatever he may be prospered in, so that there need not be any collections when I come." He says, 'I want it all gathered and put together and stored up and every first day of the week you do that until I come. And when I come, I'm going to take it and I'm going to take it to Jerusalem and you send the ones you want to go with it to verify that it's going to be there and we'll take it down and give it to them.' That's exactly what they did.

Verse 3: "And when I come, whomever you approve in your letters, these are the ones I will send to carry your bounty to Jerusalem."

- Having nothing whatsoever to do with a worship service.
- Having nothing whatsoever to do with a meeting.
- Having nothing whatsoever to do of a substitute day for the Sabbath where they would rest.

*No, this is a day of work!* Nowhere in the New Testament where the term 'the first day of the week' has been translated from the Greek into the English do we find that it was a day of worship—period! Most of the things referring to the first day of the week where the disciples were assembled, that day came to an end at sunset and Jesus taught them on the second day of the week, beginning in the evening after the sun had set. So to use the thinking of these people who claim we ought to worship on Sunday, they're absolutely and entirely wrong. If they want to follow through with their logic, they ought to worship on Monday.

Now you think that through, because if what they say was true, and if what was done was true, then they ought to worship on Monday. They've got the wrong day on Sunday.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible In Its Original Order* by Fred R. Coulter

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Corinthians 11:17-19
- 2) 2-Timothy 2:15
- 3) John 3:33-36
- 4) Acts 17:11
- 5) Revelation 1: 10, 7-10
- 6) 1-Corinthians 5: 7-8, 6
- 7) Ephesians 4:13-16
- 8) Hebrews 4:9
- 9) 2-Corinthians 11:13-15

- 10) Hebrews 4:9
- 11) Matthew 28:1-2
- 12) Mark 16:1-2
- 13) Luke 23:55-56
- 14) Luke 24:1, 36-41, 44-48
- 15) John 20:1, 19-20, 26-28
- 16) John 21:1
- 17) 1-Corinthians 16:1-3

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 20:7
- Acts 13

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- *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop
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