

Refuting Sunday-Keeping XI

Never on a Sunday

Fred R. Coulter—March 2, 2001

Maybe on a Monday, but definitely on a Thursday. Now that may sound a little ridiculous right at first, but when we go through and understand the first day of the week even more, and look at the criteria that has been set out by Russell Tardo and his book, *Sunday Facts & Sabbath Fiction*, we are going to see that the Protestants ought to be keeping Thursday. The reason that that sounds odd is because their whole logic and their whole reasoning referring to the first day of the week and why they keep the first day of the week, that logic is so flawed that we are going to see that if you take that logic and follow it through all the way to its conclusion, then they ought to be keeping Thursday instead of Sunday.

Now, the Bible tells us we are to ‘prove all things and hold fast that which is good.’ Also in Romans 12:2, it says: “Do not conform yourselves to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind in order that you may prove what *is* well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God.” The bottom line is this: no one is going to get into the kingdom of God unless they do the will of God. So we have to prove what is the will of God, and we have to do it from the point of view of approaching it from a converted mind, not a carnal hostile mind as we have seen which underlies all the rejection of the Sabbath and insists on Sunday-keeping.

‘But be transformed by the renewing of our minds.’ Then we are to do like the Bereans. It says that the Bereans were more noble than those in Thessalonica, because they searched the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.’ So what we are going to do, we’re going to expand what I finished up on *Refuting Sunday-keeping #10*, and we are going to examine it a whole lot more carefully, and go through all of the Scriptures step by step, and then we’re going to understand that the reasons for keeping Sunday have no basis in fact in Scripture whatsoever.

Let’s read first of all some of the reasons why we keep God’s Holy Sabbath. Now I’ve got fourteen listed here. There are many more that we could add to it, but these are the basis of why we keep the Sabbath instead of Sunday. Now I want you to understand and to notice that all of this begins in nearly every case with God, then in a couple of cases what the Apostle Paul taught. But it all begins with the authority of God, because of what God has done.

1. God created the Sabbath the seventh day
2. God blessed it and made it Holy

Now let’s understand something very important here. Only God can make something Holy because God is Holy. No man can proclaim something Holy because he desires to make it Holy. No man can receive something from God, which is contrary to His will, because he’s hoping it. No man can do what he figures is good and right in his eyes, and require that God accept it. All of those things, if we really understand it, apply to the reasons for Sunday-keeping.

3. God rested and fellowshiped with Adam and Eve on that day and he probably instructed them
4. God gave it to mankind at creation and to Israel before Sinai. The Sabbath is a gift of God

Not only is it a law, but primarily it is a gift. God gave this as a blessing.

5. God owns it; it is the Sabbath of the Lord
6. God commands us to keep it
7. God commands us to rest on that day
8. God commands that the Sabbath and the Holy Days are Holy convocations

Every one of these things are based upon what God has done.

9. God made the Sabbath and Holy Day-keeping a sign and a perpetual covenant

And perpetual means *it’s never going to end*. Now we come to the New Testament:

10. Jesus Christ is Lord of the Sabbath Day
11. Jesus Christ, the apostles, believers, and New Testament church kept the Sabbath and the Holy Days

You can search the New Testament from Matthew to Revelation and nowhere will you find a single command by Christ or by an apostle that changed the Sabbath day from the seventh day to the first day of the week.

12. Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, taught the Gentiles to keep the Sabbath and Holy Days
13. God the Father and Jesus Christ spiritually fellowship with the true believers on the Sabbath and the Holy Days
14. In the New Testament Christians are commanded to keep the Sabbath (Heb. 4:9)

All of these are based *on the authority of God and Jesus Christ*, and the teachings that the apostles gave under the authority and command that Christ gave them.

Eleven Reasons for Sunday-Keeping, from *Sunday Facts & Sabbath Fiction*:

- 1) Now on this day, the first day of the week, Jesus rose from the dead

As we saw last time, *not true!* So you might want to go ahead and mark that down—not true. He rose right just before the Sabbath ended, not the first day of the week. So their first reason has no validity in fact at all.

- 2) Christ first appeared to the disciples on that day

Partially true; mostly true!

- 3) Jesus met the disciples at different places and repeatedly

Partially true! When we really understand it, we will see that it was only three disciples, Mary Magdalene and two other disciples. Then we will see He did appear to the others just as the day was ending.

- 4) Jesus blessed them, that is the disciples
- 5) Jesus imparted the Holy Spirit
- 6) Jesus first commissioned them to preach the Gospel to all the world
- 7) Jesus gave the apostles authority to legislate for and guide the Church
- 8) This day became of joy to the disciples
- 9) The Gospel of the risen Christ was first preached by an angel...

True

- 10) Jesus Himself set the example of preaching the Gospel of His resurrection and expounding all the Scriptures on the subject and opened their minds to understanding

Partially true!

- 11) The purchase of our redemption was completed

Not true!

Now let's go back and look at these for just a minute.

- Is there any command where Jesus said, 'You're going to keep the first day of the week'? *No, there isn't!*
- Does appearing to the disciples change the commandment of God? *No, it doesn't!*
- Does Jesus meeting with the disciples in different places and repeatedly, does that change the Sabbath?

Now we will see that there is a huge gigantic problem, because Jesus appeared to them for forty days. Because Jesus blessed them, does that change the day of worship? Can they be blessed on any day? *Of course!*

Imparting the Holy Spirit: that didn't happen on that day. That actually happened after the second day of the week began.

First commissioned them to preach the Gospel to all the world: that happened after the first day of the week ended and the second day of the week was beginning. And also we will see that that happened on the last day that He appeared to the disciples.

This day becomes a day of joy: well, if you have joy every day, does that become a Sabbath? Where is the authority of God? *Nowhere!* All of these are excuses by men going into the Scriptures looking for something to justify their arguments for Sunday-keeping. So let's take their criteria and we will boil it down to six things, six criteria, and then we'll come back and we'll visit these six criteria again:

1. He met with the disciples in different places
2. He blessed them
3. He commissioned them to preach
4. He gave them authority
5. It was day of joy
6. Jesus preached the Gospel and opened their minds

That is the criteria! So we're going to be surprised when this occurs on which day, all six of these apply in the greatest degree. Now, let's pick up the story and we're going to go between Matthew and Mark and Luke and John and we're going to put the whole story together and see how the events took place.

First of all, let's understand something very, very important here. All days in the Scripture are reckoned from sunset to sunset. So when the sun goes down the sixth day of the week ends and the seventh day of the week begins. So the Sabbath is about ready to begin.

The apostles and all the believers, the disciples, followed that reckoning of day-by-day from evening to evening. Now let's see that it was so. Come to Matthew 28:1: "Now late on the Sabbath... [Sabbath ends at sunset] ...as *the first day of the weeks* was drawing near, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to observe the sepulcher." This was right just before the Sabbath ended, and this is the weekly Sabbath, because as it was dusking toward the first day of the week. Which means that right here in the Scripture we know that the disciples calculated and reckoned the days from evening to evening.

Let's look at something else here, which is very important, which you don't see in the English translation. In the Greek *the first day of the week* is 'ton sabbaton,' so it is *the first day of the weeks*--it is

plural and there's a definite reason why it's plural. This day, though it is the first day of the week, is also a very important day because it is the first day of the count toward Pentecost. This day, being the first day of the weeks, is also the Wave Sheaf Offering Day, which Jesus fulfilled when He ascended to the Father.

Let's come to Mark 16, and again in every one of these places, what we find is this: We find that in every case all of the writers of the Gospel account were inspired to write this as the 'first day of the weeks,' because it begins the count to Pentecost. When you come to Acts 2, then God gave the Holy Spirit in power for preaching.

Now let's come to Mark 16:1; let's understand again, this shows us clearly that they reckoned the days from sunset to sunset. "Now when the Sabbath had passed... [Why would they wait for the Sabbath to pass? *This was the Holy Day Sabbath, this was not the weekly Sabbath*, because if it were the weekly Sabbath, then they couldn't have prepared the spices on Friday. So this is the Holy Day Sabbath.] ...when the Sabbath had passed, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the *mother* of James, and Salome bought aromatic oils, so that they might come and anoint Him." So what did they do? *They observed the Holy Day Sabbath, which was the first day of Unleavened Bread*, and they waited until after sundown when the day ended and then they bought the spices.

Let's follow this along, Luke 23:50: "And behold, there came a man named Joseph, a member of the council, a good and righteous man, (He did not consent to the council and their deed.) from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, and who was also himself waiting for the Kingdom of God. He, after going to Pilate, begged for the body of Jesus. And after taking it down, he wrapped it in linen cloth... [Now it's very important to understand about being wrapped, wrapped just like mummies. That's why when Lazarus was called out of the tomb he walked out with the grave clothes still wrapped around him.] ...he wrapped it in linen cloth... [We see from the account in John 20 that also Nicodemus came with some spices and they wrapped Him and put Him in the tomb as it says here:] ...and placed it in a tomb hewn in a rock, in which no one had ever been laid. Now it was **a preparation day**, and **a Sabbath was coming on**" (vs 50-54). That Sabbath—and in the Greek it's clear, it's 'a Sabbath,' there's no definite article in the Greek, which is very important to understand. It was '**a** preparation,' and '**a** Sabbath,' because we'll see when we come to the other part here, that the definite article in the Greek is there for '**the** Sabbath.'

So this is telling us there were two Sabbaths during the week when Jesus was crucified, because

that always happens when you have a Passover that occurs in the middle of the week on a Wednesday. The next day Thursday, beginning Wednesday night to Thursday, is the first Holy Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Then from Thursday at sunset to Friday at sunset is another preparation day for the weekly Sabbath. So here we have it.

"And *the* women also, who had come with Him from Galilee, followed *and* saw the tomb, and how His body was laid.... [Well, they couldn't go home and do spices that night because it was a Holy Day. They couldn't buy them that night because everything was closed. It was a Holy Day.] ...And they returned *to the city*, and prepared spices and ointments... [Which had to be on Friday, the preparation day for the weekly Sabbath.] ..and *then* rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment" (vs 55-56). Now that is 'the Sabbath' day and 'the resting,' and they were obeying God. So we have that very clear. We need to really keep that in mind.

Now let's come to Luke 24:1: "Now on the first *day* of the weeks... [Here again, 'the first day of the weeks,' showing that it is the count toward Pentecost. And every place that is used in the New Testament, it means that very first day, the first day of the weeks, though it is the first day of 'a' week, so it's a double meaning here.] ...they came to the tomb at early dawn, bringing *the* spices that they had prepared; and certain *others* came with them."

Let's go to John 20, and we will see how the story comes, because we will see that Mary Magdalene was the first one to go and she went by herself apparently, and met the other women there at the tomb when they came. Now we have to deduce that from what we read here in John 20:1: "Now on the first *day* of the weeks... [Again, the first of the weeks.] ...while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb... [Meaning she got up while it was dark and she was leaving her home to go to the sepulcher or to the tomb.] ...and she saw *that* the stone had been taken away from the tomb." Meaning that as she was walking there the sun was rising. Perhaps she left just when there was a first little bit of light in the eastern horizon. As she was walking to go there, it was getting lighter and lighter, and it was light enough by the time she got there that she could see that the stone had been rolled away.

Verse 2: "Then she ran and came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken away the Lord from the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.'" Now we will see that the other women went to the rest of the disciples while Mary Magdalene went to Peter and John.

Here's how the stone was removed that covered the entrance of the tomb. Now when Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus put Jesus' body in the tomb it was just right before sunset ending the Passover day, and they rolled the big stone. Now they had a big round stone that was on an incline and that was rolled back to open the tomb. There was probably a little stopper there to keep it from rolling. So when they closed it they apparently just pushed up against the stone enough so they could get the stopper out and let the stone roll down and come right over the entrance of the sepulcher.

Now then, you will recall that the priests and the Pharisees, now they went to Pilate and said, 'Give us guard and let's post it, because remember the deceiver said that He was going to rise the third day, and so we don't think He's going to do that, we know He's not going to do that, but just in case the disciples come and steal the body away, let's go ahead and put the guards there.' So the guards came out and what did they do? They sealed it and in order to seal it they must have used some kind of mortar so it would be sealed, so it would be very difficult to move the stone away. So that's why the women when they came there, they were saying, 'Who's going to roll the stone away for us?'

Now notice Matthew 28:2: "And *in the morning* suddenly there was a great earthquake... [that's how God moved it] ...for an angel of *the* Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled away the stone from the door, and sat upon it. Now his appearance was a lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of them, those who were keeping guard trembled, and became as dead men. But the angel answered *and* said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; for I know that you are seeking Jesus, Who was crucified. He is not here; for He has risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord Himself was lying. And go quickly, *and* tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead. And behold, He goes before you into Galilee; there you shall see Him. Listen! I have told you.' And they quickly left the tomb with fear and great joy... [So yes, they did have joy on that day, but joy is no reason for changing the commandment of God.] ...*and* ran to tell *it* to His disciples" (vs 2-8).

Remember that Jesus said He would be in tomb for three days and three nights. So He was in there as we saw last time. He was in there Wednesday night, Thursday day; Thursday night, Friday day; Friday night, Sabbath day. Three days and three nights, raised at the end of the Sabbath. Jesus, as a spirit being, didn't need to have the stone rolled away so He could get out of the tomb. We'll examine that a little bit more when we come to John 20. He just walked through matter, passed through it.

So let's know that He was not there. And we'll clear up a little problem here when we come to Mark 16.

Luke 24:2. "But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb; and when they entered *it*, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus" (v 2-3). No one was an eyewitness to the resurrection. The women did not see the resurrection. The guards did not see the resurrection. As a matter of fact, they were surprised when the stone was rolled back. They were afraid. So Jesus when He was resurrected at the end of the Sabbath, just went out, walked past right through the stone and probably went over to the Garden of Gethsemane where He undoubtedly prayed all that night to God the Father.

Now in the *Harmony* coming out I have a whole section of what did Jesus do on the Wave Sheaf Offering Day, so I won't go through and explain that, because we're looking at the Sunday proposition here. But what I want to do is follow through with these events. I want you to understand that while these are taking place, time continues to go; the sun rises higher and higher.

Verse 4: "And it came to pass that while they were puzzling over this, suddenly two men in shining garments... [those were the angels] ...stood by them. And as they bowed their faces to the ground, being filled with fear, they said to them, 'Why are you seeking the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen: remember when He spoke to you *while He* was yet in Galilee, saying, 'It is necessary for the Son of man to be delivered into *the* hands of sinful men, and to be crucified, and to arise the third day'?' Then they remembered His words; and after returning from the tomb, they related these things to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary, *the mother* of James, and the others with them, who *told* these things to the apostles. But their words appeared to them as idle talk, and they did not believe them. Then Peter rose up and ran to the tomb; *and* stooping down, he saw the linen clothes lying alone; and he went home wondering about the things that had come to pass" (vs 4-12).

Now let's come back here to the account in Mark 16, and we're going to clear up another verse which is greatly misunderstood. This is the verse where they say, 'Oh, yes, the Lord rose on the first day of the week,' which was one of the first or second ones we covered when we started this series on *Refuting Sunday-Keeping*.

So let's come back to Mark 16:2: "And very early on the first *day* of the weeks, at the rising of the sun, they were coming to the tomb... [the sun was coming up] ...and they were asking themselves, 'Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?' For it was a massive *stone*.

But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away. And after entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right... [Now this accounts just for one angel, but know that there were two. So this is giving that experience of the one angel.] ...clothed in a white robe; and they were very frightened. But he said to them, 'Do not be afraid. You are seeking Jesus the Nazarene, Who was crucified. He has risen; He is not here. Look, *there* is the place where they laid Him. But go, tell His disciples and Peter that He goes before you into Galilee; there you shall see Him, as He said to you.' And they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them; and they did not say anything to anyone because they were afraid" (vs 2-8).

Let's clear this up. It is as simple as a proper punctuation of a comma. Now let me read it the way it is in the *King James*, v 9 "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He cast seven demons." Now that makes it *appear* that He was resurrected the first day of the week, but all of the facts show that He was resurrected just before the weekly Sabbath ended. And He was not there when they came. He did not rise at the rising of the sun, so if we put the comma in the right place we get the right sense of it.

Now let's read it with the comma in the right place. "Now after *Jesus* had risen, early *the* first day of the weeks He appeared first to Mary Magdalene..." (v 9, *FV*).

Now let's go see in John 20 about the occasion and how it happened that Mary Magdalene saw Him first. Now again, we want to understand that the time is continuously ongoing. John 20:3: "As a result, Peter and the other disciples went out and came to the tomb. Now the two ran together, but the other disciple ran faster than Peter and came to the tomb first; and he stooped down *and* saw the linen cloths lying *there*, but he did not enter. Then Simon Peter came following him, and he went into the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying, and the napkin that had been on His head..." (vs 3-7).

Now as I've explained before, they probably just saw the form of Jesus' body where He had been wrapped. As a spirit being He could pass right through the wrappings and just leave them there intact. What a tremendous witness that He was raised from the dead. If someone would have actually stolen the body, they would have taken it out with all of the wrappings on it. Then another thing occurred, which really convinced John that the resurrection was true and the thing that is important is this. John was the very first one to believe that He was raised from the dead.

Now let's look at this account here, v 7: "And the napkin that had been on His head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself." Probably set over to the side. Now this is important, because if someone were to steal the body, they wouldn't do that. They would take it with the grave clothes and all the wrappings and the head-napkin, which covered His head. But here it is all folded up. What does that tell you? Jesus had to be alive to do it. It's not going to do it by itself and a corpse isn't going to do it.

"Then the other disciple, who had come to the tomb first, also went in and saw *these things*; and **he believed**" (v 8). Now I want you to understand something very important. We're going to see this as we go along. God expects you, when you know the Truth and see the actual thing as it is, to believe—right away, instantly, not giving yourself some time. Not sort of doubting and pooh-poohing it, because we'll see a little later on what Jesus thought of that. Now let's continue on with the account so we'll see how it was that He appeared to Mary Magdalene first. And He did appear to her on the first day of the week; that is true. But up to this time He's appeared to none of the disciples—correct? *Yes!*

Verse 9: "For they did not yet understand the Scripture *which decreed* that He must rise from the dead. Then the disciples went away again to their *home*. But Mary stood outside the tomb weeping... [Now remember, she came early in the morning, ran back and told Peter and John. They ran out there. Mary probably walked as fast as she could, it doesn't say that she ran and she got there after they left. So here she's standing outside the sepulcher weeping.] ...and as she wept, she stooped down *and looked* into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white who were sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been laid" (vs 9-12). And they saw how He was put in there because they saw Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus put Him into the sepulcher.

"And they said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping?' She said to them, 'Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.... [So here she looks at the grave clothes and doesn't even understand it.] ...And after saying these things, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?' Thinking that He was the gardener, she said to Him, 'Sir, if you have carried Him off, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary.' Turning around she said to Him, 'Rabboni'; that is to say, 'Teacher'" (vs 13-16).

Now notice what Jesus said. Yes, Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene first. Now what time

of day is it? *We don't know!* We'll try and get a handle on the time of day here in just a little bit, but we know that this is later in the morning. Now we can make an educated guess from the next verse, as to about the time that this took place, v 17: "Jesus said to her, 'Do not touch Me, because I have not yet ascended to My Father. But go to My brethren and tell them that I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.'" Now this is showing that *Jesus was the wave sheaf offering*. He was to fulfill that, the first of the firstfruits, the first from the dead.

The ritual that the priest performed at the temple was this: Right after the morning sacrifice was offered—now we don't know if it was after it was wholly burned, or while it was still burning. We don't have the details on that, but generally the offering at that time was put on the altar approximately at nine in the morning. So the earliest that it could be waved would be nine o'clock. Now if it were afterward it would be probably ten o'clock or maybe a little bit later. We don't know. So that is only a guess.

But we do know it's at least about nine o'clock in the morning. Now let's see if we can get a little more understanding on this. Let's come back here to Luke 24 and let's see the account here and let's begin to understand approximately the time. We'll jump ahead just a little bit and then we'll go back and we'll fill in the spaces here.

Now this is when Jesus was walking with the two disciples, doesn't even give their names, to the village of Emmaus. Luke 24:29: "But they constrained Him, saying, 'Stay with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is declining.' And He entered in *as if* to stay with them." What do you mean 'toward evening, the day is far spent'? This is when they arrived in Emmaus. Let's understand something about the sunrise and sunset at this time of the year. In the spring of the year around Passover time the length of the day portion is approximately twelve hours and the night is approximately twelve hours. So this means that sunrise is about six in the morning and sunset is about six in the evening. So the day is far spent and it is late. It would have to be approximately 4:30 at this time, because three o'clock is not far spent.

Those of us who keep the Sabbath understand when we are looking at our activities and looking at the setting of the sun, at three o'clock in the afternoon none of us pay much attention to the sun going down. We know it's about three o'clock. But about 4-4:30, then we know the day is far spent and the Sabbath is coming on. So this also confirms another thing. They reckoned the days from evening to evening. So the key thing here and is important to remember is this: *The first day of the week ends at*

sundown and the second day of the week begins. That becomes a very critical thing.

Let's go back and let's pick up the account here beginning in v 13 and we'll come all the way through the rest of Luke 24 and we will see the time. We will be able to understand exactly what happened and we will be able to pretty well figure out the time and the setting and we're going to see why I said never on a Sunday, maybe on a Monday.

Verse 13: "And behold, on the same day, two of them [disciples] were going to a village called Emmaus, which was about sixty furlongs from Jerusalem.... [Now that is 7-1/2 miles. Now if you're walking and you're a good walker, you can cover 2-1/2-3 miles an hour. So let's just say 2-1/2 miles. That means this trip took them three hours. We know that they arrived somewhere around 4:30, so that backs up and puts the time approximately 12:30. So however long it took from 9-10 in the morning until about 12:30 for Jesus to ascend to the Father, be accepted of the Father, and all the ritual and all the ceremony that went on there, and the angels rejoicing, and so forth. And Jesus presenting Himself as a sacrifice, as the Lamb of God, for the sins of the whole world.

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So, He comes back down to the earth now and He meets the two disciples and they're going to the village of Emmaus, 7-1/2 miles away.

Verse 14: "And they were talking with one another about all the things that had taken place.... [That's important to remember, because when we come to the term 'the third day' that's including all the things: the setting of the guard, the sealing of the tomb.] ...And it came to pass, as they were talking and reasoning, that Jesus Himself drew near *and* went with them.... [He was able to appear in a little bit different form. Here He comes and He's walking with them.] ...But their eyes were restrained, *so that* they did not know Him. And He said to them, 'What *are* these words that you are exchanging with one another as you walk, and why are you downcast in countenance?' Then the one named Cleopas... [So it names at least one of them.] ...answered *and* said to Him, 'Are You only traveling through Jerusalem, and have not known of the things that have happened in these days?' And He said to them, 'What things?' And they said to Him, 'The things concerning Jesus the Nazarean, a man Who was a prophet, Who was mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him up to *the* judgment of death, and crucified Him. And we were hoping that He was the one Who would redeem Israel....'" (vs 14-21),

Now the disciples were looking for a political solution to the captive state of Judea at that time to deliver them out of that and restore the kingdom to Israel. So they didn't understand any of the prophecies. We'll see that again a little later on.

"...But besides all these things, as of today, the third day has already passed... [Sunday, Sabbath, Friday—that's the third day. Has nothing to do with the third day of Jesus rising from the dead. But this is the third day:] ...since these things took place. And also, certain women from among us astonished us, after they went to the tomb early; for when they did not find His body, they came to us, declaring that they had indeed seen a vision of angels, who said, 'He is living.'.... [Now we're going to understand something here about how we are to believe. Because if we get a message from a true angel, we are to believe it.] ...And some of those with us went to the tomb and found it exactly as the women had said, but they did not see Him.' Then He said to them, 'O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken!'" (vs 21-25).

Now let's understand something here. **When we know the Truth, we are to believe it.** And, of course, how many times did Jesus tell the disciples that this would happen? *Quite a few times when you read the Gospel account.* Verse 26: "'Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into His glory?'.... [right while they were walking along]: ...And beginning with Moses, and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them all things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures" (vs 26-27). So that's why it's very likely that this whole journey to Emmaus took three hours.

"And *as* they approached the village where they were going, He appeared to be going on farther. But they constrained Him, saying, 'Stay with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is declining.' And he entered in *as if* to stay with them. And it came to pass, as He sat *at the table* with them, He took the bread *and* blessed it; and after breaking it, He gave it to them" (vs 28-30). Now we don't know how long it took for them to get the bread. But probably they just went into the inn and sat right down at the table and the innkeeper, since it was the Feast of Unleavened Bread probably had all kinds of unleavened bread and brought it right up to them and that's when Jesus did this. He blessed it and broke and gave it to them.

"Then their eyes were opened, and they knew Him; and He disappeared from them.... [Gone! As a spirit being, He could just go.] ...And they said to one another, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as He was speaking to us on the road, while He was opening the Scriptures to us?'" (vs 31-32). So it's *partially true* that He opened the minds of those two disciples on the first day of the week to

the Scriptures concerning His death and resurrection. But as we will see, it is not true for the rest of the disciples because the sun went down ending the first day of the week and the instruction that He gave to the rest of the apostles took place on the second day of the week.

So which day should you worship on? The first day of the week or the second day of the week? Because He taught more of them on the second day of the week than He did on the first day of the week. So if you're going to use that as a criteria for keeping Sunday, well then you've just lost your criteria, because now it's on another day. Let's see that as we go along.

Now v 33: "And they rose up that very hour *and* returned to Jerusalem... [Now remember, it's 7-1/2 miles. Now how fast could they go to get back there? Obviously, as soon as they knew it was Jesus, they plenty of adrenaline to go pretty quickly. Now we know they didn't do any four-minute miles, because you can't go a mile in four minutes and continue that for 7-1/2 miles. So let's figure that they had fifteen-minute miles while they were jogging to get back. That means you have seven and a half fifteen minute segments, which then is almost an hour and fifty minutes to get back. So we're looking at 4:30. So we're looking at 5:30 getting right up there to six o'clock. Maybe it was four o'clock and maybe we're dealing a little after six. But you see and you understand the time how close you are to sunset by time they get back there.] ...and they found the eleven and those with them assembled together, saying, 'In truth, the Lord has risen! And he has appeared to Simon.' Then they related the things that had happened *to them* on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of the bread. Now as they were telling these things, Jesus Himself stood in their midst... [appeared just like He disappeared] ...and said to them, 'Peace *be* to you'" (vs 33-36).

Now why were they assembled? Were they assembled there—now remember, the sun is just about ready to set. Now let's come to the account in John 20, and let's see why they were assembled. This was not the first Sunday meeting to begin the New Testament Church. There was another very valid reason why they were assembled together and we'll see it in and John records that here in John 20.

John 20:19: "Afterwards, as evening was drawing near that day, the first *day* of the weeks... [Now remember, it happened just before the day ended. So there could not be too much activity that took place on the remainder of that first day of the week.] ...and the doors were shut where the disciples had assembled for fear of the Jews...."

Now why were they afraid of the Jews? *Because remember, the guards went and told the priests and the Pharisees that His body is gone.* And

remember, they bribed them and said, ‘Well, we’ll give you the money and you go say that the disciples came and stole the body away and we’ll make it right with the governor.’ So they were afraid that the soldiers and the priests and Pharisees were going to come and arrest them and kill them, too. That’s why they were assembled there. This is not a church meeting. This is not observing another day that’s Holy instead of the Sabbath. They were there because they were scared to death and afraid they were going to be arrested and killed.

“...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). Now we’re getting pretty close in to being the second day of the week—aren’t we? Because remember the first day of the weekends at sunset. Don’t come and tell me midnight to midnight, because that has no standing here. We have to go by the facts which we see in the Scriptures.

Let’s pick up the rest of the story and see what happened, Luke 24:37: “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” (vs 37-39). Since He became a human being He could also manifest Himself back in a human-type form—flesh and bones. Of course, He did that to show them that it was really He, that He was really alive. This is phenomenal, because we don’t understand what it’s like to be crucified and die on the cross. So this is really a tremendous thing that He is alive.

Verse 40: “And after saying this, He showed them *His* hands and *His* feet. But while they were still disbelieving and wondering for joy... [Even though they had joy they still didn’t believe and He’s sitting there right in front of them. So He’s got to convince them a little bit more.] ...He said to them, ‘Do you have anything here to eat?’ Then they gave Him part of a broiled fish and a *piece* of honeycomb. And He took these *and* ate in their presence” (vs 40-43). Now how long did this take? *Fifteen minutes, twenty minutes, twenty-five minutes*—we don’t know, doesn’t tell us. But remember, we’re getting closer and closer to sundown ending the first day of the week—aren’t we? *Yes, we are!*

Now the rest of it goes on into the second day of the week, and He then taught the apostles at this time. Then He opened their minds to the Scripture, not on the first day of the week, but on the second day of the week. Remember, it took three

hours for Jesus to explain that to the two disciples as they went to Emmaus. So it took Him at least that long, maybe even more, because He went through all of the prophets with the two disciples. Now we’re going to see that He did more than that in explaining to the apostles here, so this had to be into the second day of the week. So this destroys all the logic for keeping the first day of the week because Jesus opened their minds to understanding. Can Jesus open their minds to understanding any day of the week? *Yes!* Does that change the Sabbath from the seventh day of the week to the first day of the week? *No!* But if it did, then perhaps you ought to consider the second day of the week, Monday, beginning sunset Sunday to sunset Monday, as the day of worship, if that’s going to be your criteria.

Verse 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... [This is far more than the three hours that it took for Him to explain to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus.] ...Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures” (vs 44-45). How long did that take? *Well, I’m sure with all the excitement it went on very late into the night—didn’t it? Had to have!*

“And said to them... [here’s the conclusion of it]: ...‘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). Now that had to be on the second day of the week, because this was the finality of after going through all the Scriptures in the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Him. And besides, He taught a whole lot more than just the eleven—right? There were other disciples there. There were the eleven.

All the points that they have as to those eleven reasons why that they keep Sunday have no validity in fact to change the day of worship. John 20:22: “And after saying this, He breathed on them and said, ‘Receive *the* Holy Spirit.’.... [This is when they received the begetting of the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost they received the Spirit for preaching and the extra gifts that they needed as apostles.] ...Those whose sins you shall remit, they are remitted to them; and those whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.” (vs 22-23).

In other words, they were to discern between those who would repent and didn’t. Those who repented, their sins are forgiven through repentance and baptism, laying on of hands. Those who didn’t, they didn’t receive the Holy Spirit. And you can just

put in your margin there, Acts 8, we have an example of that with Simon Magus. This is not giving any license to the Catholics to now say that you must have a priest that you confess to. No stretch of the imagination is that implied here.

Then we have the account here, now we have here Thomas. “But Thomas, called Didymus, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. Then the other disciples said to him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see the nail marks in His hands, and put my finger into the nail marks, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe at all’” (vs 24-25). Now when did that happen? Well, obviously, that was the next morning. Perhaps this happened on the day portion of the second day of the week, being Monday.

Now v 26: “Now after eight days... [This has to be going clear into Tuesday. Now here’s another important meeting. This is a repeated meeting—is it not? Why was not this day, Tuesday, used as a proclamation for a new day of worship instead of the seventh day? This is important—isn’t it? Because a doubter, Thomas, believed—didn’t he?] ...Now after eight days, His disciples again were within, and Thomas with them. Jesus came after the doors were shut, and stood in the midst and said, ‘Peace be to you’.... [So here’s a repetition of what He did eight days earlier.] ...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.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Because you have seen Me, Thomas, you have believed; blessed are the ones who have not seen, but have believed’” (vs 26-29).

Now I want you to understand how important it is to really believe the Scriptures. Don’t believe the silly arguments of men. Don’t ever again sit back and think, ‘Oh, how are we going to answer these Sunday-keepers?’ I’ll give you the real answer here in just a minute. We’re answering some of it. Never on a Sunday, maybe on a Monday, now we’ve got a Tuesday. Now what are you going to do?

Now v 30: “Now then, Jesus did many other miracles in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book.... [What about the days that those occurred on? What about those many other signs?] ...But these have been written, so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you may have life through His name” (vs 30-31).

Let’s see there were many things that were done. John 21:25: “But there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I do not suppose... [This is through His whole ministry, obviously; not just the times that He

appeared to the disciples.] ...I do not suppose that even the world itself could contain the books that would be written.” This also tells us that the apostles wrote the Gospels. They didn’t leave it through oral tradition for 400 years and then let the pagan priests of the Roman Catholicism canonize the Scriptures. *That’s a fairy tale, that’s not true!*

Now let’s come back here to the first part of John 21. What occurred this day is a very important day, too—isn’t it? Now we don’t know on what day this happened, but we do know what happened.

Verse 1: “After these things, Jesus again revealed Himself to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias....” That’s clear up in Galilee. Now was this after they met Him at the mountain in Galilee? *We’re not told.* But anyway the story is this, they were out fishing all night, they didn’t catch anything. Jesus came and stood on the shore, it was morning. They couldn’t quite make out who it was. He asked them, ‘Have you caught any fish?’ They told him no, so He said, ‘Well, cast the net on the other side.’ So they cast the net on the other side and they caught 153 fish. In the meanwhile, Jesus up on the shore, He creates a fire, has fish cooking on it, and has bread. Now where did that come from? *Jesus probably created it.* Wouldn’t you not think that’s an important day? Should we not use that as a day of criteria? Did not Jesus teach them? *Yes, He did!* Did He not miraculously feed them? *Yes, He did!* Did they not miraculously catch 153 fish, and 153 is a type of all nations, by the way. Remember when He first called them, so this goes clear back to the first calling—doesn’t it? He says, ‘Come and I will make you fishers of men.’

Now then, what took place? Verse 15: “Therefore, when they had finished eating...” After they were done eating. Now we don’t know what time of day it was. Maybe it was nine o’clock in the morning by this time. So does this show we should start services at nine in the morning? Should we be outside by a lake, should we have fish and bread? Is that what it’s telling us? When you take the logic that they have used to justify the first day of the week, when you start applying it to the things that took place after Jesus was resurrected, it all falls apart in a big heap. There is no justification for Sunday-keeping at all whatsoever, nor any command of God, nor any command of Jesus Christ. Just the justification of men wanting to keep their Sunday-keeping.

Here’s where He said to Simon Peter, v 15: “...Simon, *son* of Jonas, do you love Me more than these?” *And* he said to Him, ‘Yes Lord. You know that I love You.’ He said to him, ‘Feed My lambs.’” Now, is that not commissioning him to do a work for the church? *Yes, it is!* But it also applies to all the

other apostles as well, but chiefly to Peter because he had denied Him three times. He wanted to make sure that Peter understood that he had to love Him more than any of the others. This, by the way, did not establish Peter as the first pope. So He asked Him three times. ‘Do you love Me?’ He said, ‘Feed My sheep, feed My lambs.’

Let’s go back to the book of Matthew 28; here’s another occasion, and this occasion could be considered a reason for establishing a day of worship, based on the criteria that’s given in this book. Matthew 28:16: “Now the eleven disciples went into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed *for them to meet Him*. And when they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted” (vs 16-17). Was this a worship service? If so, should we not keep this day as an authentic day? *No! It has nothing to do with the commandment*, ‘You shall remember the Sabbath day to keep it Holy.’

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me’” (v 18). Now, what day did that meeting take place when they were there in Galilee? *We don’t know!*; it doesn’t tell us at all. When we come to the book of Acts, it’s a very interesting place right here in the book of Acts 1. We’ll see where we get ‘never on a Sunday, maybe on a Monday,’ and we could put there, ‘probably on a Tuesday, but definitely on a Thursday.’

Acts 1:1: “The first account I indeed have written, O Theophilus, concerning all things that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after giving command by the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen; to whom also, by many infallible proofs, He presented Himself alive after He had suffered, **being seen by them for forty days...**” (vs 1-3). Now which one of the forty days do you want for a day of worship? You count forty days and you have seven weeks and five days. Since He appeared to them on the first day of the week, being the first day of *the weeks*, counting toward Pentecost, you have thirty-five days, which is then five weeks and then you have five days—Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

Now notice what took place on this last fortieth day. All of the criteria for keeping Sunday fits on this day more profoundly than any other day. Therefore, according to the criteria that they have given, the Protestants should not worship on Sunday, *but Thursday*. Now let’s read that criteria again:

1. He met with the disciples
He met with them all forty days—didn’t He?—but this one is a special one.

2. He blessed them
We’ll see here, Jesus undoubtedly blessed them.

3. Commissioned them to preach
This is where He made it really clear.

4. Authority to the apostles
Yes, He gave it to them.

5. A day of joy and prayer

6. Jesus preaching the Gospel and opening their minds

Well, He opened their minds all during the forty days, but here He preached the Gospel to them.

Verse 3: “...for forty days... [being on a Thursday] ...and speaking the things concerning the Kingdom of God.... [Is that not preaching? *Yes, it is!*] ...And while *they* were assembled with *Him*... [So it was an assembly—wasn’t it? It was a meeting—wasn’t it?] ...He commanded them... [So there He’s giving them authority and commanding them.] ...not to depart from Jerusalem but to ‘await the promise of the Father, which,’ *He said*, ‘you have heard of Me. For John indeed baptized with water... [So He’s giving a sermon—isn’t He? This Thursday is really a better day *if you’re going to use this criteria* to determine which day to worship on. Then Thursday has got to be the day.] ...but you shall be baptized with *the* Holy Spirit after not many days.’ So then, when they were assembled together, they asked Him, saying, ‘Lord, will You restore the kingdom to Israel at this time?’ And He said to them... [So He’s teaching them—isn’t He?] ...‘It is not for you to know *the* times or *the* seasons, which the Father has placed in His own authority. But you yourselves shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses, both in Jerusalem... [Now here’s the commission to preach the Gospel—correct?] ...in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto *the* ends of the earth’” (vs 3-8). *Wow! What a day this must have been.*

Now notice, and this should have made this day more Holy than any of the other days, because look what took place. “And after saying these things, as they were looking at Him, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight” (v 9). That’s the day they should have made Holy, because they saw the Lord go to heaven. When you take faulty logic and follow it through and see how consistent it is, it all falls apart. Of course, we should not meet on Thursday. Of course, we should not make that a Holy day. But if you’re going to take the criteria that they have said, the reasons that they meet on Sunday, it really fits on this Thursday more perfectly than any other thing.

Now v 10: “Now while they were gazing intently up into heaven as He was going up, two men in white apparel suddenly stood by them... [Now maybe it was the same two angels that were there at the sepulcher.] ...Who also said, ‘You men of

Galilee, why do you stand *here* looking up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, Who was taken up from you into heaven, shall come in exactly the same manner as you have seen Him go into heaven.’ Then they returned to Jerusalem from *the mountain* called Mount of Olives, which is near Jerusalem, being *about* the distance of a Sabbath’s journey. And after entering Jerusalem, they went up into the upper chamber, where both Peter and James were staying... [it lists all of the apostles] ...All these were steadfastly continuing with one accord in prayer and supplications, *together* with *the* women, including Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers” (vs 10-14). Now that ought to give good criteria for making a day Holy.

I am being a little foolish and factious, and as the Apostle Paul said, ‘The false apostles forced him to be foolish.’ So what I have done, I have taken *their* arguments and applied it in the way that they say they apply it and we really come up with Thursday as the day of worship.

Let’s come back to Matthew 28 and let’s see what they were to teach. Obviously, it was not to get rid of the Sabbath Day. That is ludicrous! Any man who says that Jesus came to do away with the law does not understand the Scriptures. Anyone who said that because of these things we keep Sunday, doesn’t really understand what he’s saying. In other words, their minds have not been opened to understand the Truth about Jesus Christ. Their minds are closed. Let’s see what Jesus said and then there are a couple of other Scriptures that we will add to it to show and make it absolutely clear that ***no man can undo the Sabbath of God*** and proclaim another day Holy regardless of the circumstances involved.

Matthew 28:18: “And Jesus came *and* spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore, go *and* make disciples in all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; Teaching them to observe ***all things that I have commanded you***....” (vs 18-20). Now nowhere did Jesus command that Sunday was to replace Sabbath. That cannot be included in any the instructions that Jesus gave the apostles. So the apostles never taught Sunday-keeping. The apostles taught the Scriptures. Even as late just before the death of Paul, Paul wrote Timothy and said, ‘You have known the Holy Scriptures from a child which are able to make you wise unto salvation through Jesus Christ.’

There is no basis for Sunday-keeping at all:

- anywhere in the Scriptures
- any place
- in any time
- for any reason

- for any excuse
- there is no justification for it at all whatsoever.

Now let’s come back here to Deuteronomy 18, and let’s read this again. I know we have read this, but we need to read this again, so that we can really get our perspective straight. Here’s Moses speaking and this is a prophecy of Jesus Christ. This is one of the prophecies that Jesus opened to their understanding on that night being the second day of the week when He went through the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms. This is a vitally important one to understand.

Deuteronomy 18:15: “The LORD your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, One like me. To Him you shall hearken, According to all that you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, so that I do not die’” (vs 15-16). In other words, Christ coming in the flesh was an answer to those Israelites who rejected listening to the commandments of God, which the fourth commandment said, ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it Holy.’

Verse 17: “And the LORD said to me [Moses], ‘They have spoken well what they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet... [Who is Christ] ...from among their brethren, *One* like you, and will put My words in His mouth.... [So He spoke everything that God the Father wanted Him to speak.] ...And He shall speak to them all that I shall command Him. And it shall come to pass, whatever man will not hearken to My words which He shall speak in My name, **I will require it of him**. But the prophet who shall presume to speak a word in My name... [The eleven reasons why we keep Sunday. That is presumptuous in the name of Christ.] ...which I have not commanded... [And He never commanded Sunday-keeping.] ...him to speak or who shall speak in the name of other gods, **even that prophet shall die**’” (vs 17-20).

Sunday-keeping *leads to death*. Sunday-keeping *has nothing to do with true Christianity*. Let’s come to John 12 to show that Jesus is enforcing these words true to what He has said. Anyone who believes the silly arguments of Sunday-keeping certainly do not believe the Scriptures. You may use some of them. You may have a fuzzy feeling in your heart. You may feel good about it. You may have joy and *praise worship* on Sunday, but you know nothing about God.

John 12:47—this is a fulfillment of Deut. 18 and Christ is ***the One***: “‘But if anyone hears My words and does not believe... [And He said, ‘Think

not that I've come to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I come not to destroy, but fulfill.' And there are many people who don't believe that.] ...I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has one who judges him; the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day'" (vs 47-48). That's when the workers of lawlessness are going to say to Jesus, 'Haven't we done many wonderful works? Haven't we preached in your name, cast out demons and prophesied?' And He will say, 'I never knew you. Depart from me you workers of lawlessness.'

Verse 49: "For I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father, Who sent Me, gave Me commandment Himself, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. Therefore whatever I speak, I speak exactly as the Father has told Me'" (vs 49-50).

So that's why we should keep the seventh day Sabbath.

Remember—Never on a Sunday, maybe on a Monday, kind of on a Tuesday, but definitely on a Thursday—if you're going to use the kind of logic that is given here in this book.

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

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 12:2
- 2) Matthew 28:1
- 3) Mark 16:1
- 4) Luke 23:50-56
- 5) Luke 24:1
- 6) John 20:1-2
- 7) Matthew 28:2-8
- 8) Luke 24:2-12
- 9) Mark 16:2-9
- 10) John 20:3-17
- 11) Luke 24:29, 13-36
- 12) John 20:19-20
- 13) Luke 24:37-48
- 14) John 20:22-31
- 15) John 21:25, 1, 15
- 16) Matthew 28:16-18
- 17) Acts 1:1-14
- 18) Matthew 28:18-20
- 19) Deuteronomy 18:15-20
- 20) John 12:47-50

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Hebrews 4:9
- Acts 2, 8

Also referenced:

Sermon Series: *Refuting Sunday-Keeping #10*

Books:

- *The Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter
- *Sunday Facts and Sabbath Fiction* by Russell Tardo

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