

save

The Sabbath Sentinel

JUNE 1986



Vacation Every Week!

By Buddy Kruger

What? A vacation every week! You're crazy! Only presidents, kings or movie stars could do that! What do you mean I could take a vacation every weekend.

Now, wait a minute: I sure could use that. My career's a real killer. I've got to do a lot of overtime. And then I'm attending these personal improvement seminars for executives on the side. Scarcely have time to eat. And my family . . . running here, running there . . . we see each other usually about once a day if we're lucky. My marriage is slipping away from me. You know, those neat together-times my wife and I used to enjoy were crowded out long ago. I just hate this mess! But I don't know how to stop.

Tell me about this vacation idea. I don't see how you really think I could do it and survive.

Do you ever feel that way? Your life waiting some impending explosion or breakdown? Time running out on you, on your kids, on your marriage? Too busy to quit? Barely managing to keep going? Do you need an escape, a vacation, a break, a new "charging up"? Join the clan! There's millions of people "in the same boat." But millions more have learned to cope.

Allow me to "trade" secrets with you. You can escape, get that break, be recharged, and stop the erosion of your life. You can vacation every weekend and not lose at all but really gain. Here's how millions of other busy, successful people are doing it.

The Stopping Place

The Creator God who made you and me and all this planet knew we'd have these difficulties with time-stress. So, in the very beginning when setting up the days of the week, He appointed a special

time for us to use for just such a vacation, every weekend. He even gave it a unique name: "cessation", "stopping", or "Sabbath". It meant a whole day in which to stop, to cease, to quit.

Quit what?

Everything you've had to be doing for the last six days: all that "pressure-cooker living you've been doing; quit so you can relax, unwind, and recuperate your energies.

You'll find His Word on this in the Bible, Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:8-11, and Hebrews 4:9-11. In other words, a weekly mini-vacation for mankind has been in God's plan for a long time. But so few have tried it or even known about it that our race is about to annihilate itself because of the stress created by living without it.

Worth the Results

Wherever people really try God's plan and follow out His

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instructions closely, dramatic, beautiful things begin to happen to them.

A new sense of control over their own circumstances grows in them. A new calmness and peace settles down over their minds. They discover the thrill of a new independence from the "rat race," the tyranny of the clock, the demands of the job, from the hoarse voices of competing, driving producers and consumers. Life's best priorities begin to come into focus. One has the sense of belonging to the maximum, the best and more secure "Foundation" in the universe. It's that feeling of "rootedness" in something that will last. This is not a local concern, not a state-wide or national corporation. It's bigger than any world organization or man-made planetary "network." This belongingness takes in the entire cosmic universe as one becomes an active member of the Creator's family. Experiencing Sabbath God's way puts you in touch with His life, His ideas, His plans, His eternity and powers—with reality itself. This puts earthly life into

proper perspective, filling its affairs with new meaning and direction.

Preparing Ahead of Time

As it is with any vacation, so it is with Sabbath: to be able to really stop, rest, and enjoy the freedom this cessation will give, you need to make some definite arrangements ahead of time. In Christ's day Friday was called "the Preparation Day" (Mark 15:42; Luke 23:54-56), because people got ready for Sabbath before it came. This still holds true today and is a meaningful practice to adopt and cherish. Quit work early Friday. Depending on your occupation, rearrange things to quit a few hours before sunset. You can also be doing preparation things on the other days leading up to Friday. The more you prepare ahead, the more complete will be your refreshment.

Several things may need your attention. For a vacation we get foods ready ahead of time so fixing meals will be fast, simple, and less fuss. Forget complicated recipes and a lot of slaving over the stove. Choose simple foods like more whole, fresh fruits and vegetables and good homemade bread. Fix

foods easy to cook Friday and then warm up on Sabbath. The cook needs to vacation too (Exodus 16:23-30). For vacation we plan our activities ahead somewhat and assemble everything we'll need. We pick out special clothes. Then we're done! and we're off! Vacation has come! And a peace begins to settle down over us like a soft downy blanket.

Sabbath Celebration

The real benefits of Sabbath come to man by using the time to be God's guest, letting Him lead as our royal Host. When doing this our attention is fixed on Him, and we keep ourselves tuned in to His Words and wishes. He has celebration on His mind and has told us to celebrate on Sabbath (Exodus 31:16, Ezekiel 20:12,20). It is the day to celebrate His creatorship and all-providing love. He invites us to lay aside all thoughts of materialism, buying and selling, self- or job-centered tasks, demands, goals and schedules. Refuse to give them any further attention during His day. Instead, step into a new dimension, for the best vacation is a complete change, allowing Him to fill our attention. "Cessation" refreshes and renews man by giving him a specific, quiet, time to meet with God, and reach out from his narrow, cramped existence up to His unlimited Person and resources. Such an opportunity coming every week should arouse a great sense of gratitude and celebration.

So this is a time to practice genuine love in turning away from self-pursuits and interests to attend to His needs, listen to His voice, concern oneself with His recognition, learn what one can from His vast store of wisdom and knowledge; celebrate His goodness.

Some "Hows"

On Friday prepare for celebration by putting up some

special decorations or arrangements. Make as big a difference as possible in your home environment, personal attitudes and activities. Show that you have prepared for His presence and a real celebration.

Do no work on Sabbath more than mere survival tasks or real necessities.

Put His Word at the heart of your Sabbath hours. Ask Him to speak to you there as you read and meditate. As a family event take turns reading aloud around your circle. Make it the point of your reading to find Jesus Christ, His characteristics, what He's like, what He's done for you, promises you and plans for your future.

Then talk with Him about His ideas and thoughts that you've found in His Word. Unload your week's disappointments, mistakes, felt needs and fears on Him. He loves to carry them away from you and replace them with hope and new courage (John 1:29, Hebrews 4:14-16).

Give creative expression of your praise to Him in sharing musical pieces together—singing, instrumentals, group songs.

Seek a group worship experience with those outside your family, other Sabbath-celebrating Christians. Here God can speak with you in a new way through spiritual sharing between those of similar faith.

Spend some time out close to nature in the fields, forests, mountains, at a lake, river, park, or other nature spot—places where God can show you His handiwork and creative skill. Give your senses to Him to impress with new object lessons of truth. Record these lessons in sights, sounds, tastes, smells, in a notebook for future encouragement and sharing with others.

Go with Him to assist any fellow human beings along the way

with emergency needs or physical suffering. Doing good toward others in need is always appropriate during God's Sabbath. That's what He does (Luke 13:10-17; 14:1-6).

As we can see by now, when God gave the Sabbath to mankind in the heart of His Ten Commandment Law (Exodus 20:8-11), He was asking us to remember Him. The Sabbath vacation experience reflects His own goodness to man, provides for his core needs in a stress-filled world, and opens up before him a path of eternal growth in companionship with His Creator. Sabbath is the crown of God's presence and the summit of His wonderful law and character.

Don't delay another week to join Christians around the world in this vital and life-saving vacation. Put yourself into the channel of joy and restoring peace. Survive all your crises, surmount all your difficulties, and triumph over all obstacles by meeting your Maker on His Holy Day.

*—excerpted from Weimar Bulletin,
of which the author serves as editor.*

“IN FOR LIFE”

Did you know that you can become a lifetime member of the Bible Sabbath Association for a contribution of \$500 within a one-year period?

Several folks have taken advantage of these lifetime memberships. What about you?

For further information, write to:

**The Bible Sabbath
Association
Fairview, Oklahoma 73737**

How to Promote the Sabbath in Your Area

The following is one of many different ads that have been placed in local newspapers by BSA members.

TRED OF THE RAT RACE?

**Discover the wonder-
ful day of rest God
created just for you.**

Write:

**Bible Sabbath
Association
Fairview, OK,
73737**

If you are interested in sponsoring ads in your local newspapers, we can help you. Write for our information sheed entitled, "Reaching Out Through Local Advertising."

**The Bible Sabbath
Association
RD 1, Box 222
Fairview, OK 73737**

**“The witness of the Spirit” is
the only testimony received in the
court of heaven.**

**Failure is simply the oppor-
tunity to start over again (I John
1:9).**

from the
**PRESIDENT'S
DESK**



May I share a prayer with you?

*Praise be to You, O Lord and Holy Father in heaven.
You are so righteous and full of majesty.
You are patient to perfection with us, your earthling children.
Now, my Father, I have been amazed at the realization as never
before*

*That you believe in us who put our trust in You.
I bow in awe before You; I sing praises to You!
My heart is deeply moved by You; I'm listening, Lord!
I love You—through Christ Jesus my Savior.
Now, let your blessing and patience and trust and love
Be upon the reader who is holding this SABBATH SENTINEL
In his or her hands. He or she is listening, too. Amen.*

We want to make an announcement to all our readers and supporters. The 12 officers and directors-at-large (6 of each) of The Bible Sabbath Association have recently voted on three matters, all related to the work of Richard Wiedenheft, our only salaried employee (on a one-half time basis so far). We have voted to appoint Mr. Wiedenheft as editor of THE SABBATH SENTINEL. He has been acting editor for a year and doing highly commendable work. We also voted to provide him with a policy regarding the acceptance of advertisements for publication in the SENTINEL.

*We are also furnishing Mr. Wiedenheft with an appropriate title for his position as our BSA representative to all Sabbath-believing peoples and the public-at-large. His new title will be *Executive Director*, thus doing away with the temporary, job-descriptive appellation we have used since he was hired two years ago. These three actions were effective as of May 1, 1986.*

We believe God has brought Dick to us, even as He has brought others as volunteers over the years. God will help us to do the right thing and advance by faith.

Dick's current, time-consuming project is a brand new edition of a directory listing the variety of Sabbath-keeping groups and churches all over the country. It will be the most comprehensive and attractive directory we have yet published. Please order yours before you start out on your summer trips.

Leroy C. Bass, President
Washington Island, Wisconsin

News From BSA

Directory Publication Time Near

As you read this, Bible Advocate Press in Denver should be in the midst of printing the new *Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups*. It provides information about more than 185 groups. In addition, there is information about more than 80 periodicals (most of them available without subscription price) and 25 educational institutions. There are 30 pages of ads by more than 40 different advertisers: The geographical index indicates which groups are active in more than 500 cities in North America (Seventh-day Adventist churches not included).

Once again, we want to thank all who had a part in making it possible for us to publish this truly valuable resource.

Directory Price Set

After several discussions, BSA leaders set the cover price for the new *Directory* at an even \$7, post paid. Price takes effect June 1, when the pre-publication offer expires.

Take BSA Directories to Summer Meetings

If you are attending a meeting with other Sabbathkeepers this summer, perhaps you can help distribute the new *Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups*. We are looking for a limited number of people who can accept a supply of directories on consignment—to be distributed at these meetings. If you are interested, please write to BSA immediately for details.

BSA Director Marries

Early in 1984, BSA Director Gilbert Sanford was in Mexico with a group of volunteers who were there

to put a roof on a church. Another volunteer on the project was Pearl Gourley, a widow of 5 years. Gilbert and Pearl kept in touch and eventually decided to marry. The wedding was held on January 10, 1986, at the Winterhaven, California, home of a retired Seventh-day Adventist minister. A week later they were in their motor home in Colonia, Mexico, ready to work on another church building project. The couple is now residing at St. Rt. Box 200, Pendleton, Oregon, 97801. Congratulations to both of you!

Writers Guide Available

A one-page guide is available for anyone interested in writing for THE SABBATH SENTINEL. It covers optimum length for articles, comments about topics, editorial policies, etc. Write Editor Richard A. Wiedenheft, RD 1, Box 475, Falls, PA 18615.

We're Looking for News

We're interested in all kinds of news about seventh-day people, congregations, denominations, and ministries. If you know about happenings that would be of interest to other Sabbathkeepers, please let us know. We'll consider including the information in our column "News from the Seventh-Day Community."

CHANGE OF ADDRESS????

By all means notify us in advance when you move. If we send a SENTINEL to your old address, the post office charges us 30¢ to return it—and you risk missing that issue.

News from the Seventh-Day Community

The Quiet Hour Announces Plans for TV Specials

"Harvest 90" is the Seventh-day Adventist Church's slogan for its soul-winning campaign during the last half of the decade. The Quiet Hour, which sponsors weekly radio and television programs, is focusing on North America during that period. The organization is asking supporters to provide support for six consecutive prime-time specials in the cities that currently carry the weekly "Search" telecast. Speaker LaVerne Tucker plans to reveal in the six hour-long programs the true character of God from eternity in the past to the end of the great controversy. The six-night series will be followed up by three months or more of public and personal evangelism.

Growing Response to Garner Ted Armstrong Program

The Garner Ted Armstrong Evangelistic Association announced that it is receiving record volumes of mail and phone calls from the telecast aired on WGN Chicago and new programs in Akron and Houston. The Association also announced plans for summer baptismal tours into most parts of the U.S.

Response to new "The World Tomorrow" Telecast

It is reported that the Worldwide Church of God is receiving an average of approximately 16,000 phone calls in response to each of its weekly telecasts. The response for new speakers, David Hulme, David Albert, and Richard Ames is about the same as it was for Herbert Armstrong before his death in

January.

Brazilian Convention

The Brazilian Church of God (7th Day) held a national convention last February (summer-time south of the equator). Almost 300 people from about 10 Brazilian states attended. A new board of directors was elected, with Pastor Gilberta Pedro da Silva as president, and Altair Junqueira as vice-president. There were seven ordinations and a young student was appointed to work with their full-time evangelist Flavio S. Carvalho.

We're Looking for News

We're interested in all kinds of news for this column—news about seventh-day people, congregations, denominations, ministries, etc. If you know about happenings that would be of interest to other Sabbathkeepers, please let us know; we'll consider including the information here. Photos of news are also welcomed. Include s.a.s.e. if you want photos returned.

Thought to Grow On: "Like a rudder to a ship is the Sabbath in the life of every Christian who devotes its sacred hours to God. To hold one steady to his Christian course; to direct his perilous way amid the storms of life; to bring him back to the chartered path if a sudden tempest has driven him aside; all this, and more, can the Sabbath do for any conscientious observer of the holy day."

—Dr. Loyal F. Hurley
as quoted in Berean SDB Church Bulletin



A baptismal service in Brazil during the annual convention of the Church of God (7th Day). Elders Aganor and Almeida are in the water. (Photo courtesy *The Fellowship Herald*)

Sabbath: Reprieve from Curse

Sin brought upon man the curse of toil. God said to Adam, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'you must not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; through pain and toil you will eat of it all the days of your life . . . By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food . . ." Man was cursed to toil for his living.

The Sabbath released man from this curse for one day out of seven. I believe the world is still under the curse, otherwise it would not be necessary to work for a living.

It is ironic that many Christians believe that Christ has set man free from the Sabbath. If Christ did free man from the Sabbath, then it is a freedom that places him back under the curse of toil on that day. The curse was not

limited to specific days. Only a command from God could suspend it. That command was, "Keep the Sabbath holy." If the Sabbath command is no longer in effect, then the curse of toil remains in effect seven days a week.

—Gary Hemminger in
The Sabbath Recorder

Gift Subscriptions

You can share **THE SABBATH SENTINEL** with a Sabbath-keeping friend or acquaintance—an older person who is alone, a friend who has moved away, a pastor or church leader—anyone who is interested in knowing more about the Sabbath and Sabbathkeepers.

Gift subscriptions are only \$10 each (\$12 foreign). Send names and addresses and appropriate donation to The Bible Sabbath Association, Fairview, OK 73737.

What Really Lasts?



Putting together the new Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups has been a very interesting challenge, one that yields some interesting statistics. The 1980 edition listed 139 groups; the new edition will list more than 180. Somewhere near 50 of the groups in the 1980 edition don't appear to be active in 1986. Of the groups listed in the new edition, approximately 86 are listed for the first time. And at least 40 groups listed have roots in other organizations that are still listed. A survey of the history of churches throughout the Christian era would undoubtedly reveal similar

statistics.

Organizations are simply not permanent. From the time of the apostles, organizations have come and grown large; they have fractured and spawned other groups. New movements have arisen and flourished (often at the expense of established organizations); they have evolved into established organizations in their own time, only to experience dissent and division. On and on it goes.

Organizations, as useful and important as they are, are temporary and serve a purpose only for a time. They do not last; they do not inherit eternal life. It is individuals who, through the Savior, will live for all eternity! It seems rather a shame then that all too often individuals get lost in the shuffle and machinations of organizations, in the rising, fracturing, and falling of churches.

C. S. Lewis wrote, "Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendors." Oh that we could learn to more effectively use organizations as tools to minister to people whom we'll spend eternity with, rather than using people to serve organizations that are here today and gone tomorrow.

—Richard A. Wiedenheft



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The Bible Sabbath Association is a nonsectarian, non-denominational association dedicated to bringing together into one strong organization all believers in the Biblical seventh-day Sabbath (Saturday) regardless of sect, creed, or denomination. Its sole purpose is to promote communication, understanding and respect among all Sabbathkeepers and to spread the knowledge of, belief in, and observance of the Creator's Holy Day. The only qualification for membership in BSA is belief in the seventh-day Sabbath.

Annual Member Contribution: Regular Membership, \$20; Family Membership, \$25 (individual member certificates issued but only one set of records and one copy of THE SABBATH SENTINEL and other mailings is sent); Life Membership, \$500 or more contributed during one year. All memberships include annual subscription to THE SABBATH SENTINEL.

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Renewal Notice: Please renew your BSA membership or subscription automatically before the month and year printed on your address label.

Change of Address: Please notify us at least six weeks in advance of a change of address.

Bulk Subscriptions: Bulk subscriptions are available if 10 or more copies are sent in the same package. They are \$5 for each of at least 10 subscriptions. \$8 for each subscription overseas.

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Writers: Send manuscripts to Editor Richard A. Wiedenheft, R.D. 1, Box 475, Falls, PA 18615, Phone (717) 378-2056. Manuscripts should be typewritten, double spaced, with wide margins on all sides; use only one side of paper. If you want manuscripts returned, please enclose self-addressed stamped envelope. We invite articles on various aspects of the Sabbath and on other subjects of general interest to Sabbathkeepers, however, we cannot pay for them. A writer's guide is available on request.

Opinions expressed in articles are those of the writers and not necessarily of The Bible Sabbath Association.

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Often a sin, if it is to run its course, will pass through certain stages. The story of David and Bathsheba offers a classic example of the life cycle of a sin. The main elements of the story will be traced out; however, you may want to refresh your memory by reading II Samuel 11 and 12.

STAGE ONE: Opportunity

"Then it happened one evening that David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of the king's house. And from the roof he saw a woman bathing, and the woman was very beautiful to behold" (II Samuel 11:2). So far David had not necessarily sinned. Certainly he could not help noticing that a woman was taking a bath and that she was very beautiful—what we are not told is how he looked at her or what his thoughts were.

STAGE TWO: Pursue with curiosity

"So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, 'Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?' " (vs.3) Perhaps David could have her for himself. After all, he was a king, and kings did that sort of thing. Have you ever flirted with the possibility of doing something, only to get a red flag—assurance that the thing was wrong?

STAGE THREE: Decision

"Then David sent messengers, and took her . . ." (vs. 4) Knowing the woman was married and that her husband was at battle, David decided to do something, something he never should have entertained thoughts of doing. He simply had no business whatsoever with

Bathsheba.

STAGE FOUR: Action

" . . . And she came to him, and he lay with her . . ." (vs. 4) Up to this stage David could have aborted the life cycle of this sin with few repercussions. But now he had followed through on his decision by taking action—action that indelibly impacted many lives for the worse.

STAGE FIVE: Direct repercussions

"And the woman conceived; so she sent and told David, and said, 'I am with child.' " (vs. 5) God's laws are logical. Often to break one is to suffer direct repercussions. It is like an equation. 2 plus 2 equals 4.

STAGE SIX: Attempted cover-up

"And David said to Uriah, 'Go down to your house and wash your feet.' " David had more in mind for Uriah than having his feet washed! By getting Uriah off the battlefield and home with Bathsheba, it might be possible to deceive people into thinking Uriah was the father of the child in Bathsheba's womb. In order to cover up one sin, it is often necessary to commit another. But deceit was only David's first follow-up sin.

STAGE SEVEN: Seared conscience/impaired logic

Uriah nobly refused to sleep with his beautiful wife in the comfort of his home while his comrades were sleeping out on the battlefield, so David had to resort to new measures to deal with the problem his sin had created. ". . . David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it by the hand of Uriah. And he wrote in the letter, saying, 'Set Uriah in the forefront of the

ycle of a Sin

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hottest battle, and retreat from him, that he may be struck down and die.' " (vs. 14,15)

Certainly the gravity of David's guilt was heavy enough before he chose to have Uriah killed. But his conscience was seared, and his logic impaired. It did not matter that other Israelite soldiers died with Uriah. In David's sin conquest, the only thing that mattered was self.

STAGE EIGHT: Retribution

"Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised me, and taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.' Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes and give them to your neighbor, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of the sun. For you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.' " (12:10-12)

This prophecy came from the mouth of Nathan, whom God sent to David. "Then David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the Lord.' And Nathan said to David, 'The Lord also has put away your sin; you shall not die. However, because by this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also who is born to you shall surely die.' " (vs. 13,14)

God made it clear at Mount Sinai that future generations suffer from the sins of their forefathers. The pop psychology that says "Do your own thing as long as you don't hurt anyone else" works about as well as a shovelful of dirt in your gastank. No sin is committed in a

vacuum. Sin, by its very nature, contaminates and produces a negative influence on society and on future generations.

What should we learn from this case study on the life cycle of a sin?

First, it is never too late to repent. Ultimately David did repent (for the stirring account of David's repentance, see Psalm 51), but not until confronted by Nathan. God wants nothing more than for His children to be forgiven and reconciled to Him. This can happen at any stage throughout the life cycle of a sin. But we must often live with the consequences of our sins long after we are forgiven by God. David did.

The most important lesson to learn from David's sin conquest is this: The best time to turn to God is before sinning, not after. Had David sought God for strength in his hour of temptation with the same fervency that he sought his forgiveness afterwards, just think of the pain and suffering that could have been avoided.

"Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death." (James 1:14-15).

The phenomena of sin is no longer the mystery it was to Adam and Eve. Its fruits are thoroughly documented by history. Its impact on lives is like the widening rings on a pond disturbed by the toss of a stone. Sin produces grave consequences, which, if considered seriously in advance, might turn your temptation into revulsion.

—the author pastors a congregation in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

On the Legal Front

The following four cases are based upon the Winter 1986 issue of *Court Report*, a publication of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Theresa O'Malley became an Adventist after seven years' with Simpson-Sears Limited (Sears of Canada). Telling Sears she could no longer work Friday nights and Saturdays, she was threatened with firing and accepted a change in status to part-time, losing about half her pay. She sued for better terms and won. The Supreme Court of Canada held that Sears did not show it would suffer undue hardship in accommodating her beliefs while maintaining her in a full-time job. The case turned on many legal points and was considered a narrow interpretation, that is, one which does not set precedent to be applied to a large range of situations. It is one of the first to be decided after Canada's new Charter of Human Rights and the recent Canadian Human Rights Act.

Mr. Philbrook (apparently a member of the Worldwide Church of God, which observes the Levitical Holy Days) teaches for the Ansonia, Connecticut, school district. This employer allows three days off each year for religious reasons and three for personal reasons excluding faith. Since Mr. Philbrook took all six for holy day observance, the school district insisted that he not be paid for three of them. The 2nd US Court of Appeals ruled that Mr. Philbrook should be paid. His idea to use the non-religious personal days to cover religious activity posed no undue hardship to the employer. When both parties propose reasonable solutions, the court said, the employee's must be

accepted. The Supreme Court will review this case.

Mr. Gibson, an engineer for the Missouri Pacific Railroad, had Saturdays off because of his Adventist beliefs. He was transferred to another location, but had too little seniority there to get Sabbaths off. Another worker agreed to a shift switch; but the railroad refused to pay the resulting overtime. The US District Court for Eastern Arkansas found that MoPac didn't have to accommodate him in an engineer's job because other positions were available and disrupting a bona fide seniority system was not a remedy required by law.

Mr. Smith refused to work on Sunday and was fired by Pyro Mining Company in Kentucky. The firm had allowed employees to negotiate shift swaps with others; but that did not work for Mr. Smith. The US District Court for Western Kentucky said that Pyro had not gone far enough to accommodate him because a passive system that lets a worker try to help himself isn't enough. A company must make positive efforts.

Comment: Compare this to the case above. In the first a worker could not force a shift swap that would cost overtime and (presumably) violate a labor contract. In the second a company couldn't use a hit-and-miss voluntary shift switching scheme as its only accommodation to a worker. The cases aren't the same, so the findings aren't contradictory. They involve different circumstances and subtleties of the law. Regardless of our feelings on specific issues, the mental training of studying these

court decisions can make us more logical and prepared to deal wisely with Caesar.

Legal Update: The June, 1985, issue of *THE SABBATH SENTINEL* noted the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission order to Hershey Medical Center to rehire Wallace M. Swinehart. The security guard and Worldwide Church member had been fired after HMC began requiring Sabbath work. Commonwealth Court reversed the reinstatement, citing undue hardship to the hospital. The case was the first to be pursued against the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Swinehart's employer) and may have set a precedent.

All public activity is banned by law, except church attendance, in the Outer Hebrides, an island chain off Scotland. Most residents

are members of the strict Free Presbyterian Church; but some have demanded a change after a rash of January auto accidents. Government trucks were not allowed to spread salt from midnight Saturday to Monday morning. Because doctors and others risked their lives on icy roads, the All-Island Council has allowed crews to be called by police or medical personnel "in an emergency." Most folks seem satisfied with the change, though one elder complained it is "the thin edge of the wedge that ushers in a godless Sabbath." Is keeping a car out of the ditch on Sunday as permissible as pulling an ox out of one on Saturday?

News items and comments may be sent to Mr. Mesick at RD 1, Box 299-1, Hartly, DE 19953.

Sabbathkeeping Christians in China

By Dr. John Wu

According to reliable information from the Chinese Church Research Center, published in the *Vancouver News* on January 3, 1984, there are between 25 and 50 million Christians in house churches in Mainland China. The major, indigenous house churches are: the Jesus Family, the Little Flock, and the True Jesus Church. The True Jesus Church, which has more than 38,000 members on Taiwan, 1200 in Europe, 20,000 in Asia, 2500 in Africa, and almost 1000 in North America, is a Sabbathkeeping church.

Since the True Jesus Church is

the number one house church in China, it is reasonable to estimate that its membership is at least a few million. This estimate may be partially supported by two witnesses who came out from China to visit their relatives. The first one is a member of the True Jesus Church who lives in Fu-ching County, Fukien Province. She testified that there are more than 50,000 members of the True Jesus Christ in her county. (I heard her testimony in Boston two years ago.) The other witness visited Japan and testified that all the 40,000 inhabitants of South Sun Island are

members of the True Jesus Church, because the Holy Spirit raised a dead person after a long prayer by church members.

The growth that God has manifested in China is very exciting. Membership of the True Jesus Church increased from 120,000 before World War II to a few million in recent years, even under strict communist control and severe persecution.

The reason for this incredible increase (approximately 20 to 30 times) in the True Jesus Church in

China is due to the great spiritual power of God, who frequently shows signs and miracles. This fact proves that the Lord worked with them and manifested a mysterious result; therefore the more the persecution, the more our church grew, as God manifested during the time of the early apostolic church.

—An elder of the True Jesus Church and a medical doctor, the author lives near New York City where he is engaged in cancer research at Columbia University.

A Brief History of the First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Toronto, Ontario

By Herlitz Condison

It was in the summer of 1973 that three Seventh Day Baptists, originally from Jamaica, decided to start meeting on Sabbaths in order to establish a Sabbath School group. The three members were Isolyn Sinclair, Sylvia Lindo and Herlitz Condison. Our first meeting took place in the apartment of Sister Sinclair and her husband, Brother Elon Sinclair.

As the word of our meeting got around, others started to attend and, after about six weeks, we started to meet in the home of John and Freda Cain and their nine children. In 1974 we rented space in the Temple Baptist Church in the eastern section of Toronto. Other SDBs living in Toronto heard about the group, and it was not long before we had a vibrant SDB Fellowship going.

With the help of Rev. L. R. Lawton, then corresponding secretary of the SDB Missionary

Society, we drafted a constitution with the idea of organizing ourselves into the first SDB church in Canada. The constitution was submitted to the federal government in Ottawa since we would come under the Non-Profit Organizations Act. In 1978, our constitution and proposed method of operation were accepted, and we received our tax-free status.

Just about that time (August 1978) we outgrew the rented facilities at Temple Baptist Church and, although there were not many of us with good steady jobs, we decided—after seeing the leading of our God—to purchase a church. On the first Sabbath in September, 1978, we moved into our church—**The First Seventh Day Baptist Church** of Toronto, located at 48 Fisher Street in downtown Toronto, a little west of the center of the city.

*—condensed from
The Sabbath Recorder*

The Sabbath Is Changed to Sunday

By Richard A. Wiedenheft

It took many decades, even centuries, for the post-apostolic church to change the Sabbath to Sunday. The substitution did not come about because of the Apostles' teaching. Rather it was the result of religious, political, and social forces that existed in the Roman Empire during the first three centuries after Christ. Church leaders of that period compromised the teachings of the Word of God because of pressures from the pagan Roman world.

In brief summary, this is what happened: At certain times the leaders in the Roman world were very anti-Jewish. As a result, Christians found it expedient to adopt an anti-Jewish attitude. Church leaders, particularly at Rome (the seat of the Empire), moved as far away as possible from anything that was considered Jewish—especially the Sabbath. They substituted Sunday, a day that was much more acceptable in the pagan Roman world at that time.

Roman Attitudes

The anti-Jewish attitude of the Romans during the first and second centuries A.D. is quite evident in their writings. Listed below are the names of five Roman writers and passages that indicate the attitude of each toward the Jews. The quotations are taken from the outstanding work *From Sabbath to Sunday* by Samuele Bacchiocchi (The Pontifical Gregorian University Press, Rome, 1977); page

numbers are given in parenthesis. Seneca (ca. 4 B.C. to 65 A.D.)

"This fervent stoic railed against the customs of this 'accursed race [the Jews] . . .' and especially their Sabbath-keeping: 'By introducing one day of rest in every seven, they lost in idleness almost a seventh of their life . . .'" (p. 173).

Persius (34 to 62 A.D.)

" . . . presents the Jewish customs as the first example of superstitious beliefs. The Jewish Sabbath, particularly, is adduced as his first proof that superstition enslaves man" (p. 174).

Martial (ca. A.D. 40-104)

" . . . the circumcised Jews and their Sabbath are a synonym of degradation" (p. 175).

Plutarch (ca. A.D. 46-119)

" . . . surpassed all his predecessors in bitterness. The Jews, according to this historian, descend from lepers expelled from Egypt . . . Their indolence on the Sabbath commemorates the day they left Egypt. 'All their customs,' Tacitus writes, 'are perverse and disgusting' . . ." (p. 176).

Tacitus (ca. A.D. 55-120)

" . . . surpassed all his

predecessors in bitterness The Jews, according to this historian, descend from lepers expelled from Egypt . . . Their indolence on the Sabbath commemorates the day they left Egypt. 'All their customs,' Tacitus writes, 'are perverse and disgusting' . . ." (p. 176).

In view of these attitudes among the Romans, it is no wonder that Josephus, the Jewish historian of the first century, wrote so extensively in defense of his people even though he sympathized with the Romans.

Political Repression of Jews

In view of these anti-Jewish attitudes, it is not surprising that the Romans should take repressive political and economic measures against the Jews from time to time.

Emperor Claudius, about 54 A.D., expelled the Jews from Rome, including Jewish Christians Priscilla and Aquilla (Acts 18:2). At that time, Christian Jews were not differentiated from Jews in general. They suffered equally under Claudius.

During the 60's A.D., anti-Jewish sentiment culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 A.D. Emperor Vespasian abolished the high priesthood and the Sanhedrin and prohibited worship at the temple site.

Around 135 A.D. Emperor Hadrian made it a crime to practice the Jewish religion. It became illegal to rest on the Sabbath!

What would you do if the practice of your faith became illegal? Obey God rather than men? Or compromise for the sake of expedience?

Many Christians, especially Jewish Christians, continued to observe the Sabbath as they had been taught by the Apostles.

However, as the political pressures increased, other Christians began to compromise. They did what was practical, adopting a position of *accommodation with the Roman Empire and differentiation from the Jews*. They yielded to the forces of the world around them instead of being faithful to the will of God.

Anti-Jewish Attitude Adopted by Christians

The Apostles were Jews; and even though they criticized Jewish leaders for their failure to accept the Gospel, they continued to hold the Old Testament as the inspired Word of God; they continued to regard the Jewish people with love and compassion. However, Gentile church leaders in post-apostolic Rome were of a different mind. They adopted the same anti-Jewish attitudes of their Roman contemporaries. The quotations given below are taken from Bacchiocchi's book. Page numbers are given in parenthesis.

Justin Martyr (ca. A.D. 100-165); church teacher at Rome

"He [God] imposed it [Sabbath] on the Jews as a 'mark to single them out for punishment they so well deserved for their infidelities'" (p. 186).

Marcion (ca. A.D. 144)

" . . . ordered his followers 'to fast on Saturday justifying it in this way: Because it is the rest of the God of the Jews . . . we fast in that day in order not to accomplish on that day what was ordained by the God of the Jews'" (p. 187).

Victorinus (ca. A.D. 304; Bishop of Petau)

"[Christians were] to avoid 'appearing to observe the Sabbath with the Jews, of

which the Lord of the Sabbath Himself, the Christ, says by His prophets that His soul hateth' " (p. 196).

It is quite evident that the church fathers adopted the same anti-Jewish bias of the Romans. And they actually reinterpreted the Old Testament to justify their position—trying to put as much distance as possible between themselves and anything that appeared Jewish, particularly the Sabbath.

A Political Church Emerges

As the Sabbath was gradually denegated, Sunday was promoted as a practical substitute. This day was venerated by many pagans, particularly at Rome. It was a logical choice and would make the Christians seem distinct from the Jews and more like the Romans.

Of course, church leaders needed a rationale to justify their adoption of Sunday; but there was little in the Bible that could be construed to support the first day of the week. The best reasons they could come up with were that light was created on the first day of the week and that Jesus was alive from the dead on the first day. Not very strong arguments! However, the real reasons were purely and simply political and social!

The various bishops at Rome, because they were at the seat of the Empire and more in tune with the attitudes of the Roman world, gained in power and prominence in the church. They put pressure on other bishops to accept Sunday; in time they succeeded.

The evidence is that for several centuries, Christians in Asia continued to keep the Sabbath, or to keep both Saturday and Sunday. A few even in Rome continued to do so for some time. But the die was cast. The power of the bishops at Rome was growing rapidly. Christians

there were gaining the approval of the Emperors. And once this new religion gained official recognition and sanction under Constantine, it was all over for those who sought to remain faithful to the teachings of the Word of God. A politicized church had emerged with the power of the state behind it.

Confessions by Modern Church Leaders

Modern Roman Catholic leaders have been quite frank in admitting that there is no Biblical authority, but only church authority, for Sunday. Notice just two quotations:

"But you may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify." (James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*, p. 89)

"Some of the truths that have been handed down to us by tradition and are not recorded in the Sacred Scriptures, are the following: that . . . Sunday should be kept holy instead of the Sabbath; that infants should be baptized . . ." (*Butler's Holy Family Series of Catholic Catechisms*, John Murphy Co., Boston)

Many other quotations from Roman Catholic sources are available in the leaflet "Roman Catholic Confessions About Sunday," published by The Bible Sabbath Association.

Protestants have traditionally rejected the authority of the Catholic church, relying instead on the Bible. Many have cried, "The Bible and the Bible only." Hence

they have been forced to comb the Scriptures thoroughly to find support for their first day sabbath. Their search is quite fruitless. And some have written quite frankly about the lack of Biblical authority for Sunday.

“Because it was requisite to appoint a certain day . . . it appears that the Church did for that purpose appoint the Lord’s day.” (Augsburg Confession, part 2 art. 7)

“The festival of Sunday . . . was always only a human ordinance and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a divine command in this respect; far from them, and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday.” (*The History of the Christian Religion and Church*, Dr. Augustus Neander)

Many similar quotations appear in the leaflet “Protestant Confessions About Sunday,” available from The Bible Sabbath Association.

The substance of these and many other frank admissions is that there is only traditional authority—not Biblical authority for the adoption of Sunday as a day

of rest and worship. And the fact is that down through the centuries, many Christians, albeit a small percentage of all those who claim to be Christians, have continued to observe the day set aside by God at Creation. There have been and are now Christians who rest from their work on the Sabbath according to the will of God—who enjoy the freedom provided by the day sanctified by God, who celebrate His creation, His rest, and His redemption by resting on the day He set aside at creation.

Marriage is not wrecked by a blowout but rather by a slow leak—continued negligence and inattention. Marital vegetation can take place even when a couple lives, eats and sleeps together for years—if that is all they do. But what you generously and diligently invest in your partner will be returned with interest in your children now, and you will eliminate the risk of the “20 year fracture.”

—J. Allan Petersen
Family Concern

Most folks put a “Do not Disturb” sign on their opinions.

—*The Christian Word*

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Orchids and Onions

Prison Ministry

Enclosed is a check for my membership dues and to reserve a *Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups*. Thank you for your stewardship. We have over 100 men that attend services and classes on and about the Sabbath here at Oregon State Prison (Praise God) and have had many baptisms. Two officers heard about the Sabbath and took it to their pastor, a pentecostal minister; as he studied with them, he became a firm believer in the keeping of God's commandments and conducted a study at his church and the whole church (186 out of 188 members) started Sabbath-keeping. It has spread now to 2 more pentecostal congregations here in Salem.

Chaplain N. Toats
Canby, Oregon

Thanks from Poland

Thank you very much for sending THE SABBATH SENTINEL and the calendar for 1986. It is very kind of you to remember about me here in Poland and that from time to time you write of our activity. We build one common family of the people, who solemnize the Sabbath, the true and only day of rest, which was forgotten by the world and Christianity.

Bronislaw Ciesielski
Poland

Appreciates March Issue

The March issue is the best yet. Every article and

piece of information in it is fine and edifying.

I believe that every Sabbatarian should subscribe to the SENTINEL and have a copy of the *Directory*. I hope I can help prepare the 1990 directory.

George Estey
Garfield, New Jersey

Comments on "Beware of Sabbathkeepers Mentality"

James W. Christeson's article [Feb. issue] prompts several responses. Sabbathkeepers are not necessarily followers of Yahweh. There are many who make an idol of the Sabbath. Many people make an idol or religion of a particular belief. Truth can be found in Christendom, but so can deception. Satan knows Scripture better than any of us and can use it to deceive us. We need to find the truth with the inspiration from Yahweh through His holy Word. Truth is not to be obtained from any other person, but rather another person can guide us to see the truth with the spirit of Yahweh. We don't sit at Satan's feet to learn, and Scripture tells us that Satan has deceived the "whole world." Sabbathkeeper Bill needs to read and study the Scriptures and listen to others and use the Holy Spirit to discern the truth. We are to "Prove all things." How? By the use of the Scriptures of Yahweh.

Kerry L. Roberts
Largo, Florida

Classified Ads

Seventh Day Baptist General Conference will be held August 10-16 at Worcester Polytechnic Inst., Worcester, Mass. The theme of this, the 174th annual session is "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord." Registration information can be obtained from Rev. Leon Wheeler, P.O. Box 238, Ashaway, RI 02804. (6)

Rejuvenate body, mind, and spirit at Health Hotel on the Ocean. Write or call for free book: 208 Third Ave., Asbury Park, NJ 07712; (201) 775-7575. (6,7)

Speaker available June through August on little-known human rights situations of Sabbathkeeping Christians throughout the world. Church services or private gatherings of any size. Write Christians in Crisis, 1111 Fairgrounds Rd., Grand Rapids, MN 55744 or phone (218) 326-1765. (5,6)

Sacred name Bibles, Roth-erham translation, available in paperback; thinner edition, \$5.50; thicker paper edition, \$3.00. Free to brethren on low income or for libraries. To order or for information on the missing "J" and other literature, write Norman Keller, 1838 W. Hayes, Davenport, IA 52804. (5,6)

Mechanic wanted part time. Sabbathkeeper. Apartment and tools furnished. Write Kolterman, 1436 W. 81 St., Cleveland, OH 44102. (5,6)

Free studies: "Is There Only One Chance for Salvation?" and "Is Baptism Required for Salvation?" Write to Church of God, International, Box 2525, Tyler, TX 75710. (5,6,7)

Watch Garner Ted Armstrong every Sabbath on WGN Cable Network. (5,6,7)

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Free subscription to *The Prophetic Word Magazine*. Learn the prophecies now being fulfilled and those prophecies for our future! Write *The Prophetic Word*, Box 2442, Abilene, TX 79604. (5,6,7)

The Church of the Eternal God holds weekly Sabbath services in Harrisburg, Penna. For further information call (717) 561-0447 or (717) 927-6166. (5-10)

The Biblical Church of God offers you a free booklet that you should find interesting: "The Law of Moses and Galatians 3:17." Write Biblical Church of God, Box 1234, Santa Cruz, CA 95601. (6)

Classified ads are available at the rate of 30¢ per word (including each word and each group of numbers in the address). Copy for classified ads should be sent, along with payment, to The Bible Sabbath Association, Fairview, OK 73737. Deadline is the 15th of the month for the issue of the second subsequent month (e.g., April 15 for June issue). BSA reserves the right to reject any copy; publication does not necessarily imply endorsement by The Bible Sabbath Association. Information and rates for display advertising is available on request.

Loneliness is our friend when it forces us to enjoy God's fellowship as much as we enjoy others' fellowship.

—Mrs. Tschanz

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