

The SABBATH SENTINEL

Serving the Seventh-day Christian Community

March 1987



Rest? Never on Sunday

By Ben Patterson
Reprinted from *Christianity Today*

A friend of W. C. Fields once walked into his dressing room unannounced and caught him reading the Bible. Knowing Fields's cynical attitude toward religion, he was surprised. Fields himself seemed embarrassed and quickly shut the book: "Just looking for loopholes," he explained.

That captures some of the ambivalence most Christians I know have toward the Sabbath—looking for loopholes. They know it is special, and to be observed, but they don't really know why or how. Frankly, attending religious services comes out a poor and distant second place to all the other things one can do with a weekend, like going fishing, playing golf, or just sleeping in and enjoying the Sunday paper over several cups of coffee. Or the Sabbath looms up as a barrier to getting some necessary work done, whether piled up in the office from the week before or waiting in the yard from the month before. So they always seem to be looking for loopholes: ways to get credit for keeping the Sabbath, without actually having to keep the

Sabbath.

Some play the percentages loophole: "Well, two out of four Sundays isn't too bad. In baseball, that would make me a .500 hitter." Others attempt the "Have your cake and eat it too" loophole: they attend worship services, and then proceed to cram the day full of what they really want to do. The earlier the service the better for these folks.

The more theologically sophisticated go for the "You deserve a break today" loophole. They stay away from church, explaining, "I've had a tough week. I'm exhausted. This is the one day I have to rest up or do some things around the house that just have to be done. Didn't Jesus say that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath?"

Indeed, Jesus did say it was for our sakes that God gave the command to observe the Sabbath and to keep it holy (Mark 2:27). But that's the point, isn't it? In the Sabbath command God has said to us, "Here it is, I give it to you for your own health and happiness. Keep it and

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you win. Violate it and you lose." If something is given for our sakes, and we refuse to receive it, then we hurt ourselves. The Pharisees, to whom Jesus directed that famous statement, were violating the Sabbath. They were piling up so many rules defining how one should keep the day holy that the day was lost under the pile. But they violate it no more than we do when we commit the equal and opposite error and set no rules at all. They are guilty of the legalist sin, we of the antinomian sin. We both violate the Sabbath, and in the process hurt ourselves, the violators.

Grace

What do we lose when we lose the Sabbath? We lose grace. This seems to lie behind the explanation for the Sabbath command given in Exodus 20:11: "For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." There is a rhythm and pattern built into creation from the beginning. It proceeds from the very character of God himself. He works and he rests. Not even with God is there ceaseless production; there is also rest from production. He has left that stamp of himself on his creation. We do well to imitate him.

Work, this side of the Fall, has a way of pressing us all down and burying us under its weight. Studs Terkel, after interviewing scores of men and women from a wide variety of occupations, concluded in his best-seller *Working*: "This book, being about work, is, by its very nature, about violence—to the spirit as well as to the body." But the Sabbath,

even this side of the Fall, is a word of grace spoken into the lives of driven, harassed workers. It says to housewives and to account executives, to welders and to attorneys, "You may stop now—no, you must stop now—at least for a day." Even to non-Christians it says, "Your life is not all law and necessity. The Lord of creation who causes his sun to shine on both the good and the evil, has also given you this grace and this freedom from work."

The Sabbath says to welders, housewives, and account executives: "You may stop now—no, you must stop now—at least for a day."

Freedom

In the Sabbath God gives us freedom. In Deuteronomy another reason is given Israel for keeping the Sabbath holy: "Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there with an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day." Keeping the Sabbath is a powerful way of remembering that we are freed people.

The beauty of the command to keep the Sabbath holy is that it empowers us to deflate all of the imperial claims that work would make on our lives. It enables us to look it in the eye and say, "No! I am not your slave! I'm stopping for the next 24 hours. In Christ I am free. My future well being is in his hands, not in how well my hands serve you." The beauty of the command is that it is a command. We would rarely rest if we were given the choice. We need to be ordered by the

Almighty to rest, or else we'll keep on obeying the orders of almighty work.

The Sunday edition of the *Los Angeles Times* classified section has row after row of ads reading, "Job pressures too much? Overworked? Harassed at work? Headaches? Poor sleep? Stomach aches? Depressed?" They start off sounding a lot like our Lord when he looked at a weary crowd and said, in effect, "Are you burdened and weighed down with cares? Come to me and learn from me and I will give you rest." But these ads are for work-trauma hot-lines and work-injury and stress-evaluation centers; and they promise legal aid and disability benefits, not rest.

The grace and freedom of rest on the Sabbath has a way of shedding grace and rest on the other six days of the week. Stephen Winward was right when he said, "If all of our days are to be holy, then we must keep the Lord's day holy." I would add, if all of our days are to be restful, then we must rest on the Lord's Day. We sanctify a part for the sake of the whole.

Hope

The Sabbath also gives us hope. In many ways it is a window in this world that gives us a peek into the next. The weekly Sabbath has an eschatological character to it. It points to the eternal Sabbath of Hebrews 4, in which we will all rest forever in the celebration of God's mercy. Poet George Herbert wrote of the Sabbath, "O day most calm, most bright / The fruit of this, *the next world's bud.*"

If it is true that a day of rest in this world is the "bud" of the world to come, then we can truly rest in hope

the rest of the week! If rest is the "bud" of the future, then the future is not in our hands, but in God's. That hope saves us from the pride that gives idolatrous significance to the work we do through the week. If the Lord does not build the house, then whatever we do is done in vain. The future is in his hands, not ours.

But that hope also saves us from the despair that says nothing we do matters. Since the future is in his hands, he can take what we do and make it matter as he both weaves it into his grand scheme of redemption and gives us our daily bread, to boot.

The Sabbath should not be regarded as a petty legalism to be circumvented, but as a positive witness of the grace, freedom, and hope that animates Christian existence. If we are burdened by the anxiety and struggle of work, it may be just the approach we need to set forth the gospel in its redeeming clarity.

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Response to Sabbath Editorial

The following letters, written in response to the foregoing editorial about the Sabbath, were published in the November 7 issue of *Christianity Today* (CT).

Reading Ben Patterson's editorial, "Rest? Never on Sunday" [Sept. 19], I wondered if I was reading something by a Seventh-day Adventist. However, the duality of Sunday/Sabbath belied that. Nevertheless, some of Patterson's comments sound strongly akin to Ellen White's teaching: "The Sabbath is the great question which is to decide the destiny of souls."

No one would deny that God wants his people to care for their physical health, but it is clear from Hebrews 4 that Christ is the believer's Rest.

M.L., Massachusetts

There seems to be considerable confusion among not only non-Christians but also Christians about the concepts of the Sabbath and the Lord's Day. Why not feature a clear presentation of the Scripture teaching regarding these days and their present relevance?

D.R., Michigan

Patterson falls right into the trap

of the sabbatarians. Seventh-day Adventists and other sabbatarian legalists will read the editorial, smile, shake their heads, and wonder at the biblical naiveté of the write and CT editors.

If Ben Patterson thinks we should keep the Sabbath, then why not the seventh day? And why not keep all the biblical commands regarding the Sabbath? CT readers deserve a better account of why Christians should observe Sunday worship and one day a week for rest.

D.A., Illinois

I appreciated the September 19 issue. There are at least three articles that concern me very much: "The Cost of Being Black"; "A Separate Altar"; "What Do You Mean When You Say 'God'?" and the editorial, "Rest? Never on Sunday." Having come out of Seventh-day Adventism, the editorial reached me.

W.R., California

THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN

So why do most churches observe Sunday?
For free information, write:

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What One Person Can Do

In the last year or two, Larry and June Acheson of Rushville, Illinois became convinced of the Sabbath, learned about The Bible Sabbath Association, began fellowshipping with both the Macomb Church of God (Seventh Day) and the Rushville Seventh-day Adventist Church, and have been very active in promoting the Sabbath in their local community. Last summer Larry began working on a billboard project—a cooperative effort of the two Sabbathkeeping congregations. His labors paid off in the fall when two signs, advertising the Sabbath and the two congregations, went up in Macomb and Rushville.

Beginning in September, Larry began running Sabbath ads in the *Rushville Times* each week. They resulted in a number of inquiries to BSA, but they also sparked quite a response from local clergymen, who felt compelled to comment on the ads in the newspaper's "Guest Minister's Column" and in letters to the editor.

Presbyterian Challenge

The Presbyterian pastor was the first to respond, challenging the ad that asked, "Have you ever wondered why most Christians today meet on Sunday, when it was Jesus' custom to observe the seventh-day Sabbath?" He wrote, "The quick answer is Jesus was a Jew, and we are Christians who celebrate the day of resurrection—Sunday." He went on to denounce making a god of the Bible: "If we make the Bible God, then our God is bound by the endsheets of a book. If we subscribe to this idea of not doing anything unless the Bible specifically tells us, we are making the Bible God."

Larry responded to Pastor Orsted's column with a letter, which was published in the paper the following week. It explained more about reasons for keeping the Sabbath, that the issue is not something about which the Bible is silent: "If the Bible does specifically tell us to do something, then we should do it. And the Bible tells us to set aside a specific day on which to worship God. That day is the Sabbath..." He concluded his letter, "If there is a danger of worshipping the Bible by abiding by it and it alone, then I perceive that a similar danger exists for those who abide only by the words spoken from a pulpit."

Round Two

The next week, the Free United Methodist minister devoted a portion of his column to the Sabbath question. He stated that the important issue was acceptance of Jesus Christ, that the problem with churches is they spend too much time fighting about how and when to worship, and not enough time worshipping, that God wouldn't sentence someone to "... eternity in hell because they have chosen to observe Sabbath on Sunday instead of Saturday, or vice-versa."

Larry responded with another. In it he agreed that accepting Jesus is the important thing; but he went on to point out the strength of the Bible teaching in favor of the Sabbath and commented, "I know of no preacher who would go along with breaking any one of these (the Ten) commandments. Yet when it comes to observing the seventh day . . . suddenly we hear statements to the effect that God doesn't mind which day we keep, as long as we keep

one.”

Round Three

The next week the Free Methodist pastor told a story in “Guest Minister’s Column.” It’s point seemed to be intended as a criticism of the Sabbath controversy, but he didn’t address the issue directly. The Roman Catholic priest wrote a letter to the editor which was completely unrelated to the Sabbath issue. However, the Lutheran pastor wrote a long letter saying he was reluctant to become involved in the controversy, but, “. . . when Christian consciences are being falsely bound and their salvation (is endangered) one cannot but speak.” He outlined a number of arguments against the Sabbath—that it was part of ceremonial law, that the first Christians met on days other than Saturday, that Christ abolished the Sabbath, etc. He also suggested that those interested in the subject should meet face to face.

Larry responded with another lengthy letter which answered the points made by the Lutheran pastor; he also indicated he would be happy to meet with anyone to discuss the Sabbath question.

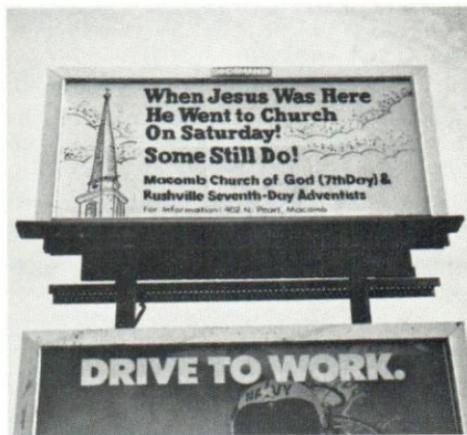
One week later, one E. Simpson, wrote a letter to the newspaper expressing his appreciation for the

exchange of ideas in the paper; he was pro Sabbath.

After more than a month of publishing letters, columns, and ads relating to the Sabbath, the editors indicated to Larry they would rather see the discussion continued in another forum.

The Lutheran pastor did, in fact, arrange a meeting with Larry Acheson, but they didn’t really get into substantive Sabbath issues. As of last report, a second meeting to specifically discuss the Sabbath had not yet taken place.

Between billboards, ads, and numerous letters to the editor, Larry and June have certainly made an impact for the Sabbath in their local community. Larry expresses confidence that many seeds have been sown—seeds which will someday yield fruit. While many Sabbath-keepers would undoubtedly suggest different approaches, the one the Achesons have used has certainly had an affect. And one can’t help but be reminded of numerous small towns of a century ago, where Sabbathkeeping churches were started by seventh-day preachers who came to town and challenged the local clergy to publicly debate the issue.



The two billboards sponsored by the Macomb Church of God (Seventh Day) and the Rushville Seventh-day Adventist Church. A good example of the kind of cooperation BSA applauds.

Newspaper Ads

Placed by Larry and June Acheson in their local newspaper

THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN

So why do most churches
observe Sunday?

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Fairview, OK 73737

37w2

MYSTERY:

Have you ever wondered why
most Christians today meet on
Sunday, when it was Jesus'
custom to observe the seventh-
day Sabbath (Luke 4:16)?

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Box 222-A
Fairview, Ok. 73737

CAN YOU FIND:

One Bible text where it says it was
"customary" for the Church to observe,
or to meet on, the first day of the week?

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39w2

SUNDAY DILEMMA

You may have heard that the seventh-day Sabbath was
meant for the Jews only, that Sunday-keeping is for the
Gentile believers. If this is true, then why are Gentiles
recorded as inviting the Apostle Paul to preach to them on
the Sabbath? (Acts 13:42)

"Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to
serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, everyone
that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant,
even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my
house of prayer." Isaiah 56:6,7

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Have You Read It Yet?

A History of the Sabbath & Sunday

By John Kiesz

A concise, but authoritative, study of Sabbatarians

63 pages - \$3.00

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Fairview, Oklahoma 73737

News from BSA

BSA Needs Your Help

We estimate that only about 1 out of 1,000 Sabbathkeeping Christians know about BSA. We need your help in reaching thousands more—so we can minister to them and so they can join us in sharing the truth of the Sabbath with the world. If you send us names and addresses of Sabbathkeepers we'll let them know about this unique ministry. See back cover for more details. Thank you.

Planning continues for BSA Summer Meeting

Preparations continue for a general meeting of The Bible Sabbath Association, to be held July 6 and 7 in Denver. All association members are encouraged to plan now to attend; of course, visitors will be welcome. Watch the April issue for registration information. If you're not a BSA member, consider becoming one so you can participate fully in association business.

BSA Election Upcoming

1987 is election year for BSA officers and directors-at-large. Primary election will be held during the summer, with a run-off in the fall. Newly elected leaders will begin serving a four-year term on January 2, 1988. All association members are urged to begin thinking and praying about this upcoming election; if you are not a BSA member, we urge you to consider becoming one so you can participate in the election.

Send us Notices of Summer Meetings

As a service to the seventh-day community, *The Sabbath Sentinel*

publishes notices of national conferences, campmeetings and festivals that are open to visitors. Now is the time to send us information. March 15 is the deadline for the May issue, April 15 for the June issue. There is no charge for this service; however, donations are appreciated.

Creation Decrees

R. C. Sproul in his book, *Knowing Scripture*, writes, "If any biblical principles transcend local customary limits, they are the appeals drawn from creation." In other words, the decrees of God at creation reflect His perpetual intent and abiding will for the whole of mankind down through the ages. Creation ordinances are not limited to man as Hebrew or as Christian or man as Corinthian. They are for all peoples and stand apart from cultural trappings.

Consider Jesus' treatment of the Sabbath in this regard. When the Pharisees questioned the Sabbathkeeping of Jesus' disciples in comparison to their own Sabbathkeeping customs, Jesus appealed to the creation origin of the Sabbath. "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27). Literally, the Sabbath *came into being* for the sake of man. Thus, the creation ordinance of the Sabbath transcends the legalistic Sabbathkeeping customs of the Pharisees, while preserving the Sabbath's original intent as a benefit to all mankind.

From an article on hermeneutics in the Dec. '86 issue of The Bible Advocate

How Can You Be So Sure?



About seven years ago, Mormon missionaries came to visit us at the request of someone else. I agreed to meet with them on the condition that I would have equal time—to tell them some things. I remember the incident so vividly because we were visiting in the cramped basement living quarters of our still-under-construction home. I also recall so well the absolute confidence these young men had in their “one true church”! I could see how anyone who was the least bit insecure in his own relationship with God could be drawn to their steadfast certainty. Of course, the Mormons didn’t begin to convince me of their point of view, and I can only hope and pray that some of what I shared with them will bear fruit.

The Mormons’ visit got me thinking back to the time when I, as a young minister, visited many people as a representative of an organization I firmly believed was the one true church. So many times during those visits people would say to me, “I wish I had your faith” or “I wish I could be as sure as you are.” Reflecting on those incidents, I can see that what they were seeing in me was my supreme confidence in my work and my church. They ached to have my complete security (which I subsequently learned was ill-founded).

I firmly believe that the confidence, security, and sense of personal identity radiating from the followers of eastern religions, cults, and cult-like churches today is what makes them so attractive to so many people. Their aura of “I have it all put together” is so enticing.

But of all people on the face of the earth, shouldn’t Christians, especially Sabbathkeeping Christians, exude this same kind of confidence and faith. We do have it all put together—or rather, we have had it all put together for us. God is our Father, Jesus washed away our sins and translated us into His eternal kingdom. We know how the last chapter in the book of our life and the life of the world will turn out. We know right from wrong. We know that God watches over us as a loving father—that all things will work together for good for us because we love Him! We can have absolute confidence—not in organizations or doctrines, not with self-righteous pride, not because we know all the answers, but because we know the One who does!

We should be the ones exuding complete assurance and peace of mind to those around us. We should be the ones who shine as beacons proclaiming our utter confidence in God, in His Word, and in His plan for all mankind. We should outshine all others—just as did the early Christians, who turned the world upside down!

—Richard A. Wiedenheft

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Editor Emeritus Eugene Lincoln
Editor Richard A. Wiedenheft
Department Editor Howard M. Mesick
Contributing Editors Gilbert Sanford, George Dellinger
Typesetting Kenneth Tustin
Proofreading David Kramer
Layout/Printing/Mailing Church Publishing Company, Cleveland, TN 37311

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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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**ADDRESS CORRESPONDENCE TO:
THE BIBLE SABBATH ASSOCIATION
R.D. 1, BOX 222
FAIRVIEW, OK 73737
Phone: (405) 227-3200**

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.

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

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It's a custom at our house to tell our children a story before putting them to bed. My wife, June, and I usually tell them a Bible story, but occasionally we share with them a tale that we heard when we were small. Each story has a moral which we hope will influence their thinking.

Recently, I told the story about a horse who was proud to be the only animal on the farm who was entrusted with important responsibilities. He was the one who pulled the plow and who helped clear the land of brush and small trees. He was the animal who was called on whenever there was a task that required strength. But then one day the farmer bought a tractor to pull the plow and clear the land. The horse was so jealous that he tried to run away! But at the end of the story, the horse changed his mind about the tractor because it saved his life by pulling him out of a murky pond. The moral: Sometimes a change is for the best.

Several changes have occurred in my life in the past few years, and I believe they are for the best. To begin with, I was once so entrenched in the doctrine of a particular church that when someone (now my wife) told me that just because I had been sprinkled didn't mean I had been baptized, I became infuriated. I mean it took gall to insinuate that my preacher had taught me wrong! But I did some research, and before long I became convinced that a change was in order. If immersion was good enough for my Savior, then it was good enough for me.

My latest change involves the Sabbath. Like most Christians, June and I had been raised to think that Sunday is the Sabbath. No one had ever told us any differently. But then we began to have guilt trips over our customary visits to local



restaurants after Sunday morning services. I only took June there because I wanted her to rest on Sunday (You know, "You deserve a break today..."). The only thing was, week after week, I couldn't help but notice that while we were eating and enjoying ourselves, talking about the sermon, the waitresses were eagerly taking orders and the cooks were busy filling those orders. Questions began to float around in my mind: Should we let people work for us on Sunday? If no one ate out on Sunday, would these people go to church?

Our guilt feelings led to a search for answers, for we had heard that long ago no one worked on Sunday. The custom, as I understood it, was that everyone packed a lunch in the



Time for a Change

By Larry Acheson

morning and then went to church. Afterwards, the people would eat together and spend the afternoon fellowshiping or studying the Bible together. But that was way back when. What I wanted to know was what happened between then and now?

My curiosity led me to a book about the rest days of various cultures, including Christendom. Written by a secular author, this book took me further back in time than I originally wanted to go; for according to it, the rest day of our Messiah was Saturday, not Sunday. Yet the writer concluded that Sunday rightfully became the new day of Christian worship since the Apostle Paul "condemned" the Sabbath in Colos-

sians 2:16. For awhile I was satisfied that Sunday was indeed a perfectly acceptable day on which to worship—that is, until I learned that the Sabbath was customarily observed by the Apostle Paul, who said "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

I told myself, as in the case of immersion, that if keeping the Sabbath was good enough for our Savior and the Apostle Paul, then it was good enough for me. My wife and I tried and failed to disprove the validity of the Sabbath. In fact, the more we studied, the more convinced we became that a change was in order.

We began observing the Sabbath a year ago. The change was difficult at first, just as it was for the horse learning to accept the new tractor. Keeping the Sabbath has cost us the respect of a few dear Christian friends; some think we're following the teachings of some cult leader. We thank our Heavenly Father that we are among the few who can say that we learned about the Sabbath on our own, with no one trying to persuade us or to lead us astray. Our answers came from history books, a cultural book, and, of course, from the Bible.

Some people have told us that we're under a curse because we're trying to earn our salvation; but we know that our hearts are not set on earning salvation; we obey our Heavenly Father because we love Him (I John 5:3) and because it is our duty (Luke 17:10). We strive to please Him, and if "remembering the Sabbath day to keep it holy" pleases Him, then that's what we'll do. It's a change that has definitely been for the best.

The author works for his father's farming operation near Rushville, Illinois

Seventh-Day Christians Opposed to Calendar Change

Editor's note: In response to a newspaper clipping sent to us by a reader, in February BSA issued the following press release to over 200 periodicals, including all major Christian magazines and many seventh-day publications.

In a recent article in *The New York Times*, John M. Culkin, executive director of the Center of Understanding Media, New York City, touted the benefits of a new calendar that would remain the same year after year. Termed the "Constant Calendar," it would create months of four or five complete, seven-day weeks, with each month beginning on a Monday. However, the Constant Calendar would also insert an extra day at the end of every year, thus disrupting the weekly cycle.

The Bible Sabbath Association (BSA), a nonsectarian organization of seventh-day Christians, is vehemently opposed to any calendar changes that alter the weekly cycle. According to BSA Executive Director Richard A. Wiedenheft, "The Constant Calendar would create incredible problems for seventh-day Christians, observant Jews, and to many first-day Christians who are concerned about observing the Fourth Commandment. We believe the weekly cycle and the seventh-day Sabbath stems from Creation and has continued without interruption to the present. Adding an extra day would mean that well over 5 million seventh-day Christians around the world would keep the Sabbath on Saturday of one year, Friday the next year, Thursday the next year and so on. This would create horrendous problems for employees, employers, schools, and government in every country. A huge price to pay, just so we don't have to recite a poem in order to remember how many days each month has!"

The proposed Constant Calendar divides the year into four equal quarters of 13 weeks and three months. The first two months in each quarter would contain 4, 7-day weeks, the third month would contain 5, 7-day weeks. Four quarters would add up to 364 days. The 365th day, not part of any month or week, would be added between December and January. A similar in-between day would be added between June and July every four years. It is these in-between days that would create problems for anyone who is committed to observing a Sabbath every seven days as mandated by the Fourth Commandment.

Previous calendar changes (by Julius Caesar and Pope Gregory) have not interfered with the week, and BSA would not oppose a new calendar that leaves the week intact.

The Bible Sabbath Association, with home offices in Fairview, Oklahoma, is dedicated to promoting communication and cooperation among all seventh-day Christians and to protecting the rights of Sabbatarian Christians to observe the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath.

For more information write BSA or call (717) 378-2056.

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 Seventh Day Community

SDA Global Strategy

At its 1986 meeting in Brazil, the Seventh-day Adventist Annual Council adopted a resolution directing the General Conference to develop a global strategy whereby the church can reach the unreached.

General Council Discusses Church of God Merger

During November, at their annual retreat, ministers of the General Council of the Church of God (Seventh Day), Meridian, Idaho, discussed their proposed unification with the General Conference, Denver. A consensus vote revealed that 87% of the General Council ministers present favored unity.

Unanimously adopted was a response to a General Conference ministerial council statement on how the doctrine of clean and unclean meats was to be handled. The General Conference statement, a "working agreement on the subject of clean and unclean meats," maintained the body's present teaching against eating unclean meats, but prohibited active, divisive efforts by those with strong convictions on either side of the issue; it also recommended a ten-year moratorium on debate on the issue in church publications and meetings.

The General Council's ministers' response was a general acceptance, with some clarification designed to protect individuals' rights to freely voice their convictions in a nondivisive way.

A vote on merger of the two bodies is scheduled for separate, but simultaneous, conferences next July.

SDA Publisher Travels to USSR

Harold F. Otis, president of Review and Herald Publishing Association,

left during January for a two-week trip to Russia, as an official guest of the Soviet government. He will be discussing the possibility of publication of a Christian magazine in the USSR.

Yahweh's Way in Newsweek

Last month we reported on Assemblies of Yahweh's open letter to *Newsweek* magazine about its article on the Florida-based group Yahweh's Way. To our knowledge that letter was not published by *Newsweek*; however the following letter from Yisrayl B. Hawkins, overseer of a Sabbathkeeping group in Texas was published:

"Your article 'Yahweh's Way' about a Miami-based group of people who call themselves the Yahwehs could have misled people into thinking that any group using Yahweh was part of its name is associated with that group. This is not true. Yahweh is, of course, the Hebrew name for God. Our group, The House of Yahweh, headquartered in Abilene, Texas, is not associated with any hate-filled, violent or anti-Semitic organization. We teach true love and are open to all people, regardless of race."

Loma Linda to Close One Campus

University trustees voted early in January to close the La Sierra campus, consolidating operations there with the Loma Linda campus.

SDA Undersecretary Dies

David Henry Baasch, age 65, undersecretary of the General Conference, died suddenly on January 15. For 43 years he had worked in various church positions, for the last 20 at the General Conference.

Cost Comparison: TV vs. Radio

In a recent letter to contributors, Garner Ted Armstrong mentioned that the money his organization spends on television programs comes to about \$25 per response, compared to almost \$50 per response for radio. His conclusion, "... we *must* continue on television for the time being ... radio is simply not a viable alternative for the present." Currently, the Church of God, International is averaging between three and four hundred calls per week in response to TV programs.

Sabbathkeeping Pitcher in Major Leagues

The Texas Rangers signed a contract with Ed Correa that does not require him to pitch on Friday nights or Saturday afternoons. Correa, a 20-year old Seventh-day Adventist from San Juan, Puerto Rico did pitch six games on the Sabbath during 1986.

Correa's younger brother, Ranser, is excited that the way is paved for him to also pitch in the Major Leagues. The younger Correa, age 16, is considered the top pitching prospect in Puerto Rico.

The Texas Ranger's situation is not without precedent. In 1977, Danny Thomas, affiliated with the Worldwide Church of God, played outfield for the Milwaukee Brewers. He was known as the "Sundown Kid" because of his Sabbathkeeping.

Community Ballpark Center of Controversy

The local Jaycees of Bladenboro, North Carolina started the furor when they got the town board to lift the ban on Sunday morning activities at Wateree Park. Local ministers responded with a storm of protest and asked the board to reinstate the ban.

Jack Robinson, pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist church in

nearby Elizabethtown, took the opportunity to enlighten the community about constitutional issues. If the park was to be closed on Sunday morning so as not to compete with religious services, how about on Saturday for the sake of SDA religious services?

Under pressure from the local churches, the board voted to reinstate the Sunday ban; then the controversy moved to the newspaper, which published letters from the SDA officials. Pastor Jack Robinson was interviewed by radio and TV stations.

Finally the board reversed itself again and in a four to one vote, rescinded the Sunday ban. However the local ministers indicated their determination to fight on—they plan to put the issue on a ballot, so the people of the town can decide.

Adventist Baptisms

The Seventh-day Adventists announce that during the year ending June of 1986, they had baptized 374,759 converts worldwide.

South African Violence

The *Adventist Review* reported that during 1986 eleven Seventh-day Adventists lost their lives in South African violence.

Evangelists Missing in Colombia

Two SDA literature evangelists in Argelia, Cauca, to canvass, were last seen November 5. They were aware of the dangers of political unrest in the area, but felt a greater concern for sharing the Gospel than for their own lives.

SDA Emphasis on Renewal

This year, 1987, has been designated as a year of renewal for North American Adventists. In writing about renewal, *Adventist Review*

associate editor Myron Widmer pointed out areas of strength in the church, and areas where renewal is needed. On the positive side, the church has grown to have active ministries in 183 of the world's 216 recognized countries, worldwide it has the most extensive mission program and educational system of any Protestant church, it operates one of the largest networks of medical facilities of any religious denomination, it rates at or near the top in contributions per member, and it is growing by more than 1,000 individuals every day.

However, according to Widmer, renewal is needed in the following areas: personal Bible study, a sense of urgency, health emphasis, family togetherness, importance of an Adventist education for young people, a sense of identity and mission for the SDA church, and in Sabbath holiness. He noted that recent surveys indicate that only about half of Adventists in North America attend church.

Adventist Clinic in Nepal

A recently opened health clinic in Kavre, Nepal, reported a great increase in its monthly volume of outpatients—from 94 to 669. With only one surgical glove, the nurse often has to do minor surgery with one hand behind her back.

“KGB” Confiscates Bibles in Idaho

We have all read about our brothers and sisters behind the Iron Curtain who do not have Bibles and who must conduct their church services without them. But none of us really knows firsthand what a hardship that must be. Realizing this fact, the brethren of the Caldwell, Idaho, Seventh Day Church of God decided they needed a taste of doing without the Holy Scripture. On November 23, as they observed Bible Sabbath, some “KGB” men came into their worship and praise service and confiscated Bibles. The rest of the service was run without Bibles. They found it fairly easy to sing many of the Scripture songs and were encouraged to know that they had much of the Word of God hidden in their hearts in song. However, they reported that as a result of their experience, they had a much better appreciation for the Bible and thank the Lord that it is easily available whenever they want to read it.

Adapted from The Herald of Truth Newsletter

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.

How to Promote the Sabbath in Your Area

If you are interested in sponsoring ads in your local newspaper that will promote the Sabbath and the aims of The Bible Sabbath Association, we can help you. Write for our information sheet entitled “Reaching Out Through Local Advertising.”

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

News and Comment

School Aborts Girl's Baby, Tells Mom Girl Is at Teacher's Home

In *Preston vs Thermalito School District*, the mother of an Oroville high-school girl is suing in Calif. Superior Court because her daughter's teacher, school superintendent, and principal lied to her repeatedly, while arranging an abortion. After Erin Preston told her teacher she might be pregnant, school officials took her out on separate occasions for a pregnancy test, counseling, and an application for abortion funding.

Because Eris was a discipline problem, Ms. Preston had quit work to be with her more and had requested daily reports from the school on Erin's conduct. The teacher, Marilyn Forhan, admits to falsifying those reports to hide the preparations; and her superiors admit complicity. One day Ms. Forhan asked if Erin could come to her house to baby-sit, then stay overnight. The mother assented; and Forhan took Erin to an abortuary. Ms. Preston wouldn't have known, except that Erin was hospitalized the next week for emergency surgery due to complications.

Officials say California law lets them lie to protect a child's abortion decision from family influence. Similar laws exist in other states.

Horrendous issues arise. If the school district wins, deceit and conspiracy will be legal tools of government in its everyday dealings with citizens, not just in grave national security matters. Also, state intrusion into family life will increase. Ms. Preston, by the way, is pro-abortion, but resents what was done behind her back. Why aren't the national media covering this case?

Daily Lord's Prayer recitation

in public schools does not violate Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, said the Ontario Supreme Court on July 14. Justice Dennis O'Leary wrote, "That some pupils may feel pressure to participate. . . is . . . a minor infringement of their freedom of . . . religion." This view is opposite to current US opinion.

NYC plans to end foster care contracts with Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant agencies next June unless they agree to place children on a non-denominational basis, thus giving up their religious purpose. Agencies can no longer make kids go to church and must give access to contraception and abortion. About 4000 children per year will be affected. This attack on religious institutions, which provide much cheaper and better service than secular counterparts, follows New York's withdrawal of nearly \$80 million in contracts from Catholic and Salvation Army shelters for their refusal to hire gays in public contact jobs.

St. Agnes Hospital, Baltimore, may lose accreditation of its ob/gyn department for refusal to perform abortions. In 1986 it provided free birth care to over 6000 poor women.

Creation is taught in 30% of public schools beside evolution, according to Prof. Richard B. Dierenfield of MacAlester College of St. Paul, MN, in the Summer 1986 *Religion and Public Education* magazine. In the South, its 42%.

Send clippings with publication's name and date to Howard M. Mesick, RD1 Box 299-1, Hartly, DE 19953.

Is Saturday a Day of Pagan Worship?

By George Dellinger

One of the more incredible charges which foes of the Sabbath bring up centers around the name *Saturday* for the seventh day.

This line of reasoning admits that Sunday is named for the sun, a pagan object of worship; however, since Saturday is named for Saturn, a pagan god, the Sabbath is just as much a day of pagan worship as Sunday.

There are two answers to this claim, which will show it is just as invalid as other arguments and human reasonings against the Sabbath.

First, Saturday is just a name. It was never a regular day for the weekly worship of the Roman god Saturn. But Sunday has always been the day dedicated to the sun and used for its worship. Let us look at some scholarly admissions:

"This word [Sunday] is of heathen origin . . . obviously the exact name indicates the day devoted to the worship of the sun . . . With the expansion of Christianity in Europe the day for special Christian worship falling on that of sun worship the name was simply taken over" (W. O. Carver, *Sabbath Observance*, p. 19).

". . . Sunday, over which (day) the Sun presided, was especially 'holy' (in ancient Rome)" (Franz Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra*, p. 167).

"The Church made a sacred day of Sunday . . . largely because it was the weekly festival of the sun . . ." (Arthur Weigall, *The Paganism In Our Christianity*, p. 145).

"But what a pity that it

[Sunday] comes branded with the mark of paganism, and christened with the name of the sun god . . ." (Edward Hiscox, in a paper read before a New York Ministers' Conference, Nov. 13, 1893).

Second, regardless of the history and background of the day we call Saturday, it is still the day commanded by God, who never commanded Sunday.

We all know such references as Gen. 2:1-3, Ex. 20:8-11, Mark 2:27-28, Luke 4:16, and a host of other scriptural passages; they need not be quoted here. But the simple fact is that God has ordained Saturday as His holy Sabbath day, what man may have done with the day notwithstanding.

A final consideration must be mentioned. In 1886 William Mead Jones, a British Seventh Day Baptist minister, published *A Chart of the Week*. In this valuable work, Jones listed the days of the week by their names in 159 ancient and modern languages. In 108 of these languages, the seventh day of the week was designated "Sabbath." No further comment is needed. The evidence speaks for itself.

We need not be concerned about the name Saturday. It is just an English word for a day of the week which was never at any time specifically dedicated to Saturn-worship (although it was named for that pagan god). But Sunday has always been devoted to sun-worship. And in a very real sense, it is still used for that purpose today by those who do not know God and who reject His Word and commandments.

To Repeat . . .

A collection of contemporary quotes—
significant statements by or about Sabbathkeepers

... sometimes in our blind zeal and *presumption*, we try to twist God's arm to satisfy our own desires. . . . *Presumption* steps beyond proper bounds. It *demand*s. . . . rushes ahead of God. *Faith rests*. It leaves the answer in God's hands.

Pastor E. L. Saunders in an editorial about the "faith" of parents who insisted their diabetic son was healed, refusing to give him insulin as they watched him die; in The Hour of Preparation Magazine, published by the Association of Seventh-day Pentecostal Assemblies.

The loss of Harris Pine Mills is a wound, a deep and painful wound, but it is nothing as compared to the catastrophic loss that could befall this denomination because of the indebtedness many of its entities have incurred. As we start this new year, . . . I am calling for Seventh-day Adventists, both personally and corporately, to change their ways. I am calling for us to break off the shackles of debt that are holding us at risk personally and as a denomination.

SDA General Conference President Neal C. Wilson, in writing about lessons learned from the bankruptcy of Harris Pines Mills, a church-owned corporation, in the Jan. 1, 1987 Adventist Review.

The controversy over arms to Iran continues to stay in the headlines here. It will probably be some time before it is clear just what happened. . . . Iran repeatedly says that as soon as it wins its war with Iraq it plans to "liberate" Jerusalem . . . Well, the world is a mixed up place, at best. The Bible tells us that the time of the end would be especially confused and filled with turmoil, and all over the world we can certainly find evidence of this. The important thing, for us, as believers, is to "look up"—for a better world is coming, and our redemption is drawing nigh!

Gordon M. Fauth, in an editorial in the Dec. '86 The Mount Zion Reporter.

The greatest and most disturbing problem facing mankind is not starvation in famine-stricken countries. Neither is it our national debt, nor the threat of nuclear war. In simple words, it is the *sin problem*.

L. L. Christenson, in an article in the December, 1986 Bible Advocate.

The weekly Sabbath is a picture of the completion of this present heaven and earth, the bringing into fullness all that God planned from the beginning of *this creation*.

James L. Porter, in his new booklet God's Sabbath Rest

The views expressed are in no way intended to necessarily reflect those of The Bible Sabbath Association. If you read or hear concise, significant statements by or about Sabbatharians, please send them to us for possible publication in this column. Include name and address of author.



Resources Available From BSA

Books

<i>History of the Sabbath & Sunday</i> by John Kiesz (64 pp.)	\$3
<i>From Sabbath to Sunday</i> by Samuele Bacchocchi (372 pp.)	\$8
<i>Divine Rest for Human Restlessness</i> by Samuele Bacchocchi (320 pp.)	\$8
<i>The Law, the Gospel and the Sabbath</i> by Frank M. Walker (91 pp.)	\$3
<i>Right Face: A Handbook for Sabbathkeepers</i> by Eugene Lincoln (30 pp.)	2 for \$1
Directory of Sabbath-Observing Groups, 1986 Edition	\$7
Back issues of THE SABBATH SENTINEL	40 for \$5

Booklets

<i>Bible Truths about "Salvation by Grace Through Faith"</i> by Frank M. Walker (32 pp., 20/lb.)	50¢ each; \$8/20
<i>Questions for Seventh Dayists Answered</i> by Terril D. Littrell (18 pp., 30/lb)	20¢ each; \$5/30
<i>Sabbath Truth and Sunday Fallacies</i> by George A. Main (12 pp, 60/lb.) ..	10¢ each; \$5/60
<i>Has Sabbath Time Been Lost</i> by Joseph M. McGuire (10 pp. 60/lb)	15¢ each; \$9/60

Tracts

<i>Why I Keep the 7th Day of the Week as the Sabbath</i> by C. C. Morian (7 pp. 100/lb.)	5¢ each/ \$5/100
<i>Facts on Sabbath</i> (6 pp, 120/lb.)	5¢ each/ \$5/120
<i>Roman Catholic Confessions About Sunday</i> (8 pp, 100/lb.)	5¢ each; \$5/100
<i>Protestant Confessions About Sunday</i> (6 pp, 130/lb.)	4¢ each/ \$5/130
<i>The Weekly Rest Day</i> by George A. Main (4 pp, 200/lb.)	3¢ each/ \$5/200
<i>Sunday—The Lord's Day?</i> (4 pp, 200/lb.)	3¢ each/ \$5/200
<i>The Rest of Your Life</i> (1 p, 300/lb.)	2¢ each; \$5/300
<i>Search the Scriptures</i> (1 p, 300/lb.)	2¢ each; \$5/300

Because of high mailing costs, we request minimum orders of \$5, if possible.

You may mix various tracts to make up orders of at least \$5. Sample copies of tracts are available free if you enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope with your request. THANK YOU!

Promotional Aids

Sabbath Calendars for 1987	\$1.75 each; \$1.50 each for 10 or more
Ball point pens, top quality, with imprint: "The Seventh Day is the Sabbath" ..	\$5/dozen
Bumper Stickers with a Sabbath message	\$1 each; \$7/dozen
Sabbath seals	\$1/dozen
Post cards with Sabbath message on one side, space for message and address the other side	\$1/dozen

Bible on Cassette Tape

available free on loan for cost of postage

Members of The Bible Sabbath Association may take a 20% discount off the list price of all items. Order from:

THE BIBLE SABBATH ASSOCIATION
R.D. 1, Box 222, Fairview, OK 73737
Phone (405) 227-3200

Orchids and Onions

Sabbathkeeper Discovers BSA

I have read your notice about the Bible Sabbath in our paper and I pray that many of its readers have noticed it just like I did. I pray that they will respond to it. I love God and His holy rest day, the Sabbath day. I think of it all week long and I've tried to teach others in our community about the Ten Commandments and the seventh-day Sabbath, but without success.

N.S.

Moorefield, West Virginia

Earning Salvation by Sabbathkeeping?

To "Name Withheld" in the August, 1986 issue: Your problem (of frustration in sharing the Sabbath with someone who insists Sabbathkeepers are trying to earn salvation) is one which I have often encountered. You can teach the majority of people truth by patience, prayerful persistence, love, tact, and skill. But not all. Some people close their minds to truth. Ulterior reasons such as loss of income, loss of popularity, friends and prestige are pragmatic factors that block the acceptance of the Sabbath. Of all my wide circle of Sabbathkeeping friends, I know of none who keep the seventh day holy to earn salvation. They have that and do not want to lose it. Heb. 6:6. May Yahweh bless you.

Edward A. Elstone
Sundridge, Ontario

Response to Sabbath Ads

Please send me all the information you have on the Sabbath. I have felt all my adult life that we should be going to church on Saturday.

J.H.

Sulphur, Oklahoma

I saw your ad today and I am very much interested in knowing about the Sabbath. Also, I would like to know, how we can be sure that Saturday is the Sabbath, since Joshua held back the movement of the sun and a day was lost.

J.B.

Memphis, Tennessee

Monday/First Day Calendars

God did not name the days, He only numbered them. If man wants to name the days, I don't care what name he calls them. I'll still keep the seventh even if man names it Sunday. As Shakespeare said: "What's in a name? a rose by any other name smells as sweet."

John Shirn

Bloomington, Indiana

Wants to Advertise

We have wanted many times to place an ad or letter in the local paper, but didn't know the right way to do it. Please send your information sheet, "Reaching Out Through Local Advertising." Maybe with your help, it can be done.

H.J.

Jerome, Idaho

Classified Ads

How New Is the New Covenant? A free article analyzing the relationship between old and new covenants; crucial to understanding many Biblical issues. Write Focus On Truth, Box 45T, Lake Winola, PA 18625. (1-3)

Born again! But when? Only at the resurrection—or now? Mind-jolting new facts, studiously researched. For free details, write Xavier Press, Box 11-74-SS, Dallas, TX 75223. (3)

Searching for the Spirit and Power side of the truth? It's available to anyone who knows where to look and has the courage to believe and receive. Send s.a.s.e. to: Where To Find It America, P. O. Box 1295, Plano, TX 75074. (3)

The Elijah Message together with Norman Warner has moved to P. O. Box 507, Cottonwood, ID, 83522. Please make this change on pages 123, 154, and 173 of your *Directory of Sabbath-observing Groups*. Also, please strike out the name Michael R. O'Leary. Thank You. (3)

We have been blessed by the Holy Spirit with psalms and parables of love, prophecy and warning, all in the form of beautiful music! We have transferred this blessing onto two, sixty-minute cassette tapes together with printed foldouts of the words. When requesting a set of two, sixty-minute music tapes, please include a minimum of one dollar's worth of USA postage stamps, only if you are able. Write O'Leary, River Rt., Getta Cr. Landing, Lewiston, ID 83501. (3)

Looking for fellowship? We believe the virgin birth of Immanuel, the Messiah, *did* occur as pro-

phesied (Is. 7:14), that He *was* the passover Lamb slain for sin *in our stead*. If we repent, are baptized, walk in newness of life, keep the Ten Commandments, we're promised *eternal life* (Ex. 20; Matt. 19:17; Rev. 22:14); in keeping Sabbath on Sat., high Sabbaths (Lev. 23) also land Sabbaths (Lev. 25, Ex. 23). Breaking culminates in bankrupt soil, malnutrition, mass starvation; exacts severe national penalty (Lev. 26:34-43; Matt. 24). Exodus 31—the Eternal's Sabbaths are a sign between Him and His people *forever!* Those willing to obey with a "child-like" attitude (Matt. 18:3) should commemorate Immanuel's death by taking bread and wine (John 6:53-58) same season of the year the children of Israel sacrificed the passover lamb or goat. Exodus 12 and 13. Mr. and Mrs. David Alvin Gregg, Rt. 2 Box 642, Greenfield, MO 65661; phone (417) 637-2630. (3)

Sacred Name Sabbatarian Singles: An invitation to all desiring to be in touch with the same. Please send us your name, address, and s.a.s.e. We will share with you our list of correspondents. All ages welcome. Write Sacred Name Singles, Box 1005, Ashland, OH 44805. (3,4)

Tithing: God's Command or Man's Demand? Stunning new data, meticulous analysis, surprising new conclusions. For free details, write Xavier Press, Box 11074-SS, Dallas, TX 75223. (3-6)

The Christian Church of God holds weekly Sabbath services. Serving Southeast Florida. For information, write P. O. Box 3827, Lantana, FL 33465. (7-7)

Free subscription to The Prophetic Word Magazine! Learn the prophecies now being fulfilled! Learn the prophecies for our future! Write Box 2442, Abilene, TX 79604. (1-12)

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If you really want to receive THE SABBATH SENTINEL but cannot afford a subscription, let us know your need. The generosity of others enables us to send out a limited number of "love" subscriptions.

We're Looking for Sabbathkeepers!

Probably less than 1 out of 1,000 seventh-day Christians know about The Bible Sabbath Association!

If you think more should know about us, that more should be reading *The Sabbath Sentinel* and using BSA material to share the Sabbath, you can help by sending us names and addresses of Sabbathkeepers you know. Think of . . .

- members of the church or assembly where you fellowship
- people who attend other seventh-day churches
- scattered individuals with whom you correspond
- brethren you've met at camp meetings and festivals
- ministers you've known through the years
- people who could use BSA material to share the Sabbath truth

If you send us their names and addresses, we'll let them know about our association, about *The Sabbath Sentinel*, about the literature we publish, about our other services—services that will help them share the Sabbath with others. Thank you for helping us!

Send names to:

The Bible Sabbath Association

**RD 1 Box 222
Fairview, OK 73737**