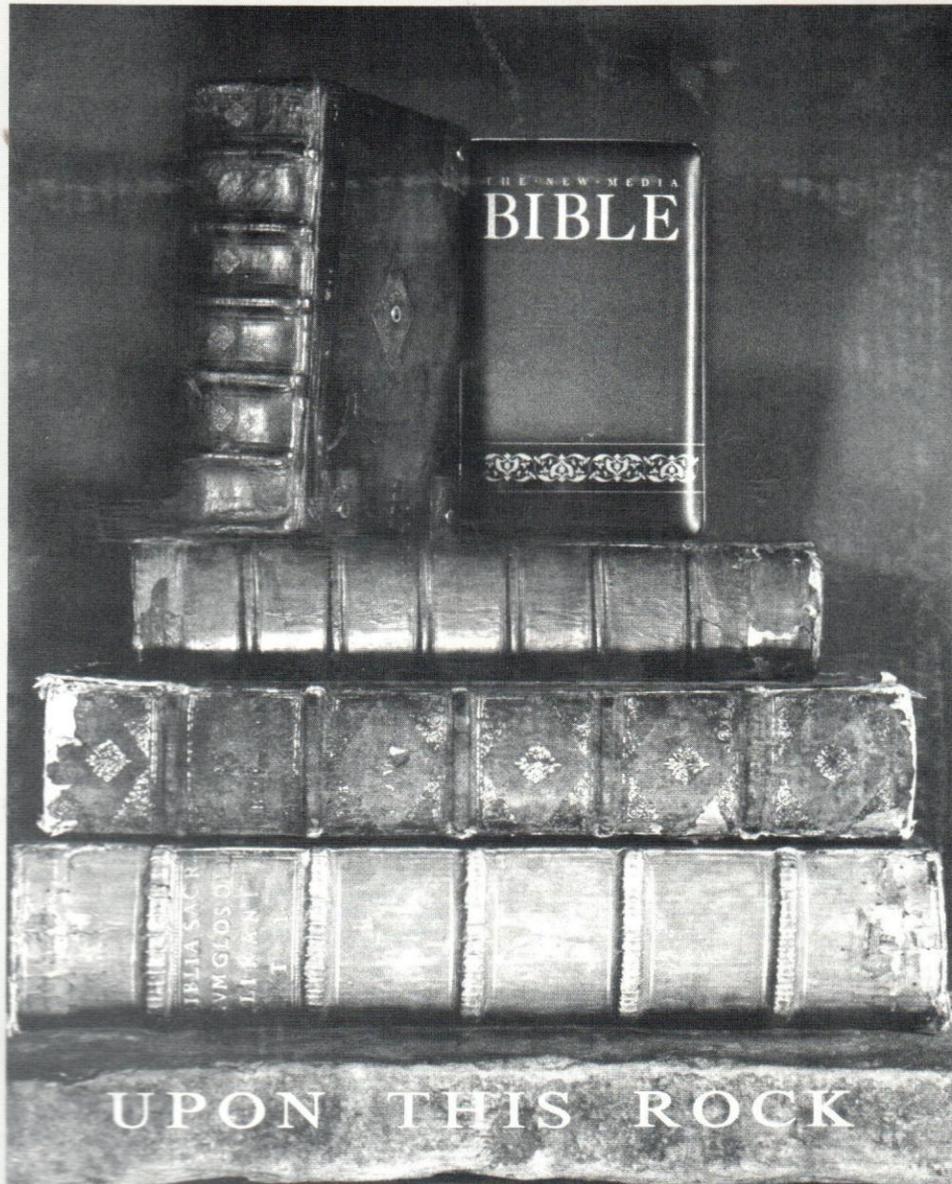


# THE *Sabbath Sentinel*

SEPTEMBER 1993



THE BIBLE SABBATH ASSOCIATION

 BIBLE  
SABBATH

# INSIDE FRONT COVER

In saying, "Until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished," Jesus affirmed the integrity of the Scriptures, and He predicted, "heaven and earth will pass away, but My Words will never pass away!" You, the reader, have just had a part in fulfilling that prophecy.

Our informative cover feature, "How We Got Our Bible," begins on page 6 of this issue. The cover photograph represents pictorially the five books

of Moses contained in volume 1 of the 1634 edition of the *Biblia Sacra* (Holy Bible); the books of Acts through Revelation contained in the 1590 edition of the *Biblorum Sacrorum*; the 1589 parallel edition of the *Testamentum Novum* containing the Byzantine Greek manuscripts, an old Latin translation, and a new Latin translation of the Byzantine text by Theodore Beza; a 1632 edition of the King James Version of

the Bible; and the New Media Bible videotape.

The Believer, enabled through the preservation of the Bible, responds to Jesus' invitation, "Everyone who hears My Words and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock," and participates in the New Testament dynamic, "upon this rock, I will build My church."  
—MG

## EDITORIAL

### GOOD INTENTIONS VERSUS ACTION

Before you read this, take possession of your favorite chair, turn the T.V. off, ask the family members to do a quiet activity for 10 minutes and then relax. Reflect back to the mood of the moment when you and your spouse stood in front of the minister, pledging your devotion to one another forever. In sickness or in health, in times of prosperity and adversity we each promised to cherish our best friend. But when adversity came sometimes it was easier to complain about the adversity than to expend effort cherishing. And what happened when we got busy with the career and the family, the leaking roof and the sick dog? Did we take time then to nourish and cherish our spouse or did we, like most families, become too "busy" to take time for our first love? Hard times always test our good intentions.

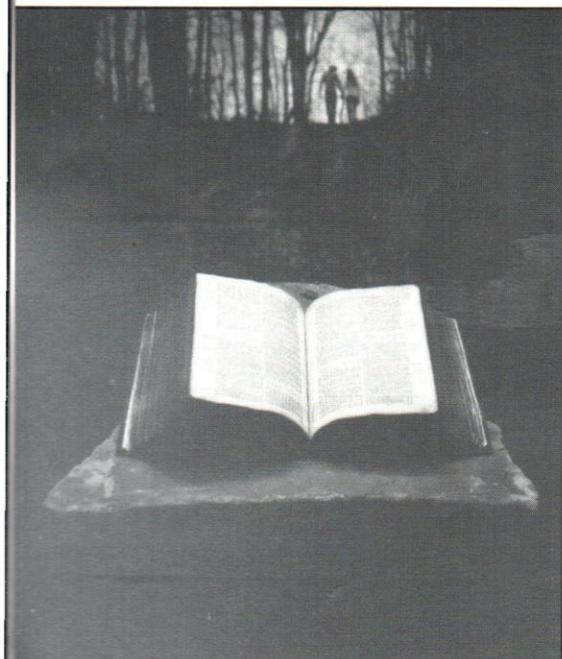
Think with me now back to the time when you gave your heart to the Lord. We each intended the best! We wanted to keep that "just baptized" feeling forever. We promised to stay true to Him, live for Him and share the joy we experienced with everyone we met. But when the hard times came and the busy weeks followed, did our first love go unnoticed? Were our actions replaced by only good intentions?

In II Corinthians 8:1-15 Paul encouraged the church to generously share in a work that they had enthusiastically begun. He said, "Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. Now **finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it**, according to your means. For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have." (Verses 10-12)

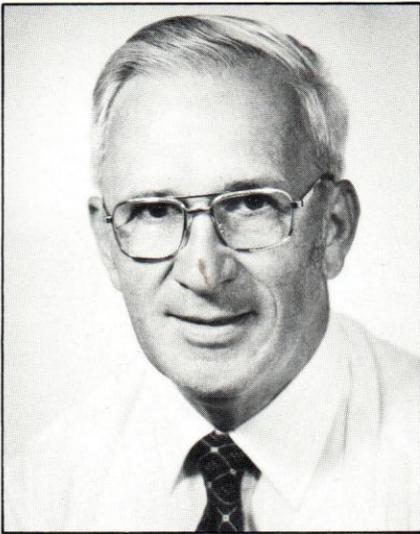
You see, Paul realized that it's easy to have a desire to do a good thing. It is not difficult to desire to do something for the Lord. But he also saw the need to challenge the people to "complete" or *take action* on their good intentions.

We all look forward to receiving the magazine we hold in our hands. And we all believe it would be good to share it with someone else. But have we put our good intentions into action? No? Then would you join with us in accepting a challenge this month to share the Good News of Jesus Christ and the blessed rest of His holy day by sponsoring just one additional gift subscription to *The Sabbath Sentinel*? As you think about it, perhaps this means giving up one meal out, one new book, one new "toy." It means not just *thinking* about it, but *acting* on it. Won't you take a moment right now to complete the enclosed subscription form and mail it to us today?

And what is our motive in sharing this Good News? Is it simply to keep this magazine coming? No. Look with me at verse 9: "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich." Every sacrifice on our part is small in comparison with what the Lord did for us. He gave up everything for us. He took action to save us. According to our means, let's do what we can for Him.  
—SC



## A Note From the President



EUGENE LINCOLN

The Bible Sabbath Association has been around for 48 years. *The Sabbath Sentinel* has been coming to subscribers for five years less — first as a quarterly, then, in 1960, as a monthly magazine. During those years the association and the magazine have made a tremendous impact. They have furthered understanding among Sabbathkeepers of differing beliefs, promoted the seventh-day Sabbath concept from a nondenominational basis, and championed the idea of no human-made laws to promote *any* day of rest.

This magazine has gone to national and state legislators. A few years ago, when I was editor, a US. Senator called me, asking for two dozen copies of a particular issue — the next day!

The new editor, Sydney Cleveland, and his predecessor, Richard Wiedenheft, have made improvements in the *Sentinel* so great that one would hardly recognize it as the same magazine that it was 10 years ago.

So why am I writing this? Obviously, not to put laurels on the heads of those who have made this magazine one of

which the BSA can be proud — and obviously not to boast about what a great association we have, though each of these reasons would be valid. Let me put it bluntly. Are you ready for some uncomfortable reading?

### Need to Increase Subscriptions

*The Sabbath Sentinel* must increase its number of subscribers, or it will soon go belly up. A rough cost-subscription survey, indicates that with about 1,000 subscribers the *Sentinel* would break even financially, without heavy subsidies from the BSA. We must immediately increase the number of subscribers if we want this magazine to continue. Your help is needed now: send gift subscriptions, give us lists of possible subscribers among your friends, members of your local congregation, and officials of your denomination. All of these solutions are easy but vital. **If each subscriber would take out just one additional gift subscription for a friend or relative this magazine could break even right now.** Is an extra fifty cents a week too much to ask?

### BSA Needs Your Financial Help

The Bible Sabbath Association cannot continue unless it has funds with which to accomplish its work. So we urge you to consider prayerfully the financial needs of the BSA, which is currently spending more money than it is receiving. Don't neglect your own local group, but also don't forget the needs of the BSA.

The BSA and *The Sabbath Sentinel* are both here now, and for that we are thankful. But CPR requires more effort than smelling salts — and resurrecting the dead is even more difficult! Please remember both the BSA and *The Sabbath Sentinel* while they're in the "smelling salts" stage. Acting now will enable each of us to help promote the Bible Sabbath into the next half-century.

A Christian Nation?

What do we Call Ourselves?

Jesus to the Rescue

How we got our Church

**Annual Membership Contributions:** Regular Membership, \$25; Family Membership, \$30; Life Membership, \$500 or more contributed during one year. All memberships include an annual subscription to *The Sabbath Sentinel*.

**Subscription to *The Sabbath Sentinel*** is \$15 per year in the US; \$18 outside the US (please remit in US funds).

**Bulk Subscriptions** are available if 10 or more copies are sent in the same package: \$7 each subscription, \$10 outside US.

Address all correspondence regarding BSA membership, subscriptions to *The Sabbath Sentinel*, change of address, or classified advertisements to: The Bible Sabbath Association, RD 1 Box 222, Fairview, OK 73737; telephone (405) 227-3200. Make all checks, drafts, and money orders payable to The Bible Sabbath Association.

Correspondence and Manuscript submissions to *The Sabbath Sentinel* should be addressed to Sydney or Sherry Cleveland, *The Sabbath Sentinel*, 172 Suncrest Drive, Greenwood, IN 46143; telephone (317) 885-8122.

Opinions expressed in *The Sabbath Sentinel* are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editorial Staff or of The Bible Sabbath Association.

Second class postage paid at Fairview, OK 73737 and Additional Mailing Offices. **Postmaster:** send change of address to *The Sabbath Sentinel*, RD 1 Box 222, Fairview, OK 73737.

BIBLE  
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# Mailbox

## Too Brief!

Enclosed is a contribution. Thanks for the new format. However, for someone who keeps the Sabbath "alone," it always seems too brief!

Bill Ickes  
Berlin, PA

## Reaching Out

### Through Local Advertising

Having been a Sabbathkeeper for all of my 79 years, first 36 in the Church of God and since 1950 as a Seventh-day Adventist, I appreciate your good magazine. Please send your fact sheet entitled "Reaching Out Through Local Advertising."

Charles Carpenter  
Loma Linda, California

*Anyone interested in sharing the Sabbath through local advertising may receive this fact sheet by writing BSA, RD 1, Box 222, Fairview, OK 73737.*

## HWA and Church Government

I just wanted to let you know that I really enjoyed Mr. Nickel's article on Church Government (*TSS*, April, 1993). Keep up the good work!

Mark Roush  
Bainbridge, Indiana

## Magnificent Seventh or Magnificent Savior?

Having been a SDA member for some forty years, I began to search the one and only authority upon the subject of Sabbathkeeping — the Bible. ... I came to the conclusion that as a covenant upon Israel, it had meaning in the One who is spiritual rest — that of the Lord Jesus. The day had now fulfilled its purpose in the eyes of Yahweh. ...

To make the Sabbath day a doctrine in this late date is to make it be a product of the human mind. ... There is absolutely no value to be gathered at this time to the day of rest and the manna given in the desert to Israel; both significantly pointing to Jesus the Messiah. He is the rest; and He the living Bread. To embrace the day as a means to honor Jesus was the glorious privilege of Israel awaiting them. We now have the substance of our faith: Jesus!

Today Jesus is to be found in the manner He set forth, "For where two or three have gathered in my name (not day) I am there with them." The writer to the Hebrews had the same

thing in mind, "not neglecting to meet together, as is habitual with some ..." Why did this inspired man not say, "Not forsaking or neglecting to assemble together (as believers), as is the habit of some, but admonishing (these to keep the Sabbath holy), warning, urging and encouraging one another, and all the more as you see (the end time coming on)."

To prove a doctrine from silence is futile. And no amount of specious loyalty to Jesus can be sifted out of the "day" to make it honor-wrapped as the "Magnificent Seventh" and so to ignore the "Magnificent Savior" in the process of idolizing the seventh day as equal to the Lord Jesus.

To see Jesus with outstretched arms in invitation to come to Him in a faith that is as small as a mustard seed will be blest by Him as no day can do. Spiritual rest is our need. To be certain of what we hope for and believe in is greater than all efforts to offer a day.

Come unto Me, He says, I will give you rest that will encompass you in all you do and on any day of the week. And this is a permanent rest as long as you live (Matthew 11:27-30). May God (Jesus) bless you with His spiritual rest on a daily basis!

Bill Ritz  
Walla Walla, Washington

*Thanks for reminding us to magnify Jesus above His day and to accept His rest everyday. Be sure to read this month's article on Twenty-Five Reasons to Worship on Sunday.*

## Freedom For Whom?

The editorial "What Price Freedom?" (June, 1993) presented Pastor Everett Sileven's experience. When he was trying to get nominated as a candidate for governor of Nebraska ten years ago, our ministerial fellowship invited him to meet with us to describe what he would do if elected. One of us asked whether he would appoint only Baptists to State offices. He said, No, he would not, because the Constitution forbids any religious test for public office; he would appoint the best people he could find regardless of their faith.

I asked the next question: "I am the Seventh-day Adventist here. If you were elected, would you work for Sunday laws?" "Not on the State level," he replied. "But if a majority

of the voters in a town or county were to enact such a law, I would say they had that right."

"What would happen to those of us who do not keep Sunday?" I asked. "Well, you could use the political process to try and get the law changed," he said. "Isn't that all right?" "I am not comforted," I concluded. I realized that in the meantime, before the change of the law, I might have to spend some time in jail.

One of my preacher friends pressed it a little further. "What would you do about the minorities who don't follow all the customs of the majority?" His answer was not reassuring. I could not help observing that Pastor Sileven, who had just spent six months in jail himself for his beliefs, could not see what his policies might do to someone else with different beliefs. Fortunately he was not nominated for the governor's race. May God help us and our leaders to practice the Golden Rule!

Ralph E. Neall  
Lincoln, Nebraska

*Isn't it amazing that even some who fled to the New World to escape religious persecution at times deprived others of religious liberty? God has blessed us with a political system which enables all citizens to make certain our liberties are protected—if we simply are willing to pay the price by getting involved.*

## The Reality is Christ

Just wanted to let you know how much I was gratified by the article "The Reality is Jesus Christ" by Michael Galimore in the June, 1993 *TSS*. I have felt what Mr. Galimore explained in the article for many years, but have been unable to put my feelings into words. One of the first things I noticed about the feast days is that there are specific instructions on when and how and where they are to be kept, most of which are virtually impossible in today's world. The "substitutions" provided by some Sabbath-keeping churches didn't make any sense to me and seemed more self-serving than holy. Thank you, Mr. Galimore, for putting my feelings into words.

Bonnie Rice  
Pickerington, Ohio

### Baptism for the Dead

I appreciated Larry Spurgeon's article on baptism for the dead (*TSS*, July, 1993) and found his research of Old Testament texts concerning "mikvah" to be enlightening. However, I think he missed the point Paul was addressing in 1 Corinthians 15:29. Chapter 15 contrasts the certainty of Christ's resurrection from the dead with the certainty of our resurrection through faith in Him. By pointing to those (in paganism) who demonstrated their faith in a resurrection by erroneously being baptised by proxy for those who had died, Paul chided the Corinthian Christians for their lack of faith in Christ's power to resurrect believers.

Early references to the doctrinally unsound practice of baptism for the dead may be found in Tertullian's *Against Marcion*, v. 10; *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* 48; and Chrysostom's *Homilies on 1 Corinthians* xl. 1.

Paul was aware of the view among the Sadducees that once death occurred it was impossible to reconstitute the body. He used their belief to throw the Sanhedrin into confusion and thus escape their sentence of death (Acts 23:6-8). Apparently the appearance of bodily-resurrected believers after the death of Jesus (Matthew 27:52, 53) was simply dismissed as hallucinations. In the same way, the Sadducees claimed Christ's resurrected body had been stolen by His disciples (Matthew 28:11-13). No doubt there were those within the Christian community at Corinth who found it difficult to relinquish the doctrinal errors of their past as they were taught the truth of the resurrection.

Name Withheld

## THE GOOD NEWS!

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel,  
because it is the power of God  
for the salvation of  
everyone who believes:  
first for the Jew,  
then for the Gentile.  
For in the Gospel a  
righteousness from God  
is revealed,  
a righteousness that is  
by faith from first to last,  
just as it is written:  
The righteous will live  
by faith."  
— Romans 1:16, 17 NIV

# Worldwide Church Leaders Dialog with Church of God (Seventh Day)

RICHARD WIEDENHEFT



Joseph Tkach, Jr., center, with Pastors Marvin Keim and Lynn Taylor

Correspondence and phone calls between Calvin Burrell, president of the General Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day) and Joseph W. Tkach, pastor general of the Worldwide Church of God, have resulted in meetings between representatives of the two churches.

In May, Joseph Tkach, Jr., Greg Albrecht (editor of *The Plain Truth* magazine), Victor Kubic, and Mike Feazell spent a day at the offices of the General Conference in Denver. The discussions were conducted in a spirit of brotherhood; they focused on areas of common belief, common history of the two organizations, and common experiences in dealing with changes.

At the invitation of Calvin Burrell, the four WCG leaders attended the general conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day) held June 29 to July 3 in Minneapolis. They sat in on workshops, observed business meetings, joined in worship services, and had personal conversations with many ministers and members of the General Conference, including a number who had previously been affiliated with WCG.

Reflecting on the communication taking place between the two organizations, Joseph Tkach, Jr., commented, "We have moved from being silent cheerleaders and silent critics to a warmer, friendlier rapport with each other. I hope our relationship continues to progress; I hope we can put aside the differences that have separated us and receive each other as brothers. I've made some good friends here — friendships I don't want to let die."

While many people are skeptical of the changes being made by the WCG, BSA executive director Richard Wiedenheft, who had a number of discussions with the WCG representatives at the Minneapolis meetings, commented, "From everything I've seen and heard, I believe the changes in the Worldwide Church of God are motivated by a sincere desire to pursue truth. The new spirit and attitude of respect and acceptance of people of other persuasions is very much in keeping with the philosophy of The Bible Sabbath Association. For that I rejoice."

# How We Got Our BIBLE

## The Ten Best-Selling Bibles in America

Name	% of Market
1. New International Version	30.1
2. King James Version	24.2
3. Living Bible	11.9
4. New King James Version	9.1
5. New American Bible	4.9
6. Today's English Version	4.2
7. New American Standard Bible	3.2
8. ICB/New Century Version	2.2
9. Revised Standard/New Revised	1.5
10. Amplified Bible	1.4

*Our thanks to Jerry Griffin for giving permission to excerpt this portion from his recent book How We Got the Bible, pages 17-19. For further reading about the fascinating work of providing God's Word in modern languages, How We Got the Bible may be purchased from Bible Advocate Press, P.O. Box 33677, Denver, CO 80233 for \$4.50.*

### Brief History of the English Bible

As Christianity spread into new lands, it was necessary to translate the Hebrew-Greek Scriptures into other languages. The first translations were into Coptic, Syriac, Armenian, Ethiopic, and Latin. The Bible would not become readily available in English until some 14 centuries after the last book of the New Testament had been written.

Contrary to the naive notions of some, the English Bible was not uncovered in the sands of Palestine, already bound in black leather, (printed) on India paper with gold edges, and dedicated to King James. It did not come that easy. It took men of courage and faith — men who gave their lives — so we might read the Word of God for ourselves in our own language.

### Jerome's Latin Vulgate

The history of the English Bible begins with the Latin Vulgate. In 382 AD, Damascus, the Bishop of Rome, commissioned Eusebius Heironymus, better known today as Jerome, to revise the older Latin versions of the

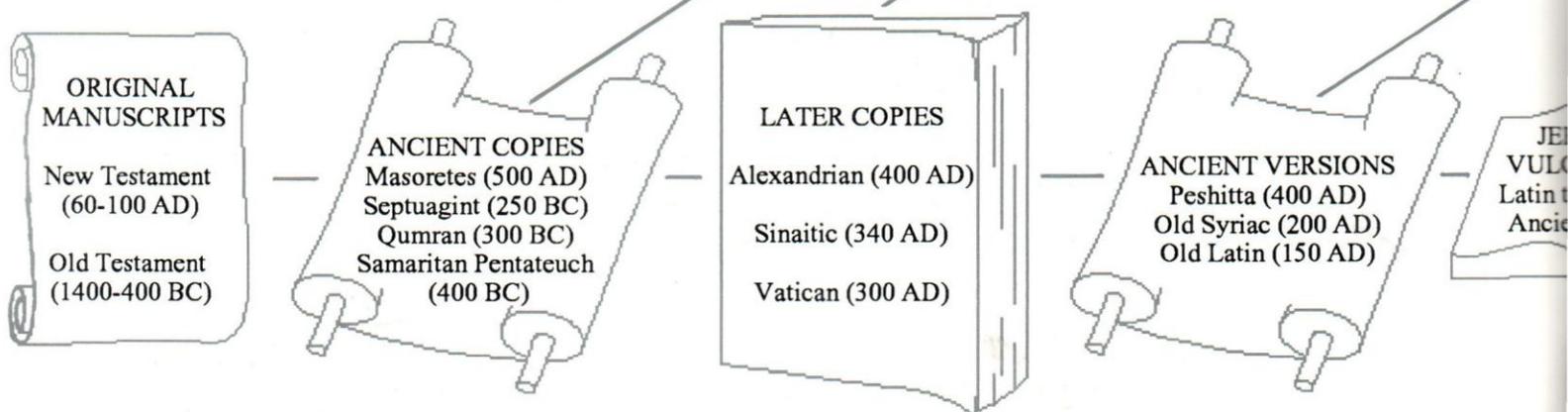
Bible. After 23 years of work, Jerome completed his task in 405 AD. His translation became known as the Vulgate, or "common," Bible because it was written in the common, everyday Latin of the people. In time, Jerome's Vulgate became the predominant translation in Europe and the only official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church.

From the fourth to the seventh centuries, missionaries from Rome began spreading Christianity throughout the British Isles. They brought (Jerome's Latin Vulgate) with them. From the seventh to the fourteenth centuries, the Vulgate reigned supreme in England.

Unfortunately, only the educated class could read and understand Latin. For the vast majority of people, knowledge of the Word of God came solely from the sermons and stories of parish priests, the religious plays in the market places, and the religious paintings, wood carvings, sculpture, and stained glass windows which decorated the churches.

### Early English Versions

First attempts to put the Bible into the language of the English people were meager. As early as the seventh century, paraphrases and partial translations of the Latin Bible into



Follow this chart to discover the origins of your favorite version(s) of the Bible. Consider whether or not the closer your Bible is translated directly from the earliest manuscripts the more accurately it reflects the writer's original words. Ask yourself whether the

use of modern language clarifies the original words for you. And then decide whether your favorite version makes it easier for you to understand the prompting of the Holy Spirit. But most important of all, faithfully read and study your Bible every day.

Anglo-Saxon and other English dialects began to appear. For example:

**Aldhelm**, Bishop of Sherborne, translated the Psalter about 700 AD;

**Egbert**, Archbishop of York, translated the first three Gospels about 705 AD;

**The Venerable Bede**, a monk at Jarrow (and the greatest English scholar of the day) translated the Gospel of John about 735 AD;

**Alfred the Great**, King of England and a scholar in his own right, translated the Ten Commandments, Exodus 21-23, and Acts 15:23-29 into Anglo-Saxon around 870-901 AD;

**Aldred**, a priest, wrote an inter-linear translation of the gospels into the Northumbrian dialect between the lines of a Latin Bible about 950 AD.

No complete English translation of the Bible existed, however, until the Wycliffe Bible appeared in 1384.

### The First English Bible

John Wycliffe, a scholar and theologian who was an opponent of the papacy, believed that people should be governed by the Bible alone. His outspoken position against the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church earned him the title, "morning star of the Reformation."

Wycliffe organized a group of "poor priests," called Lollards, to travel the countryside preaching and reading the Bible to the people in their own language, instead of Latin. He felt strongly that a Bible in English was needed.

Under his sponsorship, two of his associates, Nicholas of Hereford and John Purvey, translated the Bible from the Latin Vulgate into English. Although Wycliffe himself did not do the actual translating, his name was given to the work. The Wycliffe Bible was completed in 1384, with a revision produced by Purvey in 1395. For the first time the complete Bible was now available in English.

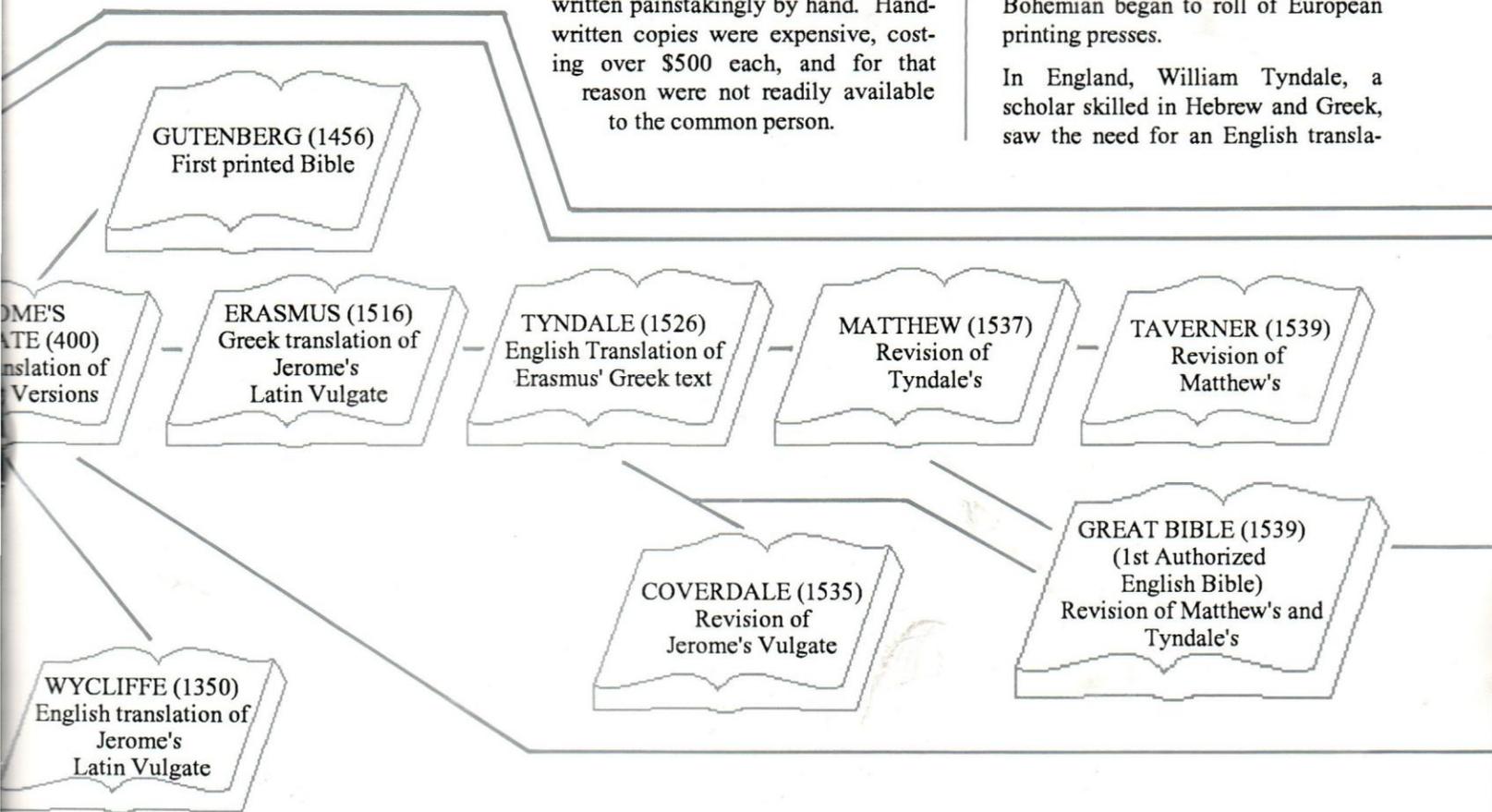
Since the Wycliffe Bible was produced before the invention of the printing press, all copies had to be written painstakingly by hand. Handwritten copies were expensive, costing over \$500 each, and for that reason were not readily available to the common person.

Church authorities quickly opposed the Wycliffe Bible, claiming that Latin, "the holy tongue," had given way to the uncouth language of the peasant. Fearing the uneducated would grossly misinterpret the Scriptures, the Church viewed Wycliffe's Bible as a threat to its authority and the "true" faith. ... Readers and distributors of Wycliffe's Bible were arrested and punished. Some were even burned at the stake. Wycliffe himself died in 1384 before the persecution began. But the animosity of the Church had been so aroused that his body was disinterred and burned, and his ashes scattered on the River Swift some 44 years after his death. The Wycliffe Bible would remain the only Bible in English for a century and a half.

### The Father of the English Bible

In 1456, the first printed book came off Johann Gutenberg's printing press, the famous "Gutenberg Bible," which was a copy of the Latin Vulgate. A new era had begun. With the advent of the printing press and a newfound interest in Hebrew and Greek, vernacular translations in Spanish, Italian, French, Dutch, German, and Bohemian began to roll off European printing presses.

In England, William Tyndale, a scholar skilled in Hebrew and Greek, saw the need for an English translation.



tion based, not upon the Latin Vulgate, but upon the original languages. Said Tyndale, "I had perceived by experience, how that it was impossible to stablish the lay people in any truth, except the Scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue."

On one occasion, Tyndale became involved in an argument when someone suggested that it was better to be without an English version of the Bible than to be without the pope. Tyndale replied with his now famous statement, "I defy the Pope and all his laws; if God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost."

In Germany, he secretly completed translating the New Testament from Greek into English in 1525. Before he could have it printed, however, he was discovered by the authorities. Escaping to Worms, Tyndale managed to have 3,000 copies printed in February

of 1526. The first *printed* English New Testament was now available. Copies were smuggled into England in shipments of grain and cloth. English church authorities ordered its confiscation and all copies burned.

Tyndale, still in Germany, continued to print and smuggle his New Testaments into England faster than the authorities could destroy them. In 1530-1531, he also translated parts of the Old Testament from Hebrew into English.

In May of 1535, Tyndale was kidnapped and imprisoned in Flanders. In August of 1536, he was convicted of heresy and was strangled and burned at the stake in October of that same year. His last words were, "Lord, open Thou the King of England's eyes."

Tyndale's work was so monumental that he is called the "Father of the English Bible." Almost every subsequent English version is indebted to him. For example, about 90 percent of Tyndale's New Testament has been reproduced in the King James Version.

### Reading Levels of Major Versions

Version	Grade Level
ICB/New Century Version	3.9
Today's English Version	7.3
New International Version	7.8
New King James Version	8.0
Living Bible	8.3
New English Bible	8.5
Phillips' NT	9.6
Jerusalem Bible	10.1
Revised Standard Version	10.4
New American Standard Bible	11.3
American Standard Version	11.6
King James Version	14.0

S

ASV = American Standard Version

ERV = English Revised Version

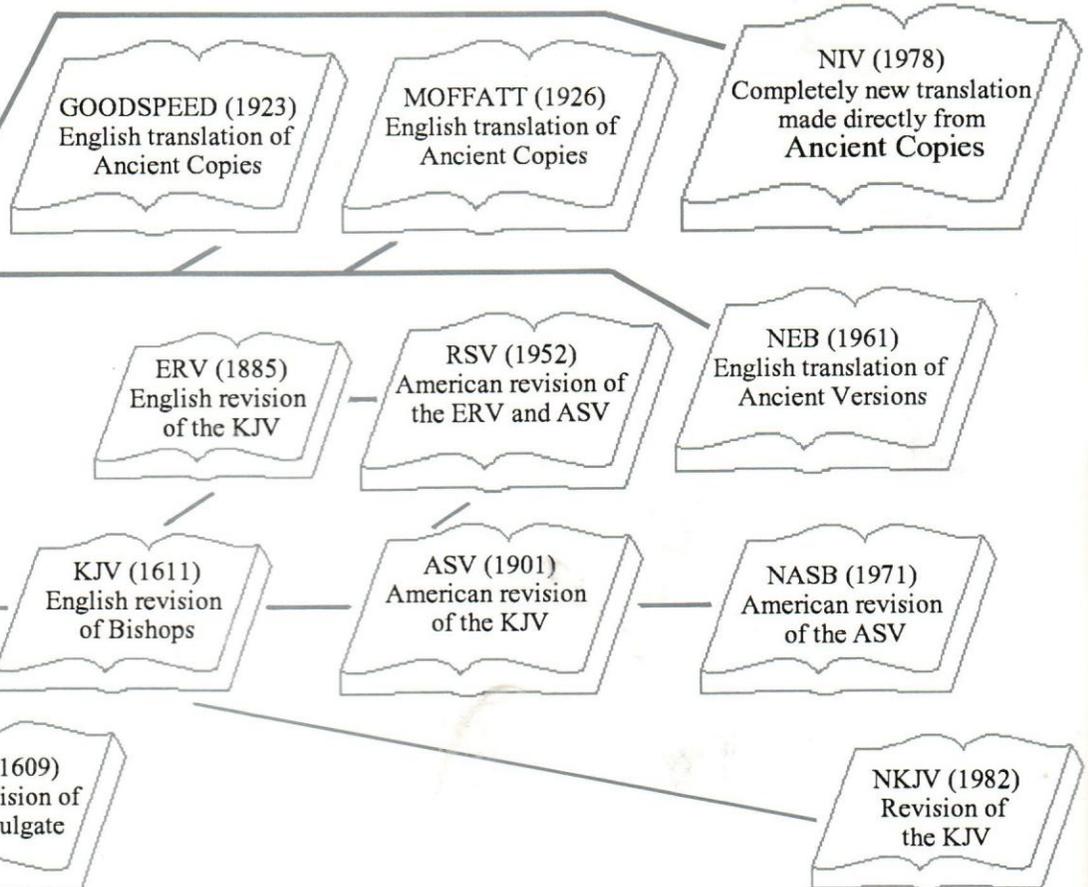
KJV = King James Version

NASB = New American Standard Bible

NIV = New International Version

NKJV = New King James Version

RSV = Revised Standard Version



# Twenty-Five Reasons to Worship on Sunday

*Dr. Russell K. Tardo, of Faithful Word Publications has written Sunday Facts & Sabbath Fiction, 25 Reasons Why the Christian Church Worships on Sunday. The book is available from P.O. Box 496, Arabi, LA 70032. The following introduction and 25 reasons are briefly quoted from his book in an effort to make Sabbath-keepers aware of the views of Sunday-keepers. Italicized comments following each "reason" are those of TSS editorial staff.*

"The sabbatarian presses are rolling out a plethora of books, tracts and magazines, and their numerous radio and television broadcasts aggressively promote Sabbath observance, while denigrating Sunday worship. While many of their publications and broadcasts address a number of worthwhile topics and issues, the underlying theme of them all is that *Sabbath keeping is necessary today*, either as a mark of one's salvation, sanctification or maturity. Many Christians have been confused by this unrelenting barrage from seemingly knowledgeable, Bible quoting sabbatarians, and many have even succumbed to their errors, and now spout the same mechanical sabbatarian phrases, such as 'Sunday worship is the mark of the beast' or the 'seal of Romanism.' And while there exists a broad diversity within the sabbatarian movement, they virtually all believe that the true, distinguishing mark of God's end-time remnant people is Sabbath observance. It is to all of these that this book is addressed. If this endeavor helps even one person to find the real truth about Sunday and the Sabbath, if it delivers even one from the iron jaws of legalism, it will have been well worth the effort. ... Here are 25 Biblical reasons why the Christian Church worships on Sunday." — *Introduction*

**1. Jesus Rose on Sunday.** *Nothing in the NT accounts of Christ's resurrection even hints at a change of the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday. Rather, the Scriptures are clear that Christ's disciples "rested on the Sabbath in obedience to the commandment" (Luke 23:56).*

**2. The Church was born on Sunday (Pentecost).** *Many believe it was on a Sunday that the Holy Spirit came down in power upon those assembled in the upper room. But was this the day the Church was born? No. Two years previously Christ declared He was the foundation of His Church and that His disciples were it's members (Matthew 16:16-19). Again, in chapter 18 verses 15-20, Jesus referred to His disciples and followers (all of which were Sabbath-keepers) as "the church." Therefore the Church had been in existence at least two years prior to Pentecost. A careful examination of Bible references concerning the reception of the Holy Spirit clearly teaches the Spirit may be received on any day of the week. No Bible record concerning the reception of the Holy Spirit even suggests a change of the day of worship from Saturday to Sunday.*

**3. No Sabbath command in the New Testament.** *This is a wide-spread error. Every one of God's Ten Commandments are repeated in the NT (Matthew 4:10; 1 John 5:21; Acts 17:29; 1 Timothy 6:1; Mark 2:27, 28; Hebrews 4:4, 10; Colossians 1:16; Matthew 19:19; Romans 13:9; Matthew 19:18; Romans 7:7). Jesus told a prospective convert that if he wanted to "enter life, obey the commandments" (Matthew 19:17). In addition, Jesus Himself set His followers the example of Sabbath-keeping (Luke 4:16) and expected they would continue Sabbath observance after His death and resurrection (Matthew 24:20). Decades later even Gentile converts to Christianity were worshipping on Sabbath according to James' comments made at the first General Christian Council in Jerusalem (Acts 15:19-21).*

**4. Jesus canceled the Sabbath (by "breaking the Sabbath" John 5:18).** *No, Jesus did not cancel or abolish the Sabbath (Matthew 5:17-20). But Jesus did sweep away the rubbish of man-made regulations concerning Sabbath-keeping (Matthew 12:9-14; John 5:5-18). He re-established the Sabbath in it's original purity.*

**5. The Sabbath was part of the law given exclusively to the Jews.** *No, the Sabbath dates from the seventh day of Creation (Genesis 2:1-3) — 2,500 years before there was a Jew and before the Ten Commandments were given on Sinai. Scripture tells us the Sabbath continues from Creation on across the broad spectrum of earth's history all the way to the new heavens and the new earth (Isaiah 66:22, 23). If the law was "given exclusively to the Jews" then could it be God's will for Christians to lie, steal, murder, dishonor their parents, take God's name in vain, and so on? Surely no thoughtful Christian would ever claim that the Ten Commandments were given exclusively to the Jews — even the Apostle Paul stated that Christians do not "nullify the law" by their faith, and that the law is necessary to define sin in the life of every Christian (Romans 3:31; 7:7).*

**6. Christ fulfilled the law (Matthew 5:17).** *Yes. And, as our Example, by fulfilling God's Ten Commandment law He established it's perpetual claim upon each of His followers. The word "fulfill" does not mean "to abolish" (as Jesus clearly stated: "I have not come to abolish them ..." [verses 17-20]). Any traffic policeman will quickly point out that your fulfillment of the law on Monday by driving the legal speed limit does not abolish that law and allow you to drive as fast as you want on Tuesday.*

**7. There was no Sabbath observance before the law.** *Wrong again. The Lord God Himself rested on the Sabbath 2,500 years before the law was given (Genesis 2:1-3). God established the seventh day as the holy day of rest and worship for all mankind. The first book of the OT contains God's personal testimony that "Abraham obeyed me and kept my requirements, my commands, my decrees and my laws" (Genesis 26:5). Are we brave enough to contradict God by claiming Abraham did not keep the Sabbath 2,100 years the law was given? And three months before Sinai (Exodus 19:1), God miraculously fed His people with manna. Through that forty-year-long recurring miracle God taught the Israelites to keep the Sabbath rest every seventh day (Exodus 16:4-31). Is it valid to assume that three months after the manna commenced and God proclaimed the fourth commandment*

from Sinai saying "Remember the Sabbath day ...," that two million Israelites had no idea what He was speaking about? A person can only "remember" something he has previously known.

**8. Sabbath-keeping died with the law.** There are two errors in this assumption. First, God's Ten Commandment law did not "die." Speaking of the law as a means of earning salvation Paul states "I died to the law ..." (Galatians 2:19). No Christian can legitimately keep the Ten Commandments as a means of salvation. Thus we must "die to the law" as a means of salvation if we are to accept God's grace in Jesus Christ. Second, since God's Ten Commandment law did not die at the cross, the Sabbath commandment is very much alive today. Paul is clear that the physical rest of the weekly Sabbath remains for Christians as an illustration of the spiritual rest and salvation we enjoy in Christ (Hebrews 4:1-11).

**9. The fourth commandment is absent in the New Testament.** Not true. We already covered this under reason number 3.

**10. Sabbath-keeping is the "ministration of death" (2 Corinthians 3:3, 6-17).** No, Sabbath-keeping is not mentioned even once in this chapter from 2 Corinthians. Verse 7 speaks of "the ministry that brought death" (NIV). In verse 9 Paul calls it "the ministry that condemns men." Was this the Sabbath? No, in a general sense it was the entire religious system of the Jews that had become so perverted by legalism (righteousness by works) that Jesus pronounced seven woes against it (Matthew 23:13-38; Mark 7:6-13). In a specific sense it refers to the Ten Commandments "engraved in letters on stone" (2 Corinthians 3:7). As the definition of sin (1 John 3:4), the Ten Commandments condemn every sinner to death (Romans 3:23). Only God's grace showered upon us through the ministry of Jesus Christ can rescue us from the death we deserve (Romans 6:23). Does God's grace put an end to God's law? No, grace requires law — we have been set free from sin, not from God's law (Romans 6:15, 18). As a saved Christian living under the empowering Spirit of God, we will not have a ministry of condemnation. Like Christ, we will have a ministry of reconciliation (John 3:17). Does this

free, Spirit-filled ministry which inspires a lifestyle of reconciliation abolish God's Ten Commandments? No, for again, grace cannot exist apart from law (Romans 4:15).

**11. There is only one law.** In the ultimate sense this is correct — it is the law of life or death: we are either saved by God's grace or we are lost by our works. The question is, does God's saving grace abolish His law? As already discussed, the Bible answer is No. Thus the Sabbath, which existed millenniums before the Ten Commandments were given on Sinai, and which is included in God's Ten Commandment law, is still in effect.

**12. Sabbath observance is ceremonial.** An interesting argument considering that reason number 11 has just proclaimed there is only one law! If the Sabbath commandment is ceremonial it is just as much so as any of the other nine. The real issue is: Was the Sabbath part of the ceremonial system which pointed to Christ as the Lamb of God, and which was abolished at the cross? No, the Sabbath is part of God's Ten Commandment law which was implemented through the ceremonial system, and which continues to be implemented through Christ's High Priestly ministry. The law still condemns sinners to death even though the ceremonial system no longer exists. Our death penalty for violating God's Law is paid through the reality of Christ and not the "shadow" of the old ceremonial system. Thus all of God's Ten Commandments, including the Sabbath, still stand.

**13. Sabbatarians don't keep the Sabbath.** This assumption is in error. Jesus said that if we are going to rely on perfect obedience our righteousness will have to surpass that of the Pharisees (Matthew 5:20). The principle outlined in 2 Corinthians 8:12 and Isaiah 64:6 is that while our efforts will never satisfy the righteous requirements of God's law, He accepts our loyal intent as the best we can offer. The fact that we do not perfectly satisfy those requirements does not mean that the law has been abolished. It means we must constantly turn to Christ to accept His forgiveness and to grow in His grace (2 Peter 3:18).

**14. The Church always worshipped on Sunday.** Not factual. See our response to reasons number 1, 2 and 3.

**15. History validates Sunday worship.** No, history records Sunday worship. The real issue is, Who is our highest authority? Do we worship on Sunday because history records most Christians subsequent to the NT did? Or do we worship on Saturday in obedience to God on the day He made holy and set aside for His people as the day of rest and worship? Joshua offers good advice as we make our decision (Joshua 24:15).

**16. Saturday was for evangelism!** It still is — that doesn't make Sunday the holy day of rest and worship.

**17. Sunday is not the "Christian Sabbath." Amen.**

**18. Sabbath keeping endangers the soul.** So does Sunday-keeping. Any "keeping" endangers the soul if it is done from a sense of legalism.

**19. Faith in Christ is our Sabbath (Hebrews 4:1-11).** The issue in Hebrews 4 is resting from our legalistic works, not a change of the day of worship. The fact Paul points to the Sabbath-day rest as his example of our spiritual rest in Christ makes it clear that the Christians of his day were very familiar with the meaning and purpose of the Sabbath. Interestingly, verses 6 and 11 say that "disobedience," not lack of "faith," prevented some from entering that "rest." No amount of obedience can take the place of faith — and no amount of faith can take the place of obedience (James 2:17, 18). Faith and obedience must be combined to enter either the physical or spiritual Sabbath rest in Christ (Hebrews 4:2).

**20. The Sabbath was not intended to endure forever.** Wrong. See Isaiah 66:22, 23.

**21. No one reading the New Testament would be convicted to observe the Sabbath.** The growing number of eight million Sabbath-keepers around the world indicates otherwise.

**22. Sabbath-breaking is not a sin.** The Sabbath is part of God's Ten Commandment law. 1 John 3:4 states that "everyone who sins breaks the law." Sabbath-breaking is a sin.

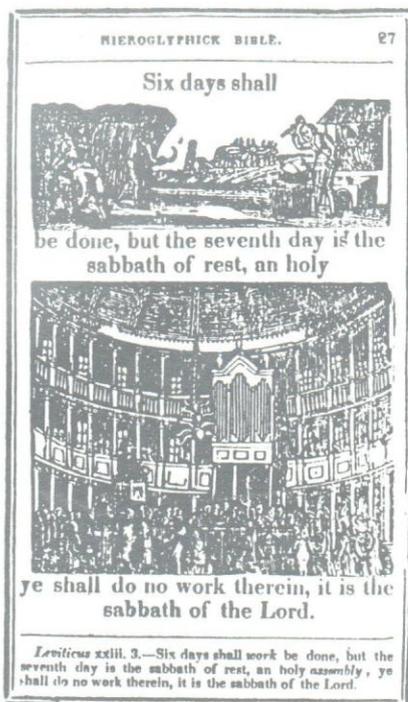
**23. The Sabbath was made for man.** All mankind. Amen.

**24. Sabbath-keepers are weak in the faith (Romans 14).** Apparently the author has not studied persecuted Sabbath-keepers. Never-the-less the

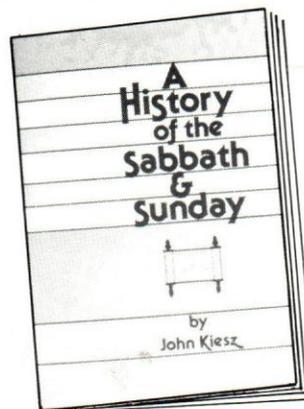
issue being discussed in Romans chapter 14 revolves around personal preferences. If a man's personal preference is to eat vegetables (verse 2) or to consider one day more sacred than another (verse 5), we are not to pass judgment on him (verse 13). Personal preferences are matters of personal conscience (verse 22). However, when dealing with a plain "thus saith the Lord" (as in the Ten Commandments), personal preferences must give way to God's direct command. We all will answer to Christ for our personal preferences (verses 10 and 12) as well as for our lives of conscious disobedience to God's law (verse 22 and 2 Corinthians 5:10). But nothing in Paul's discussion abolishes or changes the Sabbath.

**25. Sabbath-keeping denies the all sufficiency of Christ.** No, keeping the Sabbath is a sign that we recognize only the Lord can make us holy (Ezekiel 20:12). The Sabbath is designed to be a safe-guard from legalism as well as a perpetual reminder of our sinfulness and our desperate need for the All-sufficient Savior. It is the eternal symbol of the security of our salvation by faith through grace. And it is the weekly reminder that we can now rest and be at peace in Jesus Christ. May that blessing be yours this Sabbath day.

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