

ARE CHRISTIANS OBLIGATED TO KEEP THE SABBATH? : PART 1

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Observing The Sabbath, Every Day A Blessing, Acknowledging God On Daily Basis, Hypocrisy Of Church Attendance, Charade Of The Jews, Lip Service Or True Worship, Spiritless Feast Days, New Testament Christians Or Old Testament Law, Jesus Frees Us From The Law, Unbelieving Jews Sought To Establish Their Own Righteousness, Jews' Perceived Righteousness Did Not Save Them, People Control Through Mosaic Law, Christ Is Lord Of The Sabbath, Original Purpose Of The Sabbath, The Mosaic Law Was Our Schoolmaster, The Letter Of The Law Or Spirit-Led, Burned Up Self-Righteous Works, Worship In The Spirit, Works Don't Save Us, Washed In The Blood Of The Lamb

While I have already written extensively regarding the correct attitude which modern New Covenant Christians should have towards the Old Testament Levitical and Mosaic Laws, this topic still comes up rather often on the various social networks where I participate. In fact, one is given the clear impression that there is an ongoing online "war" between the legalists, and those people who adhere more to Grace-based beliefs. Recently, one of our conversations touched on the topic of the Seventh Day Adventists, and the fact that observance of the Sabbath day is a central part of their doctrine. In asking me about this subject, one person quoted the following verse that is found in the Book of Genesis:

"And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."

Genesis 2:3, KJV

This woman then proceeded to ask me the following question:

----- Begin Quote -----

Wouldn't that Day, being blessed, hold some special

significance, if we acknowledged it, and worshiped the Lord as our Creator on that Day, just as Sunday is set aside today?

----- End Of Quote -----

In answering this woman, the first point I would like to make here, is that I do not believe that it is necessary for us to acknowledge one particular day each week in order to honor the Lord. As far as I am concerned, every day is a special blessing, because every day is given to us to live by the Lord. As the Psalmist was inspired to write:

"This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

Psalm 118:24, KJV

Over a thousand years later, the Apostle Paul penned the following words to the brethren at Rome, when they too were apparently having problems, because some of them felt that it was necessary to observe certain feast days, while some of the others viewed every day as being the same, and of equal importance:

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

Romans 14:5, KJV

Rather than acknowledge a particular day as part of a weekly ritual, because it is mandated by some branch of organized religion, I believe that it is much more important that we acknowledge the Lord in our lives every single day of the year. This shouldn't occur just on one day of the week when worldly people try to show their holiness and devotion to God. Furthermore, we shouldn't do things out of mere habit, or simply because it is the politically correct thing to do, but rather because we have thankful hearts.

In short, if we do have thankful hearts for all that the Lord has done for us, we will manifest our thankfulness to Him every day, and we will acknowledge Him every day. If we are not truly living our lives in obedience to God's Word and Will; and if we are not acknowledging Him in our lives every single day of the year; then in my view, setting aside about one hour of one day a week is nothing short of total hypocrisy, and I don't think that God really cares for it.

But again, this is just my opinion. You may feel differently.

As I point out in the article "The Biblical Practice of Fasting", by the time that Jesus arrived during the First Century, the so-called worship of the religious elders of Israel had been reduced to nothing more than a pitiful and hypocritical charade before both God and man. It was all talk and no substance. It was spiritless and dead; just like so many modern church services today. It is for this reason that Jesus strongly rebuked the Scribes and the Pharisees, and thoroughly exposed their sins and the hypocrisy of their ways, in such sharp discourses as the one that is found in Matthew chapter twenty-three. In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus very pointedly told His self-righteous religious enemies that they honored God with their mouths, while their hearts were very far from Him, as we see here:

". . . Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition."

Mark 7:6-9, KJV

As you can see, in rebuking the religious elders of Israel, Jesus was quoting from the Prophet Isaiah. This is because since the days of the Prophets, the Lord had been rebuking the Israelites because of their dry, spiritless religion of dead works. This, of course, included their observance of certain feast days, including the sabbaths. These solemn practices had become utterly worthless and vain. In fact, they were quite disgusting to the Lord, because they were not being done from the heart; and they were not coupled with true obedience; as we see by the following verses:

"And he hath violently taken away his tabernacle, as if it were of a garden: he hath destroyed his places of the assembly: the LORD hath caused the solemn feasts and sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion, and hath despised in the indignation of his anger the king and the priest."

Lamentations 2:6, KJV

"Behold, I will corrupt your seed, and spread dung upon your

faces, even the dung of your solemn feasts; and one shall take you away with it."

Malachi 2:3, KJV

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

Isaiah 1:11-17, KJV

Isn't that quite amazing? The ancient Israelites were going through all of the right motions of pretending to be a holy sanctified people with all of their special feast days and Sabbath observations. They were making long prayers to God. They were offering their morning and evening sacrifices. They were getting together and having their solemn meetings. Yet the Lord was utterly sick of it. He didn't want to have anything to do with it. In fact, He even went so far as to say that He didn't even want to hear their prayers because they stunk in His nostrils. Their prayers were no longer a sweet-smelling incense to Him. They had become a foul odor which nauseated Him. How much those verses remind me of so many modern church-goers who also go through the motions of pretending to be Christian, while they live their daily lives in hypocrisy and deep sin, and collectively do things to other nations of the world, which a Christian people simply should not do!

It should be clear then, that if our hearts are not right with the Lord, going to church on Sunday, or Saturday, or Wednesday is not only a meaningless act, it is in fact a hypocritical act; legalism at its worst; and God utterly hates it. But returning to our main point concerning the necessity of observing holy days such as the Sabbath, the

simple truth of the matter is that we Christians are not under the Old Testament Covenant. We are under the New Testament Covenant, which was signed and sealed by Jesus' own Blood. I explain this concept in more detail in other articles such as "Is Jesus the Only Begotten Son of God?", as well as in "The Blood Atonement: In Jesus' Own Words". I encourage you to read them if you desire a more in-depth understanding of the significance of the Sacrifice of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The point is, being as we Christians are covered by the New Testament Covenant -- or agreement if you prefer -- we are no longer bound by the bondage of the Old Testament Law -- that is, the 613 mitzvot -- as the pre-Christian era Israelites were. As I explain in quite a few other articles, such as in "The Royal Law: Thou Shalt Love", Jesus came to free us from dependence upon the Law for our Salvation. That is why in explaining these things to the Law-observing Jews of His time, He said such things as the following:

". . . If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

John 8:31-32, 36, KJV

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

Luke 4:18-19, KJV

While Jesus kept some aspects of the Law in order to "fulfil all righteousness" -- Matthew 3:15 -- at the same time, He was not in bondage to the same, as you will see momentarily. Furthermore, He taught His followers that they could be free from the bondage of the Law as well. For example; after an incident where the Lord's Disciples were caught picking corn on the Sabbath day, consider what happened next:

"And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the

high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."

Mark 2:24-28, KJV

On another occasion, when Jesus was about to perform another miracle of healing, once again His religious Law-observing enemies -- the unbelieving Jews -- found an opportunity to attack Him. Notice again how the Lord responded and put them to shame due to their self-righteous legalism, and lack of love and mercy:

"And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day? And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him."

Luke 13:14-17, KJV

Over and over again those self-righteous, legalistic, and supposedly Law-observing Scribes and Pharisees accused the Lord of breaking the Mosaic and Levitical Laws; and each time, Jesus would wisely respond to their holier-than-thou accusations with words such as we find in the previous two examples. Jesus offered them an opportunity to be freed from the weight and burden of the Law, but many of those stubborn Jews simply refused to accept His invitation. They preferred the old ways, the old customs, the old traditions, and the old doctrines; because through their stiff rejection of Jesus Christ, they could continue to boast of their own supposed righteousness. In fact, as the Apostle Paul informs us, they sought to establish their own righteousness without Christ. Consider the following verses:

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For

they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and GOING ABOUT TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Romans 10:1-4, KJV

Do you see that? Paul clearly writes "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Do you understand what Paul means by that? As you will see even more clearly as we continue this discussion, he was basically saying, "Look guys; you can stop trying so hard to fulfill all of the mandates of the Mosaic Law, because Jesus took the burden of keeping the Law, and the burden of sin, from us, when He offered up His own life on the Cross. From now on, our righteousness can only be achieved through faith in Him." That is precisely why Paul also writes the following in his Epistle to the Philippian brethren:

And be found in him [Jesus], NOT HAVING MINE OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:" Philippians 3:9, KJV

But notice what else Paul writes in those previous verses in his Epistle to the brethren at Rome. He says "my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved." Do you understand what Paul is saying? Quite simply, he is acknowledging that his Jewish brethren are not saved, because they are still trusting in their own righteousness, and not in the righteousness which comes through faith in Jesus Christ alone. Wow!

As I mention in a number of other articles, another reason why the Scribes and the Pharisees were so beholden to the Laws of Moses, is because they used those strict mandates to keep the common people under their control. How much this sounds like some churches today, which likewise make certain unnecessary demands upon their blind flocks; such as forced observance of the Sabbath, or honoring Mary and the Saints, or going to confession, or being water baptized, or some other legalistic ritual or requirement.

Please notice precisely what the Lord says in the previous verses from the Gospel of Mark. First of all, He tells the Jews that He is the Lord of the Sabbath. What does He mean by that? In my view, He is saying that He and His Father created the Sabbath, so He is entitled to do whatever He

wants to do on it, whether they like it, or agree with it, or not. If He and His followers want to glean corn on the Sabbath, so be it. If He wants to heal sick folks on the Sabbath, He is perfectly within His right to do so.

Second, the Lord is also very clearly saying that the Sabbath was not made for men to be under strict bondage to it. That is why He states "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath". The idea behind the Sabbath, was simply to instruct men to rest when their bodies required it. In fact, in the original Hebrew, the word "shabbath" means to cease, desist or rest. So that, in my opinion, is the spirit, and true intent, of the Law concerning the Sabbath. You need to remember that the Israelites were under Egyptian bondage for a period of several hundred years. They didn't have a day off from work. They didn't know what it meant to rest; so the Lord had to teach them to do so by making it a law. God was basically saying to them, "You need to take it easy. It is important that you give your bodies a chance to rest and recover from your labors each week." It's just that simple.

As I point out in some of the aforementioned articles, the Apostle Paul tells us plainly that the Law was only meant to serve as a schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ; at which time our dependence would be upon Him, and not upon strict adherence to the Mosaic Law, for our Salvation, as we see here:

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."
Galatians 3:24-25, KJV

Please notice Paul's final words in the previous two verses: "we are no longer under a schoolmaster." Sadly, as we have already seen, some people today, including certain Christian denominations, such as the Seventh Day Adventists, are just like those self-righteous Jews of old. While they may not see it as such, they have taken a step into the legalistic past by mandating that all of their members observe the Sabbath. Such people have fallen under the bondage of the letter of the Law, instead of being Spirit-led, and freed through the Sacrifice of Christ. In describing the Law-bound Jews of his own time, and explaining how New Testament Christians must be led by the Spirit instead, the Apostle Paul had this to say:

"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is

that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and NOT IN THE LETTER; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Romans 2:28-29, KJV

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Romans 8:14, KJV

You see; as Paul states in the previous verses, we can choose to live according to the letter of the Law just like those legalistic Jews did. We can try to do everything right on the physical level -- such as be circumcised, observe the Sabbath, keep kosher laws, observe all of the other Jewish holy days, feasts and customs -- in order to try to convince ourselves -- and other people -- of how good and holy we are, so that we might win their praise. However, the reality of the situation is that it is all really nothing but dead, legalistic, self-glorifying works; and in the end, they will amount to nothing, and they will in fact be burned. This is exactly what the Apostle Paul wrote in the following verses:

"Now if any man build upon this foundation [meaning Christ] gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

1 Corinthians 3:12-15, KJV

What God desires of us most, is true worship in the Spirit, in humility, so that He can receive the praise, glory and honor, and not us. As Jesus said to the woman at the well so long ago:

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

John 4:24, KJV

To be quite honest, while I have had a number of interactions with them, I am not all that familiar with the doctrines of the Seventh Day Adventists. As such, I am not certain if they view the observance of the Sabbath as an essential part of God's Salvation Plan or not. I certainly hope that this is

not the case, because if there is one thing of which I am absolutely certain, it is that our so-called "good works" -- including observance of the Sabbath -- cannot possibly ever save us, or contribute to our Salvation in any way. As I explain in articles such as "Are You Crucified With Christ?", Jesus Christ paid the full price for our Salvation, and our works, no matter how good or righteous they may seem to be, cannot add to what He has already accomplished.

Let me remind you that when the Lord said on the Cross "It is finished", that is exactly what He meant. By shedding His own blood, Jesus had fulfilled the rigid demands of the Law for the remission of our sins. His blood was the purchase price for our Salvation, and our sins were in fact symbolically washed clean. This eternal truth becomes so evident in verses such as the following:

"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."

Hebrews 9:22, KJV

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

1 John 1:7, KJV

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

1 John 2:2, KJV

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

1 John 4:10, KJV

"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"

Revelation 1:5, KJV

"And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Revelation 7:14, KJV

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though

your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."
Isaiah 1:18, KJV

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."
Matthew 26:26-28, KJV

"And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many."
Mark 14:22-24, KJV

"And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."
Luke 22:14-20, KJV

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;"
Romans 3:25, KJV

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."
Ephesians 2:13, KJV

"For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all

while the testator liveth."

Hebrews 9:16-17, KJV

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;"

Hebrews 10:19-20, KJV

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate . . . Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Hebrews 13:12, 20-21, KJV

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

1 Peter 1:2, KJV

Please go to part two for the conclusion of this article.

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ARE CHRISTIANS OBLIGATED TO KEEP THE SABBATH? : PART 2

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We Are Washed In The Blood Of The Lamb, Saved By Grace And Not By Works, Good Works In The Life Of A Christian, Grace And Works Can Never Be Mixed, Christ Died In Vain If We Can Be Saved By The Law, We Cannot Be Justified By The Law, The

Blood Of Animals Or Blood Of Christ, New Covenant Christian Or Old Testament Law Keeper, View Of The Jerusalem Brethren Regarding Gentile Believers And Sabbath-Keeping, Don't Let Anyone Judge Your Freedom In Christ, Let Every Man Be Fully Persuaded In His Own Mind, Live According To Your Own Faith And Stand Fast In Freedom, Be Spirit-Led, Take A Day To Rest, Admonition To The Self-Righteous, BBB Suggested Reading List

As I concluded in part one, our own so-called "good works" -- including observance of the Sabbath -- cannot possibly save us, or contribute to our Salvation in any way. It is because of this inability to save ourselves by our own works, that Jesus Christ had to meet the full requirements of the Mosaic Law, and pay the full price for our Salvation, when He shed His innocent Blood on a Roman cross. His shed blood was the purchase price for our Salvation, and through our faith in His atoning Sacrifice, our sins are in fact washed clean. As I have shared with my readers many times before, insofar as the longtime debate between God's Grace and our own works are concerned, the Holy Scriptures plainly tell us that our works just don't cut it. They never have, and they most certainly never will. Consider the following group of verses which clearly emphasize this point:

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that NOT OF YOURSELVES: it is the gift of God: NOT OF WORKS, lest any man should boast."

Ephesians 2:8-9, KJV

"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

Romans 11:6, KJV

"NOT BY WORKS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"

Titus 3:5, KJV

So either we believe that we are saved fully and totally by God's Grace through faith in Christ, or else we futilely try to save ourselves through our own so-called "good works" and our observance of the Mosaic Law. We simply cannot have one foot standing upon Grace, while the other is standing upon the Law and good works. It is like trying to mix water and

oil. We have to make a choice regarding what we believe.

Now, please don't misunderstand my words. I am not saying that there is no place in the life of a Christian for good works. Quite to the contrary. As I point out in articles such as "Parable of the Sower: Salvation and Service", as well as in "Study, Work, and Don't Be Ashamed", works are indeed a very important part of our Christian walk and our service to the Lord. In fact, the Scriptures make it very plain that what we do for the Lord in this present life AFTER we are saved, will follow us into the Next Life, and result in Heavenly Rewards. Consider the following verses:

"If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?"

Proverbs 24:12, KJV

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

Matthew 16:27, KJV

"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:"

1 Peter 1:17, KJV

". . . I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

Revelation 2:23, KJV

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Revelation 14:13, KJV

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."

Revelation 20:12-13, KJV

"For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, WELL DONE, THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: ENTER THOU INTO THE JOY OF THY LORD. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: ENTER THOU INTO THE JOY OF THY LORD. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Matthew 25:14-30, KJV

Having shared all of that, let me reiterate again that if we are counting on our works to save us, if our faith is in our good works, instead of in Christ, then truly, we are doomed to absolute failure from the start; because we will never be good enough, or holy enough, or worthy enough, to deserve Salvation and Eternal Life of our own accord. As the Apostle

James wrote, absolutely none of us is capable of keeping the entire body of the Mosaic Law. If we break even just one of them, we are guilty of having broken them all. That means that we are sinners, and the wages of sin is death, unless we have been covered by the Blood of Christ. Consider this verse:

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

James 2:10, KJV

So to those of you who are convinced that you must keep the Sabbath -- Torah-observant Jews and legalistic Christians -- what about the other 612 mitzvot? Do you faithfully observe every single one of them as well? If you do not, you are a hypocrite, and you are doomed by your own legalism. Let me also add that even if we could keep the entire Law, and save ourselves through our own "good works", then as the Apostle Paul also wrote to the Galatian brethren, by so doing, we have in fact nullified the Sacrifice of Christ, and He died in vain. Do you believe that? I most certainly don't. Paul wrote the following:

"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

Galatians 2:21, KJV

The reason why Jesus was able to do the things which He did on the Sabbath day, is because He was free from the letter of the Law; and so are we when we believe in Him, and accept His Atonement for our sins. It is actually just that simple. We simply cannot be saved through our observance of any part of the Old Testament Mosaic Law -- that is, the Torah -- and that includes the observance of the Sabbath. Because if we really could be saved that way, then we would be depending upon ourselves, instead of upon the Sacrifice of Christ. Allow me to share with you a few more important Scriptures on this subject, because they make this very clear to those who have eyes to see, and ears to hear:

"And by him [Jesus Christ] all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Acts 13:39, KJV

"Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of

sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith."

Romans 3:20-27, KJV

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

Romans 7:4, KJV

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified . . . I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

Galatians 2:16, 21, KJV

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith."

Galatians 3:11, KJV

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

Galatians 5:4, KJV

Notice in that last verse, Paul is telling the backslidden Galatian brethren the very same thing that he wrote to the Roman brethren in Romans 11:6. That is, that either we are saved, or justified, by the Law -- meaning by our own good works in keeping the Law -- or else we are saved solely by God's Grace. There simply cannot be any mixing of the two. Sadly, that is precisely what some modern-day Christians -- such as the Seventh Day Adventists, and it would seem the

Messianic Jews as well -- are doing, when they insist that we must believe in Jesus, but we must also fulfill parts of the old Mosaic Law, such as observing the Sabbath. They are trying to mix the Old Covenant -- which was sealed by the blood of animals, with the New Covenant -- which was sealed by the Blood of Jesus Christ. Or as the Lord Himself called it, the Blood of the New Testament. Consider this verse:

"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Matthew 26:28, KJV

So allow me to ask you something dear reader: Are you a New Covenant Christian, or are you bound to the Old Testament Law like those legalistic Jews of old? Do you truly trust completely in the Blood of Jesus Christ for your Salvation, or are you secretly trusting in your own perceived goodness and righteousness? In other words, do you honestly believe that striving to keep the Laws of the Old Testament era -- including observing the Sabbath -- somehow makes you more worthy in God's sight? If so, then you are trying to save yourself, instead of trusting in Christ, and you are doomed to fail.

Personally, I am fully convinced that we New Testament era Christians are not bound by the mandates of the Mosaic Law for our Salvation. Our only hope is in Christ. Furthermore, I believe that no one should place unnecessary burdens upon Christian Believers, or attempt to add anything to God's finished work through Christ, because of the rigid dogma of their particular denomination. To do so is to add conditions to our Salvation, which was already paid in full by Christ. Consider what James, Peter and the other Apostles wrote to the Gentile Christian brethren who were living outside of Israel. See if you notice what is missing:

"For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well."

Acts 15:28-29, KJV

Allow me to ask you a final question: If the Jewish-born Jerusalem brethren -- who personally knew and were taught by Jesus Christ Himself -- considered it very important for the

Gentile Christians to observe the Sabbath day, why didn't they include such a requirement in their list of recommended observances which they sent to them? The answer seems very obvious to me: They didn't consider the Sabbath observance necessary, or even a priority, for the Gentile brethren. It was a Law which had been given by God to the Jews only, and the Church in Jerusalem did not want to burden the Gentile brethren with it.

In fact, after explaining to the Colossian brethren how Christ had freed them from the curse of the Law, by nailing the ordinances of the same to His own Cross, the Apostle Paul then tells them to not let anyone judge them because of what they did or didn't eat or drink, or because they didn't observe the various feasts and sabbaths like the legalistic Jews did. Consider the following two verses which prove my point:

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross . . . Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:"

Colossians 2:14, 16, KJV

Please take careful note of Paul's final words in those two verses: "or of the sabbath days". Can there be a confirmation more clear than that? In addition to all of the other things that he is saying there, Paul is telling the Gentile brethren that they should not allow anyone to judge or criticize them if they don't observe the Jewish Sabbaths. As I said, this is a clear confirmation of the decisions that were made in Acts chapter fifteen, where observing the Sabbath was never even mentioned as a requirement for Gentile Believers.

Just as Paul had questioned the Galatians regarding why they had backslidden from the freedom they had gained in Christ, and allowed the legalistic Jews to place them anew under the bondage of the Law, he also questions the Colossian brethren in a similar manner when a few verses later he states the following:

"Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?"

Colossians 2:20-22, KJV

In other words, Paul is saying, "If you truly believe that you have become dead to the Law through the body of Christ, then why are you still observing and obeying the doctrines and commandments of men, according to the Mosaic Law?". So what we have seen then, is that Jesus, the Jewish Apostles, and Paul, all make it clear that we are no longer bound by the mandates of the Mosaic Law, insofar as our Salvation is concerned; and that includes the observance of the Sabbath day. In summing up his thoughts on this topic to the Roman brethren, Paul states:

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

Romans 14:5, KJV

So while I have now given you a clear understanding regarding what the New Testament teaches concerning the relationship between New Covenant Christians and the Mosaic Law, it is up to you to decide what you want to believe; because as I am sure you must realize, we must each choose to live according to our own faith. If after reading this message, you still desire to observe the Sabbath, it is really up to you. Allow me to emphasize here that there is absolutely nothing wrong or evil about doing this; but it simply isn't necessary, and it certainly won't help to save you. Only Jesus saves.

If you fully realize that you are only saved by God's Grace through Christ, and not by any ritualistic works of the Law, and if observing the Sabbath, or going to church on Sunday, makes you feel like you are pleasing the Lord, then by all means do it. However, just remember that if you really want to please the Lord, you need to remember Him and acknowledge Him, every single day of your life, and not just when your particular brand of organized religion calls you to church. God desires a continual, ongoing relationship with you, and not just a once-a-week date at the local church building, where many people worship Him in name only. As for me, I will follow Paul's Spirit-led advice to the Galatians where he writes the following:

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Galatians 5:1, KJV

In short, I believe that we each need to be Spirit-led in our understanding of the Scriptures, and we also need to have some humility about it as well. Personally, the way that my faith runs, and my conviction, is that it does not really matter which day we choose to take our rest from our labors. Whether it is Sunday, Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday, as we have already seen, the primary emphasis and intent concerning the Old Testament Sabbath law, is that man needs to take a day off. That is it. I do not believe that God takes offense if we Christians do not follow Old Testament legalism regarding this issue. I also think that it is very sad that certain Christians have taken this law, and turned it into a kind of legalistic bludgeon which they use against their fellow Christian brethren.

Before concluding this article, I would like to offer one final admonition. As we saw earlier, the Apostle Paul wrote that we must each be fully persuaded in our minds regarding such issues as observing the Sabbath. Now, as I noted at the very beginning of this article, the social networks are just full of people -- and by this, I mean Christians -- who are constantly doing battle with each other over doctrines. The very real danger here -- besides the fact that it results in serious division in the Body of Christ -- is that people tend to become rather self-righteous and holier-than-thou. They begin to compare themselves to others, and think that they are somehow better than others, because they do certain things which other Christians don't feel the need to do. Obviously, this is very foolish, prideful behavior. The Apostle Paul warned against it, as we can determine by the following verses:

"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ: Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready

to our hand. But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth."

2 Corinthians 10:12-18, KJV

So I urge you to please watch out for this sin. And please remember that whether or not one observes the Sabbath does not make one any better than anyone else. Neither does it have any effect on one's Salvation. So please stop patting yourself on the back, while you judge and condemn others who do not see things as you do. If you are guilty of this kind of behavior, ask the Lord to give you some humility, because you really need it.

With these sobering thoughts, I will bring this article to a close. I pray that it has been both instructive, as well as a blessing, in your life. If you have enjoyed it, and if you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would also appreciate if you would take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, I encourage you to study the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this article, or which contain topics that are related to this article, and which are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server:

Are You Crucified With Christ?

Dead to the Law: God's Laws Written on Our Hearts

Free From the Fear of Death: Law and Works vs Grace

Humility in Our Understanding of God's Word

Is Jesus the Only Begotten Son of God?

Jesus Christ or Yeshua Messiah?: More Christian Zionist Legalism

Longhairs and Weirdy Beardies vs. the Legalists

Parable of the Sower: Salvation and Service

Should Christians Engage in Doctrinal Debates?

Study, Work, and Don't Be Ashamed

The Biblical Practice of Fasting

The Blood Atonement: In Jesus' Own Words

The Royal Law: Thou Shalt Love

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