

Is There a Sabbath for the Christian?

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Introduction: The Sabbath is as controversial today as it was in the First Century!

- A. Does God expect Christians to keep the Sabbath day?
- B. Is there a *new* Sabbath Christians must keep?
- C. Can or should Christians keep the Sabbath day today?
- D. Does a “Sabbath rest” have any spiritual value for Christians today?

I. The Sabbath Day was to be observed by the People of Israel as a Day of Rest.

- A. A law given to the people of Israel.
 - 1. People sometimes forget that the Old Law was given specifically to the people of Israel, not the whole of mankind (**Exod. 19:5-6**).
 - 2. Though important principles to live by, no one except the Jews were technically under the Law except the Jews.
 - 3. The Sabbath day was specifically given to the children of Israel as a sign between the Lord and them (**Exod. 31:13**).
- B. The fourth of the Ten Commandments.
 - 1. There were many laws given to Israel beside the Ten Commandments and Israel was to be careful to observe *all* of them (**Deut. 31:12**).
 - 2. The Ten Commandments were the foundation to the law (**Ex. 20:1-11**).
 - 3. “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy” (**Exod.20:8**).
- C. A day of rest (**Exod. 20:8-11; cf. Gen. 2:3**).
 - 1. The purpose of keeping the Sabbath was to have a day of rest in commemoration of the day in which God “rested” from creating the world.
 - 2. God cannot get tired, being all-powerful (**Isa. 40:28**), yet he did “rest” or ceased from his labor of Creation.
 - 3. Israel was to observe the Sabbath day, to be extra careful to do no labor as prescribed by the Law of Moses (cf. **Lev. 23, 24, 26**).
 - 4. Those who worked on the Sabbath were stoned to death (**Num 15:32ff.**)

II. The Law of Christ Replaced the Law of Moses, Putting an End to Keeping the Sabbath Day.

- A. The Law of Moses and all of its statues has been taken away in Christ (**2 Cor. 3:7-11**).
 - 1. All parts of the Old Law has been done away, including the keeping of the Sabbath day.
 - 2. The Old Law (Old Testament) is “taken away in Christ” (**2 Cor. 3:14**); *When exactly did this occur?*
 - 3. When Jesus died on the cross and established His *New Covenant* or New Testament (**Mat. 26:28**).
- B. “The cross of Christ” or the moment of Jesus’ death was the moment the Old Law was destroyed as it was “nailed to His cross” (**Col. 2:13-17**).
 - 1. The Old Law has been taken out of the way, nailed to the cross (**v. 14**).
 - 2. No longer could anyone be judged in regard to the requirements of the Old Law, including the Sabbath Day (**v. 16**).
 - 3. The Old Law was a mere shadow of what is come in Christ, temporary and inferior of what we now have in Jesus Christ! (**v. 17**)

C. The book of Hebrews extensively shows the superiority of Christ and His New Covenant over the Law of Moses.

1. The Old Law was imposed on Israel until the “time of reformation” brought by Jesus Christ (**Heb. 9:8-15**).
2. Clearly, the first covenant (the Old) has been taken away in order to establish the second (**Heb. 8:6-13; 9:16-17; 10:9-10**).
3. If only a part of “the first” is taken away (**Heb. 10:9**) as some assert, *who* is to determine what part remains?
4. There is no evidence in Scripture to suggest that only ceremonial or civic law (of O.T.) passed away, thereby leaving in place the Sabbath day.

III. Is the First Day of the Week the “New Sabbath” for Christians?

A. Some believed the first day of the week (Sunday) is the new Sabbath for Christians (e.g., Movie “Chariots of Fire”).

1. The Seventh Day Adventists for a time blamed the Catholic Pope for changing the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday.
2. To teach that the Pope changed it is far too late because Christians were meeting on Sundays in the first century (**Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2**).
3. For the first three centuries of Christian history, the testimony shows that the original disciples worshipped on Sunday - *not on the Sabbath*
4. Today, Adventists have modified White's argument (corrected the prophet) asserting instead that *Christians themselves* changed the Sabbath!

B. The first day of the week is never referred to as a “Sabbath” day in Scripture.

1. The first day of the week has great significance *being the day Jesus was raised from the dead* (**Mat. 28:1; Mark 16:1-2; Luke 24:1; Jn. 20:1**).
2. The apostles / disciples met together on resurrection Sunday (**John 20:19**), then on Sunday a week later (**John 20:26**).
3. The church was established on the day of Pentecost, which always came on a Sunday (**Acts 2:1; cf. Lev. 23:15-16**).
4. The early Christians, under the leadership of *inspired men* (apostles) assembled on Sunday to “break bread” and give (**Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2**).
5. The first day of the week later referred to “*the Lord’s day*” (**Rev 1:10**).

IV. Can Christians Keep the Sabbath Day Today if They So Choose?

A. The principle of having a day of rest certainly has great merit!

1. Jesus recognized the value of rest (e.g., **Mark 6:30-31**).
2. No time for rest can result in a stressful and grievous life (**Eccl 2:22-23**)

B. Christians can keep the Sabbath day *as long as* they understand it is not required by the law of Christ and do not judge others for it (**Rom. 14:4-6**).

Conclusion: There Still Remains a Sabbath Rest for the People of God: Heaven! Let Us Be Diligent to Enter That Rest (Heb. 4:1-11).

A. Let us unite by faith the gospel message that we have heard and *demonstrate* our faith by obeying the gospel with all diligence!

B. Our labor for the Lord is not done in vain, but leads to a great reward! (**1 Cor. 15:58**).