

Protestant Confessions



**About
Sunday**

TESTIMONY OF EMINENT MEN

The extracts that follow are from noted clergymen, scholars and other eminent writers, all of whom doubtless kept the Sunday as a matter of church custom. But they nevertheless bear witness that there is no Bible command for it.

ANGLICAN:

“And where are we told in the Scriptures that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are nowhere commanded to keep the first day. . . . The reasons why we keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because the Bible, but because the church, has enjoined it.”—Isaac Williams (Anglican), *Plain Sermons on the Catechism*, vol. 1, pp. 334, 336.

“The Lord’s day was merely of ecclesiastical institution. It was not introduced by virtue of the fourth commandment.”—Jeremy Taylor (Church of England), *Ductor Dubitantium*. part 1, book 2, chap. 2, rule 6, secs. 51, 59 (1850 ed.), vol. 9, pp. 458, 464.

Mr. Morer, a learned clergyman of the Church of England, says: “*The Primitive Christians had a great veneration for the Sabbath, and spent the Day in Devotion and Sermons. And ’tis not to be doubted but they derived this Practice from the Apostles themselves.*”—*A Discourse in Six Dialogues on the Name, Notion, and Observation of the Lord’s Day*, p. 189.

BAPTIST:

Dr. Edward T. Hiscox (Baptist): "There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day, but the Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will, however, be readily said, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the Seventh to the First day of the week. . . . Where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament,—absolutely not."—Paper read Aug. 20, 1893, at a Baptist ministers' meeting at Saratoga, New York.

"The Lord's Day is not sanctified by any specific command or by any inevitable inference. In all the New Testament there is no hint or suggestion of a legal obligation binding any man, whether saint or sinner, to observe the Day. Its sanctity arises only out of what it means to the true believer."—J. J. Taylor (Baptist), *The Sabbatic Question*, p. 72.

CONGREGATIONALIST:

Dr. R. W. Dale (British Congregationalist): "It is quite clear that, however rigidly or devotedly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath. . . . The Sabbath was founded on a specific, Divine command. We can plead no such command for the obligation to observe Sunday. . . . There is not a single sentence in the New Testament to suggest that we incur any penalty by violating the supposed sanctity of Sunday."—*The Ten Commandments*, pp. 127-129.

Timothy Dwight's *Theology* (American Congregationalist) says: "The Christian Sabbath

[Sunday] is not in the Scripture, and was not by the primitive church called the Sabbath.”—Sermon 107 (1818 ed.), vol. 4, p. 49.

CHRISTIAN (*Disciples of Christ*):

Alexander Campbell (founder of Disciples of Christ): “‘But,’ say some, ‘it was changed from the seventh to the first day.’ Where? when? and by whom? No man can tell. No; it never was changed, nor could it be, unless creation was to be gone through again: for the reason assigned must be changed before the observance, or respect to the reason, can be changed!! It is all old wives’ fables to talk of the change of the sabbath from the seventh to the first day. If it be changed, it was that august personage changed it who changes times and laws *ex officio*—I think his name is DOCTOR ANTICHRIST.”—*The Christian Baptist*, Feb. 2 1824, vol. 1, no. 7.

“The first day of the week is commonly called the Sabbath. This is a mistake. The Sabbath of the Bible was the day just preceding the first day of the week. The first day of the week is never called the Sabbath anywhere in the entire Scriptures. It is also an error to talk about the change of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. There is not in any place in the Bible any intimation of such a change.”—*First Day Observance*, pp. 17, 19.

LUTHERAN:

“We have seen how gradually the impression of the Jewish sabbath faded from the mind of the Christian Church, and how

completely the newer thought underlying the observance of the first day took possession of the church. We have seen that the Christians of the first three centuries never confused one with the other, but for a time celebrated both."—*The Sunday Problem* (1923 ed.), a study book of the United Lutheran Church, p. 36.

"Because it was requisite to appoint a certain day, that the people might know when they ought to come together, it appears that the [Christian] Church did for that purpose appoint the Lord's day."—Augsburg Confession, part 2, art. 7, in Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* (Scribners, 4th ed.), vol. 3, p. 69.

"The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a divine command in this respect; far from them, and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday."—*The History of the Christian Religion and Church*, Dr. Augustus Neander, p. 186.

METHODIST:

Methodist Episcopal *Theological Compend*, by Amos Binney: "It is true there is no positive command for infant baptism. . . . Nor is there any for keeping holy the first day of the week."—Pages 180, 181.

On what authority have Protestants observed Sunday? Plainly on the authority of the very Catholic Church which they abandoned.

Write for our companion tract: "Roman Catholic Confessions about Sunday."

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