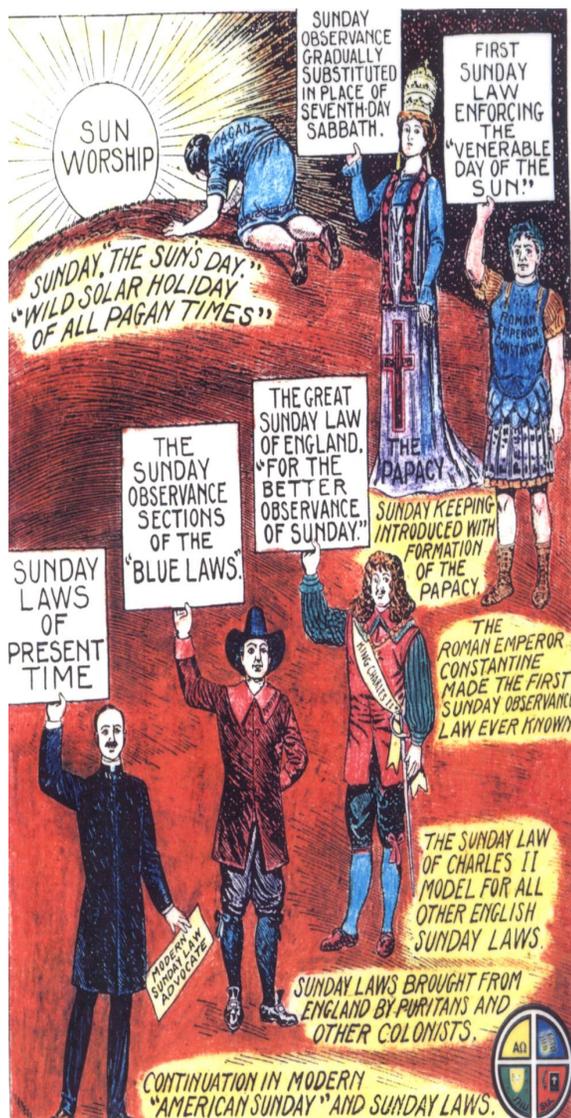


THE ORIGIN AND SPREAD OF SUNDAY KEEPING



Evangelicals ignorantly teach that Sunday Keeping is right and should be followed as a Biblical teaching. Observe what this Sunday keeper says:

"Even as the death of the Lord Jesus brought about the end of any legal Sabbath observance, so His resurrection marked the beginning of a new and very special day—the Lord's Day, the first day of the week ... As Christians, we meet for fellowship and the preaching of the Word on the first day of the week for a number of reasons. First, we do so because the Lord Jesus arose from the dead on Sunday." Richard W. DeHaan, **Sunday: The Lord's Day**, p 11.

"Down through the years of church History, believers have almost unanimously observed Sunday, the day of the Lord's resurrection, as the Lord's Day." **Ibid**, p 12.

The claim that Christians everywhere are today merely doing what Jesus and His apostles did in keeping Sunday holy as a continuum is the teaching of this author. However, an investigation of history shows the real cause of Sunday holiness over the years was due to the Church taking it up from paganism and legislating it through their governments beginning with Emperor Constantine down to this day. We shall look at six various points in the real history of Sunday holiness. They are:

1. The pagan keeping of Sunday.
2. The Church adopting Sunday from the pagans.
3. Emperor Constantine's Sunday Law.
4. The great Sunday Law of England.
5. The transportation of Sunday legislation from England to America, and
6. The present day efforts to enforce a Sunday law.

1. **Sunday among the pagans:** The ancient pagans recognized Sunday as a venerable and holy day

among themselves long before Christ.

"Sunday; so called because this day was anciently dedicated to the sun, or to its worship ... The first day of the week." **Webster's New International Dictionary**, quoted in Charles S. Longacre, **The Church in Politics**, p. 33.

In the Roman Empire from the time of Christ Mithra the Sun god was worshipped and Sunday was holy to him.

"Mithraism had the same weekly cycle as the Hebrews, but honored the first day of the week as holy time instead of the seventh-day." Charles Longacre, **The Church in Politics**, p 34.

"That Sunday was the sacred day of Mithra, the invincible Sun is a fact known and taught by many outstanding authorities of modern times." Robert Leo Odom, **Sunday in Roman Paganism**, p. 155.

This sun-god was called the Lord by ancient pagans, and his day called the Lord's day. This inscription is taken from a tomb of a baby in Catina (now Catania) on the east coast of Sicily.

"He was born, O Lord of good things on the 15th day before the Kalends of November, on the day of Saturn [Saturday]; he lived 10 months; (and) he died on the 10th day before the Kalends of September, on the Lord's day of the Sun." **Ibid**, p. 154.

2. **The Church adopted Sunday from the pagans:**

"Even in its earliest introduction into the Christian Church, Sunday observance bears the ear-marks of its pagan origin." Calvin P. Bollman, **Sunday Origin of its Observance in the Christian Church**, p 11.

"It [Mitharism] had so much acceptance that it

was able to impose on the Christian world its own Sun-day in place of the Sabbath, it Sun's birthday, 25th December, as the birthday of Jesus." G. Murray, **Christianity in the Light of Modern Knowledge**, pp. 73,74.

The so-called Christian Gnostic Clement of Alexandria was the first to call Sunday the Lord's day in the Church, but he appealed to heathen philosophy as his authority calling it the eight day.

"And the Lord's day [Sunday] Plato prophetically speaks of in the tenth book of the Republic, in these words: And when seven days have passed to each of them in the meadow, on the eighth day they are set out to arrive in four days." Clement, **The Stromata Book v**, quoted in, Robert L. Odom, **Sabbath and Sunday in Early Christianity**, p. 185.

Sylvester 1, bishop of Rome (A.C.B. 314-335) ordered the Church to call Sunday the Lord's day.

"But he [Sylvester] ordered [them] to call the Sabbath by the ancient term of the law, [to call] the first feria the "Lord's day," because on it the Lord rose [from the dead]. Moreover, the same pope decreed that the rest of the Sabbath should be transferred rather to the Lord's day [Sunday], in order that on that day we should rest from worldly works for the praise of God." **De Clericorum Institutione, Book 11**, Chap XXLVI, quoted in, **Ibid**, p. 248.

3. **Emperor Constantine's Sunday Law:** He was the first in history to legislate Sunday as a religious day for both Christians and pagan Sun worshippers. The law reads thus:

"Let all the judges and town people, and the occupation of all trades, rest on the veneration day of the sun ..." **Issued March 7, 321 A.D.,**

Corpus Civilis Codicis, lib. 3, tit. 12,1.3.

Quoted in, Charles Longacre, **The Church in Politics**, p. 35.

"Sunday was first adopted by Christians in lieu of Saturday long years after Christ, in commemoration of the resurrection. The first 'Sunday law' was enacted in the year 321 after Christ soon after the emperor Constantine had abjured paganism, and apparently for a different reason than the Christian observance of the day." Chief Justice Clark in **North Carolina Reports,** Vol. 134, pp. 510,511, quoted in **Ibid**, p. 37.

4. **The great Sunday Law of England:** In the Roman Empire after Constantine, and even in the European nations that resulted from the break up of the western Roman Empire, many more Sunday legislation occurred, but it was the great Sunday Law of England issued by Charles 11 that we must look to that we may see the spread of Sunday holiness. This Sunday Law of 1676 reads in part:

"For the better observation and keeping holy the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday: Be it enacted ... that all the laws enacted and in force concerning the observation of the day, and repairing to the church thereon, be carefully put in execution; and that all and every person and persons whatsoever shall upon the Lord's day apply themselves to the observation of the same, by exercising themselves thereon in the duties of piety and true religion, publicly and privately ..." **Act of the 29th of Charles 11, chap. 7.** Issued in 1676; quoted in **Ibid**, p. 54.

5. **The Transportation of Sunday Legislation from England to America:** All the colonies of Great Britain received their Sunday laws from England, and no less America. The American colonies had Sunday laws inherited from England.

"All the English colonies in America sooner or later followed the precedent established by the Sunday law of Charles II. The Puritans of New England and the Episcopal Church in Virginia became the established churches in their respective colonies, and every one, both Church members and nonchurch members, was assessed alike to support the legally established churches, and every person was compelled to "attend divine service on Sunday." or forfeit ten shilling for each default." **Ibid**, pp. 54-55.

6. **The Present day Efforts to Enforce Sunday Laws:** Notwithstanding the fact that America has a Constitution that strictly forbids any form of religious State legislation, Evangelicals have persistently made efforts to get new Sunday Legislations. Says Bradley Googins,

"Only by framing the Sunday closing laws in this manner do we have a chance for insuring a basic quality of life for our families and communities." **Sunday Closing Laws Revisited**, quoted in, G. Edward Reid, **Sunday's Coming!**, p. 86.

Pope John Paul II said.

"In this regard, one may ask whether existing laws and the practice of industrialized societies effectively ensure in our own day the exercise of this basic right to Sunday rest." **On The Hundredth Anniversary of Rerem Novarum**, quoted in, **Ibid**, p. 88.

"Sanctifying Sunday and holy days requires a common efforts ... in spite of economic constraints, public authorities should ensure citizens a time intended for rest and divine worship. Employers have a similar obligation toward their employees ... Christians should seek recognition of Sundays ... as legal holidays." Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, "Keeper of the Straight and Narrow", Quoted in **Ibid**, p 91.

These has been evidences proving the real origin of the influence of Sunday in the religious world. It came not from Christ nor the early Church, but was the result of the Church apostatizing and borrowing from paganism. Legislation of Sunday laws for more than 1500 years over Europe and her colonies have popularized it today. But however, the Law of God explicitly states that it is the Seventh-day Sabbath that is to be kept. (Exodus 20 8-11). The Sabbath-day called the Lord's day was kept by John by A.C.B. about the time when the Book of Revelation was written (Revelation 1:10; Isaiah 58:13,14). The Sabbath is Jesus' special day since it exalts Him as Lord (Mark 2:27,28) and He expects all Christians to keep that day since they will be Judged by the Law and must keep all the law (James 2:8-12; Ecclesiastes 12:13,14). Those who turn from hearing the Law, God will **not** hear their prayers (Proverbs 28:9), and the only criterion to have entered into the new kingdom of God was obedience to the Law of God (Revelation 14:12; Revelation 22:14). Amen.

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