



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

The Christian Sabbath

The following is the text of a letter sent to the "Belfast Telegraph" in reply to a letter which appeared in its columns written by one, Colin Nevin, of Bangor, Co. Down. My reply was sent on March 29th and has not yet appeared in the BT. It may well never appear! Mr Nevin is a denier of the Lord's Day being the Christian Sabbath and we would like his arguments answered so we are publishing our brief reply here.

Sir,

Your correspondent, Colin Nevin, claims that: "The only day that God, or Jesus, referred to as the Sabbath Day was the seventh day (Saturday) - never Sunday." That is far from being the truth. Keeping the Sabbath is part of the Moral Law of God, which remains binding upon all men. Paul the Apostle taught that "There remaineth therefore a rest (Greek - a keeping of Sabbath) to the people of God," Hebrews 4:9.

It is of significance that the Holy Spirit, Who inspires the Word of God, should employ the Greek word 'sabbatismos' while every other time in this chapter He employed another word for 'rest' - the Greek word 'kata-pausis'. This is not a reference to the future rest of heaven otherwise surely the Holy Spirit would have used that Greek word, 'sabbatismos' throughout the chapter!

There is a keeping of sabbath required by the people, as Hebrews 4:9 states, but it is not a keeping of the Jewish Sabbath, something Paul refuted in Colossians 2:16-17. That which Paul taught in Hebrews 4 the early believers were seen to practise in the records of the New Testament, as Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 16:2 illustrate.

The seventh-day Sabbath commemorated the finished work of Creation but the first-day Sabbath commemorates the finished work of Redemption. If the Old Testament seventh-day Sabbath was still in force, why did the disciples meet on the first day of the week? Seventh Day sabbatarians have never really given an answer to that question.

It is true that Constantine issued a decree throughout the Roman Empire in 321 AD enforcing the keeping of the first day of the week as a day of cessation from work, but he was only decreeing what obviously had been the practice of Christians from the beginning of the new era. He did not initiate a first-day Sabbath but rather merely endorsed Christian practice.

The first day of the week has been endorsed by the greatest of God's servants and enshrined in the orthodox creeds of Protestantism in the wonderful times of revival and reformation. Furthermore, it has proved to be an inestimable blessing to those communities which have observed it. Its abandonment, as governments of late have been most keen to promote, will rob our nation of that blessing.

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29th March 2012.