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Opening the doors to Sabbath desecration

A tract distributed at a protest supported by Bible-believing churches in Counties Fermanagh and Tyrone mounted against the increase in trading on the Lord's Day

It began with opening the shops the Sabbath before 25th December for the 'Christmas' rush. Then it was extended to include the month of December. Now seven-day shopping is to be an all-year-round affair. So the downgrade of Sabbath trading continues to accelerate.

Local traders in the Erneside Shopping Centre in Enniskillen have announced that they will be opening seven days a week. Sunday trading was given impetus by Dunne's Stores which began to open its doors regularly on the Lord's Day some months ago. Now other traders, fearful that they might miss a little profit-making, are to follow suit.

Every citizen should recognise the danger that Sabbath desecration brings. There is no sin more likely to bring God's judgment upon a people than the desecration of the Lord's Day. It was this sin, above all others, which brought judgment upon Israel in times of old. Hear what God's word has to say to us today: --Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them. But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them, Ezekiel 20:12-13.

The experiences of Israel are recorded in the Bible for our learning. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope, Romans 15:4. God and His Word have not changed. We are still required to: Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy, Exodus 20:8. It is still wrong to break God's day of rest.

The very least that we can do is to register our disapproval of traders breaking the Sabbath day by withdrawing our support from them. Were this to happen, I have no doubt that many traders would take a different view of the profitability of such a course of action. Above all, there is a need for Christians to humble themselves before the Lord and confess the sins of our people and intercede for the land. We need to raise a cry in the land, a testimony against this evil like that of Nehemiah in his day. What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath, Nehemiah 13:17-18.

But there are other profits and accounts which all men should give thought to. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Matthew 16:26. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God, Romans 14:12. To live and die in defiance of God's law can only result



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n eternal loss for our souls. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting , Galatians 6:8. The Sabbath day is especially a day for contemplating eternal matters. It is not a day for ignoring and defying God and concentrating upon earthly affairs. We invite you to read and consider the message of the gospel of Christ set forth in the Holy Scriptures for in it is the path to true riches. For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich , 2 Corinthians 8:9.



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