

An Open Letter to Dr. James Kennedy

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Samuele Bacchiocchi, Ph. D.

Retired Professor of Theology, Andrews University

Dear Members of the Endtime Issues Newsletter:

The tragic events of this past year, will be long remembered as marking a turning point in the thinking and living of Americans and of many other people in other countries. The war on terrorism has become an ever present daily reality that has radically changed our lifestyle. The days when I could catch a flight by arriving at the airport half-an-hour before departure, have gone. I was forcefully reminded of this fact this morning when I had to queue up for 45 minutes before reaching the security check point. For the first time I was asked to take off not only my coat, but also even my shoes for screening. Yet all of these added security measures cannot guarantee the elusive search for safety and security.

At the threshold of the new year 2002, I am reminded of Paul's words, "forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead" (Phil 3:13). As believers we cannot allow the tragic events and calamities of the past year to obscure our vision of the glorious destiny that lies ahead of us. After all we are pilgrims journeying to the Promise Land. The intensification of warfare, various forms human rebellion, calamities, famines, infectious diseases like AIDS, that are decimating the population of many developing countries, serve as a constant reminder of the nearness of the End.

The END we are waiting for is UNIQUE, because it will be the end of sin, sorrow, and death, and the beginning of righteousness, joy, and eternal life. May this hope of a new beginning soon to take place at Christ's glorious coming, burn brighter and brighter in our consciousness during this coming year. May it motivate us to live "sober, upright, and godly lives" while awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

In view of the lengthy nature of this newsletter, I will dispense of most of the usual introductory updates. I will only post a note of thanks and my itinerary for January and February.

A NOTE OF HEARTFELT THANKS

Looking back into the year that has passed, I cannot help but express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you who have taken time to write to me most encouraging and gracious messages. Many of you have reassured me that you are praying for my ministry. I want you to know that for me it is encouraging to know that I can count on your intercessory prayers.

A special thanks to those of you who have supported my ministry by ordering my books and recordings for your personal enrichment and outreach endeavors. Your orders have made it possible for me to continue this ministry of Biblical research and proclamation.

I wish to acknowledge in a special way those churches that have sponsored copies of my book *THE SABBATH UNDER CROSSFIRE* to their local ministers. The responses we have received during this past year have been very encouraging, as indicated by some of the experiences I have shared in past newsletters. Last week the HOLLAND SDA CHURCH, In Holland, MI, sent me the labels of 188 local ministers of different denominations. We mailed out the books immediately to each pastor together with a nice cover letter from Pastor David Grams, of the Holland SDA Church. Let us pray that the Lord may use this timely book to help many church leaders to rediscover the validity and value of the Sabbath for our tension-filled and restless society.

If your church wishes to donate copies of *THE SABBATH UNDER CROSSFIRE* to your local ministers, I am glad to support your initiative by offering the book by the case of 32 copies for only \$190.00, that is only \$5.90 per copy, instead of the regular price of \$20.00. If you supply us the address of your local pastors, we will be glad to do the mailing for you.

UPCOMING WEEKEND SEMINARS

As a service to our subscribers, I am listing the date and the location of the upcoming seminars for the months of January and February 2002. Every Sabbath it is a great privilege for me to meet our subscribers who travel considerable distances to attend the seminars. Feel free to contact me at (616) 471-2915 for a special seminar in your area sometimes during 2002. I still have a few openings for 2002. Each of the three seminars on the Sabbath, Second Advent, and Christian Life-style are now presented with PowerPoint slides which add a visual dimension to our message.

JANUARY 18-19: ST. PETERSBURG FIRST SDA CHURCH

Location: 1001 56th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33710
For information call Pastor John Wolfe at (727) 865-0613 or (727) 345-1742

JANUARY 25-26: KELOWNA, BC: OKANAGAN ADVENTIST ACADEMY

Location: 1035 Hollywood Road, Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada
For information call Pastor Robert Lemon at (250) 766-3737 or (250) 878-5663
This will be a mini-campmeeting for all the churches in the Kelowna district.

FEBRUARY 1-2: OREGON: LA GRANDE SDA CHURCH

Location: 2702 Adams Avenue, La Grande, OR 97828
For information call Pastor Jack Farrell at (541) 426-6028.
Five local SDA churches are coming together for this district rally.

FEBRUARY 8-9: TEXAS: BURLESON SDA CHURCH

Location: 601 S. Burleson Blvd, Burleson, Texas 76028.
For information call Pastor Mike Chappell at (817) 295-5746 or (817) 295-7141

FEBRUARY 15-16: ORLANDO, FL: FOREST CITY SPANISH SDA CHURCH

Location: 1226 Bunnell Road, Altamonte Springs, FL 32716
For information call the church office at (407) 293-2971.

FEBRUARY 22-23: MIAMI, FL: BETHANY SDA CHURCH

Location: 2500 N. W. 50th Street, Miami, FL 33142
For information call Pastor S. J. Jackson at (954) 442-8258 or (305) 634-2993

A WORD OF EXPLANATION ABOUT THE "OPEN LETTER TO DR. J. KENNEDY"

It may be helpful to give a word of explanation about the "Open Letter to Dr. James Kennedy" that you are about to read. Several subscribers to our newsletter have encouraged me to respond to Dr. James Kennedy's sermon on the Sabbath entitled "The Gift of Rest." The sermon was broadcasted nationwide on November 4, 2001 through the Coral Ridge TV Network.

Two major reasons influenced my decision to spend over 100 hours preparing this response. First, I respect Dr. James Kennedy as one of the best expository preachers in America today. I admire the perceptive way in which he expands Biblical passages, making them relevant to the life of people today. His worship service and preaching style stand out for their Biblical content and reverential character. He brings to the pulpit the kind of dignity and solemnity often lacking among TV preachers.

The second reason is the enormous influence Dr. Kennedy has on million of Christians who listen to his sermons on both TV and radio. His outreach and credential are succinctly stated in the information released from his office: "From the pulpit of the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Dr. D. James Kennedy proclaims the Word of God through television and radio to 25,000 cities and towns, and foreign countries. From a small gathering of seventeen, the church has grown under his ministry to a membership of almost 8,000, with a peak attendance of over 12,000."

"Dr. Kennedy is the President and Founder of Evangelism Explosion International which is now training laymen in evangelism in 132 countries throughout the world. He has also founded a school Westminster Academy, and a Christian radio station, WAFG, which broadcasts 24 hours a day. He is the Founder and Chancellor of Knox Theological Seminary."

What impresses me about Dr. Kennedy's ministry, is the fact that his success is not dependent upon "Gospel gimmicks" like beat music, drama, sacred dancing, and other forms of church entertainment, but upon the proclamation of God's Word with clarity and conviction. Adventist pastors interested in church growth, may wish to attend one of his seminars on evangelism. Dr. Kennedy may have some valuable insights into church growth, relevant for our Adventist church growth program.

Dr. Kennedy appeals to me as a sincere Christian, who is sincerely wrong on such Biblical teachings as the Sabbath and the State of the Dead. Few weeks ago I heard his sermon on the state of the dead, and I was greatly distressed by his frequent appeal to near-death experiences to prove conscious life after death.

I have prepared this lengthy response motivated by a genuine Christian desire to help Dr. Kennedy reexamine his understanding of the change from Sabbath to Sunday in early Christianity. Let us pray that the Lord may use this "Open Letter" to lead him to a fuller understanding and experience of the Sabbath truth.

I am mailing the following "Open Letter" to Dr. James Kennedy" together with a complimentary copy of my four books on the Sabbath. If he chooses to respond, I will be sure to post his response. If he wishes to dialogue with me in person, I would be glad to travel to Fort Lauderdale to visit with him. I will keep updated on any future development. Remember this project in your prayers.

ENDTIME ISSUES 79: AN OPEN LETTER TO DR. JAMES KENNEDY
Samuele Bacchiocchi, Ph. D.,
Retired Professor of Theology, Andrews University

Dr. James Kennedy, Ph. D.
Coral Ridge Ministries
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Dear Dr. Kennedy:

On November 4, 2001, you delivered a sermon entitled "The Gift of Rest" through your "The Coral Ridge Hour" TV network. A good number of Seventh-day Adventists who heard your sermon, were distressed by your critical comments about our Adventist understanding of the change from Sabbath to Sunday in early Christianity. Several of them who subscribe to my electronic ENDTIME ISSUES NEWSLETTER, which is read by over 20,000 people around the world, have urged me to respond to your comments.

My response to your sermon comes in the form this Open Letter which will be emailed to my subscribers. This will enable thousands of people who heard your sermon to benefit from this dialogue. Should you decide to reply to this Open Letter, rest assured that your response will be posted without editorial changes in an ENDTIME ISSUES NEWSLETTER. Furthermore, should you wish to dialogue with me in person, I would be glad to make time in my busy schedule to come to Coral Ridge for a friendly conversation.

The reason I have been asked to respond to your sermon, is because I have spent several years investigating the Sabbath/Sunday question. To familiarize you with my research, I am enclosing complimentary copies of the four books I have authored on this subject. One of them, *From Sabbath to Sunday*, is my doctoral dissertation which was presented at and published by the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, Italy, where I was the first non-Catholic to be accepted in its 450 years of history. Pope Paul VI awarded me a gold medal for attaining the academic distinction of *summa cum laude* in my doctoral studies and dissertation.

From Sabbath to Sunday has been favorably reviewed by hundreds of scholars of different persuasions, including Presbyterian scholars from your own denomination. You can read a sampling of their comments at my website: www.biblicalperspectives.com. I mentioned these things simply to reassure that I have attempted to examine the Sabbath/Sunday question as objectively as possible.

If you take time to read the enclosed books, you will soon discover that I am not a denominational apologist, but an independent Bible scholar who strives for objectivity. This is indicated by the fact that none of the 16 volumes that I have authored have been published by a Seventh-day Adventist Publishing House. The reason is that in few instances my conclusions differ somewhat from traditional Adventist positions. In my view the task of a denominational scholar is to advance the understanding and experience of denominational beliefs, and not to defend questionable positions.

AN APOLOGY

Before commenting on your sermon, I wish to apologize on behalf of some Adventists who have written you rather accusative letters. Some of these fellow believers have shared their letters with me. In their zeal to challenge your critical comments about our church, they used derogatory words and failed to appreciate some of the profound theological insights your sermon offers about the Sabbath.

Please accept my apology on behalf of those who criticized your sermon in an unbecoming way. Christian maturity calls for showing respect toward those with whom we disagree. It is unfortunate that zeal for defending denominational beliefs can lead some people to become hostile toward those who believe differently.

MY PERSONAL APPRECIATION FOR YOUR MINISTRY

You might be interested to know that I always listen with great pleasure to your televised sermons. They represent the best kind of expository preaching heard in America today. I admire the perceptive way in which you expand Biblical passages, making them relevant to the life of people. Unfortunately my itinerant ministry, which takes me away from home practically every weekend, allows me only rarely the privilege to seat in front of the TV on Sunday evening and benefit from your preaching.

These introductory remarks are intended to reassure you that I am writing this response to your sermon, as an admirer of your preaching style and content, and not as an adversary. At a time when many preachers are trying to reach people by giving them what they want, namely entertainment oriented services with beat music, drama, worship dance, and clown preaching, your worship service and preaching stand out for their Biblical content and reverential style. The fact that your proclamation of the Word of God through television and radio, reaches over 25,000 cities and towns, besides your Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church of about 8000 members, goes to show that people still respond today to reverent and perceptive Biblical preaching. May God continue to give you the wisdom and grace to withstand the pressure to use "Gospel gimmicks" to please our entertainment oriented society.

To ensure accuracy I am using the printed version of two of your Sabbath sermons entitled "The Gift of Rest" and "Remember the Sabbath." Furthermore, I have on hand some responses you have prepared to the "Saturday versus Sunday" questions. It is my fervent hope and prayer that this dialogue may lead us to a fuller understanding of which is God's Holy Day and what it should mean for our Christian life today. Your response will be thoughtfully read.

YOUR PERCEPTIVE INSIGHTS ABOUT THE SABBATH

After spending several weeks responding in my last three ENDTIME ISSUES NEWSLETTERS (No. 76, 77, 78) to a former Adventist minister who recently rejected the creational origin and universal function of the Sabbath, it was refreshing to read your perceptive comments about the cosmic scope and universal value of the Sabbath. The minister in question follows the Lutheran tradition which creates an unwarranted dichotomy between law and grace, the Old and New Covenants. Consequently he argues that the Sabbath is part of the Old Covenant *package of laws* given to the Jews and terminated at the Cross. New Covenant Christians allegedly live by *principles of love* revealed by Christ and thus observe the Sabbath spiritually every day, not literally on the seventh day.

It is evident that you reject the Lutheran dichotomy between law and grace, and follow instead the Calvinistic understanding of the continuity and validity of the Old Testament moral principles. For you the Sabbath is not a Jewish institution given at Sinai and terminated at the Cross, but a creational ordinance designed to benefit mankind for all time. I wish to commend you for accepting and proclaiming the Biblical view of the Sabbath as a creation institution for mankind.

The Sabbath: A Creation Institution

The introduction to your sermon "The Gift of Rest," caught my attention. You begin by highlighting the contrast between the typical human boss who urges his employees to work harder, saying: "Get going, move, push, lift, work, work, work," and God who says, "Rest my son. Rest, my daughter." Your perceptive comments enshrine a profound truth. The fact that Adam and Eve spent their first full day of life, not working, but resting in God's presence and admiring His creative accomplishments, tells us that the divine goal for human beings, is not merely to work and produce, but primarily to rest and enjoy fellowship with God and His creation.

The Sabbath and marriage are two institutions that have come down to us from the garden of Eden. You bring out this point eloquently in your sermon, saying: "When Adam walked out of the garden of Eden, he brought with him two institutions which have immeasurably blessed the life of mankind ever since—the institution of the home and one which was even older, the institution of the Sabbath, the first institution which God gave mankind. The benefit to the human race that has come through the institution of the Sabbath, can hardly be overestimated. There is an old maxim that states: 'As goes the Sabbath so goes the nation,' and we might do well to ponder that thought and what it portends for America."

Your perceptive comments remind me of a similar statement made by President Abraham Lincoln in a speech he delivered on November 13, 1862. He said: "As we keep or break the Sabbath, we nobly save or meanly lose the last and best hope by which mankind arises."¹ The reason Sabbath observance is so vital to the spiritual well-being of individual believers and of a Christian nation as a whole, is largely because the essence of Christianity is a relationship with God. And the Sabbath provides the time and opportunities to cultivate such a relationship and experience moral and physical renewal.

Ignoring the Lord on His Holy Day, ultimately leads people to ignore Him and His moral principles every day. This is why Scripture equates Sabbath profanation with apostasy. Ezekiel writes: "The people of Israel rebelled against me in the desert . . . they utterly desecrated my Sabbath" (Ex 20:13). In your sermon "Remember the Sabbath," you correctly state: "History has abundantly evidenced the fact that every nation which has forgotten, profaned, and desecrated the Sabbath of God has found itself forgotten by God and has been brought under the curse of the Almighty."

The Sabbath and the Savior

Another positive aspect of your Sabbath teaching is the refutation of the popular view that Christ abolished the Sabbath. You state: "We live in a time when the institution of the Sabbath has come under great attack from several different points of view. There are those who declare that it was abolished by Christ and is no longer in effect today. But what do the Scriptures teach? The Scriptures do not teach that Christ ever annulled, abrogated, or abolished the Sabbath or any of the Commandments. On the contrary, the Scripture very plainly teach that the Commandments remain in effect today and have been strengthened by Christ who declared that not only the deed but the thought and the word are part of that which God has given us. He clearly states that if we love Him, we will keep His commandments. . . . Even as late as the Book of Revelation we read that here is the patience of the saints of God, those who have the faith of Jesus and keep the commandments of God. In the very last chapter of the Bible we read of those who keep the commandments of God and have the right to the tree of life."

Dr. Kennedy, you are absolutely correct in affirming that Christ did not abolish but strengthen the Sabbath by revealing its true intent. A careful study of the unusual coverage given by the Gospels to the Sabbath teachings and ministry of Jesus, shows that Christ did not *nullify*, but *clarified*, *exemplified* and *amplified* the Sabbath by his teaching and saving ministry. Viewing the rest and redemption typified by the Old Testament Sabbath as realized by Christ's redemptive mission, New Testament believers regarded Sabbathkeeping as a day to celebrate and experience the Messianic redemption-rest by showing "mercy" and doing "good" to those in need.

The new Christian understanding of the Sabbath as a time of active, loving service to needy souls, rather than of passive idleness, represents a radical departure from contemporary Jewish Sabbathkeeping. This is attested also in an early document known as the *Epistle to Diognetus* (dates between A. D. 130-200), where the Jews are charged with "speaking falsely of God" because they claim that "He [God] forbade us [Christians] to do what is good on the Sabbath-day—how is not this impious?"² This positive humanitarian understanding of Sabbathkeeping is rooted in Christ's Sabbath teachings and example, which is brought out in the Gospels.

How to Keep the Sabbath

Dr. Kennedy, I wish to commend you also for articulating with clarity and conviction how to keep the Sabbath by working during the week and resting unto the Lord on the Sabbath. I liked the story of your former seminary professor Dr. Robinson, who explained to his students how one can break the Sabbath on Tuesday. "When you are goofing off on Tuesday, you are breaking the fourth commandment."

Your point is well taken, because the Sabbath commandment has two components: (1) Work six days, (2) Rest unto the Lord on the seventh day. If we loaf around during the week, we have nothing to celebrate when the Sabbath comes around. We are going to be more bored than usual. The Sabbath challenges us to follow God's example by finishing our work during the six days, so that on the seventh day we can celebrate, not only God's creative and redemptive accomplishments, but also what we have been able to accomplish by God's grace.

The second component of the Sabbath commandment is the consecration of the seventh day unto the Lord, by abstaining from secular work and protecting the right of dependant workers to do the same. I was intrigued by the way you develop this important aspect of the Sabbath Commandment. You ask the question: "Do you go out to eat on the Lord's Day, on the Sabbath Day? If you do, you are obviously making people work to feed you."

To illustrate this point you share a very telling personal experience. You said: "When I first came to this area about forty years ago, we didn't have an evening service. I had never thought about that problem, and my wife and I went out on Sunday evening to get something to eat. And I recall that one evening we were seated at a counter in a little restaurant. The cook was behind the counter fixing the food that we ordered. We were the only customers there, so I got into a conversation with this man, who was about forty. I found out that he was a Christian—at least he professed to be, and I said to him, 'Where do you go to church?' He said: 'I don't go to church.'

"So I started to pontificate a little bit, and said to him, 'Well, you know, sir, you really ought to go to church. It's actually very important and ah . . . why did you stop going?' Suddenly he whirled on me with the instrument in his hand he had been cooking with and said, 'Because of people like YOU who come here and make me work all day long to fed you. That's why.' I want to tell you, I was speechless. That's the last time I ever did that."

What an inspiring testimony! I wonder how many popular preachers of mega churches today would be as bold as you, Dr. Kennedy, to challenge their listening congregations and viewing TV audiences to honor the Lord on His Holy Day, not only by resting themselves, but also by respecting the rights of others to do the same? I am afraid, not many of them, because this is an unpopular Biblical principle in our self-centered society.

The Crisis of Sabbath Observance

The result of this pastoral negligence is evident in America today, where the vast majority of Christians go out to eat, to shop, to play, or to entertain themselves after attending the Sunday morning church service. Most Christians do not see anything wrong in mixing together going to church on Sunday morning with going shopping or to places of entertainment on Sunday afternoon. For them the Lord's DAY is the Lord's HOUR of church service, after which they feel free to seek for pleasure and profit.

Two major factors have contributed to the current situation. The first is the historical change from Sabbath to Sunday, which ultimately was a change from a HOLY DAY into a HOLIDAY. In spite of all the efforts that have been made throughout the centuries by Popes, church councils, and Puritans, to make Sunday into a HOLY DAY,

the historical reality is that Sunday began and has largely remained an HOUR OF WORSHIP followed by secular activities.

The recognition of this historical reality has led the Catholic Church and over 10,000 Protestant American churches (including the Willow Creek Community Church), to anticipate the Sunday church services to Saturday afternoon, in order to accommodate those who find it difficult or inconvenient to go to church on Sunday. Fulfilling Sunday church worship on Saturday afternoon hardly makes Sunday into the Christian Sabbath. It only confuses Christians as to which day is the Sabbath day and how should it be observed by Christians today.

The second factor which has contributed to the current crises of Sabbath observance, is the failure of church leaders to summon Christians to “Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.” This is an unpopular message today when most people are seeking for pleasure and profit, rather than for the peace and presence of God in their lives. Preachers like you, Dr. Kennedy, who dare to call upon Christians to keep the Sabbath holy, are few and far between. Even Pope John Paul II in his Pastoral Letter “*Dies Domini—The Lord’s Day*,” fails to call upon Christians to remember the Sabbath day by giving priority to God in our thinking and living during the 24 hours of the seventh day. Instead, he calls upon the international community of nations to promulgate Sunday laws in order to ensure the right of Catholics to fulfill their Sunday Mass precept. The reason is that for the Catholic Church the Sabbath commandment boils down to fulfilling what they call “the Sunday Mass Precept.” For Catholics attending the Sunday Mass is not an option. It is a serious obligation they are seeking to protect with the help of Sunday Laws.³

The solution to the current crisis of Sabbath observance is to be found not in *legislation*, but in internal *moral renovation*. What is needed today is to call upon Christians to remember what they have long forgotten: “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” This entails teaching Christians how to make all the activities of the Sabbath day God-centered, not self-centered. Whether we engage in formal corporate worship, or in informal fellowship and recreation, all our Sabbath activities should spring out of a heart that has decided to honor God on his Holy Day.

The Example of the Pilgrim Fathers

In your sermon you cite the example of the Pilgrim Fathers who came to America partly because King James I of England issued in 1618 the famous book of sports which introduced all sorts of sports in England on Sunday afternoon. This “caused such a turmoil in England, that it almost produced a revolution within that country.”

Some godly pastors and people were so distressed by the secularization of Sunday that they “gathered together and set sail two years later from that land. They were the Pilgrims. Their destination: America.” The rest of the story was unfamiliar to me. You state: “It is interesting also to remember that when the Pilgrims came to America, they came into the bay on Saturday, and were confronted with a great storm. That storm finally subsided during the night. The next day was Sunday. They had been at sea for months in crowded quarters. Many people today would eagerly have scrambled ashore to the new land. However, the Pilgrims decided that they would not move their things on that day. They stayed on the ship that Sunday and worshipped God. The next day they landed in America. From the very beginning they honored the Lord’s day.”

Unfortunately the example Sunday observance set forth by the founding fathers of this great nation, has largely been forgotten by our materialistic and secularly minded society. In fact, it is not uncommon to hear even preachers today condemning as legalists (earning salvation by works) those who attempt to observe Saturday or Sunday as a Holy Day. The fact is that genuine Sabbathkeeping is an antidote to legalism, because it invites believers to experience God’s salvation *not by working*, but *by resting*. The act of resting represent a resignation to any human effort to achieve salvation—it is an act whereby we allow the omnipotent grace of God to operate more fully and freely in our

lives. On the Sabbath, as John Calvin aptly expresses it, believers are “to cease from their work to allow God to work in them.”⁴

Summing up, your teachings regarding the validity, continuity, and value of the Sabbath for Christians today are sound and perceptive. Contrary to those who reduce the Sabbath commandment to an Old Covenant Jewish institution terminated at the Cross, you recognize and proclaim with clarity and conviction its permanence and relevance for our tension-filled and restless lives. For this conviction and efforts I wish to commend you.

The problem that I find in your teachings, is not what you say about the Sabbath, but your attempt to make Sunday into the Biblical Sabbath. Repeatedly you state in your sermons that “it was by the example of Christ and the apostles that the Sabbath was changed to Sunday.” You explain that “Sabbath comes from the Hebrew word *shabbath*, which means simply ‘rest,’ and the first day of the week is the Christian’s rest day.” “On the seventh day the Jews remembered the creation of the heavens and the earth. But we celebrate on the first day of the week, the new heaven—the new creation—the kingdom of God brought forth by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. This is infinitely greater and eternal.”

Dr. Kennedy, may I respectfully point out that your attempt to make Sunday the new Christian Sabbath established by Christ and the apostles allegedly to celebrate the Resurrection, lacks both Biblical and historical support. The fact is that Sunday is not the Sabbath. The two days differ in origin, authority, meaning, and experience. It is with deep regret that in the second part of this response I need to point out the major flaws of the popular arguments that you submit to legitimize Sunday as the new Christian Sabbath established by Christ and the apostles. Please accept my constructive criticism as coming from one who admires and respects you. I believe that you are a sincere man, but sincerely misled in your understanding of the origin of Sunday. It is my fervent hope and prayer that this dialogue may lead you to a fuller understanding of the truth of God’s Holy Sabbath day.

THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST UNDERSTANDING OF THE ORIGIN OF SUNDAY

Before examining your understanding of the origin of Sunday, let me respond to your allegation that “the Seventh-day Adventists, who celebrate the Sabbath on the seventh day, will usually tell you that it was Constantine in the early 300s (325 A. D.), that had the temerity to take upon himself the authority, simply because he was the Caesar of Rome, to change the Sabbath day from Saturday to Sunday. . . . Is there any truth in that? Not the slightest.”

You are correct in stating that Constantine did not change the Sabbath to Sunday. He simply made the “*Dies Solis*—the Day of the Sun,” a legal holiday for the whole empire. The reason was simply because the Day of the Sun had become increasingly popular among both the pagans and most Christians, as a result of the widespread acceptance of Sun worship. You will find an analysis of this development in chapter 8 of my dissertation *From Sabbath to Sunday*.

But you are incorrect in attributing to Seventh-day Adventists the gross historical error of making Constantine responsible for changing the Sabbath to Sunday. I do not know of any Adventist scholar who has ever advocated such a view. The scholarly literature produced by the Adventist church unanimously acknowledges that Sunday worship began in the early part of the second century as a result of an interplay of social, political, pagan, and religious factors.

Dr. Kennedy, you may wish to consult the symposium *The Sabbath in Scripture and History*, produced by twenty two Adventist scholars and published in 1982 by the Review and Herald Publishing Association—the major Adventist publishing house. This symposium brings together the best Adventist scholarship on the Sabbath/Sunday

question. In this book no Adventist scholar ever suggests that Constantine changed the Sabbath to Sunday. This is not to deny that some uninformed pastors or lay members have attributed to Constantine the responsibility for changing the Sabbath to Sunday. In every denomination there are those who do not know what they are talking about. Our Adventist Church is not an exception.

The symposium *The Sabbath in Scripture and History* has a chapter entitled “The Rise of Sunday Observance in Early Christianity.” I was asked to write this chapter which summarizes the highlights of my dissertation *From Sabbath to Sunday*. Simply stated, the conclusion of my two years investigation conducted in Vatican libraries and archives is that two major factors contributed to the change from Sabbath to Sunday in early Christianity, namely, anti-Judaism and Sun-worship. Anti-Judaism led many Christians to abandon the observance of the Sabbath to differentiate themselves from the Jews at a time when the practice of Judaism in general and Sabbathkeeping in particular were outlawed by the Roman government.

Sun-worship influenced many Christians to adopt the observance of the Day of the Sun to facilitate their identification and integration with the customs and cycles of the Roman empire. For the sake of brevity I will submit a summary account of the finding of my investigation regarding the influence of anti-Judaism and Sun-worship in changing the Sabbath to Sunday in early Christianity. I thought you would appreciate hearing the conclusions of my research, before I proceed to examine your views.

Anti-Judaism and the Origin of Sunday

To understand what led many Christian to abandon the Sabbath—a millenarian festival deeply rooted in the Jewish and Judeo-Christian religious consciousness and lifestyle, it is important to understand the socio-political situation of the time. Beginning with the First Jewish Revolt against Rome (66 A.D.), various repressive measures—military, political and fiscal—were imposed by the Roman government upon the Jews, on account of their resurgent Messianic expectations which exploded in violent uprisings in many parts of the empire.

Militarily, Vespasian and Titus crushed the First Jewish Revolt; and Hadrian, the Second Jewish Revolt (A.D.132-135). Politically, Vespasian (A.D.69-79) abolished the Sanhedrin and the office of the High Priest; later Hadrian outlawed the practice of Judaism altogether (ca. A.D.135). Fiscally, the Jews were subjected to a discriminatory tax (the *fiscus judaicus*) which was introduced by Vespasian and intensified first by Domitian (A.D. 81-96) and later by Hadrian (A.D.117-138).

These repressive measures were intensely felt in Rome as indicated by the contemptuous anti-Jewish literary comments of such writers as Seneca (d. A.D. 65), Persius (A.D. 34-62), Petronius (ca. A.D. 66), Quintillian (ca. A.D. 35-100), Martial (ca. A.D. 40-104), Plutarch (ca. A.D. 46-119), Juvenal (A.D.125) and Tacitus (ca. A.D. 55-120), all of whom lived in Rome most of their professional lives. They revile the Jews racially and culturally, deriding Sabbathkeeping and circumcision as examples of Judaism’s degrading superstitions.⁵

The Roman anti-Jewish repressive measures reached a climax during the reign of the Emperor Hadrian (A. D. 117-138) as a result of violent Jewish uprisings against the Romans which were fueled by resurgent Messianic expectations. After three years of bloody fighting (A. D. 132-135) to crush the second major Palestinian Jewish revolt—called after its leader, the Barkokeba revolt—the Emperor Hadrian in A.D. 135 adopted the most repressive measures against the Jews. He not only destroyed the city of Jerusalem and prohibited Jews to enter the city, but he also outlawed categorically the practice of the Jewish religion in general and of Sabbathkeeping in particular.⁶

To avoid the repressive anti-Jewish and anti-Sabbath Roman legislation, many Christians followed the lead of the Bishop of Rome in changing the time and manner of observance of two institutions associated with Judaism, namely the Sabbath and

Passover. The Sabbath was changed to Sunday and Passover to Easter-Sunday. What facilitated these historical changes was the development at this time of a “Christian” theology of contempt for the Jews.

A whole body of *Adversus Judaeos* (“Against all Jews”) Christian literature began to appear at this time. Following the lead of pagan writers, Christian authors developed a “Christian” theology of separation from and contempt toward the Jews. Characteristic Jewish customs such as circumcision and Sabbathkeeping were proclaimed to be signs of Jewish depravity.

The condemnation of Sabbathkeeping as a sign of Jewish wickedness, contributed to the abandonment of the Sabbath and the adoption of Sunday observance, in order to clarify to the Roman authorities the Christian separation from Judaism and identification with Roman paganism. This historical change from Sabbath to Sunday observance was pioneered by the Church of Rome approximately one century after the death of Jesus. The Church of Rome was a predominantly Gentile Church that took over the leadership of Christian communities after the A. D. 70 destruction of Jerusalem. To appreciate how the Church of Rome went about to wean Christians away from Sabbathkeeping and to encourage Sunday worship instead, I will briefly mention the theological, social and liturgical measures taken by this church. These measures are discussed and documented in chapter of my dissertation *From Sabbath to Sunday*.

Measures Taken by the Church of Rome

Theologically, the Sabbath was reduced from a creational institution established by God for mankind, to a Mosaic institution given exclusively to the Jews as a trademark of their depravity. Justin Martyr, for instance, a leader of the Church of Rome (about A. D. 150) argues in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, that the observance of the Sabbath was a temporary Mosaic ordinance which God imposed exclusively on the Jews as “a mark to single them out for punishment they so well deserve for their infidelities.”⁷

It is hard to comprehend how a church leader like Justin, who became a martyr for the Christian faith, could reject the biblical meaning of the Sabbath as a sign of covenant commitment to God (Ex 31:16,17; Ez 20:12,20), reducing it instead into a sign of Jewish depravity. What is even harder to accept is the absence of any scholarly condemnation for such absurd and embarrassing theology of contempt for the Jews—a theology which blatantly misinterpreted biblical institutions like the Sabbath, in order to give biblical sanction to the political and social repression of the Jews.

The sad lesson of history is that the desire to be *politically correct* by supporting popular immoral policies such as the extermination of Jews, Moslems and heretics, or the perpetration of slavery, has caused some church leaders and Bible scholars to become *biblically incorrect*. They fabricated unbiblical theologies designed to sanction popular immoral practices. It is impossible to estimate the damage done to our society and Christianity at large by these theologies of expediency.

The failure of church leaders and scholars to reject the theology of contempt toward the Jews, has contributed, among other things, to the origin of the popular *dispensational theology*. This theology, embraced by many evangelical churches today, teaches among other things that God will rapture the church away secretly and suddenly, before pouring out His wrath on the Jews during the final seven years of Tribulation. The popularity of the book and movie *Left Behind*, which is taking American by storm, is a tangible proof of how pervasive this deceptive teaching is today. I have examined the dispensational endtime scenario in several of my books, including *Hal Lindsey’s Prophetic Jigsaw Puzzle*, for which I received a literary award in 1987 by the Associated Church Press.

Socially, the negative reinterpretation of the Sabbath as a sign of Jewish wickedness led the Church of Rome to transform Sabbath observance *from a day of feasting and joy into a day of fasting and sadness*.⁸ The purpose of the Sabbath fast was not to enhance the spiritual observance of the Sabbath. Rather, as emphatically

stated in the papal decretal of Pope Sylvester (A. D. 314-335), the Sabbath fasting was designed to show “contempt for the Jews” (*exsecratione Judaeorum*) and for their Sabbath “feasting” (*destructione ciborum*).⁹ The sadness and hunger resulting from the fast would enable Christians to avoid “appearing to observe the Sabbath with the Jews” and would encourage them to enter more eagerly and joyfully into the observance of Sunday.¹⁰

The weekly Saturday fast developed as an extension or counterpart of the annual Holy-Saturday fast of Easter season. The annual Holy-Saturday Easter fast, like the weekly Saturday fast, was designed to express not only sorrow for Christ’s death but also contempt for the Jews who were considered as the perpetrators of His death. The anti-Judaic motivations is clearly expressed by Constantine in his letter to the Christian bishops at the Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325).

In this conciliar letter the Emperor urges all Christians to follow the example of the Church of Rome in adopting Easter Sunday, because, he wrote: “We ought not therefore to have anything in common with the Jews, for the Savior has shown us another way . . . In unanimously adopting this mode [i.e. Easter Sunday] we desire, dearest brethren, to *separate ourselves from the detestable company of the Jews*.”¹¹ This letter of the Council of Nicaea represents one of the clearest expression of the theology of contempt for the Jews, which was fabricated to justify, among other things, the change from Sabbath to Sunday and from Passover to Easter-Sunday.

Liturgically, the Church of Rome decreed that no religious assemblies and eucharistic celebrations were to be held on Saturday. For example, Pope Innocent I (A. D. 402-417) declared that “as the tradition of the Church maintains, in these two days [Friday and Saturday] one should not absolutely celebrate the sacraments.”¹² Two contemporary church historians, Socrates¹³ and Sozomen, confirm Innocent I’s decretal. For example, Sozomen (about A. D. 440) tells us that while “the people of Constantinople, and almost everywhere, assemble together on the Sabbath, as well as on the first day of the week, such custom is never observed at Rome and Alexandria.”¹⁴

Sun-worship and the Origin of Sunday

The repressive measures adopted by the Romans against Judaism in general and Sabbathkeeping in particular mentioned above, help us understand what contributed to the abandonment of the Sabbath. But the question remains, Why was Sunday chosen to show separation and differentiation from the Jews? Christians could have chosen Friday to commemorate Christ’s atoning sacrifice for our redemption. The answer to this questions is to be found especially in the influence of Sun worship with its Sun-day. The Invincible Sun-god became the chief god of the Roman Pantheon by the early part of the second century and was worshipped especially on the *Dies Solis*, that is, “the Day of the Sun,” known in our calendar as “Sunday.”

To understand how the Day of the Sun became the first and most important day of the Roman week, it is important to note that the Romans adopted the seven day week from the Jews just before the beginning of Christianity. Prior to that time the Romans used an eight day week, known as *nundinum*. When the Romans replaced their eight day week with the seven day Jewish week, they chose to name the days of the week after the seven planetary gods, rather than numbering the days like the Jews.¹⁵

What is surprising, however, is that initially the Romans made *Dies Saturni* (the day of Saturn) the first day of the week, followed by *Dies Solis* (Day of the Sun), which was the second day.¹⁶ The reason is that during the first century the Saturn god was viewed as being more important than the Sun god. Consequently the Day of Saturn was made the first and most important day of the week. The primacy of Saturday over Sunday continued until the early part of the second century, when the prestige of the day of Saturn was eclipsed by the day of the Sun.

Did the Romans Observe the Jewish Sabbath?

The fact that the Romans were influenced by the Jews to adopt the seven day week and to make Saturn-day (the Jewish Sabbath) the first and most important day of the week, raises the question, Did the Romans observe in their own way the Jewish Sabbath? Your answer, Dr. Kennedy, is "No." You state: "The Romans did not keep the Jewish Sabbath; they would not have bothered themselves with a custom of a despised minority from the eastern end of the Mediterranean. They had no Sabbath at all!" Again you affirm: "The Romans had no Sabbath at all. Saturday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Sunday . . . none! They had no Sabbath to change."

Your statements, Dr. Kennedy, are clearly contradicted by historical evidences which clearly show that the Jews did influence the Romans, to adopt not only their seven day week, but also some forms of Sabbathkeeping. You will find the documentation and discussion in chapter 8 of *From Sabbath to Sunday*. It is not clear how the Romans observed Saturday in the first century. Some texts indicate that it was regarded as an unlucky day (*dies nefastus*) for doing business. Tibullus (about 30 B.C.), for example, explains that he could have justified his staying in Rome with his beloved Delia on Saturday by arguing that "the sacred day of Saturn held one back."¹⁸ Similarly, Sextus Propertius, a contemporary of Tibullus, speaks of "the sign of Saturn that brings woe to one and to all."¹⁸

Texts such as the ones just quoted suggest that in the first century Saturday was the day in which the Romans restricted their activities out of a superstitious veneration for the god Saturn. The Jewish observance of the Sabbath throughout the Roman world, apparently influenced this development. For example, the Stoic philosopher Seneca laments that "the customs of this accursed nation [Jews] have gained such influence that they are now received throughout the world. The vanquished have given laws to their victors . . . the greater part of the [Roman] people go through a ritual not knowing why they do so."¹⁹

The testimony of Seneca is confirmed by the Jewish historian Josephus when he writes: "There is not one Greek or barbarian nor a single nation to whom our custom of abstaining from work on the seventh day has not spread, and where the fasts and the lighting of lamps and many of our prohibitions in the matter of food are not observed."²⁰

The Christian apologist Tertullian confirms the widespread Roman adoption of the Jewish Sabbath as a time for "ease and luxury." Responding to the pagan charge that Christians had adopted Sun-worship because they observed Sun-day, Tertullian writes: "We have some resemblance to those of you who devote the day of Saturn to ease and luxury, though they too go far away from Jewish ways, of which indeed they are ignorant."²¹

Eventually the Romans did change Saturn's day to Sun's day as a day for ease and relaxation, but this process began in the second century, and not at the time of Constantine. What contributed to this change was the increasing popularity of the Sun-god which caused the advancement of the Day of the Sun (Sunday) from the position of second day of the week to that of first and most important day of the week. This required each of the other days to be advanced one day, and Saturn's day thereby became the seventh day of the week for the Romans, as it had been for the Jews and Christians.

Dr. Kennedy, when I learned about the advancement of the Day of the Sun from second day of the week in the first century, to the first day of the week in the second century, I asked myself the question: It is possible that this development influenced Gentile Christians to adopt and adapt the Sun's day for their Christian worship in order to show separation from the Jews and identification with the Romans at the time when Sabbathkeeping was prohibited by Roman Law?

Indications of the Influence of Sun-Worship

During the course of my investigation I found indirect and direct evidences supporting this hypothesis. Indirectly, there are indications that people who had worshipped the Sun-god in their pagan days, brought with them into the church various pagan practices. The existence of the problem is evidenced by the frequent rebukes by Church leaders to those Christians who venerated the Sun-god, especially on the Day of the Sun.²²

The influence of Sun-worship can be seen also in the early Christian art and literature, where the symbology of the Sun-god is often used to represent Christ.²³ In fact, the earliest pictorial representation of Christ (dated about A. D. 240), which was discovered under the confession of St. Peter's Basilica excavated during a 1953-57, is a mosaic that portrays Christ as the Sun God riding the quadriga sun-chariot. Sunrise also became the orientation for prayer and for Christian churches.²⁴ The *dies natalis solis Invicti*, the birthday of the Invincible Sun, which the Romans celebrated on December 25, was adopted by the Christians to celebrate Christ's birth.

A more direct indication of the influence of Sun-worship in the Christian adoption of Sunday, is provided by the use of the symbology of the light and the sun to *justify* the actual observance of Sunday. For example, in his *Apology* written from Rome at about A. D. 150, Justin Martyr emphasizes that Christians assemble "on the day of the Sun . . . because it is the first day on which God, transforming the darkness and prime matter, created the world."²⁵

The connection Justin establishes between the Day of the Sun and the creation of the light on the first day of creation, is hardly coincidental. Church leaders frequently reiterate the same connection. For example, Eusebius (about A. D. 260-340) refers several times to the creation of the light on the first day to justify Sunday worship. In his *Commentary on Psalms*, he wrote: "In this day of light, first day and true day of the sun, when we gather after the interval of six days, we celebrate the holy and spiritual Sabbath. . . . In fact, it is on this day of the creation of the world that God said: 'Let there be light and there was light. It is also on this day that the Sun of Justice has risen for our soul.'²⁶

Testimonies such as these indicate that the adoption of the Day of the Sun was facilitated by the convenient time and effective symbology the day provided to commemorate two significant events of the history of salvation: *creation* and *resurrection*. Jerome (A. D. 342-420) expresses these dual reasons, saying: "If it is called day of the Sun by the pagans, we most willingly acknowledge it as such, since it is on this day that the light of the world has appeared and on this day the Sun of justice arose."²⁷ Eventually, as the influence of Sun-worship disappeared, Christians no longer appealed to the first day creation of the light to justify Sunday observance. The Resurrection became the dominant reason for Sunday worship.

The conclusion of my investigation is that the change from Sabbath to Sunday is a post-apostolic development that occurred as a result of an interplay of social, political, pagan, and religious factors. Anti-Judaism led many Christians to abandon the observance of the Sabbath to differentiate themselves from the Jews at a time when Judaism in general and Sabbathkeeping in particular were outlawed in the Roman empire. Sun-worship influenced the adoption of Sunday observance to facilitate the Christian identification and integration within the customs and cycles of the Roman empire.

DR. KENNEDY'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE ORIGIN OF SUNDAY

Dr. Kennedy, your understanding of the origin of Sunday worship differs substantially from the findings of my research. You subscribe to the popular view that, as you state it, "from the time of the resurrection of Jesus Christ until this day, Christians have celebrated the first day of the week as the day upon which they met to hear the Word of God preached, to receive the communion of the Lord's supper, and to gather together their gifts for the ministration to the poor."

To defend the apostolic origin of Sunday, you submit in your sermons and notes that I have on hand, five major lines of evidences: (1) The First Day Resurrection of Christ; (2) The First Day Appearances of Christ; (3) The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost which occurred on a Sunday (Acts 2:2-3); (4) The collection of offerings done on the first day of the week (1 Cor 16:1-2); (5) The celebration of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week. Let us examine these arguments in their respective order.

(1) The First Day Resurrection of Christ

In your view, Dr. Kennedy, the Resurrection and Appearances of Christ on the first day of the week constitute the fundamental biblical justification for the origin of Sunday worship. You summarize concisely the alleged Biblical evidences with the following statements:

- "We see that Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week.
- He appeared to the women on the first day of the week.
- He appeared unto the disciples, all except Thomas, on the first day of the week.
- A week later, on Sunday, He appeared to them all, including Thomas.
- Furthermore, the Church began on the first day of the week.
- Pentecost was s on the first day of the week, and the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Church on the first day of the week.
- The first Christian sermon was preached on the first day of the week.
- The Lord's Supper was celebrated on the first day of the Week.
- On the first day of the week they laid aside their money as offerings, and that came to be known, as John describes it, as the Lord's Day."

Numerous Catholic and Protestant scholars concur with you, Dr. Kennedy, in attributing to Christ's Resurrection and Appearances on the first day of the week the fundamental reason for the choice of Sunday by the Apostolic church. In spite of its popularity, the alleged role of the Resurrection in the adoption of Sunday observance lacks biblical support. A careful study of all the references to the Resurrection reveals the incomparable importance of the event, but it does not provide any indication regarding a special day to commemorate it. In fact, as Harold Riesenfeld notes, "In the accounts of the Resurrection in the Gospels, there are no sayings which direct that the great event of Christ's Resurrection should be commemorated on the particular day of the week on which it occurred."²⁸

Moreover, as the same author observes, "The first day of the week, in the writings of the New Testament, is never called 'Day of the Resurrection'. This is a term which made its appearance later."²⁹ Its usage first appears in the fourth century, in the writings

of Eusebius of Caesarea. Therefore, “to say that Sunday was observed because Jesus rose on that day,” as S. V. McCasland cogently states, “is really a *petitio principii* [begging the question], for such a celebration might just as well be monthly or annually and still be an observance of that particular day.”³⁰

The New Testament attributes no liturgical significance to the day of Christ's Resurrection simply because the Resurrection was seen as an existential reality experienced by living victoriously by the power of the Risen Savior, and not a liturgical practice associated with Sunday worship. Paul wishes to know “the power of the resurrection” (Phil 3:10), but he never mentions “the day of the resurrection.”

Had Jesus wanted to memorialize the day of His Resurrection, He would have capitalized on the day of His Resurrection to make such a day the fitting memorial of that event. But none of the utterances of the risen Savior reveal an intent to memorialize the day of His Resurrection by making it the new Christian day of rest and worship. Biblical institutions such as the Sabbath, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper all trace their origin to a divine act that established them. But there is no divine act for the institution of a weekly Sunday or an annual Easter Sunday to commemorate the Resurrection.

The silence of the New Testament on this matter is very important since most of its books were written many years after Christ's death and Resurrection. If by the latter half of the first century Sunday had come to be viewed as the memorial of the Resurrection which fulfilled, as you, Dr. Kennedy, claim, “the new creation which Christ, by His resurrection, brought into being,” we would expect to find in the New Testament some allusions to the religious meaning and observance of the weekly Sunday and/or annual Easter-Sunday.

The total absence of any such allusions indicates that such developments occurred in the post-apostolic period as a result of an interplay of political, social, and religious factors, which I have examined at length in my dissertation *From Sabbath to Sunday*.

No Easter-Sunday Celebration in the New Testament.

A compelling indication that discredits the alleged role of the resurrection in the origin of the weekly Sunday worship, is the absence in the New Testament of any reference to an annual Easter-Sunday celebration of the resurrection. There is nearly unanimous scholarly consensus that for at least a century after Jesus' death, Passover was observed, not on Easter-Sunday as a celebration of the Resurrection, but on the date of Nisan 14 (irrespective of the day of the week) as a celebration of the sufferings, atoning sacrifice, and Resurrection of Christ.

The repudiation of the Jewish reckoning of Passover and the adoption of Easter-Sunday instead, is a post-apostolic development which occurred, as Joachim Jeremias puts it, “because of the inclination to break away from Judaism”³¹ and to avoid, as J. B. Lightfoot explains, “even the semblance of Judaism.”³²

The introduction and promotion of Easter-Sunday by the Church of Rome in the second century caused the well-known Passover (Quartodeciman) controversy which eventually led Bishop Victor of Rome to excommunicate the Asian Christians (about A. D. 191) for refusing to adopt the Roman Easter-Sunday.³³ Indications such as these suffice to show that Christ's Resurrection was not celebrated on a weekly Sunday and annual Easter-Sunday from the inception of Christianity. The social, political, and religious factors that contributed to the change from Sabbath to Sunday and Passover to Easter-Sunday are discussed at great length in my dissertation.

(2) The First Day Appearances of Christ

Dr. Kennedy, you attach particular significance to the appearances of the Risen Lord on the first day of the week to the women (Luke 24:1), the two disciples of Emmaus (cf. Luke 24:13-35), the eleven Apostles gathered together (cf. Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19), and to all the disciples the following Sunday (“eight days later”—John 20:26) to make Himself known to Thomas. You see these first day appearances as the beginning of a consistent pattern of Sunday observance.

The problem with your conclusion is that appearances of Christ do not follow any consistent pattern. The mention of Christ’s appearance “eight days later” (John 20:26), supposedly the Sunday following His Resurrection, can hardly suggest a regular pattern of Sunday observance since John himself explains its reason— namely, the absence of Thomas at the previous appearance (John 20:24).

Moreover, on this occasion, John makes no reference to any cultic meal but simply to Christ’s tangible demonstration to Thomas of the reality of his bodily Resurrection (John 20:26-29). The fact that “eight days later” the disciples were again gathered together is not surprising, since we are told that before Pentecost “they were staying” (Acts 1:13) together in the upper room and there they met daily for mutual edification (Acts 1:14; 2:1).

No consistent pattern can be derived from Christ’s appearances to justify the institution of a recurring eucharistic celebration on Sunday. The Lord appeared to individuals and to groups not only on Sunday but at different times, places, and circumstances. He appeared, in fact, to single persons such as Cephas and James (1 Cor 15:5,7), to the twelve (vv. 5, 7), and to a group of five hundred persons (v. 6). The meetings occurred, for instance, while the disciples were gathered within shut doors for fear of the Jews (John 20:19, 26), traveling on the Emmaus road (Luke 24:13-35), or fishing on the lake of Galilee (John 21:1-14).

Only with two disciples at Emmaus, Christ “took the bread and blessed; and broke it, and gave it to them” (Luke 24:30). This last instance may sound like the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, but in reality it was an ordinary meal around an ordinary table to which Jesus was invited. Christ accepted the hospitality of the two disciples and sat “at the table with them” (Luke 24:30). According to prevailing custom, the Lord “took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them” (Luke 24:30). This act, as explained by J. Behm, was “simply a customary and necessary part of the preparation for eating together.”¹³⁴

The Witness of Matthew and Mark. Another notable point is that, according to Matthew (28:10) and Mark (16:7), Christ’s appearances occurred not in Jerusalem (as mentioned by Luke and John) but in Galilee. This suggests that, as S. V. McCasland observes, “the appearance may have been as much as ten *days later*, after the feast of the unleavened bread, as indicated by the closing fragments of the Gospel of Peter. But if the appearance at this late date was on Sunday it would be scarcely possible to account for the observance of Sunday in such an accidental way.”¹³⁵

While it may be difficult to explain the discrepancies in the Gospels’ narratives, the fact remains that both Matthew and Mark make no reference to any meal or meeting of Christ with his disciples on Easter-Sunday. This implies that no particular importance was attributed to the meal Christ shared with his disciples on the Sunday night of his Resurrection.

In the light of the foregoing considerations, we conclude that Christ’s appearances served to reassure the disheartened disciples of the reality of Christ’s Resurrection, but they could hardly have set the pattern for a recurring weekly commemoration of the Resurrection. They occurred at different times, places, and circumstances; and in those instances where Christ ate, He partook of ordinary food (like fish—John 21:13), not to institute a eucharistic Sunday worship but to demonstrate the reality of his bodily Resurrection.

(3) The First Day Events of Pentecost

In addition to the first day Resurrection/Appearances of Christ, Dr. Kennedy, you find support for an apostolic origin of Sunday worship in the fact that the day of Pentecost, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the first Christian sermon, and the beginning of the church, all of these events occurred on Sunday,

The problem with your conclusion, Dr. Kennedy, is that nowhere the New Testament associates the events that occurred on the Day of Pentecost with Sunday worship. If the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the first Messianic proclamation on the Day of Pentecost, which presumably occurred on a Sunday, were seen as a justification for worshipping on Sunday rather than on the Sabbath, Luke would have explained the liturgical significance of these events for the Christian Church. Instead, he simply says: "When the day of Pentecost had come" (Acts 2:1). The focus is on what happened on the day of Pentecost. No attempt is made to link the events of the day of Pentecost with origin of Sunday worship.

The assumption that the first day events of the Resurrection, the Appearances and of the day of Pentecost, influenced the Jerusalem Church to change the Sabbath to Sunday, is discredited by the Jewish composition and theological orientation of the Jerusalem Church. The latter was known for its zealous observance of the law in general and of the Sabbath in particular.

The Commitment of the Jerusalem Church to the Observance of the Law

The attachment of the Jerusalem Church to the Mosaic Law is reflected in the decisions of the first Jerusalem Council held about A.D. 49-50 (See Acts 15). The exemption from circumcision is there granted *only* "to brethren who are of the Gentiles" (Acts 15:23). No concession is made for Jewish-Christians, who must continue to circumcise their children.

Furthermore, the exemption of the Gentiles from circumcision, did not entail their release from the observance of the law in general and of the Sabbath in particular. This is clearly indicated by the fact that the Gentiles were expected to observe the four Mosaic laws regarding the "sojourner" who dwelt among the Israelites. These laws are found in Leviticus 17-18, and are cited in the decision of the Jerusalem Council: "You abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled, and from unchastity" (Acts 15:29). This concern of the Jerusalem Council for ritual defilement and Jewish food laws reflects its continued attachment to the Mosaic laws.

This conclusion is supported by the reason given by James for requiring Gentiles to observe the four Mosaic laws regarding the "sojourner:" "For from early generations Moses has had in every city those who preach him; for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues" (Acts 15:21). All interpreters recognize that both in his proposal and in its justification, James reaffirms the binding nature of the Mosaic Law which was customarily taught every Sabbath in the synagogue.

Further insight is provided by Paul's last visit to Jerusalem. The Apostle was informed by James and the elders that thousand of converted Jews were "*all zealous for the Law*" (Acts 21:20). The same leaders then pressured Paul to prove to the people that he also "lived in observance of the law" (Acts 21-24), by undergoing a rite of purification at the Temple. In the light of this deep commitment to the observance of the Law, it is hardly conceivable that the apostolic authority of the Jerusalem Church pioneered the change from Sabbath to Sunday worship to commemorate the first day events of the Resurrection/Appearances/Pentecost.

The continuity in the observance of the Sabbath among Palestinian Christians is evidenced by the testimony of a fourth century Palestinian historian, Epiphanius. He tells us that the Nazarenes, who were "the very direct descendants of the primitive community" of Jerusalem, insisted and persisted in the observance of seventh-day

Sabbath until his own time, that is, about A. D. 350. Dr. Kennedy, you will find the text and its analysis on page 157 of my dissertation *From Sabbath to Sunday*. I vividly remember the joy I felt when I found Epiphanius' testimony. Eagerly I showed this document to my adviser, Jesuit Prof. Vincenzo Monachino. He read it attentively and then exclaimed: "This is the death-blow to the theory that makes the Jerusalem Church the birthplace of Sundaykeeping."

My professor immediately understood that if the direct descendants of the Jerusalem Church persisted in the observance of the Sabbath until at least the fourth century, then the Jerusalem Church could hardly have pioneered the abandonment of the Sabbath and adoption of Sunday immediately after Christ's resurrection. Of all the Christian Churches, the Jerusalem Church was both ethnically and theologically the closest and most loyal to Jewish religious traditions, and thus the least likely to change the millenarian practice of Sabbathkeeping.

(4) The First Day Collection of Offerings

In your sermons and notes, Dr. Kennedy, you cite the first-day fund-raising plan recommended by Paul in 1 Corinthians 16:1-3 as an indication that "collections were made on the first day of the week," allegedly because on that day the church came together for worship. This view is shared by numerous Catholic and Protestant scholars.

The various attempts to extrapolate from Paul's fund-raising plan a regular pattern of Sunday observance reveal inventiveness and originality, but they rest on construed arguments and not on the actual information the text provides. Dr. Kennedy, please note that there is nothing in the text that suggests public assemblies inasmuch as the setting aside of funds was to be done "by himself—*par'heauto*." The phrase suggests that the collection was to be done individually and in private.

If the Christian community was worshipping together on Sunday, it appears paradoxical that Paul should recommend laying aside at home one's gift. Why should Christians deposit their offering at home on Sunday if on such a day they were gathering together for worship? Should not the money have been brought to the Sunday service?

The purpose of the first-day fund-raising plan is clearly stated by the Apostle: "So that contributions need not be made when I come" (1 Cor 16:2). The plan then is proposed not to enhance Sunday worship by the offering of gifts, but to ensure a substantial and efficient collection upon Paul's arrival. Four characteristics can be identified in the plan. The offering was to be laid aside *periodically* ("on the first day of every week"—v. 2), *personally* ("each of you"—v. 2), *privately* ("by himself in store"—v. 2), and *proportionately* ("as he may prosper"—v. 2).

To the same community on another occasion, Paul thought it necessary to send brethren to "arrange in advance for the gift . . . promised, so that it may be ready not as an exaction but as a willing gift" (2 Cor 9:5). The Apostle desired to avoid embarrassing both to the givers and to the collectors when finding that they "were not ready" (2 Cor 9:4) for the offering. To avoid such problems in this instance, he recommends both a time—the first day of the week—and a place—one's home.

Paul's mention of the first day could be motivated more by practical than theological reasons. To wait until the end of the week or of the month to set aside one's contributions or savings is contrary to sound budgetary practices, since by then one finds empty pockets and empty hands. On the other hand, if, on the first day of the week before planning any expenditures, believers set aside what they plan to give, the remaining funds will be so distributed as to meet all the basic necessities. The text, therefore, proposes a valuable weekly plan to ensure a substantial and orderly contribution on behalf of the poor brethren of Jerusalem—to extract more meaning from the text would distort it.

(5) The Celebration of the Lord's Supper on Sunday

One of the evidences you submit for an apostolic origin of Sunday, is your assumption, Dr. Kennedy, that "The Lord's Supper was celebrated on the first day of the week." This view, accepted by many scholars, lacks both biblical and historical support. Historically we know that Christians could not celebrate the Lord's Supper on a regular basis on Sunday evening, because such gatherings were prohibited by the Roman *hetariae* law—a law that outlawed all types of communal fellowship meals held in the evening. The Roman government was afraid that such evening gatherings could become an occasion for political plotting.³⁶

To avoid the search of the Roman police, Christian changed regularly the time and place of the Lord's Supper celebration. Eventually, they moved the service from the evening to the morning, as indicated by the Letter of Pliny, Governor of Bythnia, to the Emperor Trajan (about A. D. 112). This explains why Paul is very *specific* on the *manner* of celebrating the Lord's Supper, but he is *indefinite* on the question of the *time* of the assembly. Note that four times he repeats the same phrase: "When you come together" (1 Cor 11:18, 20, 33, 34). The phrase implies *indefinite time*, most likely because there was no set day for the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

If, as you contend, Dr. Kennedy, the Lord's Supper was celebrated on Sunday evening, as part of the Lord's Day worship, Paul could hardly have failed to mention the sacredness of the time in which they gathered. This would have strengthened his plea for a more worshipful attitude during the partaking of the Lord's Supper. The failure of Paul to mention "Sunday" as the time of the gathering or to use the adjective "Lord's-*kuriake*" to characterize the day as "the *Lord's Day*," (as he did it with reference to the *Lord's Supper*), shows that the apostle did not attach any religious significance to Sunday.

Furthermore, the Lord's Supper was not connected with the Resurrection. Paul, for instance, who claims to transmit what "he received from the Lord" (1 Cor 11:23), explicitly states that the rite commemorated not Christ's resurrection, but His *sacrifice* and *Second Coming* ("You proclaim the Lord's death till he comes" (1 Cor 11:26).

The foregoing considerations suffice to discredit the assumption that "the Lord's Supper was celebrated on the first day of the week" during apostolic times, because Sunday was the common day of worship. During apostolic times there was no regular Lord's Supper celebration on the first day of the week as part of Sunday worship, simply because Sunday worship is a post-apostolic phenomenon.

DR. KENNEDY'S APPEAL TO BARNABAS AND JUSTIN MARTYR

To support your view of the apostolic origin of Sunday, you cite the testimony of Barnabas and Justin Martyr. Both authors are examined at length in chapter 7 of *From Sabbath to Sunday*. For the purpose of this response, I will briefly comment on your use of these authors.

Regarding Barnabas, you state: "In A. D. 120, no more than 25 years after St. John died, Barnabas, one of the earliest of the Apostolic Fathers, wrote this: 'They kept the eighth day with joyfulness, the day in which Jesus rose from the dead.'" You continue explaining that the designation of Sunday as the "Eighth Day" is derived from the inclusive reckoning common at that time. By counting inclusively from Sunday to Sunday, the seventh day of the week became the "eighth day."

Evaluation of Dr. Kennedy's Interpretation of Barnabas

Your statement calls for three major comments. First, the majority of the scholars date Barnabas between A.D. 135 and 138, because of its internal reference to the rebuilding of Jerusalem, presumably after the A. D. 135 destruction by Emperor Hadrian.³⁷ This would place Barnabas few years later than you suggest.

Second, the denomination of Sunday as "the eighth day," was motivated not by inclusive reckoning, as you explain, but rather by the desire to show the eschatological superiority of Sunday with respect to the Sabbath. For Barnabas, Sunday as the "eighth day" is superior to the seventh day Sabbath, because while the latter represents the earthly seventh millennium that Christ will establish at His coming (15:5), the former, "the eighth day," represents the heavenly and eternal "beginning of another world" (15:8). By means of this senseless gnostic, allegoric speculations about the cosmic week, Barnabas attempts to negate the observance of the Sabbath for the present age and to promote instead the "eighth day" as a valid substitution.

The speculations over the superiority of the "eighth day" Sunday over the seventh day Sabbath, are multiplied in the writing of the Church Fathers until the fourth century. The reason is that it provided a useful apologetic argument to attack the Sabbath during the Sabbath/Sunday controversy. As the eighth day, Sunday could claim to be the alleged continuation, fulfillment, and supplantation of the seventh day Sabbath, both temporally and eschatologically. The problem is that all these speculation are based on fantasy, not on Biblical facts. Chapter 9 of *From Sabbath to Sunday* provides an informative documentation and discussion of the Patristic speculations about the eighth day.

As the Sabbath/Sunday controversy subsided by the fourth century, the designation "eighth day" was dropped, because as John Chrysostom (ca. A. D. 347-407) explains: "The septenary cycle does not extend to the number eight. *It is for this reason that no one calls the Lord's day the eighth day but only the first day.*"³⁸ One wonders, why it took four centuries for brilliant church leaders to discover that it is senseless to defend Sunday as the eighth day in a seven day week. The irrational "eighth day" speculations reveal how difficult it was for church leaders to find legitimate Biblical reasons for Sunday observance. In desperation they resorted to senseless speculations which in time they had to abandon.

My third comment relates to your quotation of Barnabas: "They kept the eighth day with joyfulness, the day in which Jesus rose from the dead." This statement, taken out of context, suggests that Barnabas presents Christ resurrection as the first theological motivation for Sunday observance. However, a reading of the statement in its context, indicates otherwise. This is what Barnabas wrote: "Further he says to them, 'Your new moons and sabbaths I cannot endure.' You see what it means: it is not the present sabbaths that are acceptable to me, but the one that I have made, on which, having brought everything to rest, I will make the beginning of an eighth day, that is, the beginning of another world. This is why we also observe the eighth day with rejoicing, on

which Jesus also arose from the dead, and having shown himself ascended to heaven (ch. 15:8-9).”

The “eighth day” is inserted by Barnabas at the end of his anti-Sabbath arguments, and two basic justifications are given for its “observance:”

(1) The eighth day is the prolongation of the eschatological Sabbath: that is, after the end of the present age symbolized by the Sabbath, the eighth day marks “the beginning of another world” (v. 8). “This is why we also observe (*dio kai*) the eighth day with rejoicing” (v. 9). The word “also” (*dio kai*) suggests that Sunday was observed in addition to, and not as a substitution of the Sabbath.

(2) The eighth day is “also (*en he kai*) the day on which Jesus rose from the dead” (v. 9).

The first theological motivation for the observance of Sunday is not the resurrection, but the alleged eschatological significance of the eighth day as “the beginning of a new world.” It is here that appears the incoherence of Barnabas—perhaps acceptable at that time. While, on the one hand, he repudiates the present Sabbath inasmuch as this would have a millenaristic-eschatological significance, on the other hand he justifies the observance of the eighth day by the same eschatological reasons advanced previously to abrogate the Sabbath.

It is noteworthy that Barnabas presents the resurrection of Jesus as the second or additional motivation—not as the first reason as suggested by your quote. Sunday is observed because on that day “Jesus *also* (*en he kai*) rose from the dead” (v. 9). Why is the resurrection mentioned as the additional reasons for observing Sunday? Apparently because such a motivation had not yet acquired primary importance.

In spite of his sharp anti-Judaism, Barnabas justifies the “observance” of the eighth day more as a continuation of the eschatological Sabbath than as a commemoration of the resurrection. This bespeaks a timid and uncertain beginning of Sunday-keeping. The theology and terminology of Sunday are still dubious. There is no mention of any gathering nor of any eucharistic celebration. The eighth day is simply the prolongation of the eschatological Sabbath to which is united the memory of the resurrection.

The polemic arguments presented by Barnabas both to invalidate the Sabbath and to justify the eighth day as the continuation and replacement of the seventh, reveal the strong anti-Judaic feelings that motivated the abandonment of the Sabbath and the adoption of Sunday as a new day of worship.

To persuade Christians to abandon Jewish beliefs and practices like the Sabbath, Barnabas launches a twofold attack against the Jews: he defames them as a people and he empties their religious beliefs and practices of any historical validity by allegorizing their meaning. As a people, the Jews are described as “wretched men” (16:1) who were deluded by an evil angel (9:5) and who “were abandoned” by God because of their ancient idolatry (5 :14). They drove “his prophets to death” (5 :12) and they crucified Christ “setting him at naught and piercing him and spitting upon him” (7:9). As to the fundamental Jewish beliefs (such as the sacrificial system, the covenant, the promised land, the circumcision, the levitical laws, the Sabbath and the temple) the writer endeavors to demonstrate that they do not apply literally to the Jews, since they have a deeper allegorical meaning which finds its fulfillment in Christ and in the spiritual experience of the Christians.

Barnabas has the dubious distinction of pioneering the development of a theology of contempt against the Jews and their Sabbath—a theology that has done incalculable damage to the Christian faith. Such a theology was inspired by the repressive anti-Jewish and anti-Sabbath Roman legislation. His uncertain theology of Sunday points to the difficulties he encountered in legitimizing the adoption of Sunday observance.

Evaluation of Dr. Kennedy's Use of Justin Martyr

Justin Martyr is the second early Christian writer that you, Dr. Kennedy, cite to support your view of the apostolic origin of Sunday to honor Christ's resurrection. You state: "Justin Martyr, one of the earliest martyr of the church, in about A. D. 150 said: "Sunday is the day on which we all hold our communion assembly because Jesus Christ, our Savior, on the same day arose from the dead."

Taken in isolation, your quotation from Justin Martyr *I Apology* 67 is misleading for two major reasons. First of all, because it skips the first reason given by Justin Martyr for assembling on the Day of the Sun, namely, the creation of the light on the first day of the creation week. The complete text reads as follows: "On the day which is called *Sunday* (*te tou eliou legomene hemera*) we have a common assembly of all who live in the cities or in the outlying districts, and the memoirs of the Apostles or the writings of the Prophets are read, as long as there is time. *Sunday*, indeed, is the day on which we all hold our common assembly because it is the first day on which God, transforming the darkness and prime matter, created the world; and our Saviour Jesus Christ arose from the dead on the same day. For they crucified him on the day before that of Saturn, and on the day after, which is *Sunday*, he appeared to his Apostles and disciples, and taught them the things which we have passed on to you also for consideration."³⁹

Please note, Dr. Kennedy, that the first reason given by Justin Martyr for the Christian gathering on "the day of the Sun" (as the Greek reads), is not Christ's resurrection, as your quote suggests, but the commemoration of the first day of creation "on which God, transforming the darkness and prime matter, created the world." (67, 7).

Why does Justin Martyr give as the first reason for worshipping on the day of the Sun the creation of the light on the first day of the creation week? Most likely because he wanted to appeal to Gentiles accustomed to worship the Sun-god on the day of the Sun. We must not forget that Justin Martyr addressed his *Apology* to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, who was very familiar with Sun-worship on the Day of the Sun. In fact, in his exposition of the Christian worship to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, Justin *three times* underlines that the assembly of the Christians took place "on the day of the Sun."

Why does Justin emphasize that Christians worshipped "on the day of the Sun"? Most likely because he wanted to impress upon the Emperor the fact that Christians were not Jewish rebels but obedient citizens, well integrated within the customs and cycles of the Roman empire. This clarification was expedient at a time when the Roman government adopted repressive measures against the Jewish religion in general and the Sabbath in particular.

The resurrection is given by Justin as the second of two reasons, important but not dominant. This fact is acknowledged even by Willy Rordorf, a Swiss Calvinistic scholar whose dissertation on the origin of Sunday, is a classic in its field. He wrote: "In Justin's First *Apology* (67, 7) the primary motivation for the observance of Sunday is to commemorate the first day of creation and only secondarily, in addition, the resurrection of Jesus."⁴¹ The fact that both Barnabas and Justin present the resurrection as an additional reason for keeping Sunday, suggests that at their time the resurrection was not yet seen as the dominant reason for Sunday worship.

A second reason your quotation is misleading is because it ignores that Justin appeals also to the superiority of the eighth day over the seventh day to justify Sunday worship. He says that Christians observe Sunday because being the eighth day it "possesses a certain mysterious import, which the seventh day did not possess."⁴²

To justify the "mysterious import" of the eighth day, Justin appeals to the circumcision which was performed on the eighth day because it was a "type of the true circumcision by which we are circumcised from error and wickedness through our Lord Jesus Christ who arose from the dead on the first day of the week."⁴³ He also claims that the eight persons saved from the flood at the time of Noah "were a figure of that eighth

day (which is, however, always first in power) on which our Lord appeared as risen from the dead.”⁴⁴ Such senseless speculations about the significance of the number “eight” only reveal the desperate attempt to prove the Biblical superiority of the eighth day over the seventh day Sabbath, at a time when the controversy over the two days was raging. As the controversy subsided these fictitious arguments were dropped and the resurrection emerged as the dominant reason for Sunday worship.

The two different designations and motivations given by Justin Martyr for Sunday worship, could well epitomize the two significant factors which contributed to the change of the Sabbath to Sunday, namely, anti-Judaism and pagan sun worship. We noted that in his exposition of the Christian worship to the Emperor, Justin repeatedly emphasizes that Christians gather on the day of the Sun (possibly to draw them closer to Roman customs in the mind of the Emperor), but in his polemic with Trypho the Jew, Justin denominates Sunday as the “eighth day,” in contradistinction to and as a supersedure of the seventh-day Sabbath.

We might say that while the prevailing aversion toward Judaism in general and toward the Sabbath in particular caused the repudiation of the Sabbath, the existing veneration for the day of the Sun oriented Christians toward such a day both to evidence their sharp distinction from the Jews and to facilitate the acceptance of the Christian faith by the pagans.

Dr. Kennedy, I would like you to consider a final point about Justin Martyr, namely, his profound animosity and hatred toward the Jews and their Sabbath. Don't you find it hard to believe that a man, like Justin Martyr, who suffered martyrdom for the Christian faith, could nourish so much hatred in his heart for the Jews?

He describes the Jews as a most wicked people upon whom God imposed the Sabbath and circumcision as the signs of their unfaithfulness, in order to distinguish and separate them from other nations. He wrote: “As I stated before, it was by reason of your sins and the sins of your fathers that, among other precepts, God imposed upon you the observance of the Sabbath as a mark. . . . The purpose of this was that you and only you might suffer the afflictions that are now justly yours; that only your land be desolated, and your cities ruined by fire, that the fruits of your land be eaten by strangers before your very eyes; that not one of you be permitted to enter your city of Jerusalem.”⁴⁵

Dr. Kennedy, don't you find it appalling that a Christian martyr would make God guilty, to say the least, of discriminatory practices by giving the Sabbath exclusively to the Jews with the sole purpose of singling them out for punishment? I wonder what your listening audience would think of Justin Martyr's statement about the celebration of Christ's resurrection on the day of the sun, if you were to share with them his hatred for the Jews and their Sabbath?

It is unfortunate, Dr. Kennedy, that most defenders of the apostolic origin of Sunday, use the resurrection's testimonies of Barnabas and Justin Martyr without mentioning their theology of contempt for the Jews, which conditioned their rejection of the Sabbath and adoption of Sunday. Responsible scholarship calls for an objective examination of all the relevant data, and not for a “cafeteria style” of research. The time has come to liberate the Christian faith from those beliefs and practices which derive from a theology of hate toward the Jews, rather than from Biblical teachings. It is encouraging to see an increasing number of scholars who are committed to recover the Biblical and Hebraic roots of our faith.

Final Appeal

In closing, Dr. Kennedy, I appeal to you to reexamine the factors which contributed to the abandonment of the Sabbath and the adoption of Sunday. You appeal to me as a man of integrity, committed to proclaim Biblical truths, not ecclesiastical traditions. I have reasons to believe that a fresh reexamination of the Biblical and historical data, will bring you closer to the truth. To facilitate your research, I am pleased to offer you a complementary copy of the four volumes I have authored on historical and theological aspects of the Sabbath Sunday question. If I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to call me at (616) 471-2915. If you deem it helpful, I would be glad to meet with you at your Coral Ridge Ministry office.

The many years I have spent examining the change from Sabbath to Sunday have convinced me that it was not simply a change of names or numbers, but of authority, meaning and experience. It was a change from a HOLY DAY divinely established to enable us to experience more freely and more fully the awareness of divine presence and peace in our lives, into HOLIDAY which has become an occasion to seek for personal pleasure and profit.

This historical change has greatly affected the quality of Christian life of countless Christians who throughout the centuries have been deprived of the physical, moral and spiritual renewal the Sabbath is designed to provide. The recovery of the Sabbath is especially needed today when our souls, fragmented, penetrated and desiccated by a cacophonous, tension-filled culture, cry out for the release and realignment that awaits us on the Sabbath Day.

May the Lord continue to richly bless your life and ministry with His wisdom and grace.

Warmest Christian Regards
Samuele Bacchiocchi, Ph. D.,
Retired Professor of Theology and Church History

ENDNOTES

1. Quoted by R. H. Martin, *The Day: A Manual on the Christian Sabbath*, 1933, p. 184. Also in *Sunday* 65, (1978), p. 22.
2. *Epistle to Diognetus* 4, 3.
3. Chapter 1 of my book *The Sabbath Under Crossfire* is devoted to an indepth analysis of Pope John Paul II's Pastoral Letter *Dies Domini*—The Lord's Day.
4. *Institutes of Christian Religion*, 1972, II, p. 339.
5. The texts of these various authors are quoted in *From Sabbath to Sunday*, 1977, pp. 173-177.
6. For a discussion on the Hadrianic anti-Sabbath legislation, see *From Sabbath to Sunday*, 1977. pp. 159-161.
7. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 23, 3
8. Pope Innocent I (402-417 A.D.) in his famous decretal established that on the Sabbath "one should not absolutely celebrate the sacraments" (*Ad Decentium*, Epist. 25, 4, 7, *Patrologia Latina* 20, 550); Sozomen (ca. 440 A.D.) reports that no religious assemblies were held on the Sabbath in Rome or at Alexandria (*Historia ecclesiastica* 7, 19); cf. Socrates, *Historia ecclesiastica* 5, 22.
9. S.R.E. Humbert, *Adversus Graecorum calumnias* 6, *Patrologia Latina* 143, 933.
10. Victorinus of Pettau (ca. 304 A.D.), *De Fabrica Mundi* 5, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 49, 5.
11. Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 3, 18-19, *NPNF* 2nd, I:524-525 (emphasis supplied).
12. Innocent I, *Ad Decentium*, Epist. 25, 4,7, *PL* 20, 555; the letter is passed into the *Corpus Juris*, c. 13, d. 3 *De Consecratione*.
13. Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* 5, 22; *NPNF* 2nd, II, p. 132.
14. Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History* 7, 19, *NPNF* 2nd, II, p. 390.
15. For a discussion of the adoption of the Jewish seven day week by the Romans, see *From Sabbath to Sunday*, pp. 245-251.
16. That the day of Saturn was originally the first day of the week is clearly evidenced by the *Indices Nundinarii* and by the mural inscriptions found in Pompeii and Herculaneum where the days of the week are given horizontally starting with the day of Saturn. For a source collection see: A. Degrassi, *Inscriptiones Italiae* (Rome: Libreria Dello Stato, 1963) vol. XIII, pp. 49, 52, 53, 55, 56.
17. Tibullus, *Carmina* 1, 3, 15-18.
18. Sextus Propertius, *Elegies* 4, 1, 81-86.
19. Quoted by Augustine in *City of God* 6, 11.
20. Josephus, *Against Apion* 2, 40. A similar statement is found in Philo, *Vita Mosis* 2, 20.
21. Tertullian, *Apology* 16, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids, 1973), vol. 3, p. 31.
22. A concise survey of the influence of astrological beliefs on early Christianity is provided by Jack Lindsay, *Origin of Astrology* (London: Muller, 1972), pp. 373-400.
23. For examples of literary application of the motif of the sun to Christ, see *From Sabbath to Sunday*, pp. 253-254.
24. That primitive Christians prayed toward Jerusalem is evidenced by the Judeo-Christian sect of the Ebionites, who according to Irenaeus, "prayed toward Jerusalem as if it were the house of God" (*Adversus haereses* 1, 26). For references on the eastward orientation, see for instance, Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* 7, 7, 43; Origen *De oratione* 32; *Apostolic Constitutions* 2, 57, 2 and 14; Hippolytus, *De Antichristo* 59.
25. Justin Martyr, I *Apology* 67.
26. Eusebius, *Commentaria in Psalmos* 91, *PG* 23, 1172.
27. Jerome, *In die dominica Paschae homilia* CCL 78, 550, 1, 52; the same in Augustine, *Contra Faustum* 18,5; in *Sermo* 226, *PL* 38, 1099, Augustine explains that Sunday is the day of light because on the first day of creation "God said, 'Let there be light! And there was light. And God separated the light from darkness. And God called the light day and the darkness night'" (Gen. 1:2-5).
28. Harold Riesenfeld, "The Sabbath and the Lord's Day," *The Gospel Tradition: Essays by H. Riesenfeld* (Oxford, 1970), p. 124.
29. Harold Riesenfeld, "Sabbat et Jour du Seigneur," in A. J. B. Higgins, ed., *N.T. Essays: Studies in Memory of T. W. Manson* (Manchester, 1959), p. 212. For examples of the use of the phrase "Day of the Resurrection" for Sunday, see,

- Eusebius of Caesarea, *Commentary on Psalm 91*, *Patrologia Graeca* 23, 1168; Apostolic Constitutions 2, 59, 3. XXX
30. S. V. McCasland, "The Origin of the Lord's Day," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 49 (1930), p. 69. Similarly, Paul Cotton affirms: "There is nothing in the idea of the Resurrection that would necessarily produce the observance of Sunday as a Day of Worship" (*From Sabbath to Sunday* [Bethlehem, PA, 1933], p. 79).
 31. Joachim Jeremias, "Pasha," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Gerhard Friedrich, ed., (Grand Rapids, 1968), vol. 5, p. 903, note 64.
 32. J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers* (London, 1885), vol. 2, p. 88.
 33. For a discussion of the Passover controversy and its implications for the origin of Sunday observance, see my dissertation *From Sabbath to Sunday* (note 23), pp. 198-207.
 34. Johannes Behm, "Klao," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Gerhard Kittel, ed., (Grand Rapids, 1974), vol. 3, p. 728.
 35. S. V. McCasland (note 30), p. 69.
 36. For a discussion of the *hetaririae* legislation, see *From Sabbath to Sunday*, pp. 96-98.
 37. See, Johannes Quasten, *Patrology*, 1953, I, pp. 90-91; E. Goodspeed, *Apostolic Fathers*, 1950, p. 19; William H. Shea, "The Sabbath in the Epistle of Barnabas," *AUSS* 4 (July 1966): 150; J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 1890, I, part 1, p. 349; A. L. Williams, "The Date of the Epistle of Barnabas," *Journal of Theological Studies* 34 (1933): 337-346.
 38. John Chrysostom, *De compunctiones* 2, 4,, PG 47, 415.
 39. Justin, *I Apology* 67, 3-7, Falls, *Justin's Writings*, pp. 106-107.
 40. Willy Rordorf, *Sunday: The History of the Day of Rest and Worship in the Earliest Centuries of the Christian Church*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, PA, 1968.
 41. *Ibid.*, p. 220.
 42. Justin, *Dialogue* 24, 1.
 43. Justin, *Dialogue* 41,4.
 44. Justin, *Dialogue* 138, 1; the reference to the "eight souls" occurs in the New Testament in I Peter 3 :20 and II Peter 2:5. J. Dani~lou perceives a justification for the eighth day even in Justin's reference (cf. *Dialogue* 138) to the "fifteen cubits" of water that covered the mountains during the flood ("Le Dimanche comme huiti-me jour," *Le Dimanche*, Lex Orandi 39, 1965, p. 65).
 45. Justin, *Dialogue* 16, 1 and 21, 1, Falls, *Justin's Writings*, pp. 172, 178. The mention of circumcision and the Sabbath by Justin, as distinguishing marks designed to prohibit the Jews "to enter your city of Jerusalem" (*Dialogue* 16), seems to be an implicit reference to Hadrian's decree which forbade every Jew from entering the city (cf. *Dialogue* 19, 2-6; 21, 1; 27, 2; 45, 3; 92, 4); in chapter 92 of the *Dialogue* the reference to Hadrian's edict appears even more explicit. In fact Justin plainly states that the circumcision and the Sabbath were given because "God in His foreknowledge was aware that the people [i.e., the Jews] would deserve to be expelled from Jerusalem and never be allowed to enter there" (Falls, *Justin's Writings*, p. 294); Pierre Prigent similarly comments that, according to Justin, the circumcision and the Sabbath were given to Abraham and to Moses because "God foresaw that Israel would deserve to be expelled from Jerusalem and not to be allowed to dwell there" (*Justin et l'Ancien Testament*, 1964, p. 265 and p. 251).

Contact Information

Samuele Bacchiocchi, Ph. D.
 Retired Professor of Theology and Church History
 Andrews University
 4990 Appian Way, Berrien Springs, MI 49103

Phone (616) 471-2915 Fax (616) 471-4013
 E-mail: sbacchiocchi@qtm.net or sbacchiocchi@csi.com
 Web site: <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com>