

Remember the **Sabbath** day by keeping it holy.



Exodus 20:8

If this was a commandment from God Himself,
then

Why does the Church worship
on a Sunday?

When did it start?

Are we still in line with God's
command?

What did Jesus do?

Contained in this pamphlet is not only the case for Sabbath worship but also the historical evidence, dating back to the early Church Fathers, of how, why and when the Church turned to Sunday worship.

A Christian International, Europe Church

www.fathershouse.uk.com

Email: miketryer@fathershouse.uk.com

Tel: 01352 740408

Pastor Mike Fryer
PO Box 178
Bethel House
Mold
CH7 9BL



When did The Church begin to worship on a Sunday?

The Church started to worship on a Sunday after the times of the Apostles. It was the early Church Fathers, who were by then Gentile believers and State compliant, who initiated this act.

Is there a biblical basis for this worship?

It is clear in Scripture that **The Church has no power or authority to make the changes to the set times and laws which God gave in scripture.** Only satan tries to change the times and laws (Daniel 7 v 25.) So we have to ask ourselves ... why did The Church?

The Church chose to 'go its own way'

The reasoning and motive for these changes is outlined as follows and the evidence speaks for itself;

In 70 AD the Emperor Hadrian made it an offence punishable by death to keep the Sabbath. As the Church became increasingly Gentile, her leaders such as Bishop Sixtus in Cyprus (160 AD) formed canons that continued with the direction of the State and also supported the State in its regulations to make it illegal to keep the Sabbath.

Why?

The Roman Empire, which by now had encountered a devastating series of battles with the Jews, had increased their hatred of the Jews and had even renamed Israel "Palestine," after dispersing the Jews in order to obliterate even their inheritance. Rome was also a practising pagan State. The Church followed this condemnation of the Jews who refused totally to comply with any of the pagan practices of the Romans and Greeks, even to the point of death. They kept the Sabbath and all that God had commanded them in fear of God Himself.

The evidence is clear. The "Church" which either fell by force under the power of Rome or was forced into making Rome its authority, fell into pagan practice. This practice then continued under Luther, the founder of the Protestant movement, who himself hated the Jews.

Jesus himself loved the commands of God, the fourth being The Sabbath. He attended all the Festivals and indeed kept The Sabbath as did His disciples. As you have read, the change of the date of worship has no scriptural authority. The change was made because paganism won over Church leaders who in their hatred of Jews made changes that opposed the word of God and allied the Church to paganism, a practice that the Jews themselves were called to stand against.

Father's House have now changed to meeting together and worshipping on the Sabbath. They have also begun to celebrate the Biblical Festivals of the Lord instead of those that man has created. Messianic brothers in Israel agree with our process of change. They themselves would never follow the Easter, Christmas or Sunday Church Calendar.

On the other hand, there are many in the UK who oppose what we are doing. Mike has had meetings concerning this subject which have been long and involved arduous discussions based on ones own interpretations of Paul's letters and the book of Acts. However it is clear that Paul mentioned nothing about moving dates and times and Jesus Himself said nothing about changes to the Festivals of The Lord or the Sabbath. Surely had He wanted us to make such major changes, which clearly would affect the word of God and in particular the Ten Commandments, He would have made that very clear. In none of the New Testament writings do we see reference to a shift to other times of worship.

This change has been a very difficult one. It is never easy to stand up for what you believe to be the truth when other like-minded people just don't seem to see it. We are merely being obedient to God's calling on our lives and trying to teach others what He has shown us.

Hatred of The Jews

It was not surprising however that the Church fathers supported the state, as they were, in fact, appointed by the state. This is a practice which continues even today in the appointment of our own Bishops to the House of Lords.

On 7th March 321 AD, Constantine the Roman Emperor, (whose father was pagan and mother was Christian,) was so opposed to anything practiced by the Jews (not forgetting that Jesus, the Apostles and the early Church were all Jewish) that he made Sunday the day of rest and worship for Christians and not Saturday. This of course caused many difficulties for Jews. The appointment of Sunday church worship also helped his efforts to integrate the three main faiths of his empire - Christianity, Mithraism (Sun Worship, which was practiced on SUN -day—mithra being born on 25th December- Jesus actually being born at Feast of Tabernacles in October) and Isis Worship, which was Goddess worship.

By the early part of the fourth century, the Bishops had become so anti-Jew that they spoke out against all things that were considered Jewish, even the Laws that God had commanded for His people. We see this in its clearest form when we examine the Decree of Nicea issued by the Bishops in 325 AD.

This decree, presided over by Constantine, stated:

“ It seems to everyone a most unworthy thing that we should follow the custom of the Jews in the celebration of this most Holy solemnity, who, polluted wretches!, having stained their hands with nefarious crime, are justly blinded in their minds. It is fit therefore, that, rejecting the practice of this people we should perpetuate to all future ages the celebration of this rite, in a more legitimate order. We desire to have nothing in common with this so hated people, for the Redeemer has marked out another path for us.”

The Council of Nicea then set the calendar for Easter and Christmas on the dates of the worship of the gods cernunnos, mithra and the goddess ostre. It eliminated all mention of the appointed dates the Lord gave for Passover and all other Levitical Feasts, even though it was clear that Jesus was crucified at Passover and was born during Tabernacles.

Do you want to know more about the effect of paganism on our church today?

Coming from a professional investigative background, Mike has researched this topic in much detail and has written a concise, very informative, revelatory book called '**Craft or Christ?**' As well as being sold in the UK, this book has been sold in: Ireland, Israel, Brazil, USA and Eastern Europe. A group of Christians in Czechoslovakia are translating it as they are ministering to the Muslim community ... and they have found that the stumbling block preventing many muslims from accepting Christ is the question of Sunday worship coupled with the pagan practices involved in Christmas and Easter. This book clearly shows that we recognize the problems and are willing to change. '**Craft or Christ**' is also recommended by Mary Cheetham the former North Wales president of the intercession organization 'Lydia' and she agrees whole heartedly with its content.

The following are just a couple of examples of responses received as the book has been disseminated in Israel.

“My wife and I just finished reading your book, Craft or Christ. We found your book to be informative and relative to the times we are living in. As Messianic Jews, we believe the Festivals from God are for all Believers, Jew and Gentile. According to Romans 11, the Gentiles are like branches of a wild olive tree that were grafted in to the cultivated olive tree. Because of this the Gentile Believer enjoys the blessings from being part of that tree. An analogy to this scripture is a child being adopted into a family. The child will follow the rules established by the parents and come to appreciate and enjoy them. We believe, as Messianic Jews, all the Holidays God commanded us to remember and observe are for the Jews as well as our adopted family, the Believing Gentiles. We are all now part of God's family. God set His festivals separate and apart from other practices observed by non-believers. The enemy has tried to make Believers compromise their relationship with God by worshiping on the first day of the week, celebrating Easter and Christmas. According to I Cor. 5:6-7, "A little yeast can ruin the whole batch of dough. Get rid of the old yeast! Then you will be like fresh bread..." In your book Mike, you make it very clear the established Christian holidays are mixed with more than a little "yeast". We want to share your book with our family and friends. We want them to walk in the fullness of His blessings.

“I totally agree with Mike in leading his congregation back into celebrating the Levitical Festivals and keeping Sabbath the 7th day in accordance with the commands of God. The Easter, Christmas and Sunday times of worship are alien to myself and Jewish believers in Israel, not only because of their pagan origin but because scripture does not signpost them. Every Jew in Israel whether believer or not refers to the Scripture in Jeremiah 10 v 3 when God opposes the practice of having Christmas trees. . Gentile believers are adopted into the root of the Jews and Paul makes that very clear in the book of Romans. Paul was writing whilst under Roman rule and it is interesting that it was a regulation that an adopted child could never be disinherited or lose his inheritance.”

In 363 AD the Bishops set out more Canons on this very subject in a catechism called the Council of Laodicea. As well as Canons dictating that women should not be allowed to approach the altar and that Bishops and priests were not to be chosen by the multitude, but by the state and their fellow Bishops, the Council said this in Canon 29:

“Christians must not Judaize (become like Jews) by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honouring the Lord's Day (an institution the Bishops had made to align themselves with the state because no believing citizens worked on a Saturday and worshiped the Sun on a Sunday); and, if they can, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found to be Judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ.”

Let us not forget that these councils represented the early Catholic Church, which also instituted the worship of Mary and many other non-scriptural practices that are clearly in opposition to the commands of God.

From the statements published by the two founding Councils, we see that the motive for changing from the Biblical Festivals and Sabbath was unquestionably anti-Semitic and not in any way scriptural. It is interesting to note however, that the Bishops of Wales did not make these changes in accordance with Nicea and Laodicea, but kept to the Festivals and The Sabbath until being forced to change by Augustine when he came to Wales in 597 AD.

What did the Bishops themselves say about the Jews?

St John Chrysostom (c347-407) Bishop of Constantinople, Doctor of the Church said;

“They say that they worship God too; but this is not so. None of the Jews, not one of them is a worshipper of God...Since they have disowned the Father, crucified the Son, and rejected the Spirit's help, who would dare assert that the synagogue is not a home of demons...! The Jews live for their bellies, they crave for the goods of this world. In shamelessness and greed they surpass even pigs and goats...The Jews are possessed by demons, they are handed over to impure spirits...Instead of greeting them and addressing them as much as a word, you should turn away from them as from the pest and plague of the human race.”

When animals are unfit for work they are marked for slaughter; and this is the very thing that the Jews have experienced.

The **BAPTIST** Harold Lindsell (editor), Christianity Today, Nov. 5, 1976 ⁶
said:

"There is nothing in Scripture that requires us to keep Sunday rather than Saturday as a holy day."

Is it not clear that the early Church made the changes without Godly authority?

The evidence suggests that she did so because of a hatred of the Jews coupled with a desire to comply with the authority of the State of Rome.

Input from the Historians.

In January this year, Pastor Mike Fryer had the privilege of attending a 3 week specialized course involving 140 hrs classroom study at Yad Vashem - the Holocaust museum in Jerusalem. The subject was Christian Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. The world's most renowned authorities on these subjects lectured 24 people who were from many nations of the world both Christian and Jew. The worlds' most renowned historian on the subject of Christian Anti-Semitism is Professor Franklin H Littel of the USA. After his lecture, Mike asked him a question about the effect of the early Church moving away from the Feasts of The Lord and moving to the pagan times and dates. He replied:

" It was a triumph of paganism over the Christian movement of the day. It caused the Bishops to serve the state and not The Church and it was bad for the Jews"

The Church reformer Martin Luther, wrote "Jews and their lies." The following statements made by him have been influential in the Church;

" The Jews are not God's people. If they are not God's people then they are the devils people...the wicked Jews cannot be God's people ...the devil with all his angels has taken possession of this people...God often wanted to exterminate them, but Moses interceded for them...They are like the devil, who knows very well that God's word is the truth and yet with deliberate malice contradicts and blasphemes it...When you see a Jew, cross yourself and say "There goes a devil incarnate"... They alone want to have the Messiah and be masters of the world."

"The Jews have transformed God into the devil, or rather into a servant of the devil, accomplishing all the evil that evil desires, corrupting unhappy souls and raging against himself. In short the Jews are worse than devils."

" It is impossible to convert the devil...condemned to the flames of Hell. Therefore burn their synagogues and houses, toss in hellfire and bury with dirt whatever will not burn; burn or remove from them their prayer books, talmudic works and also the entire Bible; on pain of death let their Rabbis be barred from teaching; let all Jews be outlawed and thus endangered on the public highways; let none of them pray or teach or even give thanks to the Lord in public - such is their 'sevenfold guilt.'"

Jerome said of the Jews: - "Judaic serpents of whom Judas was the model."

Gregory of Nyssa is quoted as saying, "Adversaries of Grace, enemies of God, devil's advocates, brood of vipers, and the Sanhedrin of demons. We desire to have nothing in common with this so hated people, for the Redeemer has marked out another path for us."

The great theologian Augustine was also guilty of the growing hatred of the Jews within the Church. In a sermon on Catechumens, he said:

"The Jews hold him, the Jews insult him, the Jews bind him, crown him with thorns, dishonour him with spitting, scourge him, overwhelm with reviling, hang him upon the tree, pierce him with a spear...The Jews killed him. But when the Jews killed Christ, though they knew it not, they prepared the supper for us."

In another sermon he characterized the Jews as "**wilfully blind to Holy Scripture,**" "**lacking in understanding**" and "**haters of truth.**"

Theologians Continued:

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Charles Buck, a **METHODIST** says this in his Theological Dictionary:

Sabbath

“Sabbath in the Hebrew language signifies rest, and is the seventh day of the week... and it must be confessed that there is no law in the New Testament concerning the first day.”

Clovis Chappell, *Ten Rules for Living*, p. 61 states:

"The reason we observe the first day instead of the seventh is based on no positive command. One will search the Scriptures in vain for authority for changing from the seventh day to the first."

In a **PRESBYTERIAN** publication "The Christian at Work", April 19, 1883, and Jan. 1884 we see:

"Some have tried to build the observance of Sunday upon Apostolic command, whereas the Apostles gave no command on the matter at all. The truth is, as soon as we appeal to the *litera scripta* [literal writing] of the Bible, the Sabbatarians have the best of the argument."

Bishop Isaac William founder of Wyle college USA and an Anglican says this in his *Plain Sermons on the Catechism*, vol. 1:

"Where are we told in Scripture that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are nowhere commanded to keep the first day.... The reason why we keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because of the Bible, but because the Church, has enjoined it."

The **EPISCOPALIAN** Philip Carrington from Toronto said in the *Daily Star*, Oct. 26, 1949:

"The Bible commandment says on the seventh day thou shalt rest. That is Saturday. Nowhere in the Bible is it laid down that worship should be done on Sunday."

The Celtic Church in Wales

The Celtic Church in the first centuries followed the practice of the Festivals as set out in Scripture, particularly the Sabbath.

In 768, after many years of persecution by the Church of Rome which now practiced paganism, the Bishop of Bangor 'Elfodd' forced the Welsh Celtic Church to change from celebrating the Festivals of God as set out in Leviticus 23 to celebrating Easter, the festival of the goddess ostre. At the same time they were forced to change to Sunday worship from the scriptural Sabbath day.

The Historian A.C. Flick says this when referring to the Welsh Celtic Church; "The believers resented the effort to stigmatise them as Judaizers because they conscientiously believed the seventh day of the fourth commandment to be still binding."

Moreover, Pope Gregory 1 had issued an official pronouncement against a section of the city of Rome itself because the Christian believers there rested and worshiped on the Sabbath.

When the facts reveal that at this time, during the seventh century, there were still more Christian churches throughout the world sanctifying the seventh day, the day which God sanctified in the fourth commandment of the Decalogue, (rather than Sunday,) we can fully understand the apostolic churches that refused to worship on any other day.

There is much evidence that the Sabbath prevailed in Wales universally until A.D. 1115, when the first Roman Bishop was seated at St. David's.

Does this contribute to the fact that Wales has seen great periods of revival?

What do the contemporary theologians from different denominations say
about the shift to Sunday worship?

Rev Stephen Keenan, a **CATHOLIC** Theologian was interviewed by Cardinal John McCloskey - Archbishop of New York, during a Doctrinal Catechism. The interview went as follows:

- Cardinal: Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?
- Rev. Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her—she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority....
- Cardinal: When Protestants do profane work upon Saturday... do they follow the Scripture as their only rule of faith...?
- Rev. On the contrary, they have only the authority of tradition for this practice. In profaning Saturday, they violate one of God's commandments, which He has never clearly abrogated, 'Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath.'

The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine, 3rd ed., p. 50 reads:

- Question: Which is the Sabbath day?
- Answer: Saturday is the Sabbath day.
- Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?
- Answer: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea [c. 363] transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.

"Sunday is a Catholic institution and can be defended only on Catholic principles.... . From beginning to end of Scripture there is not a single passage that warrants the transfer of weekly public worship from the last day of the week to the first." This statement, made by an eminent historian who himself is a professing Christian, sums up the debate and leaves no question about the motive for these changes. Catholic Press, Aug. 25, 1900