

Sabbath Keeping #3

The Sabbatarian will insist that the Sabbath was/is a command given from the beginning. He will quote Genesis 2:3, and declare the day "sanctified" by God was one that was sanctified for man forever. This, the Sabbatarian reads into the text. Until Exodus 16, there is absolutely no evidence of MAN keeping the Sabbath. Let us notice why the Sabbath was given.

God told the children of Israel to "Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8). He said, "Surely My Sabbaths you shall keep, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you" (Ex. 31:13). The Sabbath was given as a "sign" of the covenant. What does this mean?

First, a "sign" is something given specifically, not generally. When a young man makes a covenant with a young woman, he gives her a "sign" (ring). If he were to give that sign to every young woman of his acquaintance, it would be meaningless. So it is with the "sign" of the Sabbath. If all men were required to observe the Sabbath from the beginning, it would not have had any significance for the children of Israel.

Second, like the "sign" given in marriage is until death, so it was with the "sign" given to Israel by God. "Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another--to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God...But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter" (Rom. 7:1-6). Christians are to be "dead" to the law, the sign of which was the Sabbath, and alive to Christ. If one goes back to the law, then he has committed spiritual adultery.

The truth is, the Sabbath observance was not made known to man until God revealed it at Mount Sinai, and a sign of a covenant not previously

given (Neh. 9:13-14; Deut. 5:3).

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