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Our Answer:

Why Do Seventh-day Adventists Suffer Imprisonment Rather Than Keep Sunday?

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RELIGIOUS PERSECUATION IN MARYLAND.

IN JAIL FOR SETTING OUT TOMATO PLANTS ON SUNDAY.

At this writing (November 23), the county jail at Centreville, Queen Anne's County, Maryland, contains three men sentenced to imprisonment by the Circuit Court until fines and costs (amounting to about \$ 55 in each case) shall be paid, for the crime (?) of performing "bodily labor on the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday."

Their names are Isaac Baker, George W. Marvel, and Milton A. Bryan. Mr. Baker was convicted for plowing his field; Mr. Marvel for setting out tomato plants in his garden; and Mr. Bryan for cutting sprouts, chopping wood in his yard, and digging in his garden. All are poor. Mr. Baker has a family of eleven children, the youngest three months old. Mr. Marvel, whose crime was setting out tomato plants in his garden, is about sixty years old, and has a large family. The only witness against him was his own son, who holds the office of constable, and who went purposely to catch his father at work that he might prosecute him. Mr. Bryan, a young man, has a wife and one child, a babe eight months old. Their work was done on their rented farms out of hearing of any church; and no one testified to being disturbed either in his public or private devotions.

These persons are recent converts to the doctrines held by Seventh-day Adventists, and are the victims of religious prejudice, which takes advantage of an old Sunday law enacted as early as 1723, which reads, "No person whatsoever shall work or do any bodily labor on the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday." These prosecutions are carried on in the face of the Bill of Rights of the State, which says, among other things,—

"All persons are equally entitled to protection in their religious liberty; wherefore, no person ought, by any law, to be molested in his person or estate on account of his religious persuasion or profession, or for his religious practice."

They refused to pay their fines, considering them unjust, and that by paying them they would be acknowledging the legal right of the State to collect fines for the violation of a law enforcing a religious dogma; and besides, were they to pay the amount, which they are not able to do, they would be re-arrested on their return to work, and thus be compelled to spend all their property in paying fines.

OUR ANSWER.

Why Do Seventh-Day Adventists Suffer Imprisonment Rather Than Keep Sunday?

BY A. F. BALLENGER.

THE imprisonment of Seventh-day Adventists, in the State of Arkansas¹ a few years ago, in the States of Tennessee² and Maryland³ recently, and the prospects of imprisonment in the State of Georgia,⁴ for the crime (?) of performing the common avocations of life on Sunday, has called forth the above question. It deserves an answer. We shall state it briefly, with the hope that those who are responsible for these modern persecutions may know the true position of those whom they are persecuting; and also that our friends who deplore the misguided zeal of our persecutors, may know the vital principle for which we suffer.

If the law which now requires us to observe Sunday were a law requiring that we repudiate the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ, and fall down and worship some heathen idol, the principle at stake would be plain to all; and yet the position in which we are placed in these States, involves this very principle.

In loyalty to Him who is our Creator and Redeemer, we render glad obedience to his command:—

¹ See "National Sunday Law," pp. 130-138.

² See "Religious Intolerance in the Republic."

³ See preceding page.

⁴ Since this matter has been put in type, information has reached us that Elder W. A. McCutchen and Elmer C. Keck, of Gainesville, Ga., have just been convicted for performing common labor on Sunday, and fined fifty dollars each, or ninety days' imprisonment.

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work : but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God ; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates : for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day ; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day; and hallowed it.”

After we have observed the “Sabbath day according to the commandment” (Luke 23 : 56 ; 24 : 1), our persecutors attempt to compel us to observe the following day, Sunday, which is another day, not the Sabbath, and which stands for a power hostile to the God whom we worship. To the suggestion that we observe both days, we reply, It is written, “No man can serve two masters ; for either he will hate the one and love the other ; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.” Matt. 6 : 24.

The Sabbath of the commandment, the seventh day, is a sign of the power of God, not only in creation, but in re-creation or redemption. The plan of redemption was laid before the creation of man, for we read of “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Rev. 13 : 8. Therefore, when the Son of God, the agent of the Father in creation, (John 1 : 3 ; Col. 1 : 16), set his hand to the work of creation, he in that very act pledged his life to redeem the world ; and the Father, in that act “gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3 : 16.

When Christ, the agent of the Father in creation, said, “Let there be light,” he pledged his life to visit us to “give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death” (Luke 1 : 79) ; and when he breathed into the form of clay the breath of life, he promised to breathe out on Calvary’s cross his own life to save fallen man. All the love ever manifested toward man, or that ever will be manifested, was bound up in his creation ; and the Sabbath, the seventh

day, is a memorial of this labor of love, and hence a memorial or sign of both creation and redemption.

We read in Eze. 20:20: "Hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God;" whom to know "is life eternal." John 17:3. The Sabbath, the seventh day, is therefore a sign by which men attain to the knowledge of God, who is revealed in Jesus Christ alone. Matt. 11:27. It is therefore the sign of what Jesus Christ, the Saviour, is to us.

Again, in Eze. 20:12, we read, "I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." Said Christ, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." John 14:6. "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." John 17:17. Therefore the Sabbath is the sign of the sanctifying power of God, which comes through Jesus Christ alone, "The Word of God" (Rev. 19:13), "the way, the truth, and the life."

Through hallowing the Sabbath, the seventh day, we manifest our allegiance to the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent; and rather than compromise this allegiance in which eternal life is involved, we can afford to suffer not only imprisonment and the confiscation of goods, but the loss of even life itself.

That by observing Sunday we compromise this allegiance, and acknowledge another master hostile to the one we serve, will appear from a study of the origin of Sunday observance and the power for which it now stands as the mark or sign.

Sun-worship, to which Sunday, "the venerable day of the sun," has always been devoted, was the false religion which in one form or another contended for the allegiance of man from creation to the unfolding of Christianity in the time of Christ. It was the worship to which apostate Israel recurred at the very base of Sinai. The golden calf was but a representation of the Egyptian god, Apis, which was a

personification of the generative power supposed to emanate from the sun. So universal was this worship of the sun, which was always performed toward the east, that the Israelites were commanded of God to pitch the tabernacle with the door toward the east, so that in order to worship in the temple, the worshiper must first turn his back on the sun rising and sun-worship. Yet notwithstanding this extraordinary precaution, we find Israel constantly backsliding from the worship of God to the worship of the sun with all its attendant abominations.

An instance of this and the way in which the Lord regarded it, is found in Eze. 8 : 16, where the Lord presents to the captive prophet, Ezekiel, in Babylon, the backslidings of Israel at Jerusalem. After showing him other abominations, he presents the climax in the following scene : —

“And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they *worshipped the sun* toward the east.”

Again we read that when King Asa would reform Judah, “he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the *sun images*.” 2 Chron. 14 : 5 (R. V.). So universally was Sunday devoted by the pagans to sun-worship, that the *North British Review*, though attempting to justify Sunday observance by Christians, terms Sunday “the wild solar holiday of all pagan times.” Vol. 18, p. 409. And when Constantine promulgated his famous law enforcing its observance, as late as A. D. 321, he calls it “the venerable day of the sun.”

When Christianity went forth in the days of the apostles, conquering and to conquer, it became necessary for the enemy of all truth to create a counterfeit more nearly resembling Christianity than did paganism, with which to do battle against the truth of God.

Paul predicted the rise of this system in the following words : —

“ Let no man deceive you by any means ; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition ; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God ; or that is worshiped ; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” 2 Thess. 2 : 3, 4.

The agency here brought to view is none other than the Roman Catholic Church. That Church claims to sit in the place of God, and alone to dispense salvation to men, as the following quotation will prove : —

“ Every one is obliged under pain of eternal damnation, to become a member of the Catholic Church, to believe her doctrine, to use her means of grace, and to submit to her authority. Hence the Catholic Church is justly called the *only saving* Church. To despise her is to despise Christ, namely, his doctrine, his means of grace, and his power ; to separate from her is the same as to separate from Christ, and to forfeit eternal salvation. Therefore St. Augustine and the other bishops of Africa pronounced, A. D., 412, at the Council Zirta, this decision : ‘ Whosoever is separated from the Catholic Church, however commendable in his own opinion his life may be, he shall for this very reason, that he is at the same time separated from the unity of Christ, *not see life*, but the wrath of God abideth on him.’ ” — *De Harbe's "Full Catechism of the Catholic Religion," Imprimatur, N. Card. Wiseman ; Imprimatur, John Card. McCloskey, Catholic Publication Society Co., 9 Barclay Street, New York, 1883, p. 145.* [Italics as in the book.]

Having thus supplanted the Lord Jesus Christ and established a substitute salvation for man, which is but a counterfeit of the true, it logically follows that she should have a substitute sign of that power. This she claims to have in the Sunday, her substitute and counterfeit Sabbath, as will appear from the following quotations : —

“ *Question.* — Have you any other way of proving that the Church has *power* to institute festivals of precept ?

“ *Answer.* — 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.”—“*Doctrinal Catechism*,” by Rev. Stephen Keenan, *Imprimatur*, John Cardinal Mc Closkey; *Excelsior Catholic Publishing House*, 5 Barclay Street, New York, 1876, page 174.

Besides confessing in this quotation, to have exalted herself above God to the extent of attempting to change the law of God, she gives this change as the sign or *mark* of her *power*.

This she does again in the following quotation :—

“*Question*.—How prove you that the Church hath *power* to command feasts and holy days?

“*Answer*.—By the very act of changing the Sabbath into Sunday, which Protestants allow of; and therefore they fondly contradict themselves, by keeping Sunday strictly, and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same Church.

“*Question*.—How prove you that?

“*Answer*.—Because by keeping Sunday, they acknowledge the Church’s *power* to ordain feasts, and to command them under sin.”—“*An Abridgement of the Christian Doctrine*,” by Rev. Henry Tuberville; *Imprimatur*, the Right Rev. Benedict, Bishop of Boston; *Excelsior Catholic Publishing House*, 5 Barclay Street, New York, 1833, p. 58.

Again the papacy here calls attention to Sunday as the sign of her *power* to command men to obey her or remain in their sins; and taunts Protestants with acknowledging that power by keeping Sunday. But she speaks more plainly still in the following quotation :—

“Thus the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an *homage* (worship) they pay, in spite of themselves, to the *authority* of the (Roman Catholic) Church.”—“*Plain Talk about the Protestantism of To-day*,” by Mgr. Segur; *Imprimatur*, Joannes Josephus Episcopus, Boston; Thomas B. Noonan & Co., Boston, 1868, page 213.

When the Roman Catholic Church says, “The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify,”⁵ we answer, “Yes.” When she says, “In profaning Saturday they (Protestants) violate one of God’s commandments, which he has never clearly abro-

⁵ See “The Faith of Our Fathers,” by James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore; John Murphy & Co., 1892, p. 111.

gated,"⁶ we answer, "Yes." When she says, "You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday,"⁷ we answer, "True." When she says: "It is impossible to find in the New Testament the slightest interference by the Saviour, or his apostles, with the original Sabbath, but, on the contrary, an entire acquiescence in the original arrangement; nay, a *plenary endorsement* by him, while living, and an unvaried, active participation *in the keeping of that day and no other by the apostles* [italics theirs], for thirty years after his death, as the Acts of the Apostles have abundantly testified to us;"⁸ we answer, "True."

When she says she has "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;"⁹ we answer, "Yes, in daring defiance of God." When she says her change is "in *flagrant contradiction* with its (the commandment's) letter, which commands rest on the Sabbath, which is Saturday,"¹⁰ we answer, "True." When she says Protestants by keeping Sunday pay "homage"¹⁰ (worship) to the Catholic Church, we answer, "Yes." When she says, Sunday keeping stands as the mark of her "*power*," we answer, "Yes." But when we are called upon to worship (do "*homage*" to) the Roman Catholic Church, or a Protestant (?) image of that Church, by keeping Sunday, and thereby receive her mark, the Sunday Sabbath, we answer calmly, but firmly, "NO; we will not regard the institution of the beast." And the reason for our refusal is found in Rev. 14: 9-12, as follows:—

"If any man *worship* the beast and his image, and receive his *mark* in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath

⁶ See "A Doctrinal Catechism," by Rev. Stephen Keenan, p. 352.

⁷ See "The Faith of our Fathers," by James Cardinal Gibbons, p. 111.

⁸ See the *Catholic Mirror*, Baltimore, Md., Sept. 9, 1893, p. 8. Also "Rome's Challenge," p. 12.

⁹ See "A Doctrinal Catechism," by the Rev. Stephen Keenan, p. 174.

¹⁰ See "Plain Talk About the Protestantism of To-day," by Mgr. Segur, p. 213.

of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb ; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever ; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints ; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

Thus it is seen that the conflict between the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week, and Sunday, the first day of the week, is not a conflict between days as such, but between institutions ; between the "commandments of God" and the "commandments of men ;" between the "God of heaven" and the "god of this world ;" between the "Son of God" and the "son of perdition ;" between the "mystery of God" and the "mystery of iniquity." And it will finally be settled in a decisive battle between the armies of heaven (Rev. 19 : 14), and "the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies." Rev. 19 : 19.

We have enlisted in the armies of heaven, and we can afford to suffer imprisonment, torture, and death rather than prove disloyal to the "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." Rev. 19 : 16.

Against those responsible for our persecution we bring no railing accusation. Against the honorable judges of the courts before whom our cases have been or may be tried, we speak no evil word. Against prosecuting attorneys and prosecuting witnesses we harbor no resentment. Against grand jurors who have found indictments, and trial-jurors who have returned the verdict, "Guilty," we speak no word of condemnation ; and for those professed Christians who have instigated these persecutions by making complaint against us, and who in most cases, have been ashamed to allow their names to be known, we have only thoughts of pity. To these we say that by our labor on Sunday, we have not infringed the natural or constitutional right, civil or religious, of any man. "We have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man." 2 Cor.

7:2. And to all concerned we say with terrible earnestness, Count well the cost before taking upon yourselves the awful responsibility of attempting to force upon us, by pains and penalties, the sign of allegiance to Rome and the mark of her power. Beware, "lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." Acts 5 : 39.

As to the civil duties which we owe to each other and to the State, we have rendered and will "render to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor" (Rom. 13 : 7); submitting ourselves "to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake" (1 Peter 2 : 13); but when civil government oversteps its rightful jurisdiction, and attempts to force upon us the ordinances of the church, we, with Peter and John, Paul and Silas, Daniel and the three Hebrews, and the martyrs in all ages, answer, in the words of inspiration, "We ought to obey God rather than men."¹¹ Acts 5 : 29.

¹¹ To the specious claim that Sunday laws are civil laws, and have nothing to do with religion, we answer that they were born in a union of Church and State; that their object is, and always has been, to enforce respect for a religious dogma, as their titles and wordings clearly show; and that they are, and always have been, enforced by the religious element.

Not until the separation of Church and State in the American Constitution made these laws unpopular, was there any attempt to disguise them in "civil" dress. This civil disguise is even now sometimes boldly thrown off, as shown in a recent case in Tennessee, where the prosecuting attorney made use of the following language in his address to the jury:—

"While the Constitution guarantees to him the right to keep Saturday, he must bow to the laws thrown around the holy Sabbath as we believe it and hold it."—*From Stenographic Report of Trial.*

Here the truth is plainly stated: Sunday laws are, and always have been, for the purpose of protecting the church dogma of Sunday sacredness; and are intended to compel others who do not accept this dogma, to "bow" to the religious beliefs of other men, to which we answer, in the language of the three Hebrews: "We will not . . . worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Touching this "civil" disguise of religious laws, the church historian, Robert Baird, has this pungent paragraph:—

"The rulers of Massachusetts put the Quakers to death and banished 'Antinomians' and 'Anabaptists,' not because of their religious tenets, but because of their violation of civil laws." This is the justification they pleaded, and it was the best they could make. Miserable excuse! But just so it is; wherever there is such a union of Church and State, heresy and heretical practices are apt to become violations of the civil code, and are punished no longer as errors in religion, but infractions of the laws of the land. So the defenders of the Inquisition have always spoken and written in justification of that awful and most iniquitous tribunal."—*"Religion in America," p. 94.*

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