

# Captive's Corner



*"Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ"*

*2 Corinthians 10:5*

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## THE SABBATH, CHRISTMAS AND EASTER

The Sabbath is a rest day. Normally, every seventh day is a Sabbath, for in six days God created the heavens and the earth and on the seventh day He rested. See Genesis 1:1 - 2:3 with Exodus 20:8-11.

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However, other "Rest Days" were given to the nation of Israel and included in their calendar. For example, Sabbaths were celebrated along with most of their feast days. See Leviticus 23. The Sabbath was given to Israel as a sign between the LORD and Israel. See Exodus 31:12-17 & Ezek. 20:12. When Israel received the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20, the Sabbath was associated with the LORD who made the heavens and the earth, resting from His creative work on the seventh day. When Moses reviewed the Ten Commandments in Deut. 6, the Sabbath was designated as a day to remember the redemptive work of God on Israel's behalf. See Deut. 6:12-15. One of the reasons that Israel was defeated and dispersed was that they failed to keep the Sabbaths involving not only their weeks but also the land. See Jeremiah 17:19-27 & Ezek. 20.

The Sabbath has to do with the first creation of which we as Christians are no longer a part. As Christians we live in the new creation (or 8th day in the types of the Old Testament feasts). Most believers think it is wise to rest one day a week but which day is unimportant in the new economy. See Colossians 2:16 - 3:11. Christians have tended to set aside Sunday (to the world this is the first day of the week) because it was the 8th day or the day of resurrection. We have been

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redeemed by the blood of Jesus into the new creation. Jesus Christ is now our Sabbath, our rest. We are no longer bound by the ordinances of the old

covenant. We now celebrate the new creation and the new redemption in Christ. Therefore, I do not believe that the Sabbath celebration is any longer binding on the saints of God. See Colossians 2:16-17 & Hebrews 4:1-11. Since Christ has fulfilled the law and we have died in Him to it (See Romans 7:1-6), we are now set free to do as His Spirit leads so long as we

do not sin. We are now under law to Christ. See 1 Corinthians 9:21. The traditions of men mean nothing. They are but a show of piety. The reality is Christ. See Hebrews 4:1-10. He is our Sabbath or our rest and that rest is perpetual. Hallelujah, what a Savior!

Now, how do we respond to those who feel they must remember the Sabbath. If they are doing so to find acceptance with God, we must resist their behavior as Paul did those in Galatia who felt circumcision was necessary in order to be justified before God. This would be adding man's work to His Work for salvation, and the gospel would no longer be a gospel of grace. See Eph. 2:8-10.

However, if a person felt he must keep the Sabbath due to his conscience before God, then I say let him observe the Sabbath. He does not sin. See Romans 14. (In my estimation, Christmas and Easter

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celebrations fit in the teachings of this chapter also. Easter, of course, is a pagan holiday which has been institutionalized into the Christian frame work. We as Christians celebrate our Lord's resurrection every time we sit at the Lord's Supper or preach

the gospel or praise and worship Him. To us days have become rather unimportant. However, if someone desires to celebrate the resurrection of Christ on a particular day, they have liberty in Christ to do so. See Romans 14 for a good exposition of this truth. As long as you do not practice pagan rituals during these celebrations, then as a Christian you have every liberty to make the remembrance of His birth and His resurrection into feast

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days. It cannot and should not be necessary for all the church to follow, for there is no such commandment or direction in the Bible for this to be so. However, individual Christians are at liberty to do as

they wish so long as they do not sin. To doubt when practicing such a feast would be sin. See Romans 14:22-23.

One other thought on the Sabbath. Christ taught that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. See Mark 2:27. In other words, it is a day of rest for man because man needs a day of rest where he ceases from his labors and focuses his attention on God and His goodness.

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In this sense Christians have generally set aside the first day of the week (the day on which our Lord rose from the dead) as a day to cease from their labors and focus their attention on the Lord. There is something to be said for this in that every

man needs a break from the world's burdens to enjoy without distraction the Lord and His people. Although I myself often work in His Work seven days a week, I do in principle agree that one day of rest is important to the well-being of a man. However, if you abide in Christ moment by moment, you will find your renewal in Him daily.

Sincerely in Christ,

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