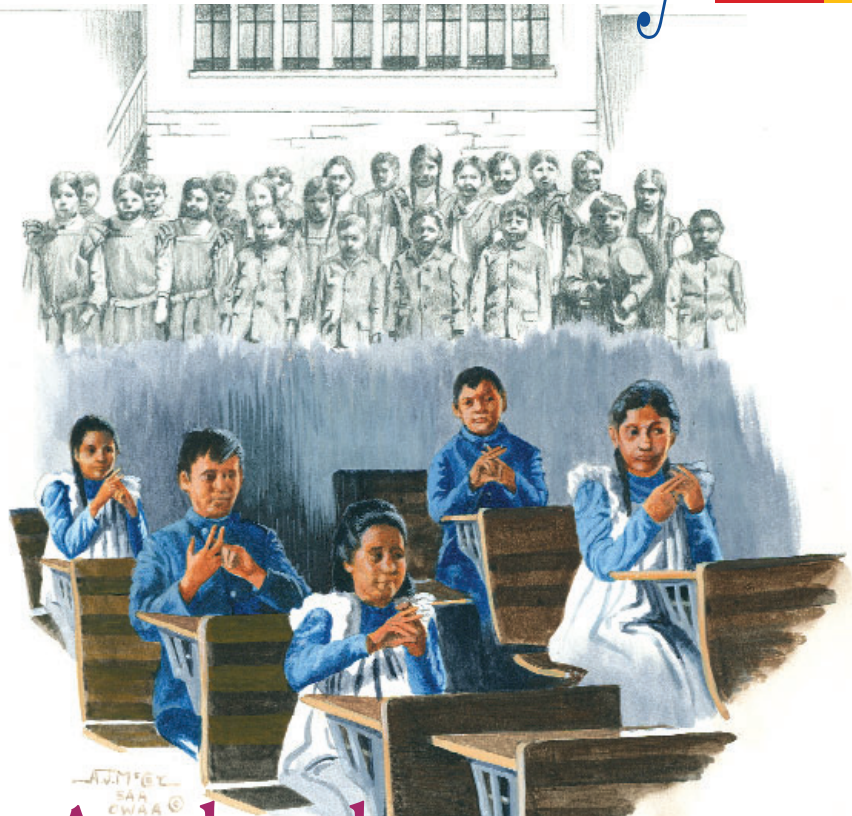


Native New Day 21



Ambush on God's Guidelines

Organized education for Native children didn't exist until the early 1600's when missionaries founded schools with the purpose of converting Native people to Christianity. When the Indian wars ended in the middle 1800's the American and Canadian governments established residential schools across the country. Over the



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years more than 165 major schools were established which more than 22,000 children attended.

Usually, these residential schools throughout North America were run by various churches on behalf of the government. Strict rules were enforced. The teachers felt little accountability to the student's families or cultures. The system was put in place by the secretary of the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs with the stated purpose: "To kill the Indian and save the man." Speaking in their native tongue and wearing long hair were forbidden. Harsh discipline was implemented to those students who didn't abide by the rules.

Though there were many positive experiences as a result of residential schools, there were also many horrible stories of abuses. With so many children to look after, and a lack of sufficient staff, unfortunately the door was open to abuse by unscrupulous teachers. Terrible practices of mental and sexual abuse became frequent. Despite government apologies, scars of these abuses are still felt today. Only in the late 1940's did the government allow Native children to attend regular public schools. It wasn't until 1965 that Native people were allowed to control their own education programs.

Though we can do little today about what has happened in the past, we still can learn from it. It is important that we take



hold of the wrongs and correct them.

The corruption of the government's educational program for educating Native children illustrates what happened in history to bring about the abuse of the Bible by the hands of unscrupulous religious leaders and teachers.

Interestingly, these abuses of God's word were predicted more than a thousand years before they happened. But the Bible also predicted that these abuses would be corrected and made right before Jesus comes again.

Sources: *The Cultures of Native North American History*, Christian F. Feest, 2000. Published by Konemann Verlagsgesellschaft mbH. Copyright 2000. United States BIA National Archives.

I Will Fight No More Forever. University of Washington Press, Merrill Beal, pp. 300, 301. 1963.

Key Thought. When God asks us to do something, it is always for our protection and good. When we obey God's laws, He promises to heap so many blessings upon us that we won't have room enough to



hold them. One reason God has asked us to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy is because it continually helps us remember important spiritual principles of life.

The Sabbath day was set aside for us as a special time to regularly refresh in our minds the fact that without the creative power of God we can do nothing. On the Sabbath we have “time” to be taught by the Holy Spirit; He is better able to prepare us for the lifestyle of heaven, our eternal home, a country where people will live in harmony together.

The Sabbath is important to God. It is interesting that in all the commandments He has said, “Remember,” only in this one, knowing that man would someday try to change and forget it. The question is: Will we remember what God wants us to believe and do or what man teaches us to do?

God has given us Ten Commandments, or laws of promise, which are at the heart of our spiritual heritage.

BIBLE ANSWERS

1. Which day of the week is the Sabbath day given to us by God? Exodus 20:10. “But the _____ day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.” *(All quotations from the Bible in these lessons are taken from the New King James Version (NKJV) unless otherwise noted.)*

Note. The Bible clearly states that the Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, the last day of each week. When you look at your calendar you will see that the



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seventh and last day of each week is Saturday and the first day of the week is Sunday. The fourth commandment states that God blessed the seventh-day Sabbath and hallowed it, meaning He made it special and set it apart for “holy use.”

On God’s Sabbath day we are to remember how He rested on the seventh day as a role model for us after completing His creation. It is not that He was tired, but that He wished to set an example. A part of true worship is remembering that God is our Creator and that all of our strength and abilities come from Him. Only our Creator has the power to change us and help us through every problem in life. Scripture tells us that when we honor and hallow the Sabbath it will become a “sign” to God that He is the Lord our God, and we are His children (Ezekiel 20:20).

2. Which day of the week is the “Lord’s Day”? Mark 2:27-28. “And He [Jesus] said to them, ‘The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.

Therefore the Son of Man is also ____ of the Sabbath.”

Note. The term “Lord’s Day” is found only once in the Bible (Revelation 1:10). Jesus tells us He is the “Lord” of the Sabbath day, because He is the One who created it and made it special as the day of worship (John 1:3; Genesis 2:2-3). Therefore the Sabbath belongs to Him; it is truly the Lord’s day. (See also Isaiah 58:13-14.)

3. Does Jesus mean for us today to remember to set aside the seventh day for worship each week? Exodus 20:8-10. “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the _____ day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.” (Also compare Hebrews 4:4-9.)

Before man destroys himself, our great Creator will come and bring an end forever to this reign of sin.

Note. These verses concerning the Sabbath day of rest are in the heart of the Ten Commandments and are very specific in letting us know the Sabbath is the seventh day of the week. Worshiping God on His holy day was not only for people in Bible times, but it is also for us today.

It is also God’s plan that His people will observe the seventh-day Sabbath in the new earth (Isaiah 66:22-23). There is no indication anywhere in Scripture that any other day except the seventh was ever to be treated as the holy day of rest.



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It is interesting that in all the commandments God has said, "Remember," only in this one, knowing that man would someday try to change and forget it.



4. Would God have told us if He wanted His day of worship changed? Psalm 89:34; Matthew 5:17-19. (Circle one.) (1) Yes. (2) No.

Note. The Bible says Yes! If Jesus intended for us to keep any other day of the week than the seventh-day Sabbath, the Bible says He would have told us (Hebrews 4:8-9).

A Sabbath-keeping pastor once offered to give \$5,000 to anyone who could find even one text in the Bible that tells us we should keep holy Sunday, the first day of the week, instead of the seventh day. He knew that it was impossible for anyone to come up with such a text, because there is no text in the Bible that tells us we should keep Sunday.

Then one may logically ask, "Where did Sunday worship come from?" The origin of Sunday worship traces its beginnings to the early second century. Barnabas of Alexandria, writing about A.D. 130, speaks of Sunday observance in his city by sun-worshiping religions (*Epistle of Barnabas*, chapter 15).

In the fourth century, Emperor Constantine of Rome and his bishops attempted to substitute Sunday for

Saturday as a day of worship. He believed that changing the day of worship to Sunday would help convert sun-worshipping people to Christianity. On March 7, A.D. 321, Constantine the Great issued the first civil Sunday law, compelling all the people in the Roman Empire, except farmers, to rest on Sunday. This, with five other civil laws concerning Sunday, set the legal precedent for all civil Sunday legislation from that time to the present. In the fourth century the Council of Laodicea prohibited Christians from abstaining from work on the Sabbath. It urged them to honor Sunday by abstaining from work on that day if at all possible.

In A.D. 321, Emperor Constantine the Great issued the first civil Sunday law compelling the Roman Empire to rest on Sunday.

The Catholic Church claims to have changed the seventh-day Sabbath of the fourth commandment to Sunday, the first day of the week. A representative catechism of the Roman Catholic Church states:

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 transferred the solemnity of Saturday to Sunday.”*

Source: *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, Peter Geiermann, 1957 edition, p. 50.

Here is a recent statement by a Roman Catholic cardinal: “The holy day, the Sabbath, was changed from Saturday to Sunday . . . not from any directions noted in the Scriptures, but from the Church’s sense of its own power. . . . People who think that the Scriptures should be the sole authority, should logically become Seventh-day Adventists, and keep Saturday holy.”—Cardinal Maida, Archbishop of Detroit, Saint Catharine Catholic Church *Sentinel*, Algonac, Michigan, May 21, 1995.

It’s very plain. The Catholic Church admits that human church leaders made the change. We can clearly see that Sunday worship, or the Sunday “Sabbath,” is a teaching of man rather than of God.

5. Did the Bible predict that attempts would be made to change God’s law? Acts 20:29-30; Daniel 7:25. (*Circle one.*) (1) Yes. (2) No.

Note. The Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, predicted man would attempt to change God’s laws and times. It is Satan who influences men to twist these laws and guidelines that God has given, in order to bring us confusion.

Dedicated Christians will search the Bible carefully so they may have a closer relationship with God and be in a position to receive the blessings He wishes to give us. Observing His time of worship is one of the ways God has especially designed for us to know a closeness with Him.

6. What blessing comes to those who “do” God’s commandments? Revelation 22:14. “Blessed are those



Each seventh day, on the Sabbath, we “remember” that God is the One we depend on for every heartbeat and every breath.

who do His commandments, that they may have the _____ to the tree of life.”

Note. Many people at this point may ask, “Does this mean I won’t be saved if I am not keeping God’s Ten Commandments and His Sabbath?”

This Scripture indicates that the attitude of those who love God will include not only *believing* what He says, but *doing* the things He has asked us to do. We do not keep the commandments to be saved. We keep them because we are saved and wish to follow God’s will for us (John 14:15, 21, 23; 1 John 5:3). We are only held accountable for what we know; but once we understand what God asks us to do, we should be willing to obey. The text says, “Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14). Our faith and love moves us to be obedient to the One who has saved us.

7. What was God’s promise to His people if they would honor and keep holy His seventh day of worship? Isaiah 58:13-14. (Circle one.) (1) They will ride

on the high hills of the earth. (2) They will be given the “heritage of Jacob.” (3) Both.

Note. This Scripture tells us that Sabbath-keepers will be fed with “the heritage of Jacob,” which is eternal life in the heavenly land God is preparing for those who love Him. (See Genesis 17:7-8; 48:3-4; Hebrews 11:8-10, 16; John 14:1-3.) God’s plan is that keeping His commandments will bring us peace, freedom, and truth, which cause us to experience the more wonderful ways of living—riding on the “high hills of the earth.”

We don't keep the commandments to be saved, but because we are saved and wish to follow God's will for us.

Closing Thought. Of all people, we Native people understand what it means to preserve our heritage. God tells us that He has given us a spiritual heritage in His commandments. As Christians we should resist any attempt to change or destroy any of the spiritual heritage that God has given us.

As you study this subject of the Sabbath, one of the things you will see is that the Bible promises many blessings if we will be obedient in worshiping in the way God intended us to worship. This topic of the Sabbath is important because the Sabbath is one of God’s commandments that is so often disregarded.

We may lose a battle or two against the Devil. But the spiritual warfare in this life is one war we will not

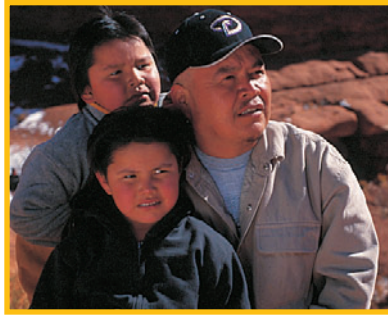
lose as long as we submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Keeping the Sabbath day holy greatly helps us stay close to the Holy Spirit's leading.

Each seventh-day Sabbath, when we "remember" that God is the One we depend on for every heartbeat and every breath, we will truly begin to understand the deepest and purest essence of the meaning of "worship." It is only by realizing our dependence on God's strength each day that by faith we will know victory and peace in our lives.

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Next Lesson. How do we keep God's Sabbath day holy? Are there guidelines in the Bible that teach us how? Will we become legalists or be accused of trying to earn our way into heaven, if we keep the seventh-day Sabbath as He has asked us to do? These and other questions will be answered in our next lesson.



*God is our Creator and source of strength.
He has given us a spiritual heritage
in His commandments.*



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