



2 Cor. 3:18

## Pope launches crusade to save Sunday

THE Pope will issue a strongly worded appeal to Roman Catholics this week to restore the sacred nature of Sunday. Prompted by concern that the sabbath has been undermined by business and falling attendances at mass in the West, he will urge Catholics to defend it as a day of worship and recreation for families.

Final preparations are being made at the Vatican to distribute an apostolic letter – or exhortation – on the subject from John Paul II. The document, *Dies Domini* (The Day of the Lord), is expected to be addressed to all “faithful Catholics” rather than only to bishops and priests.

Timed to coincide with the start of the summer holidays, when many people re-evaluate their lives away from the pressures of work, the exhortation is likely to form the subject of sermons over the next few weeks.

It is also expected to win support from other churches – particularly from evangelical Christians – who share the Pope’s anxiety about the erosion of the Sabbath.

In Britain, Sunday opening at a growing number of shops has forced many people to work, making a traditional family day impossible. While the trend is less marked in other large European countries, including France, Germany and Italy, church-going has nevertheless been in decline.

Vatican sources say the Pope has resolved to emphasise the physical and practical benefits of a day of rest. One said he was keenly aware that a day off had become a “rare luxury” in some developing countries.

The exhortation is understood to be divided into three sections, considering the sabbath from the biblical point of view, assessing the extent of its erosion and setting out a way forward.

It will reflect an appeal made at the height of a debate about Sunday opening in Rome four years ago, when the Pope warned Italians to remember the mean-

by Christopher Morgan  
Rome

ing of the day. In Vienna last month, he told Catholics: “Do whatever you can to preserve Sunday. Make it clear that this day must not be worked, since it must be celebrated as the day of our Lord.”



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***Make it clear that Sunday must not be worked, since it must be celebrated as the day of our Lord***

The initiative is the latest in a series on social issues by the 78 year old pontiff, who, despite his evident frailty and the onset of Parkinson’s disease, has left aides in no doubt about his determination to continue providing vigorous lead-

ership into the new millennium. Two of his most recent visits overseas – to Cuba and Nigeria – have been taken up largely with human rights questions. In another apostolic letter last week, he dismayed liberal Catholics by proposing to excommunicate those who persistently undermined orthodox teaching on a range of issues, including women priests, saying the church could not alter a “choice made by Christ” that only men should be ordained.

The Pope’s exhortation on the sabbath, however, is intended to unite Catholics around the idea that being fully human means having sufficient time for both work and leisure. He argues that the dignity of man depends on reasserting a degree of control over his destiny that has been threatened by longer working hours and their encroachment on the sabbath.

Terence Phipps, a lecturer at the Allen Hall Seminary in London, said the notion of one day’s rest came from the biblical account of the creation in the Old Testament and was reasserted in the Ten Commandments. “The Lord’s command is first and foremost to rest,” he said. “Because people are free, the most natural thing to do is to worship and praise God on that day of rest.”

In a sign of the broad Christian support the Pope can expect to command on the issue, David Phillips, director of the Church Society – an influential grouping within the Church of England – praised the initiative this weekend. “Anything the Pope says in line with the Bible is to be welcomed,” Phillips said. “In this country, Sunday has fallen by the wayside and Christians need to rediscover its sacred character.”

Gary Lysaght, a moral theologian at St John’s seminary in Womersley, Surrey, also welcomed the forthcoming papal letter.

“It is good to be challenged about the importance of this day,” he said. “Sadly in Britain B&Q and Sainsbury’s seem to be the new churches and cathedrals.”

*The Sunday Times, July 5, 1998*

# POPE CALLS FOR SUNDAY LAWS

It has happened at last. In the most ominous move of his whole career, Pope John Paul II has sent out a 33 page “apostolic letter”, in which he insists on the need for Sunday legislation.

The letter is entitled, “*Dies Domini*”, or, “*The Lord’s Day*”. While it is addressed to “the bishops, clergy and faithful of the Catholic Church”, we should not be naive enough to believe that these are the only persons who will be influenced by the letter. Not only is it a mandate to all Roman Catholics to personally observe Sunday in a more meaningful way, but it is also a directive to them to do all in their power to ensure that the whole society conforms to the Pope’s concept of Sunday observance by implementing “appropriate legislation”, or to put it more bluntly and in more familiar terms, by the passing of SUNDAY LAWS!

There are several reasons why this move, at this time should be regarded as most significant. Every single Seventh-day Adventist who believes the prophecies should now be trimming his lamp. If this does not shock us into arousing to most earnest efforts, it is unlikely that anything else ever will.

1. Firstly, the man who has called for this Sunday legislation is the person who, above all others alive on planet earth, is considered the symbol of morality. The one whose voice is most authoritative on social issues. In this area, the Pope is not just a figurehead. When he speaks, people in high places listen. Things happen. His voice and influence helped to topple the mighty Soviet Union and brought about concessions in the attitude of the USA towards Cuba. When he calls for Sunday laws, we can expect things to happen.
2. Secondly, the Pope is not just asking for a greater respect for Sunday, on the part of Christians. He states that Sunday rest is “not merely a religious obligation,” but is, “a human right, which should be protected by appropriate legislation.” Specifically, he wants laws to ‘protect’ Sunday!

This is not just a strident appeal to willing people to be more careful in a personal habit and more committed in a personal conviction. There is the overriding flavour of the dragon’s spirit in the Pope’s appeal. He wants his convictions, his standards of morality, his concept of duty to be imposed, not just on all Roman Catholics, but on all societies; upon all persons living on the face of planet earth. He wants to ensure that the whole society, all the world shall be persuaded to respect Sunday rest, not voluntarily, but BYLAW.

3. Thirdly, the context in which this message is given.

“*Dies Domini*”, on making Sunday holy is placed above all in the framework of the preparation for the Great Jubilee of the year 2000....” (*Bishop Marini*)

Please note the significance of this. The Catholic Church sees the year 2000 as a major landmark and turning point. A “great jubilee” is planned for that year. Exactly what this jubilee will entail remains to be seen. However, a vital part

of the preparation for this Jubilee, is the exaltation of Sunday and the promotion of Sunday observance in the whole society. Hence, the sending out of the Pope’s letter at this time. It is intended to do a particular work which must be accomplished within the next year, 1999, so that things will be in place by the year 2000. As Bishop Marini put it, “The better one celebrates Sunday, the better the Jubilee will be celebrated.” Therefore, the contents of the letter have an urgency about them. It is necessary for the success of this Jubilee that the reforms called for by the Pope, (including Sunday laws) be in place before the Jubilee. That is, before the year 2000. In essence, all Roman Catholics and those who are influenced by the voice of the Pope have been mandated to see to it that Sunday laws are passed by the end of next year, 1999, or, within the next 17 months.

4. Fourthly, in this letter, the Pope unveils his heart and shows us quite clearly where his focus is. He has devoted 33 pages (44 counting the index and bibliography) Exclusively to the Subject of Sunday observance. His reason?

“the Sunday celebration of the Lord’s Day and his eucharist is at the heart of the church’s life. (chap.3)”

“For Christian families, the Sunday assembly is one of the most outstanding expressions of their identity... (ibid)”

“Sunday...stands at the heart of all worship. (chap.2)”

“Sunday is a day which is at the very heart of the Christian life. (Introduction)”

Sunday observance has always been one of the key pillars of Catholicism. The Roman Church has hailed it as a “mark of her authority”. In the past, she has endeavoured to compel others to honour the day against their will, but in recent times she has had neither the influence or the power to do so.

Why is it that she has now, once again, openly and unapologetically undertaken to impose Sunday observance on the whole society? It is because she feels that the time is ripe. Pope John Paul II, a cunning politician and an astute tactician, realizes that his time has come. He has played the whole world like a fiddle for the last 20 years and now finally, the nations are ready to dance to his tune. Once again, Rome is mistress of the world and is pulling the strings. So, immediately, the Pope turns to the subject which above all others is dear to his heart. The one practice which above all others supports Rome’s claim of supreme authority in the religious world: The practice of Sunday worship.

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Editor ..... David Clayton

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# EXTRACTS FROM THE POPE'S LETTER: *DIES DOMINI*

(All titles supplied by the editor)

## REASONS FOR THE SABBATH

It would be banal to interpret God's "rest" as a kind of divine "inactivity." By its nature, the creative act which founds the world is unceasing and God is always at work, as Jesus himself declares in speaking of the Sabbath precept: "My Father is working still, and I am working" (*Jn* 5:17). The divine rest of the seventh day does not allude to an inactive God, but emphasizes the fullness of what has been accomplished. It speaks, as it were, of God's lingering before the "very good" work (*Gn* 1:31) which his hand has wrought, in order to cast upon it a *gaze full of joyous delight*.

(Chapter 1)

**"God blessed the seventh day and made it holy"** (*Gn* 2:3)

13. The Sabbath precept, which in the first Covenant prepares for the Sunday of the new and eternal Covenant, is therefore rooted in the depths of God's plan. This is why, unlike many other precepts, it is set not within the context of strictly cultic stipulations but within the Decalogue, the "ten words" which represent the very pillars of the moral life inscribed on the human heart. In setting this commandment within the context of the basic structure of ethics, Israel and then the Church declare that they consider it not just a matter of community religious discipline but *a defining and indelible expression of our relationship with God*, announced and expounded by biblical revelation. This is the perspective within which Christians need to rediscover this precept today. Although the precept may merge naturally with the human need for rest, it is faith alone which gives access to its deeper meaning and ensures that it will not become banal and trivialized.

(Chapter 1)

man's relationship with God also *demand*s times of explicit prayer, in which the relationship becomes an intense dialogue, involving every dimension of the person. "The Lord's Day" is the day of this relationship *par excellence* when men and women raise their song to God and become the voice of all creation.

.... *Everything belongs to God!* The Lord's Day returns again and again to declare this principle within the weekly reckoning of time. The "Sabbath" has therefore been interpreted evocatively as a determining element in the kind of "sacred architecture" of time which marks biblical revelation.(13) It recalls that *the universe and history belong to God*; and without a constant awareness of that truth, man cannot serve in the world as co-worker of the Creator.

(Chapter 1)

**To "keep holy" by "remembering"**

16. The commandment of the Decalogue by which God decrees the Sabbath observance is formulated in the Book of Exodus in a distinctive way: "Remember the Sabbath day in order to keep it holy" (20:8). And the inspired text goes on to give the reason for this, recalling as it does the work of God: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy" (v. 11). Before decreeing

that something be *done*, the commandment urges that something be *remembered*. It is a call to awaken remembrance of the grand and fundamental work of God which is creation, a remembrance which must inspire the entire religious life of man and then fill the day on which man is called to *rest*. Rest therefore acquires a sacred value: the faithful are called to rest not only *as* God rested, but to rest *in* the Lord, bringing the entire creation to him, in praise and thanksgiving, intimate as a child and friendly as a spouse.

(Chapter 1)

## THE CHANGE OF THE SABBATH

...the meaning of the Old Testament precept concerning the Lord's Day is recovered, perfected and fully revealed in the glory which shines on the face of the Risen Christ (cf. *2 Cor* 4:6). We move from the "Sabbath" to the "first day after the Sabbath," from the seventh day to the first day: the *dies Domini* becomes the *dies Christi!*

(Chapter 1)

The intimate bond between Sunday and the Resurrection of the Lord is strongly emphasized by all the Churches of East and West. In the tradition of the Eastern Churches in particular, every Sunday is the *anastàsimos hemèra*, the day of Resurrection,(18) and this is why it stands at the heart of all worship.

(Chapter 2)

62. It is the duty of Christians therefore to remember that, although the practices of the Jewish Sabbath are gone, surpassed as they are by the "fulfilment" which Sunday brings, the underlying reasons for keeping "the Lord's Day" holy — inscribed solemnly in the Ten Commandments — remain valid, though they need to be reinterpreted in the light of the theology and spirituality of Sunday.

(Chapter 4)

Rightly, then, the Psalmist's cry is applied to Sunday: "This is the day which the Lord has made: let us rejoice and be glad in it" (*Ps* 118:24).

(Introduction to the letter)

The Book of Revelation gives evidence of the practice of calling the first day of the week "the Lord's Day" (1:10). This would now be a characteristic distinguishing Christians from the world around them.

(Chapter 2)

Sunday is a day which is at the very heart of the Christian life. From the beginning of my Pontificate, I have not ceased to repeat: "Do not be afraid! Open, open wide the doors to Christ!"(9) In the same way, today I would strongly urge everyone to rediscover Sunday:

(Introduction to the letter)

Some communities observed the Sabbath while also celebrating Sunday. Soon, however, the two days began to be distinguished ever more clearly, in reaction chiefly to the insistence of those Christians whose origins in Judaism made them inclined to maintain the obligation of the old Law....

The distinction of Sunday from the Jewish Sabbath grew ever stronger in the mind of the Church, even though there have been times in history when, because the obligation of Sunday rest was so emphasized, the Lord's Day tended to become more

like the Sabbath. Moreover, there have always been groups within Christianity which observe both the Sabbath and Sunday as “two brother days.”

Wise pastoral intuition suggested to the Church the christianization of the notion of Sunday as “the day of the sun,” which was the Roman name for the day and which is retained in some modern languages.(29) This was in order to draw the faithful away from the seduction of cults which worshipped the sun, and to direct the celebration of the day to Christ, humanity’s true “sun.”

the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that “the Sunday celebration of the Lord’s Day and his Eucharist is at the heart of the Church’s life.”(41)

### SUNDAY MUST BE PROTECTED

#### *An indispensable day!*

30. It is clear then why, even in our own difficult times, the identity of this day must be protected and above all must be lived in all its depth. An Eastern writer of the beginning of the third century recounts that as early as then the faithful in every region were keeping Sunday holy on a regular basis.(36) ***What began as a spontaneous practice later became a juridically sanctioned norm. The Lord’s Day has structured the history of the Church through two thousand years: how could we think that it will not continue to shape her future?*** The pressures of today can make it harder to fulfil the Sunday obligation; and, with a mother’s sensitivity, the Church looks to the circumstances of each of her children. ***In particular, she feels herself called to a new catechetical and pastoral commitment, in order to ensure that, in the normal course of life, none of her children are deprived of the rich outpouring of grace which the celebration of the Lord’s Day brings.*** It was in this spirit that the Second Vatican Council, making a pronouncement on the possibility of reforming the Church calendar to match different civil calendars, declared that ***the Church “is prepared to accept only those arrangements which preserve a week of seven days with a Sunday.”***(37)

81. The spiritual and pastoral riches of Sunday, as it has been handed on to us by tradition, are truly great. When its significance and implications are understood in their entirety, Sunday in a way becomes a synthesis of the Christian life and a condition for living it well. It is clear therefore why **the observance of the Lord’s Day is so close to the Church’s heart, and why in the Church’s discipline it remains a real obligation.**

*(Conclusion)*

### PRESENT CONDITIONS ARE HOSTILE TO PROPER SUNDAY OBSERVANCE

Until quite recently, it was easier in traditionally Christian countries to keep Sunday holy because it was an almost universal practice and because, even in the organization of civil society, Sunday rest was considered a fixed part of the work schedule. Today, however, even in those countries which give legal sanction to the festive character of Sunday, changes in socio-economic conditions have often led to profound modifications of social behaviour and hence of the character of Sunday. The custom of the “weekend” has become more widespread, a weekly period of respite, spent perhaps far from home and often involving participation in cultural, political or sporting activities

which are usually held on free days.... Unfortunately, when Sunday loses its fundamental meaning and becomes merely part of a “weekend,” it can happen that people stay locked within a horizon so limited that they can no longer see “the heavens.”(7) Hence, though ready to celebrate, they are really incapable of doing so.

*(Introduction to the letter)*

48. Today, as in the heroic times of the beginning, many who wish to live in accord with the demands of their faith are being faced with difficult situations in various parts of the world. They live in surroundings which are sometimes decidedly hostile and at other times — more frequently in fact — indifferent and unresponsive to the Gospel message. If believers are not to be overwhelmed, they must be able to count on the support of the Christian community. This is why they must be convinced that it is crucially important for the life of faith that they should come together with others on Sundays to celebrate the Passover of the Lord in the sacrament of the New Covenant. It is the special responsibility of the Bishops, therefore, “to ensure that Sunday is appreciated by all the faithful, kept holy and celebrated as truly ‘the Lord’s Day’, on which the Church comes together to renew the remembrance of the Easter mystery in hearing the word of God, in offering the sacrifice of the Lord, in keeping the day holy by means of prayer, works of charity and abstention from work.”(84)

**In countries where Christians are in the minority and where the festive days of the calendar do not coincide with Sunday, it is still Sunday which remains the Lord’s Day, the day on which the faithful come together for the Eucharistic assembly. But this involves real sacrifices. For Christians it is not normal that Sunday, the day of joyful celebration, should not also be a day of rest, and it is difficult for them to keep Sunday holy if they do not have enough free time.** *(Chapter 4)*

### SUNDAY LAWS IN THE PAST WERE HELPFUL TO CHRISTIANS AND CANNOT BE SIMPLY SET ASIDE

64. For several centuries, Christians observed Sunday simply as a day of worship, without being able to give it the specific meaning of Sabbath rest. Only in the fourth century did the civil law of the Roman Empire recognize the weekly recurrence, determining that on “the day of the sun” the judges, the people of the cities and the various trade corporations would not work. (107) **Christians rejoiced to see thus removed the obstacles which until then had sometimes made observance of the Lord’s Day heroic. They could now devote themselves to prayer in common without hindrance. (108)**

**It would therefore be wrong to see in this legislation of the rhythm of the week a mere historical circumstance with no special significance for the Church and which she could simply set aside.** Even after the fall of the Empire, the Councils did not cease to insist upon the arrangements regarding Sunday rest.

*(Chapter 4)*

### ALL MANKIND NEEDS REST. SUNDAY PROVIDES THIS REST

65. By contrast, **the link between the Lord’s Day and the day of rest in civil society has a meaning and importance which**



**go beyond the distinctly Christian point of view.** The alternation between work and rest, built into human nature, is willed by God himself, as appears in the creation story in the Book of Genesis (cf. 2:2-3; *Ex* 20:8-11): rest is something “sacred,” because it is man’s way of withdrawing from the sometimes excessively demanding cycle of earthly tasks in order to renew his awareness that everything is the work of God.

Therefore, dear Brother Bishops and Priests, I urge you to work tirelessly with the faithful to ensure that the value of this sacred day is understood and lived ever more deeply. This will bear rich fruit in Christian communities, and will not fail to have a positive influence on civil society as a whole.

(Conclusion)

### **SUNDAY IS A HUMAN RIGHT WHICH THE STATE MUST GUARANTEE**

66. Finally, it should not be forgotten that even in our own day work is very oppressive for many people, either because of miserable working conditions and long hours — especially in the poorer regions of the world — or because of the persistence in economically more developed societies of too many cases of injustice and exploitation of man by man. **When, through the centuries, she has made laws concerning Sunday rest, (109) the Church has had in mind above all the work of servants and workers,** certainly not because this work was any less worthy when compared to the spiritual requirements of Sunday observance, but rather because it needed greater regulation to lighten its burden and thus enable everyone to keep the Lord’s Day holy. **In this matter, my predecessor Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* spoke of Sunday rest as a worker’s right which the State must guarantee. (110)**

In our own historical context there remains the obligation to ensure that everyone can enjoy the freedom, rest and relaxation which human dignity requires, together with the associated religious, family, cultural and interpersonal needs which are difficult to meet **if there is no guarantee of at least one day of the week on which people can both rest and celebrate....**

7. Through Sunday rest, daily concerns and tasks can find their proper perspective: the material things about which we worry give way to spiritual values; in a moment of encounter and less pressured exchange, we see the true face of the people with whom we live. Even the beauties of nature — too often marred by the desire to exploit, which turns against man himself — can be rediscovered and enjoyed to the full. As the day on which man is at peace with God, with himself and with others, Sunday becomes a moment when people can look anew upon the wonders of nature, allowing themselves to be caught up in that marvellous and mysterious harmony which, in the words of Saint Ambrose, weds the many elements of the cosmos in a “bond of communion and peace” by “an inviolable law of concord and love.” (111) Men and women then come to a deeper sense, as the Apostle says, that “everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for then it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer” (*1 Tim* 4:4-5).

### **CHRISTIANS MUST SEE TO IT THAT SUNDAY IS PROTECTED BY LAW**

If after six days of work — reduced in fact to five for many people — people look for time to relax and to pay more attention to other aspects of their lives, this corresponds to an authentic need which

is in full harmony with the vision of the Gospel message. Believers are therefore called to satisfy this need in a way consistent with the manifestation of their personal and community faith, as expressed in the celebration and sanctification of the Lord’s Day. **Therefore, also in the particular circumstances of our own time, Christians will naturally strive to ensure that civil legislation respects their duty to keep Sunday holy....**

### **THE LONG AWAITED MILLENNIUM**

The coming of the Third Millennium, which calls believers to reflect upon the course of history in the light of Christ, also invites them to rediscover with new intensity the meaning of Sunday: its “mystery,” its celebration, its significance for Christian and human life....

....On the threshold of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, it has been my wish to offer you this Apostolic Letter in order to support your pastoral efforts in this vital area.

(Introduction to the letter)

Given its many meanings and aspects, and its link to the very foundations of the faith, **the celebration of the Christian Sunday remains, on the threshold of the Third Millennium, an indispensable element of our Christian identity.**

Dear Brothers and Sisters, the imminence of the Jubilee invites us to a deeper spiritual and pastoral commitment. Indeed, this is its true purpose. In the Jubilee year, much will be done to give it the particular stamp demanded by the ending of the Second Millennium and the beginning of the Third since the Incarnation of the Word of God. But this year and this special time will pass, as we look to other jubilees and other solemn events. As the weekly “solemnity,” however, Sunday will continue to shape the time of the Church’s pilgrimage, until that Sunday which will know no evening.

(Conclusion)



*Following are some quotations from Vatican officials as they commented on the significance of the letter and outlined some of its major points as they saw it.*

## RELEVANT STATEMENTS BY ELLEN G. WHITE

“At the same time, the Sabbath rest is not merely a religious obligation, the Pope continues. It is a human right, which should be protected by appropriate legislation.

The 104-page apostolic letter responds to what John Paul sees as a “banalization” of the Sunday rest. He observes that in some countries the day has become simply a portion of the weekend—stripped of its character as the day devoted especially to celebration of the Resurrection.

Earlier generations of Christians had a much better understanding of the Sabbath, the Pope writes. He points to the example of the martyrs who died at the hands of the Roman Emperor Diocletian because they refused to profane the Lord’s Day. Their example led eventually to the Church’s decision to make attendance at Sunday Mass a religious obligation. But in reality that obligation reflects the Third Commandment, the Pontiff continues; it is a natural expression of the obligation to “keep holy the Lord’s Day.”

Citing the 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, by Pope Leo XIII, John Paul notes that the Church has always insisted on the right of workers to a day of rest. He denounced the “exploitation” practiced by employers who ignore this fundamental human need, observing that the exploitation is most common in poor countries.”

*(Vatican) CWNews.com*

VATICAN CITY, JUL 7, 1998 (VIS) - The Holy Father’s Apostolic Letter “*Dies Domini*,” the Day of the Lord, was presented this morning in the Holy See Press Office by Cardinal Jorge Arturo Medina Estevez, prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of Sacraments.

Joining him to explain the document were Archbishop Geraldo Majella Agnelo, secretary of the same congregation, and Bishop Piero Marini, master of pontifical liturgical celebrations.

Bishop Marini, pointing out that this letter “has its reference point in Vatican Council II, in particular on the conciliar liturgical reform,” said: “‘*Dies Domini*’ on making Sunday holy, is placed above all in the framework of the preparation for the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000. ... The Pope indicates Sundays as a qualifying element of the identity of a Christian and of the Church which is presented to the generation of the new millennium. ... The better one celebrates Sunday, the better the Jubilee will be celebrated.”

The eve of the Year 2000 will also be a good time for interreligious dialogue; a time to hold joint meetings in significant places.

The celebration of the Great Jubilee, which will take place simultaneously in the Holy Land, in Rome and in all the local Churches throughout the world, will give glory to the Trinity, God, the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

### The Great Controversy

PG- 578

These records of the past clearly reveal the enmity of Rome toward the true Sabbath and its defenders, and the means which she employs to honor the institution of her creating. The word of God teaches that these scenes are to be repeated as Roman Catholics and Protestants shall unite for the exaltation of the Sunday.

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“Protestants little know what they are doing when they propose to accept the aid of Rome in the work of Sunday exaltation. While they are bent upon the accomplishment of their purpose, Rome is aiming to re-establish her power, to recover her lost supremacy. Let the principle once be established in the United States that the church may employ or control the power of the state; that religious observances may be enforced by secular laws; in short, that the authority of church and state is to dominate the conscience, and the triumph of Rome in this country is assured.

“God’s word has given warning of the impending danger; let this be unheeded, and the Protestant world will learn what the purposes of Rome really are, only when it is too late to escape the snare. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. She is piling up her lofty and massive structures in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions will be repeated. Stealthily and unsuspectedly she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike. All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is already being given her. We shall soon see and shall feel what the purpose of the Roman element is. Whoever shall believe and obey the word of God will thereby incur reproach and persecution.

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“The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering--a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition.

587-589

Yet this very class put forth the claim that the fast-spreading corruption is largely attributable to the desecration of the so-called “Christian sabbath,” and that the enforcement of Sunday observance would greatly improve the morals of society. This claim is especially urged in America, where the doctrine of the true Sabbath has been most widely preached. Here the temperance work, one of the most prominent and important of moral reforms, is often combined with the Sunday movement, and the advocates of the latter represent themselves as laboring to promote the highest interest of society; and those who refuse to unite with them are denounced as the enemies of temperance and reform. But the fact that a movement to establish error is connected with a work which is in itself good, is not an argu-

ment in favor of the error. We may disguise poison by mingling it with wholesome food, but we do not change its nature. On the contrary, it is rendered more dangerous, as it is more likely to be taken unawares. It is one of Satan's devices to combine with falsehood just enough truth to give it plausibility. The leaders of the Sunday movement may advocate reforms which the people need, principles which are in harmony with the Bible; yet while there is with these a requirement which is contrary to God's law, His servants cannot unite with them. Nothing can justify them in setting aside the commandments of God for the precepts of men.

“ Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.

“ As spiritualism more closely imitates the nominal Christianity of the day, it has greater power to deceive and ensnare. Satan himself is converted, after the modern order of things. He will appear in the character of an angel of light. Through the agency of spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed. And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be accepted as a manifestation of divine power.

The line of distinction between professed Christians and the ungodly is now hardly distinguishable. Church members love what the world loves and are ready to join with them, and Satan determines to unite them in one body and thus strengthen his cause by sweeping all into the ranks of spiritualism. Papists, who boast of miracles as a certain sign of the true church, will be readily deceived by this wonder-working power; and Protestants, having cast away the shield of truth, will also be deluded. Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the long-expected millennium.

589-590

“ While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he will bring disease and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. Destruction will be upon both man and beast. "The earth mourneth and fadeth away," "the haughty people . . . do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have

transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." Isaiah 24:4, 5.

“ And then the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God's commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors. It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity.

592

“ Those who honor the Bible Sabbath will be denounced as enemies of law and order, as breaking down the moral restraints of society, causing anarchy and corruption, and calling down the judgments of God upon the earth.

“ The dignitaries of church and state will unite to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Political corruption is destroying love of justice and regard for truth; and even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance.

5T-451

“ When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.

“ As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy be a sign to us that the limit of God's forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation's iniquity is full, and that the angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress which prophets have described as the time of Jacob's trouble.

7T-182

As we approach the last crisis, it is of vital moment that harmony and unity exist among the Lord's instrumentalities. The world is filled with storm and war and variance. Yet under one head--the papal power--the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses. This union is cemented by the great apostate. While he seeks to unite his agents in warring against the truth he will work to divide and scatter its advocates. Jealousy, evil surmising, evilspeaking, are instigated by him to produce discord and dissension. The members of Christ's church have the power to thwart the purpose of the adversary of souls. At such a time as this let them not be found at variance with one another or with any of the Lord's workers. Amidst the gen-

eral discord let there be one place where harmony and unity exist because the Bible is made the guide of life. Let the people of God feel that a responsibility rests upon them to build up His instrumentalities.

7T-141

the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama. When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself. He will arise in His majesty to shake terribly the earth. He will come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity, and the earth shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain.

“To every human being in the wide world who will give heed, we are to make plain the principles at stake in the great controversy--principles upon which hangs the eternal destiny of the soul. To the people far and near we are to bring home the question: "Are you following the great apostate in disobedience to God's law, or are you following the Son of God, who declared, 'I have kept My Father's commandments'?"

“This is the work before us; for this our publishing institutions were established; it is this work that God expects at their hands.

Maranatha-161

Those who place themselves under God's control, to be led and guided by Him, will catch the steady tread of the events ordained by Him to take place. Inspired with the Spirit of Him who gave His life for the life of the world, they will no longer stand still in impotency, pointing to what they cannot do. Putting on the armor of heaven, they will go forth to the warfare, willing to do and dare for God, knowing that His omnipotence will supply their need.

166

As the teachings of spiritualism are accepted by the churches, the restraint imposed upon the carnal heart is removed, and the profession of religion will become a cloak to conceal the basest iniquity. A belief in spiritual manifestations opens the door to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and thus the influence of evil angels will be felt in the churches.

“The popular ministry cannot successfully resist spiritualism. They have nothing wherewith to shield their flocks from its baleful influence. Much of the sad result of spiritualism will rest upon ministers of this age; for they have trampled the truth under their feet, and in its stead have preferred fables.

167

. Communications from the spirits will declare that God has sent them to convince the rejecters of Sunday of their error, affirming that the laws of the land should be obeyed as the law of God. They will lament the great wickedness in the world and second the testimony of religious teachers that the degraded state of morals is caused by the desecration of Sunday. Great will be the indignation excited against all who refuse to accept their testimony.

172

Heretofore those who presented the truths of the third angel's message have often been regarded as mere alarmists. Their predictions that religious intolerance would gain control in the United States, that church and state would unite to persecute

those who keep the commandments of God, have been pronounced groundless and absurd. . . . But as the question of enforcing Sunday observance is widely agitated, the event so long doubted and disbelieved is seen to be approaching, and the third message will produce an effect which it could not have had before. . . .

Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power--all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. . . . As the people go to their former teachers with the eager inquiry, Are these things so? the ministers present fables, prophesy smooth things, to soothe their fears and quiet the awakened conscience. But since many refuse to be satisfied with the mere authority of men and demand a plain "Thus saith the Lord," the popular ministry, like the Pharisees of old, filled with anger as their authority is questioned, will denounce the message as of Satan and stir up the sin-loving multitudes to revile and persecute those who proclaim it.

5t-711

“A great crisis awaits the people of God. A crisis awaits the world. The most momentous struggle of all the ages is just before us. Events which for more than forty years we have upon the authority of the prophetic word declared to be impending are now taking place before our eyes. Already the question of an amendment to the Constitution restricting liberty of conscience has been urged upon the legislators of the nation. The question of enforcing Sunday observance has become one of national interest and importance. We well know what the result of this movement will be. But are we ready for the issue? Have we faithfully discharged the duty which God has committed to us of giving the people warning of the danger before them?

Ev-361

The storm is coming, the storm that will try every man's faith, of what sort it is. Believers must now be firmly rooted in Christ, or else they will be led astray by some phase of error. Let your faith be substantiated by the Word of God. Grasp firmly the living testimony of truth. Have faith in Christ as a personal Saviour. He has been and ever will be our Rock of Ages. The testimony of the Spirit of God is true. Change not your faith for any phase of doctrine, however pleasing it may appear, that will seduce the soul.

Last Day Events-136

“The wicked . . . declared that they had the truth, that miracles were among them, that angels from heaven talked with them and walked with them, that great power and signs and wonders were performed among them, and that this was the temporal millennium that they had been expecting so long. The whole world was converted and in harmony with the Sunday law.--3SM 427, 428 (1884).



***With Open Face***  
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