

# The SABBATH SENTINEL

Serving the Seventh-day Christian Community

MARCH, 1992



### Worship—for All People and all Times

*The Book of Revelation is perceived by most Christians primarily as a book of prophecy. But again and again the book focuses on worship. Perhaps we've been too busy figuring out the numbers and speculating about heads, horses, and horns to notice all the worshipping. Consider the passages in chapters 4, 5, 7, 11, 13, and 19—they all give us glimpses of God on his throne, being worshipped by the living creatures, by the seraphim, by the 24 elders, by the angels, and by all the saints. Time and again this book pictures heavenly and earthly creatures praising and adoring their Creator.*

*Revelation is a book of true worship. It is a book that tells us that no matter what is happening on earth, we need only to ascend in worship to the throne of God in heaven to find true perspective, to find out how things really are, to discover the ultimate truths of life.*

*Things on earth can be bleak, untenable, unfortunate, or miserable—but if we worship, if we commune with God, if we rise in our minds to His presence, we would discover that we are safely ensconced in the loving hands of the ultimate authority in the universe.*

*Things on earth can look frustrating and uncertain; we can lack vision and direction in our lives. But if we would worship, we would be in touch with the greatest power in the universe. The very act of worshipping Him gives us perspective and informs us that He and all who are in Him through Christ are triumphant.*

*Things on earth can look very rosy. We can get to feeling that we are rich and increased with goods, that we have need of nothing. Worship reminds us that all our earthly treasures are mere illusions that can dissipate in an instant. Worship puts us in touch with true riches—eternal life found in Christ.*

*God's people know how to say prayers; we know how to sing praises and prayers to God; some of us do one or both with great eloquence and deep feelings. But do we really know how to worship? Do we know how to become so involved in communion with our God that we do not want to be disturbed, so that we can be disturbed only with difficulty?*

*We can get so wrapped up in a movie, a TV program, or a ball game that we are mentally and emotionally in another world. Why then can't we get similarly wrapped up in communing with the greatest power of the universe—the God who loves us so much he brought us into being, sent his Son to reconcile us to Him, and gives us the promise of eternal life?*

*We are such earthbound creatures, so involved in the physical things of this world—the needs, the challenges, the problems, the possessions. And, to be sure, these must be addressed. But with the help of the Almighty, we should be able to become much more involved in worshipping the one who loves us more than anything—and find true joy and peace in our relationship with Him. After all the world of the here and now is only temporary. God's world is permanent and eternal. May he give us the grace to be more a part of that world than of this, which will soon pass away.*

—Richard A. Wiedenheft

(USPS 474-580)

**Vol. 44, No. 3 March, 1992**  
**Issue No. 419**

**A Monthly Publication of  
The Bible Sabbath Association  
RD 1 Box 222 • Fairview, OK 73737**

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**Opinions expressed in articles are those of the writers and not necessarily of The Bible Sabbath Association.**

**Second class postage paid at Fairview, OK 73737 and Additional Mailing Offices. Postmaster: Send change of address to *The Sabbath Sentinel*, RD 1 Box 222, Fairview, OK 73737.**

**The Bible Sabbath Association is a strictly non-sectarian association dedicated to helping Sabbathkeepers of all persuasions learn about and from one another and to promoting the one commandment that is repudiated by Christendom in general. BSA accepts as members all who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior, who regard the Bible as the Word of God, and who uphold the seventh-day Sabbath; it takes no official position on other theological issues.**

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**Bulk Subscriptions: Bulk subscriptions are available if 10 or more copies are sent in the same package; \$6 each subscription; \$9 outside US.**

**Address all correspondence to and make all checks, drafts, and money orders payable to *The Bible Sabbath Association*, RD 1 Box 222, Fairview, OK 73737; phone (405) 227-3200.**

**For those who don't know Him—  
Jesus Christ and Him Crucified!  
For those who do know Him—  
the liberty of His Sabbath!**

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And now abide  
**FAITH,**  
**HOPE, LOVE,**  
these three, but the  
greatest of these is  
**LOVE.**

# Why Remember?

by James Hagele, M.D.

One day when making my usual visit to the barber shop, I found the barber greatly disturbed about the education his children were receiving in the local public schools. In the conversation that followed, I learned he was especially upset that evolution was being taught. He was positive the world had been created and he resented his children being told otherwise. Listening patiently through most of the haircut, I finally suggested that God had given the perfect antidote to protect us from the poison of evolution. He was both interested and surprised to learn that I believed each and every week God chose to remind us of our origin.

This incident caused me to ask myself some questions: Why do I choose to remember the Sabbath? Do I really think one day is all that important? What is the real purpose of this day? Do the teachings of the New Testament make the practicality of the Sabbath obsolete?

In some ways it's almost like a reflex for us to answer our non-Sabbathkeeping friends with our routine reasons as to why we "keep" the Sabbath: The Sabbath is part of the Ten Commandments and the moral law is still binding; Jesus told us, "if you love me keep my commandments"; and it will be a final test of loyalty to God. However, these arguments on behalf of the Sabbath are easily dismissed as nothing but legalism by these same friends with a few statements from the writings of Paul.

It is difficult to imagine God being so tired and fatigued after six days of creating, that the sole purpose of that special day was merely to remind us of



that fact. And it would seem logical when God gave the Sabbath He must have felt He was doing a favor for His created beings. I would like to share a few reasons why the Sabbath is both a blessing and practical, not only to our first parents but to modern man.

## Deny Atheism

If one believes in the Sabbath, there is no room for atheism. Sabbath observance and denying there is a God are not compatible. One or the other must go. Celebrating this day each week reminds us of those Genesis words: "In the beginning God...." A belief in the Son of God also follows, for in John 1:1 we find similar words: "In the beginning was the Word..."

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That passage of Scripture continues on to identify that the "Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us." It also states in John 1:3: "Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made." Christ was Creator with His Father in the beginning. Every week I am reminded there is a God, there is a Son, even the Lord Jesus. The Old Testament speaks of the "Sabbath of the Lord thy God" and in the New Testament Jesus tells us "the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Both the Father and His Son chose to identify themselves with the Sabbath.

### **Reject Evolution**

The Sabbath also protects us from believing in the theory of evolution. Again, one cannot accept the Sabbath and deny the creation of this world. The very first words of Holy Scripture are: "In the beginning God created..." No matter how logically the theory of evolution may be presented, I believe its greatest weakness lies in its inability to tell me of my personal destiny. It attempts to explain my past and leave to chance my future. God desired His creatures to be reminded every week of their origin and all week long to prepare for their eternal destiny. Creation gives me dignity, for I am created in the image of God.

Apparently it is important to God for His people to remember He is the Creator, for in Revelation 14 He reminds us that it is part of the everlasting gospel. In verse 7, He requests that we worship Him on the basis of His Creatorship: "Worship Him who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water." The Sabbath is a weekly memorial of creation and a reminder that only God is worthy of my worship because He is the Creator.

### **Sanctify**

All of us have a concept of what is holy and what is not holy. We see God as holy. We can grasp the idea that the

ground near the burning bush where Moses stood was holy because God was there. We read of the tabernacle of the Children of Israel as having both a holy and a most holy place. However, when reading the first two chapters of Genesis, we find the first thing recorded as being made holy was time. Time itself was made sacred. In speaking of the seventh day of that creation week, it states: "And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy...." The concept that time itself is holy is more difficult to grasp. You can't take your shoes off for it. You can't back up from it or refrain from touching it. How do you show your respect for time? There is no logical answer as to why the Sabbath is holy other than God chose to make it so in the very beginning. God made time holy when He set aside the seventh day of the creation week and searching the Scriptures, I am unable to find where He reversed that decision.

It might be easy to conclude if I "keep" the Sabbath, it will make me holy. Nothing is farther from the truth and the Bible does not teach that idea. Some, because of their insistence on honoring that day, are accused of legalism, of attempting to earn their salvation by works. It seems very clear in Ezekiel 20:12 what is the purpose of that holy day: "Also I gave them my Sabbaths as a sign between us, so they would know that I the Lord made them holy." It isn't the Sabbath that can make me holy, it is the Lord and the Lord only who can make me holy. There is no way this can be construed as salvation by works. Rather, it is a picture of righteousness by faith and the Sabbath is my weekly reminder if God can make time holy, He can also sanctify or make me holy.

### **Rest**

When I remember this day and observe it as commanded in the moral law, I derive tremendous benefit from the concept of taking a weekly vacation or rest. All business concerns and

work are set aside. Daily decisions are put on hold and my mind has time to be refreshed, recharged. It makes the new week easier to enter and the fatigue that accompanies all those days simply vanishes on that weekly holiday. The commandment regarding that day also calls for a rest of all that is found within the gates of my responsibility.

In the Book of Hebrews, chapter 4, Paul discusses God resting on the seventh day from all His work. Verses nine and ten state: "There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his." Paul is not only reaffirming that the Sabbath was made for our physical rest, but he renews the concept of Ezekiel that it is the Lord who sanctifies us. Paul is telling us as Christians, that Sabbath-keeping includes spiritually resting in what Christ has done for us on Calvary and what He is doing for us now as our heavenly priest. It is Christ's works, not ours, that gives us assurance of salvation. The Sabbath is a reminder to rest in His redemptive work-righteousness by faith.

It is important to note that the Sabbath was instituted prior to the fall of Adam and Eve and before the entrance of sin into this world. When sin entered into the picture, God didn't scrap the idea of this special day, rather the day remained and He built upon its foundation other concepts of benefits to mankind. One example of extending the idea of rest to other than man is found in Leviticus 25:1-4. Here is given the provision for the Sabbatical year. The Children of Israel were instructed for six years to sow their fields, prune their vineyards and harvest their crops, but the seventh year was to be a rest for the fields. This special year constantly reminded man of what God had created for him—the soil, seed, plants, trees, sunlight, water, and all the elements. God

knew that even the soil needed a rest and so they were instructed to permit the land to lie idle every seventh year. The idea of fallowing ground has been practiced over the centuries and still is seen in modern society.

God didn't stop with instituting a weekly Sabbath or even a yearly Sabbath. He added still another concept of rest. He gave the economy, the business cycle a rest. That idea is found in Leviticus 25:8. God instructed His people to count off seven times seven or forty-nine years and then consecrate the fiftieth year as a special year of Jubilee. This provided for the return of property every fifty years that may have been lost due to illness, death or other tragedies of a family. Family members could look forward to the day the land would be returned and once again provide a living for them. It was God's way of preventing just a few families from ultimately owning all the property and controlling the whole economy.

Dr. Ravi Batra, professor of economics at Southern Methodist University, wrote a best seller entitled: "Surviving the Great Depression of 1990." From his studies in economics, he concludes in his book that when too much wealth is held by too few individuals or families, disruption often comes in the market place of those economies. Speaking of the concentration of wealth in America, he shows in 1929, the year of the great stock market crash, that only one (1) percent of adults/families held 36 percent of all the wealth in the United States. Thereafter that percentage of wealth dropped to 20.8 percent by 1949 and did not return to 36 percent until 1987, the year of another huge stock market drop. The following is a quote from his book: "Suffice it to say here that history shows that usually every sixth decade in America, high wealth concentration first generates huge private and/or public debt, high real interest rates, speculative fevers, mer-

ger manias, fragile financial institutions, and a general environment of graft and greed, all of which climax into a cataclysmic depression lasting no less than seven years."

Kondratieff, a Russian economist who studied the Western economies, concluded that every fifty to sixty years there would be large swings in the business cycles, thus creating booms and busts. In the economic history of the United States, one can see this in the stock market crashes of 1873, 1929 and 1987, all some fifty to sixty years apart.

Could it be that God in His great wisdom chose to protect His creatures from such devastating cycles, so He gave them a solution, the year of Jubilee? Every fifty years the economy was to celebrate its Sabbath. It was His plan to redistribute the wealth and thus prevent a few from controlling everything. It is not clear if the people fully followed this instruction, but had they done so, it could have been a blessing and prevented poverty and suffering.

#### Joy

One more blessing that comes from the Sabbath is found in Isaiah 58:13, 14. God gave a promise to those who honor His Sabbath day, who refrain from doing their own will, and call it a delight: "then you will find your joy in the Lord, and I will cause you to ride on the heights of the land...." We think of tranquilizers to bring us peace and mood elevators to lift our spirits, and hundreds of millions of dollars are spent every year on these medications. God is promising us joy, contentment and a buoyant spirit when we enter into fellowship with Him on that special day. The Sabbath is like a spiritual medicine for the weak and it brightens our mental outlook and brings us joy.

#### Hope

The Sabbath reminds me of creation and the promise of the day God will create again. Isaiah 65:17 con-

tains a promise of that day when this earth will be recreated, from a world that fell into disobedience and sin, into a brand new world. "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind." In the New Testament this same theme is presented in Revelation 21:1,5: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away.... I am making everything new..." Isaiah 66:22 goes on to explain that in the new heaven and earth, we will come before the Lord from one moon to another and from one Sabbath to another, worshiping the Creator, the ReCreator. Thus, the Sabbath gives hope of a better world to come.

#### Love

Jesus gave us a gauge, a way to measure our love for Him with the following principle: "If you love me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15.) If the Sabbath does not cause us to love God and our neighbor more each time we honor it, then our understanding of that day and the blessings that come from it are of little value. Never is the Sabbath to be used as a spiritual club against those who do not agree with its sanctity. Rather, it should be an invitation to our friends to enter into the rest and blessings that the Creator designed for that special day. We will only be able to help others remember the Sabbath when we personally experience the joy and blessings it offers. One's love for his Creator and Redeemer is probably the greatest reason to remember that day.

Why remember? God and Christ, creation, sanctification, rest, joy, hope and love.

#### Change of Address?

By all means notify us in advance if you move. If we send a SENTINEL to your old address, the post office charges us 30¢ to return it—and you risk missing that issue.

# Research Reveals Plain Truth

by Don A. Sanford, historian

Editor's note: Seventh Day Baptist historian Don A. Sanford has, on several occasions, shared with me his concern that a number of Sabbathkeeping groups claim Seventh Day Baptist history as their own—without identifying SDBs as such. Last year, *The Plain Truth* ran a series of articles entitled "History of the Church of God," which prompted the following article in the December, 1991, issue of *The Sabbath Recorder*, the official Seventh Day Baptist periodical. Your editor sent this article, along with a request for comment to Dr. Herman L. Hoeh, editor of *The Plain Truth*. Dr. Hoeh's reply follows the article.

The Worldwide Church of God is running a series of articles in their *Plain Truth* magazine under the heading, "History of the Church of God." The Historical Society has received several letters questioning their use of Seventh Day Baptist history in establishing an unbroken claim to New Testament origins.

Seventh Day Baptists do not believe that the validity of the Sabbath is dependent upon any "apostolic succession" of an organized church. Attempts to prove such dependence on human institutions sometimes detract from the divine origin of the Sabbath.

Seventh Day Baptists believe that it is far more important to base the belief and practice of Sabbath observance upon the study of Scriptures rather than a succession of human authority or practice.

During the mid-17th century, the Bible became available to the common people. Those who were known as Separatists, separated from the Church of England, giving birth to such nonconformist movements as that of the Congregationalists and the Baptists.

Baptist historian William Brackney recognizes the beginning of Seventh Day Baptists by noting that "in the biblicism of the age when the Scrip-

tures were being constantly reexamined as a standard of Free Church doctrine and practice, it is not surprising that a person or church should conclude that keeping the Sabbath was an inescapable requirement of biblical Christianity."

One of the first Baptists to write in support of the seventh day Sabbath was James Ockford, whose book was condemned by Parliament. He was followed by others such as William Saller and Dr. Peter Chamberlen, men associated with the Mill Yard Church which still exists as a Seventh Day Baptist church in London.

Francis Bampfield, Edward and Joseph Stennett were leaders in the Pinners' Hall Church which existed as an SDB church until about 1850.

John James was another leader who has long been associated with the movement leading to the Seventh Day Baptist cause in England. He was forcibly taken from his pulpit in Bull Stake Alley, arrested and martyred in 1661. Although the charge was largely political, he gave a strong testimony to the Sabbath and believers' baptism in his statement at the foot of the gallows.

James Ockford, Francis Bampfield, and John James are all mentioned in Part 9 of the series in *Plain Truth* (September 1991), but no mention is



made of their Seventh Day Baptist connection, leading people to assume from the heading that they were members of the Church of God.<sup>2</sup>

Part 10 continues the history under the title, "The Sabbath Comes to New England." The authors credit Stephen Mumford with bringing the Sabbath to Rhode Island. They write of the separation of the Sabbathkeepers from the First Baptist Church of Newport in 1671.

Although the source of most of their material is taken from the *Seventh Day Baptist Memorial*, published in 1852-54, they avoid identifying that church as the first Seventh Day Baptist church in America.<sup>3</sup>

Many of the existing records of that Newport Church are in the possession of the Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society, with the last book beginning with the words: "A continuation of the Records of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Newport, RI."<sup>4</sup>

Part 11 of the series in *Plain Truth* magazine is entitled, "War and the New Frontier." Samuel Hubbard is erroneously listed as one of the founders of the Newport Baptist Church which was founded in 1644, whereas the records show he was baptized and joined in 1648. The authors identify Samuel's wife, Tacy, as "the first native-born American to convert to Sabbathkeeping,"<sup>5</sup> yet she was born in 1609 in England, 11 years before the Pilgrims came to America. According to Samuel Hubbard's journal, the first native-born Americans to accept the Sabbath would have to have been the Hubbard's three daughters, Ruth, Rachel, and Bethiah.

"My wife took up the Lord's holy 7th day Sabbath the 10 day March 1665. I took it up 1 day April 1665. Our daughter Ruth-25 October 1665, Rachel-Jan. 15 day 1666, Bethiah-Feb. 1666. Our son Joseph Clarke-23 Feb. 1666."<sup>6</sup>

Ruth later married Robert Burdick. Rachel married Andrew Langworthy and was one of the charter members

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of the Newport Seventh Day Baptist church. Bethiah was the wife of Joseph Clarke. Many of today's seventh Day Baptists have documented direct lineage to these early Sabbathkeepers in Rhode Island.

Under a section headed, "The Name of the Church," the authors correctly recognize the Hopkinton congregation (the First Hopkinton Seventh Day Baptist Church in Ashaway, RI) as an outgrowth of the Newport Church, but refer to it as the "Church of God," based on a couple of passages which use the term "church of God" in a generic sense.

They correctly date the founding of the church at Piscataway, NJ, from the study of the Scriptures by Edmond Dunham in 1705. The authors call it "the Church of God," but a check of the record books clearly show that the early minutes all begin with the phrase, "The Church of Christ keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ..." Several early Seventh Day Baptist churches did use the name Church of Christ, possibly to clearly identify the church as Christian rather than Jewish because of their Sabbath observance.

The authors make use of several Seventh Day Baptist books including the *Seventh Day Baptist Memorial*, and Henry Clark's *A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptists in America*, published in 1811. However, several passages are quoted as being from Clark's book, when in reality they are from vol. 2 of *Seventh Day Baptists in Europe and America*. Again there is a marked avoidance of identifying the people and events as being Seventh Day Baptist.

The final quotes in that article from the November/December 1991 *Plain Truth* were taken from a more recent book, *A Free People in Search of a Free Land*, written in 1976 by the author of this review, and published by the SDB Historical Society. Yet no identification is made of its Seventh Day Baptist author or origin.

Seventh Day Baptists are anxious for the claims of the Sabbath to be proclaimed throughout the world. The Sabbath is not limited to any one denomination. But in the interest of "the plain truth," falsehoods or misleading information do not advance the cause of truth in the world.

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>William Henry Brackney, *The Baptists* (West Port, CN: Greenwood Press, 1988) 6-7.

<sup>2</sup>Ronald D. Kelly, "Free at Last" in *The Plain Truth*, vol. 56:8 (September 1991) 8-11.

<sup>3</sup>Ronald D. Kelley and Jimmy Franks, "The Sabbath Comes to New England," in *The Plain Truth*, vol. 56:9 (October 1991) 18-21.

<sup>4</sup>*Records of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Newport, RI to June 5, 1892* (CRR 1922.1).

<sup>5</sup>Ronald Kelly and Charles Vorhes, "War and the New Frontier," in *The Plain Truth*, vol. 56:10 November/December 1991, pp. 18-21.

<sup>6</sup>Samuel Hubbard's Journal circa 1633-1686. Manuscript relating to Samuel Hubbard of Newport, RI, transcribed from copies known by Isaac Backus, p. 10.

## *The Plain Truth Responds*

by Herman L. Hoeh

Your cover letter and the article by Don A. Sanford point up that certain editorial inaccuracies in the early history of Sabbatarians (in the U.S.) appeared in Part 11 of the series on the history of God's church in *The Plain Truth*. In particular, please thank Don Sanford for addressing them in *The Sabbath Recorder*.

As you know, God's people were commonly referred to as Sabbatarians in the 17th and 18th centuries and that is how we identified them—rather than by the now common denominational term Seventh Day Baptist. We did identify these first Sabbatarians in America as having reluctantly severed connection from the parent church, the First Baptist Church of Newport. As author Don A. Sanford says of the literature of God's people, the church of God was used as a generic term, not a denominational term. We used it thus throughout our series, and do not dispute the use of

other terms in the Sabbatarian churches, for the New Testament does the same.

The introductory paragraphs of Part 11, page 18, column 1 of the series in *The Plain Truth* mentioning Samuel Hubbard and Tacy Hubbard are properly corrected by Don A. Sanford. The errors arose from misreading of the text and will be correct in any future reference to the Newport church.

The quotation in reference to the 18th century Sabbatarian church in Pennsylvania was wrongly attributed to Clarke's *History*, p. 1208, due to a deletion in copy fitting. The quotations should have been attributed to *Seventh Day Baptists in Europe and America*, volume 2, page 1208.

We happily thank Don Sanford for drawing readers' attention to these particular oversights in Part 11 of our series.

# My Sabbath Home

by Brian Jones

I wasn't a churchgoer. For years I had been a hermit in the woods, and had once, for some months, lived in a cave. As a hippie, whose passions were jazz and occult experience, church had not entered into my thinking, except to pity others whose imagination was too stunted to know what else to do with a Saturday or Sunday morning but listen to a preacher and sing some tired old hymns.

But now something had changed in my life, something I would never have suspected possible. I had found Christ, or rather was found by Him. He was now my Savior. The myths that held me in thrall now melted away like a thick cloud. The hot, pulsating music of the night club and dance floor died out to a distant echo of a disordered, hedonistic past. I was on my way to church, drawn not by conventional instincts, but by Christ, whose Spirit and word had taught me to desire the fellowship of other believers.

Some weeks before I had tried to go and had walked several miles to reach the steps of a church, but was held back from ascending them by fear - of the unknown, or rejection, of being questioned about my spirituality, such as it was, but about which I could make no comment, knowing that I was a sinner. I went home and prayed, to seek God's blessings in private. I was not disappointed, but was also stimulated with a sharper craving than before for fellowship with people who were not ashamed or afraid of assembling to worship God. "If we walk in the Light, as He is in the light, we have *fellowship with one another*, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

Beyond question I realized that the seventh day was God's Sabbath, a time for "holy convocation" (Exod. 20:8-11; Lev. 23:3), which was a blessing not to be missed. The idea of maintaining a wholly private religion that had no connection with corporate effort for the good of others was an escapism that had lost its appeal to me. The Apostles were not hermits but public spirited men whose whole lives were devoted to evangelizing the world. They reached all races, classes and cultures, excluding none from their regard and loving efforts. It was time for me too, as a new believer, to emerge from seclusion, and openly join the family of God to participate with them in the joys and responsibilities of Christian life.

My second effort to attend church was more successful. I chose to visit a small Sabbathkeeping congregation in the Mission district of San Francisco. Never had I come into the company of so many loving, kindly people, who seemed to genuinely enjoy life without the need for any artificial excitement. They asked me no embarrassing questions and subjected me to no humiliating treatment. I was delighted and thankful that they did not ask me to explain why I was there, because, with long, greasy hair and clad in dungarees, I did not look the standard part of a Christian.

But I was not totally comfortable yet. The experience of attending church was too new for that to be possible. I stayed for Sabbath school, but escaped, unmolested, before the sermon. This went on for several weeks, until I summoned the courage to stay for "part B", my private terminology for the main worship service ("part

A" was Sabbath school).

Each Sabbath morning for the next month or more I was terrified that as I walked from the church to turn the first corner, someone from the congregation would come running after me, shouting, "Brother, brother, where are you going? Why not come back and stay for part B?" But that never happened. Finally I got curious to know what part B had to offer.

It was better than I had imagined possible. Some of the hymns sounded a little corny and flat. I felt silly standing and holding a hymn book in conformity with everyone else while staring at words I couldn't even bring myself to mouth. But I knew there was something here that I needed. The Holy Spirit enabled me to rise above my doubts and fears and contorted idiosyncrasies. The blessings of God were here and they were melting the icy tower of alienation and solitude that had imprisoned me for years.

Eventually I saw the unpretentious beauty of the hymns, such as "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross", a congregational favorite. The pastor's sermons were forthright, scriptural and surprisingly practical. I saw that Bible Christianity translated well into real life and had a genuineness and substance which I had been able to find nowhere else. But what captivated me beyond all resistance was the kindness of the congregation. "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another" (Jn. 13:35). The people at Tabernacle Church treated me as one of the family. I did not have to prove myself to gain their favor. They invited me to their fellowship dinners both in their homes and in the church. I had never known such unqualified acceptance anywhere, not even in hippiedom, which in its own way was very sociable, but full of suspicions and shibboleths that made it wary of welcoming strangers. But there was no guardedness here. High

standards, holy living, but no exclusivism, no cold, judging attitude toward the outsider, as different as he may be. I felt honestly accepted, and I was.

After some months of further fellowship and Bible study, I was sure the Lord Himself was inviting me to join this church. It was to me the ministering hands of Christ in the person of His saints. So, on a wintry Sabbath in February, 1975, I was baptized at Tabernacle Church. Since then I have lived in many places, and have had the honor of serving my church as a pastor and Bible instructor for the past thirteen years. But everywhere I have gone, whether I've been known or unknown, the church has been to me my spiritual banqueting house and home. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD. ... Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord" (Ps. 122:1, 3).

But the church on earth is not my final home. I look forward to the day, spoken of by the Psalmist, when all who love Christ shall dwell in His visible presence in unveiled glory: "One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in His temple" (Ps. 27:4). When that time comes, I expect with all who love God, to enter into the fullness of His eternal Sabbath rest. But church attendance will not even then become obsolete. "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, saith the LORD" (Isaiah 66:22, 23).



## A Tornado Put My Father Back Into His Ministry

by Frank M. Walker

I am the oldest of ten children with two sisters next to me, Mary and Edith. We lived in Southeast Oklahoma, and our father worked at the coal mines in his younger days. He was converted when I was a boy and soon was called into the ministry while yet working at the mines. On weekends and slack work periods he was out preaching God's Word faithfully. He knew that God had called him to the ministry.

When I was 14 years old, we moved to a farm as Dad did not want me to start working in the coal mines. He continued his ministry as opportunity came his way, but on the farm the going was hard with a large family. Consequently, he became less active in his ministry until he had almost no time in the ministry. To supplement our income, he at times went back to work in the coal mines while we farmed and cared for the small herd of cattle. To have range for

our cattle, we had moved in the late fall into the mountains of Pushmetaha County where Dad had bought a small farm.

At that time my father was working in the mines at our old home town, Gowen, to supplement our income while Mother and I with the children, except the two oldest sisters, moved to our new home to care for our cattle and farm. This was some 70 miles away from our father and two sisters. Dad had rented a company house—three large rooms—and my two sisters kept house and went to school there. They lived in the upper part of town on the small mountain slope.

It was in the spring after we moved that a tornado hit Gowen in the evening after Dad came home from work. It was raining, and after supper Dad had milked their little cow and had come in. Mary and Edith were washing and drying the dishes by the cook stove when Dad came in from the

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back door. They had a brief time to visit when a gust of wind shook the house. Dad said, "My, girls, wasn't that a strong wind!" One of the girls said, "Look, Dad, there goes the little cow around the house." The cow had been in the lot back of the house, but the wind was taking her outside and around the house. At that time the whole back end of the kitchen crashed in by the tornado winds. That three-room house was L-shaped, the front room, with kitchen behind; the large bedroom attached on the side.

All three were standing near the cook stove where the door went into the front room; the door into the bedroom was there, too. Dad and Mary stepped into the doorway of the bedroom, and the last he saw of Edith the wind was taking her into the frontroom. Dad thought, "She is gone, but I will try to save Mary." He grabbed her, intending to fall to the floor, but she was wrenched out of his arms. Both floated in the air and were let down where the kitchen had been. The air was full of wrecked debris a few inches above them. Dad put his hands on his head for protection and he looked for Mary. He saw her a few feet away and rolled over to where she was. She tried to get up when she saw him, but he put his hand on her, telling her to lie still. Very soon it had gone on, and all was quiet.

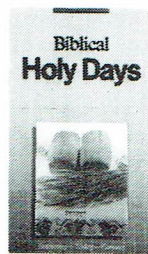
Dad was not hurt physically. Some timbers had settled on Mary's foot

and had to be moved. The house was completely gone. Edith rode that frontroom floor until it struck a tramway fill about 50 yards away; but she was left there unhurt, except for a small splinter. The God of heaven had saved all three of them (Read Romans 8:28).

Next day when sightseers asked Dad how he ever got out alive, he said, "I did not have anything to do with it." Dad was troubled all that spring and summer after they came home. God was dealing with him, and finally in late summer Dad was himself again. He confided to me the battle that had been won. That fall he entered the ministry full time. He lived almost 91 years and faithfully preached God's Word as long as he was able—until 90.

A minister for many decades, the author is director of God's Watchman ministry of St. Maries, Idaho.

Reprinted from *Acts*, April 1987.



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<i>History of Sabbath and Sunday</i> by John Kiesz (64 pp.)	\$3
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Sixth Edition and Supplement	\$7

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<i>Bible Truth About "Salvation by Grace Through Faith"</i> by F. Walker (32 pp.)	35¢ ea.; \$6/20
<i>Questions for Seventh Dayists Answered</i> by T. Littrell (18 pp.)	Out of stock
<i>Has Sabbath Time Been Lost?</i> by Joseph M. McGuire (10 pp.)	Out of stock

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### Howard Mesick Continues in Coma

BSA life member and TSS department editor Howard Mesick continues in a coma following the massive stroke he suffered after Thanksgiving. Please continue to pray for him, his wife, Cathy, and children. The Mesicks live at Rt 1 Box 299-1, Hartly, DE 19953.

### New Board Member & Ministry To Relocate

As a result of employment changes, newly elected board member Richard Nickels plans to move back to his native Portland, Oregon. The move will temporarily interrupt the operations of Giving & Sharing, his non-profit, mail order bookstore and literature publishing ministry. In the Giving & Sharing Newsletter for December, Richard wrote about his situation—it is an interesting reflection on layoffs, the job market, and faith.

“Just after the Feast of Tabernacles, I was shocked with the news that my position had been eliminated in a corporate reorganization, as my company was closing its St. Louis office. Immediately, I began the process of searching for other employment.... For each job I was qualified and applied for, there was intense competition from numerous others in the same situation as myself. One of the major companies in St. Louis sent me a stinging rejection letter, stating there were *many* more qualified people than I for the position. After a couple of months of diligent effort, I could begin to paper the walls with rejection letters. It has been a real trial of my faith. I told God that I was willing to submit to His will, and asked Him to direct my path

were I should go. Then, God opened up the *possibility* for me to obtain another job at the same level, with the same company, in my native Portland, Oregon.... There were eight internal candidates, some of whom had better educational credentials than I do. One after one, people came forward and spoke to upper management on my behalf! Mind you, none of my fellow workers profess religious beliefs similar to mine, but one lady even said she was praying for me! The encouragement I have received from spiritual brethren has also been wonderfully uplifting. In the depths of some trying times, others have lifted me up in their prayers, and in a few cases, wrote me wonderful letters.... As a result of what God has done, through many others, I am grateful to report that God has answered our prayers. I got the job!”

### Announcements for Summer Meetings

It's none too early to be planning summer conferences and campmeetings. It is our policy to publish announcements of such meetings provided they are open to all Sabbathkeepers and are conducted by individuals or groups basically in harmony with the purpose of BSA. April 15 is the deadline for the June issue.

### Your Support Welcomed

Literature is our primary means of sharing the truth of the Sabbath. As we continually work to provide the best possible materials, we thank all who use BSA literature in reaching out to others; we thank all who share in this ministry through prayers, donations, and encouragement; and we welcome your continuing support.



# NEWS

## NEWS FROM THE SEVENTH DAY COMMUNITY

### **Adventism Autonomy**

On January 1, 1992, a new division of the SDA church was created. Known as the North American Division, its membership numbers 780,000.

The North American Division first emerged in 1913, but was led by the General Conference. It will now have administrative autonomy equal to other divisions. The General Conference will now be better able to oversee the rapidly growing, worldwide SDA church.

The first change will be in the flow of tithes. The division will receive the tithes collected in their geographical area, and will then send a proper percentage to the GC. This is the same procedure followed by the 10 other SDA divisions.

### **Religious Freedom in England**

During a recent Conservative Party conference in Blackpool, England, two party leaders joined others in calling for a separation of church and state.

Anglican church leaders have had to restrain their opinions on national issues because they are appointed to their posts by the prime minister. The separation would allow the church to be more vocal in expressing its views concerning the government.

The action will probably take quite a while because of opposition from, oddly enough, Anglican leaders. Claiming that the move would be seen as a declaration that England is no longer Christian, the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, opposes

the separation.

### **Christians Shed Blood**

Plans for a Christian revival meeting in Kano, Nigeria sparked attacks from angry Muslims last October, resulting in the deaths of over 200 residents.

Rev. Reinhard Bonnke, a German evangelist, was given permission by Kano police to hold a Christian revival meeting. The small Christian community advertised the meeting by driving through town announcing the plans on a loudspeaker. A crowd of 8,000 Muslims stormed the streets in response to Bonnke's arrival and soon began looting homes and stores in the Christian section of the city.

### **Teens Pray**

A recent Gallup poll shows that three out of four North American teenagers pray.

The study, gathered from telephone calls to 513 teens between the ages of 13 through 17, reveals that 44 percent read the Bible in private and 13 percent on a regular basis. Also noted was the fact that 95 percent of those interviewed believe in God and 93 percent feel that God loves them.

### **Romanian Revival**

What started out as an international adoption, resulted in the baptism of over 60 Romanians.

SDA pastor Marc Beaven and his wife Phyllis decided to help a needy child by adopting one of the thousands of Romanian orphans. When he found out that he would be re-

quired to spend several weeks in Romania, Beaven offered to give a series of evangelistic meetings during his stay.

With the help of the SDA Romanian Union and the New Jersey Conference, the meetings drew 1,100 Romanians a night for a total of 15 nights. As a result, over 300 people decided to keep the Sabbath and another 200 showed interest in being baptized. The meetings took place in the city of Craiova, and were the first such meetings since 1948, when Communists took control of the country.

#### Forced to Flee

SDA missionaries from the United States were forced to evacuate from the central African nation of Zaire because of political and civil unrest. The missionaries, along with about 10 families, fled the country under the protection of French troops. It is un-

known when they may be able to return.

#### From KJV to NIV by SDA

In order to promote a more meaningful Bible study for children, the General Conference Sabbath School Curriculum Committee has decided to switch to the New International Version of the Bible in its Sabbath schools.

Although the King James Version will still be used for the fourth commandment and the Lord's prayer, children will learn other verses in the NIV, a modern English translation. Because some families may not make the change at home, Sabbath school teachers have been asked to be flexible in allowing children to learn verses in the translation that they use at home.

Column compiled by Ed Ozalas

## SABBATH BUMPER STICKER

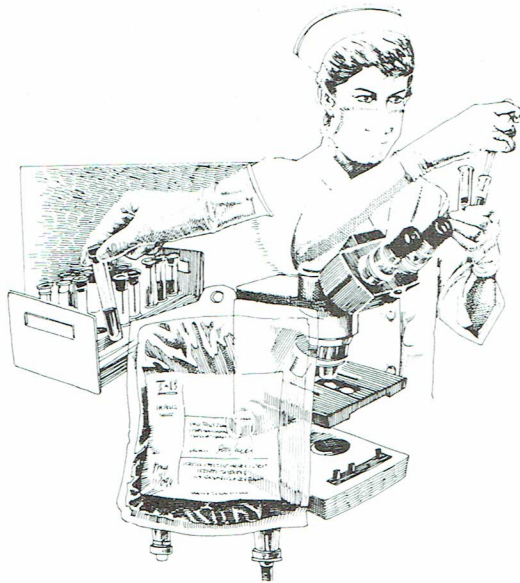
Let others know about the wonderful blessing of the Sabbath by way of this attractive bumper sticker—dimensions are 3" by 11"; blue ink on white background. Suggested donation is \$1 each, plus \$1 per order for shipping and handling. Order extras for sharing with friends.

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## Don't Put it Off

by Mynor Soper

A young couple living in our mobile home park had sent their 12-year-old daughter to our Vacation Bible School last summer. Since I try, at some point, to share Christ with all the people in our park, I was thinking about how I wanted to share with this

*Am I focusing on  
the important things  
in life?*

young couple. I was quite sure they were not Christians. But for some reason, I hadn't found what I thought to be the right opportunity.

While Marian and I were on our fall trip visiting the churches, I called home occasionally to see how things were. I was told that this young girl had to be taken to the children's hospital in Little Rock, and that they had discovered a tumor on her brain. The next time I called, I was told that the parents had gone to Little Rock to see

her. It was raining, and they were in an accident—both were killed. The next day, the little girl died.

I don't know when anything ever hit me so hard. I had meant to tell them of Jesus' love for them and the eternal life He wanted to give them; now it was over for them. Time had run out.

Jesus said, "You will be my witnesses." I meant to be. I truly did! But because I wasn't, it's very possible that that family missed out on eternal life because I put off sharing with them.

If you have been thinking about sharing your faith with somebody, let me urge you not to put it off. Time has a way of passing us by, if we don't take time to be witnesses for our Lord!

Pastor of the Texarkana SDB congregation, the author is serving as president of the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, August 1991 to August 1992; reprinted from *The Sabbath Recorder*, January, 1992.

# COMMENT

## NEWS AND COMMENTARY

**News Item:** A plan to provide parents of children enrolled in private schools with \$1,800 vouchers to be used at those schools, was rejected by voters last November in Portsmouth, NH. The proposal, initiated by a group called the Association of Portsmouth Taxpayers, was soundly defeated by an almost five to one margin.

**News Item:** The Pennsylvania state legislature has voted against a proposed \$900 voucher system that would help parents pay for private school tuition. Supporters of the plan vow to continue to fight to make the plan a reality.

**News Item:** A state constitutional amendment that would allow for a private school voucher system in Colorado, will not be placed on the ballot in 1992. In spite of the state House of Representatives voting down the measure, Rep. Patricia Miller plans to try to have the issue placed on the ballot next year.

**News Item:** South Dakota's Christian School Association failed to provide enough names on a petition to enact a school voucher system, in time to be placed on the 1992 ballot. State superintendent of Catholic schools, Rev. Howard Carroll, plans to continue the battle and will aim for the 1994 ballot instead.

### Commentary

What is going on here? Why the sudden rush to help the private schools? What will be the price to the taxpayers for such a plan? Do we really want or need such a plan?

We need only to look to Washington, D.C. for an answer. A powerful

parochial school lobby, the National Catholic Education Association, is looking for tax subsidies for private religious schools. President Bush was said to be very receptive at a meeting with Catholic education officials last November. Bending to pressure from the administration, the House Education and Labor Committee passed a measure that allows states to use federal funds for private school "choice" programs.

Politicians tend to spend money on their constituents during an election year to increase their chances of being re-elected. The problem is, it's our money. The area they are now entering, is one that has been taboo in the past. In these troubled times, the population of the United States has become more religious. The politicians are ready, willing and able to jump on the bandwagon.

The largest and immediate benefactor of private school voucher systems would be the parochial schools. Their numbers far outweigh all other private schools combined. Political support from the Catholic Church must be very tempting to anyone up for re-election. What will this cost us?

In Pennsylvania, the estimated cost for a \$900 per child voucher system is \$300 million. Federal and state governments are already up to their necks in debt. Taxpayers pay an estimated 50 percent on every dollar earned when all taxes, (including "hidden" taxes), are added up. Will the parents of private school children really benefit, or will private schools merely raise tuitions?

What might cost us even more is the

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loss of our religious freedoms. When the government starts subsidizing religious education, control of how those funds are used is not far behind. Allowing our government to become involved, in any manner, with our churches goes against the very premise that this country was founded on. We must avoid this temptation and keep the door between church and state bolted.

What can we do to stop this move? Write or call your congressman and

senators in Washington and voice your concerns. Keep abreast of local actions by reading the newspaper and the televised news. Attend local government meetings to see what they are up to. Encourage friends and relatives to become involved.

In times like these, our biggest enemy is apathy. If we sit by we may lose our freedoms. It's happened in other countries and it can happen here, so don't make excuses, just do it!

Column compiled by Ed Ozalas

## *New BSA Leaflet*

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# MAILBOX

## LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

### Pros and Cons On Editorial

I thought your article in The Sabbath Sentinel (December '91) concerning Christmas was very helpful. I truly appreciate receiving The Sabbath Sentinel. It is a very encouraging magazine.

May the Eternal bless you.

Mark C. Roush, Bainbridge, In

I would like to express my displeasure and disappointment when I opened up the calendar issue and read the editorial by Richard Wiedenheft, titled "Whether we celebrate or not...."

Obviously Mr. Wiedenheft does not adhere to a basic scripture in his beliefs, (Mark 7:7-9), and he completely overlooks the fact that when God commands us to observe certain days in the Bible, He clearly states what days these are to be. Furthermore, I wonder if Mr. Wiedenheft would be offended if someone celebrated his birthday two or three months prior to the actual date.

No one is certain of the exact date of Jesus Christ's birthday, but it was not December 25, a Catholic inspired holiday. Just check your dictionary (Christ & Mass).

I am convinced that God must have realized His Son's birthday would have been totally dishonored and distorted by mankind, with all its tinsel and glitter, if He had revealed the exact date. He purposely kept us from knowing and He purposely did not tell us to celebrate it.

I am very offended by Mr. Wiedenheft's editorial, and it may cause me not to renew my subscription to TSS.

Mary Dixon, Charleston WV

### Of New Friends

An old friend of mine in Oregon recently expressed how much he enjoyed the *Sentinel* I had sent him. He is an ex-Baptist minister in his 70's, retired now and living in Sherwood Park.

As a surprise gift to him for all his kindness to us, would you please issue him a membership in BSA with a subscription to TSS. I am enclosing a donation to cover the cost.

He told me he's always had a respect for the Sabbath and knew it was the Biblical Sabbath, not Sunday. I believe he'll be a valued member in the future.

John & Merrily, North Vancouver,  
B.C.

Enclosed you will find payment for my membership in BSA. I have been receiving literature from many different Sabbathkeeping organizations, but so many seem to be squabbling. I was very happy to hear of your organization. I thank God for whoever sent me TSS.

David E. Foster, Winner, SD

### A Thankful Friend

Thank you for your letter in answer to my questions about one of your editorials. It was a new idea to me that each Sabbathkeeping denomination has such a strong culture that other Sabbathkeepers do not feel comfortable with it. Thanks for explaining it to me.

I want to tell you that I thought your editorial on celebrating Christmas was excellent. Also, the calendar issue is very attractive.

Laura M. Drown, West Boylston, MA

# ADS

## CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

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**Help wanted:** Opportunity for qualified individuals with experience in education and a desire to minister to young people. Sabbathkeeping, boarding high school may have staff openings for the 92-93 school year in the following areas: math, music, foreign languages, boys' dean. Send resume to Personnel, Spring Vale Academy, 4150 S. M-52, Owosso, MI 48867. (3-4)

**Classified ads** are available at the rate of 30 cents per word (including each word and each group of numbers in the address). Send copy for classified ads and payment to The Bible Sabbath Assn., Fairview, OK 73737. Ad copy without payment will be returned. Deadline is the 15th of the month for the issue of the second subsequent month (e.g. August 15 for the October issue). BSA reserves the right to reject or edit any ad copy; publication does not necessarily imply endorsement by The Bible Sabbath Association. Information about display advertising is available on request.

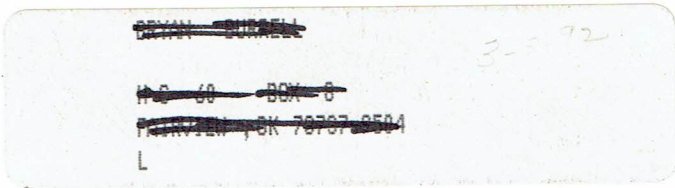
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- scattered individuals with whom you correspond
- brethren you've met at camp meetings and festivals
- ministers you've known through the years
- people who could use BSA material to share the Sabbath truth

If you send us their names and addresses, we'll let them know about our association, about THE SABBATH SENTINEL, the Sabbath calendar, Directory of Sabbath-observing Groups, and other Sabbath books and tracts—material that will help them share the Sabbath with others. Thank you for helping us!

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