

**A DISCUSSION ON THE DAY OF
CHRISTIAN WORSHIP**

IS IT

**THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK
OR THE SABBATH DAY?**

**WITH ADDITION MATERIALS ON THE SUBJECT
APPENDED**

**JOHN WADDEY OF THE CHURCH OF
CHRIST**

&

**“FOSTER” OF THE SEVENTH DAY
CHURCH OF GOD**

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THE SABBATH DAY OR THE LORD'S DAY: A DISCUSSION

Introduction: This discussion came about when a writer, whom we will identify as Foster, a minister of the Seventh Day Church of God, read one of my articles setting forth our goal to practice the Christian religion just as the first generation of Christian did. That resulted in a lengthy exchange of letters on the question, "**Are we to worship God on the seventh day Sabbath or the first day of the week, known as the Lord's Day?**" Foster affirmed that we should be keeping the Sabbath as Moses directed and I, that the Old Law of Moses was superceded by the New Testament of Jesus Christ, thus we worship on the first day of the week, the day of Christ's resurrection. The points set forth by Foster are typical of all the various "Seventh Day, Sabbath keeping denominations." These letters are reproduced as they were first written with editing only for typographical errors.

For Your Information: The Seventh Day Church of God derives from the Adventist movement that flourished in America in the first half of the 19th century. In 1858, under the leadership of Gilbert Cranmer it separated from other sabbath-keeping Adventists. Now divided into two factions they claim some 60,000 members world -wide. Among its key doctrines are the personal, visible return of Jesus to establish the kingdom of God on the earth and reign a thousand years; That the dead wait for the resurrection in a state of unconscious sleep; That the saved will spend eternity on this restored earth while the wicked will be exterminated; That the sabbath law of the Old Testament is still binding on Christians and must be observed. They baptize adults by immersion. (Information gleaned from **Handbook of Denominations in the United States**, 11 Edition, by Frank Mead and Samuel Hill, Abingdon Press 2001). **JHW**

FOSTER'S FIRST LETTER

Mr. Waddey: I have to wonder why you claim to be a first century Christian? The first century Christians worshiped on the same Sabbath day that Jesus did. They met each Sabbath, either in Synagogue or a home. It wasn't until the next century that people migrated away from the appointed Sabbath to the first day of the week (Luke 4:16, Acts 13:14, Acts 13:44, Acts 15:21, Acts 17:2).

As a matter of fact Paul said that the people were to take up a collection on the first day of the week so they would not be collecting when he comes on the Sabbath day (1 Corinthians 16:1).

First century Christians also observed the annual holy days that God gave to outline His plan of Salvation.

As a person who considers himself a first century Christian I am somewhat shocked that you make this claim. **Foster**

JOHN WADDEY'S FIRST RESPONSE

Dear Foster: The church of the first century was guided by the chosen apostles of Christ. Their faith, worship and practices were the first expressions of the religion of Christ after his ascension to heaven. We look back to them as our examples of what a church should be and do. We strive to the best of our understanding and ability to practice the faith as they did.

We worship on the first day of the week for obvious reasons:

- * That was the day of Christ's resurrection (John 20:1).
- * It was the day he appeared to the apostles to assure them of his resurrection and to prepare them for his departure (John 20:19; 26).
- * It was the day on which the church began (Acts 2:1-47). The Day of Pentecost was always observed on the first day of the week (Lev. 23:15-21).
- * It was the day when the first gospel sermon of the risen Christ was preached.
- * It was the day when way of salvation under Christ's administration was announced to sinners.
- * It was the day on which the church in Troas gathered for the communion (Acts 20:7).
- * It was the day the church in Corinth brought their gifts and offerings for God's Cause (I Cor. 16:1-2).

We do not observe the seventh day, sabbath because it was a part of the old covenant law that was taken out of the way

when nailed to the cross (Col. 2:14-17). The sabbath law was part of the ministration of death, written and engraven on stones which passeth away (II Cor. 3:7). We do not keep the sabbath because we are under the reign of Jesus and his New Covenant not Moses and the Old Covenant. We are to obey Christ in all things (Matt. 28:18, 20).

Jesus did worship on the Sabbath day because he was a Jew, who was born under the law and lived and died under it (Gal. 4:4). In his death he freed us from the law (Gal. 5:1). Today, those who seek to be justified by the law are severed from Christ and fallen away from grace (Gal. 5:4).

The Apostles went forth as missionaries bearing the gospel of Christ to lost humanity. Their mission was to go first to the Jews and then to the Gentiles (Rom. 1:16). To reach the Jews, they went to their synagogue services which provided a wonderful opportunity for them to preach the message that Christ had come and is now reigning at God's right hand.

The verses you cite tell us that Christ worshiped with his fellow-Hebrews on the sabbath and that the Apostles evangelized in Jewish synagogues on the Sabbath, But not one of them tell us or show us that following the ascension of Christ any congregation of Christians met for worship on the sabbath day. They communed on the first day, memorializing Christ's death and they gave their offerings on the first day. The first day was uniquely the Lord's Day because on that day he was raised. May I ask what your Sabbath day observance memorializes? **John Waddey**

FOSTER'S SECOND LETTER

Dear Mr. Waddey: The Sabbath day is a memorial of creation for it was created at creation and has been in existence long before there were Israelites to have a law. We know that there was sin even with Able and Cain. Sin is defined in I John 3:4 "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." So there had to be God's law in the beginning. It did not originate with Moses but with Christ.

Col 1:16 "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him."

You mentioned Matthew 28:20. It says that we are supposed to teach people the things that Jesus commanded us. What did He command us to do? Didn't He say to enter into life we were to keep the commandments and the fourth one is to keep the Sabbath day Holy? In Hebrews it says of the New Covenant that He will write His laws in our hearts and minds.

Heb 8:10: "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." It amazes me that people seem to forget that it was Jesus that gave the commandments. John 1:3, "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Only one more question. If Paul said that they were to make the collection for the saints on the first day of the week so that they wouldn't be doing it when he came, when was he coming? Also how about the festivals such as unleavened bread, that Paul said to keep in First Corinthians 11?

In John 20:1, Jesus is already risen before daylight on the first day of the week. He actually rose at sunset on the Sabbath as is easily proven and was in the ground for a full three days and three nights. So the argument that Jesus rose on the first day of the week is null and void.

When you quote Leviticus 23 you must realize that the only way to determine Pentecost every year is to count from the morrow after the Sabbath that occurs during the days of unleavened bread each year.

In Acts 20:7 the disciples had been observing the Sabbath with Paul and Paul continued to preach until midnight. They had been meeting on the Sabbath.

In Acts 13:44 Paul had the whole city come out to hear him the next Sabbath. **Foster**

JOHN WADDEY'S SECOND RESPONSE

Dear Foster: Thank you for sharing with me your thinking about the origin of the Sabbath day and verses you think establish your beliefs. To prove a point, the verse cited must bear on the subject at hand and it must be understood in its proper context. A verse taken out of its context can easily be twisted to say or prove things the sacred writer never had in mind.

* It is true that God rested on the seventh day (Gen. 2:1-3). It is true that men were capable of sin prior to the giving of the Law of Moses received at Sinai. We know when the Sabbath law was given to mankind. "Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments, and *madest known unto them thy holy sabbath*...by Moses thy servant" (Neh. 9:13-14). This fact explains why when the Hebrew was found gathering firewood on the sabbath day, the people did not know what to do to him, nor did Moses, until he received instructions from God (Num. 15:32-36). Perhaps you have noticed that you cannot find any account of the patriarchs keeping the sabbath, prior to the giving of the Law at Sinai.

* We can know that there has always been some form of divine law in the world, but we cannot know that sabbath observance was required prior to Moses' Law.

* Colossians 1:16 does declare that Christ created all things in heaven and upon earth. Then Paul lists the things he has in mind, "things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers." While this does prove that Christ created the heavens and earth and all things therein, that he created both men and angels, it says nothing about giving a Sabbath law prior to Moses' day.

* Yes, Jesus did say to the Rich Young Ruler, "Thou knowest the commandments" (Mark 10:19). But did you notice when the commandments are mentioned neither Mark nor Luke cite any reference to the Sabbath (Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20). Two points should be considered here: First you must always remember that Jesus was a Jew, born under the law and subject to the law (Gal. 4:4). When He died on Calvary he took the old law out of the way, nailing it to his cross (Col. 2:14). Included in the law taken out of the way, was the Sabbath law (Col. 2:16-17). Secondly, if you appeal to this event for proof that we today must keep the Sabbath, you must also go and divest yourselves of all your earthly goods and give them to the poor (Luke 18:22). Have you done that?

* If you will read carefully Hebrews 8:6-13 you will see that the writer is contrasting the Old Covenant Law of Moses with the New Covenant which he says is a better covenant (vs. 6). The Old Law was written on the two tablets of stone, but the laws of the New Covenant are written on our hearts. The meaning is a baby was born a Hebrew and subject to the Law of Moses. He had no choice in the matter. In Christ, no one is born a Christian, it is a decision that each one must make for himself. No one evangelized to make Jews, but to make Christians we must first preach the gospel to them (Mark 16:15). It is a mistake to assume that anytime you find the word law, it automatically is or includes the Sabbath law.

* In I Corinthians 16:1-2 Paul ordered the Christians to bring their gifts for the care of the needy on the first day of the week. That was the day when the disciples gathered together to break the bread of communion (Acts 20:7). When he said that they should do so, "that no collection be made when I come," it simply means that when he got to Corinth, regardless of the day or the hour, the funds would be ready for him to take on his journey to Jerusalem. It is unfounded assumption to say that he meant, so he could get them on the Sabbath day. Remember that we cannot prove something by words not spoken or reasons not given.

* As to the day of Christ's resurrection: You must know that the Jews counted time from sundown to sundown. John makes it crystal clear that it was "on the first day of the week," "while it was yet dark that Mary found his tomb empty (John 20:1). The same morning Peter and John rushed to the tomb saw with their own eyes (20:4-9). A short time later that morning Mary saw the two angels and Jesus spoke to her (20:11-18). Correct interpretation could never conclude that the first day means the Sabbath day. To say that is to impose your conclusion on the text of God's Word.

* You must acknowledge that Pentecost was always and only observed on a first day of the week. It is also a fact that the church had her beginning on that Pentecost first day. She has continued to worship on that first day as Acts 20:7 and I Cor. 16:1-2 clearly indicate.

* We do not dispute that Christians can assemble and worship on any day of the week including Saturday. Churches routinely do this when they have revival meetings and other extended gatherings. But to comply with Scripture, the Lord's Supper and the collection of offerings are reserved for the Lord's Day assembly.

* Please show me in Acts 20:1-7 where the Bible says the disciples had observed the Sabbath Day and then Paul preached? It is a common mistake of humanity to first assume a belief, doctrine or practice, then go to the Bible to try to prove it. You assume something to be the case when you have absolutely no evidence of it being the case. To rightly understand the Bible, we must read it and let the teaching clearly stated therein be the basis for our faith (Rom. 10:17).

* Yes, the people came out to hear Paul preach (Acts 13:44). He was a missionary preaching in Jewish synagogues,

market places, by river sides, in homes. He preached anywhere there was the potential of gathering an audience and he did so on any day of the week. But when a church was established, they assembled each first day of the week to commemorate Christ's resurrection and to perpetuate the day on which the church was founded.

* Please accept and consider these thoughts in the spirit in which I send them. We are two pilgrims trying to make our way to heaven by the grace of God. **John Waddey**

FOSTER'S THIRD LETTER

Dear John: To answer your response about the law. Abraham kept the law commandments and statutes of God long before the law was regiven to Moses. I said regiven because the Israelites had forgotten them after 430 years in Egypt.

Genesis 26:5, "Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."

I am still curious. I see where you see two examples that the people happened to be together on the first day of the week. However that was only two instances. There are many instances where they are meeting on the Sabbath. Paul also said it was his custom to go to the synagogue every week (Acts 17:2). We are also told in Acts 15 that the Gentiles have Moses read to them every Sabbath. In Hebrews it says there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God (Hebrews 4:9).

The Greek word used here is *Sabbatismo*, which means the Sabbath as opposed to the word *katapousis* which means to rest in the Lord. When Paul said not to be collecting when he comes in 1 Cor 16:2, which day is he coming on? It seems Paul excluded that day as any possibility of his being there. It could be any day but, (except) the first day of the week.

One other thing, and I will let you off the hook, Jesus used the example of Jonah for His sign because there could be no misconception about how long He would be in the grave. It was three full days and three full nights. Jesus was not raised on the first day of the week but was raised at sunset on the weekly Sabbath during the days of unleavened bread. Please follow this with me. Jesus had to be in the grave for three full days and three full nights. We must remember the days started then with the night at sunset so Wednesday night came before Wednesday day. He had Passover supper with His disciples and was betrayed after midnight on a Wednesday night. He was taken and crucified at 9am on Wednesday morning He died at 3 on Wednesday afternoon. He was placed in the grave at sunset on Wednesday. He was in the grave all Thursday night, and all Thursday day. That day happened to be the first day of Unleavened bread (John 19:31). It was a High Sabbath, or annual Sabbath. The women rested on the Sabbath day and then bought and prepared spices (Mark 16:10). They rested on Thursday and bought spices on Friday and prepared the spices (Luke 23:56). Then they prepared the spices and rested on the weekly Sabbath and were going to anoint Him on the first day of the week. So we see that Jesus was crucified on Wednesday, He was in the grave all Thursday night all day Thursday, all night Friday night, all day Friday day, all night Saturday night and all day SATURDAY and Jesus rose precisely at sunset on the Sabbath. It was not on the first day of the week. The women came before daylight and Jesus was gone. He was preparing to be offered as the wave sheaf offering of the first fruits on the morrow after the weekly Sabbath that occurs during the days of unleavened bread. He did that and then the disciples could touch and handle Him. Just because He first appeared to them after His resurrection on the first day of the week doesn't mean that is the day we are supposed to worship on. The Holy Spirit came on Pentecost and that is one of God's holy days. Does it not seem odd that the churches observe that holy day and not any of the others. Jesus is to return at the last trump, that is pictured by the festival of blowing of trumpets in the seventh month of God's calendar, Why do the churches not observe that one. It is going to be the most glorious day we have had yet. There is no evidence that I can see that we are at anytime enjoined to keep the first day

JOHN WADDEY'S THIRD RESPONSE

Dear Foster: Thank you for your letter and your explanation of your beliefs. I ask you to reflect on the many unfounded assumptions you find necessary in order to make your case.

* You **assume** that because Abraham “kept the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice” (Gen. 18:19) that therefore he kept the same laws given by God to Moses on Sinai. Yet, there is no evidence that Abraham kept the sabbath day, is there? If so please show it to me. You have not responded to, “Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right ordinances and true laws, good statutes and commandments, and *madest known unto them thy holy sabbath*...by Moses thy servant” (Neh. 9:13-14). Did or did not God make known to the Hebrews his holy sabbath by Moses? Yes or No?

* You **assume** that the sabbath law had been in existence from the beginning but was forgotten by the Hebrews while in Egypt. Can you show me a verse that says such a thing? Can you supply a verse that says Moses reissued the law on Sinai?

* When you read that Paul went to the Jewish synagogues, you **assume** it was the church worshiping on the sabbath day. Do you not understand that he went to the synagogues to preach the gospel, convert the Jews to Christ and the new way of Christianity. In those synagogues he found converts that were then organized to be the church in that community dedicated to serving Jesus Christ. In Acts 19:8-10 we see this very thing. Paul went to the synagogue and preached Christ. He separated the converts and began meeting at the School of Tyrannus.

* Since the example of the apostles going to Jewish synagogues is your proof for seventh day, sabbath worship, do you go to Jewish synagogues to worship Christ on the sabbath? If not why?

* Yes, some Gentiles did have the chance to hear Moses read on the sabbath (Acts 15:21). They were the proselytes and “God-fearers (Gentiles known as proselytes of the gate), who resorted to the synagogues to hear the reading of the Law and the teaching of the rabbis (Acts 13:15-16, 43). This says nothing about the church worshiping on the sabbath day, does it?

* Of course there is a Sabbath rest mentioned in Hebrews 4:9. However, it has nothing to do with weekly Sabbath worship. Note that the author contrasts the rest that Joshua gave the Hebrews and that which Christ gave us. The rest of which he speaks was that which the Hebrews enjoyed after 40 years of endless wandering in the wilderness. Our rest is that which we have in Christ (Matt. 11:28), specifically in heaven. For verse 10 of Hebrews 4 says, “For he that is entered into his rest hath himself also rested from his works as God did from his.” Now I take it that you and your brethren still work on six days of the week. Right? If that is the case you have not yet entered into the kind of rest envisioned here. In heaven our labors will all have ceased (Rev. 14:13). The word “Sabbath rest” is used not for a particular day of the week, but for its meaning; which is to rest by abstaining from labor.

* You **assume** that Jesus died and was buried late on Wednesday. That then forces you to **assume** he was raised on the evening of the Sabbath. This puts you in an awkward position. John the Apostle, who examined the empty tomb, says it was on “the first day of the week” that they found the tomb empty and saw the Lord (John 20:1-18). Foster says, No, it was on the Sabbath day that Jesus was raised. Now to which of these two testimonies should I subscribed?

* You would do yourself a favor if you would take time to study the Jewish custom of counting time. Especially you should note how they interpreted “cardinal (one, two, three) and ordinal (first, second, third)” numerals regarding days. When you say that you worship on the seventh day of the week, should I assume that you worship for 24 hours?

May God bless each of us as we search the Scriptures to discover God’s truth for our lives. **John Waddey**

FOSTER'S FOURTH LETTER

John: The fact that Nehemiah 9:13-14 says that God came down and gave the Commandments to Moses does not nullify the fact that they were in effect before Moses was born. It seems to me that you assume that God has more than one set of laws, commandments, and statutes. The verse you are looking for is in Exodus 16. You also make the assumption that He gave Moses a different set of Laws than Abraham kept. God told Moses, before Moses ever went up on Mount Sinai, (this in Exodus 16), “How long do you refuse to keep my laws and my commandments?” Are these different commandments and laws than He gave on Mount Sinai? The fourth commandment is to remember the Sabbath Day. Jesus said in Isaiah 66:23 that all the people would be keeping His Sabbaths after Jesus returns. Hebrews 13:8, “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.”

If God gave His Sabbath even if it was to Moses, and He doesn't change, and if His Sabbath is to be kept after His return Why would He do away with it in the middle? The verse that I quoted was in Genesis 26. not Genesis 18, which specifically states Laws, commandments and statutes. In Genesis 18:19 it says God knew that Abraham would be faithful to keep His law so that God could do what He had promised to do through Abraham.

You make a great deal about Paul meeting with the Gentiles and other Jews in the school in Acts 19 and I agree that they met in a school because the Jews threw them out of the synagogue. The Jews would not accept that Jesus was Messiah. but in Acts 18 he and the Gentiles were meeting in the Synagogue every Sabbath. Would you give me a scripture that specifically tells us to meet on the first day of the week? I have done extensive study on counting time in the Hebrew language, and on the Passover and resurrection of Jesus. Would you concede this one point, that when the apostles and women came to the tomb on the first day of the week Jesus was already gone. He never said that He rose on the first day of the week. It is recorded that when they got there He was gone.

You are assuming that because it was the first day of the week when they got there, that it was then that He arose. That is not the case at all as I have shown from the Scriptures.

John, I only bring this up because you referenced it. Please also show me one verse that says that we go to heaven. I haven't seen one verse that specifically says that. I know the verse that says that Jesus is preparing a place for us, but it says that where He is we will be also. That place is here on this earth. In the day He returns we will be changed into spirit beings and in that day His feet shall stand on the mount of olives (Zech. 14:4).

I'm enjoying our correspondence very much, However I feel you are getting frustrated. For that I apologize. **Foster**

JOHN WADDEY'S FOURTH RESPONSE

Dear Friend Foster: * Your statement regarding Nehemiah 9:13-14 is not becoming to you. You concede that the Bible says that God came down on Mt. Sinai and made known his holy Sabbath and then proceed to say in essence, I do not accept that as the fact of the matter. Either God did or did not come down on Mt. Sinai and reveal his holy sabbath. I know what God says and I know what you say. Which is more likely to be the truth of the matter? "Let God be found true and every man a liar" (Rom. 3:4).

* Of course God has had more than one set of laws and commandments (Heb. 1:1-2). In days past God commanded that men offer animal sacrifices in worship to him (Deut. 16:2). Do you offer animal sacrifices? If not, why do you not do so in the face of the command to do so? Has God's law changed regarding animal sacrifices? Yes or No?

* Moses made it crystal clear to the Hebrews they were receiving a new law from God. "Hear O Israel...Jehovah our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. Jehovah made not this covenant with our father, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day. Jehovah spake with you face to face in the mount..." (Deut. 5:1-4). This makes it clear that what Moses received on Sinai was something new compared to that which Adam, Abraham and his sons had. It also makes it clear that the Law of Moses was designed for and given to the Hebrew people, not to the Gentile nations.

* It is true that God instructed the Hebrews not to gather manna on the seventh day. They were to rest on that day. It was to be a holy day unto Jehovah (Ex. 16:22-30). Now the challenge before us is to reconcile these words with those of Nehemiah 9:13-14. Our options are these: We could conclude that either one or the other of the accounts is mistaken. This I reject and I suspect you would too. We could conclude that God instructed them not to gather manna on the seventh day, but **the Law that codified that** and other regulations was not revealed until it was given to Moses. Notice that when that Law was revealed it contained extensive explanations and applications for the recipients (Ex. 20:8-11).

* In Deuteronomy 5:15, God explained to the Hebrews why they were to abstain from work on the Sabbath and why they should extend that privilege to their servants and livestock. "And thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence...therefore (This is the reason for the forgoing statement) Jehovah thy God commandeth thee to keep the Sabbath day." Were you or your ancestors ever servants (slaves) in Egypt? Did God deliver you or your relatives from Egyptian servitude? Assuming you are a Gentile, may I ask why then are you keeping the sabbath?

* Please tell me to what extent you keep the Sabbath day given by Moses to the Hebrews. Do you travel to your place of worship? How far? Do you or your wife prepare food for meals on the sabbath? What does your church do when you find a brother or sister who has violated the Sabbath? (Num. 16:32-36). Do you stone them to death? If not why?

* If you insist on keeping the Law that includes the Sabbath day, tell me how you observe the rest of the Law of Moses? Do you offer animal sacrifices? Do you burn incense? Do you have a Levitical priesthood? Do you keep the other annual festivals, Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, Atonement? Do you keep the food laws? If not why?

* Are you sure you want to build your case on Isaiah 66:22? Do you expect to see dead carcasses of wicked people left to be eaten by worms and buzzards (Is. 66:22-24)? When the prophet says "from one new moon to another" what is his meaning? Could it be from one month to the next? If that is so, what is the meaning of from one Sabbath to another? It means from one week to the next. We could add day to day, or year to year. All of these mean "perpetually." If you say the dead carcasses rotting on display is figurative, I suggest so is the rest of this passage.

* You cite Zechariah 14:4 and from it conclude that heaven will be here on earth because Jesus will stand on the Mount of Olives. Looking at your proof-text, I read that "Jehovah cometh" (vs. 1), Jehovah shall go forth and fight against those nations..and his feet shall stand ...upon the mount of Olives" (vs. 3-4). May I ask how you deduce from this statement that Jesus will host our eternal home here on earth. Your logic runs thus. "I read that Foster is going to Rome. Therefore I know that John is going to Rome." Your conclusion does not follow. If you are counting on that as your heaven, read the rest of the chapter. It is not going to be pleasant experience. There will be earthquakes (vs. 5), darkness (vs. 6), plague (vs. 12) slow consuming death to many (vs. 12), war (vs. 13-14) you will be keeping the feast of tabernacles (vs. 19) which was observed by sleeping in temporary shelters called booths. Is this what you are looking forward to? In addition you earthly heaven is going pass away with a great noise and be dissolved with fervent heat (II Pet. 3:10). It is going to be burned with fire and melted with fervent heat (II Pet.3:12).

* I much prefer the heaven that is with the Father in his house (John 14:1-3) which is a place of glorious beauty, comfort, peace and rest...with no sickness or dying (Rev. 21:4).

* It is certainly true that Jesus is unchangeable (Heb. 13:8). Of course this refers to his moral and spiritual attributes. There was a time when he was not on earth in human form. He was conceived...a single ovum. Over nine months in his mother's womb he changed from one cell to a full term baby. From infancy, he changed to toddler, to a school age child, to a teen, to an adult. He changed from being subject to his parents to being an independent man who left home to pursue his mission. Following his death, he left this earthly realm and returned to his Father's throne. Following his death and resurrection he sent the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles into all the truth (John 16:13). What they wrote was the commandment of the Lord (I Cor. 14:37). His New Testament has not and will not change (Matt. 24:35). It will judge us in the last day (John 12:47-48). The Law of Moses will not be the standard of our judgment. It was taken out of the way, nailed to his cross (Col. 2:14-16).

* You say that God doesn't change, meaning that his Law for the sabbath has not changed. Since God's law has not change, please explain why you do not stone people to death who violate the sabbath day?

* It is still the case that Paul went to the synagogues to evangelize the Jews, not for Christian worship. Do you go to Jewish synagogues for your weekly worship? If not, why?

* Concerning the day of Christ's resurrection, remember, If I first assume my conclusion and then go to the Bible to prove I am right, I will find something somewhere that can be made to please me. But the problem with this approach is, that if your first assumption is wrong, the whole system is flawed. The only way to correctly understand what the Bible says is to read all it has to say on a given subject and duly note the details. Then, from those details you can safely draw a valid conclusion. Unfortunately, such an approach does not work well for Sabbath keeping.

* I too am enjoying our study. More than just enjoying, we must be seeking for the truth of God on this and every subject (John 8:32). I would request that you provide the verse along with your chapter reference in future letters, as it will expedite my response.

Have a good day. May we in our study, "Handle aright the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). God be with you.

John Waddey

FOSTER'S FIFTH LETTER

John: Lets look at what I said and what Nehemiah says (Neh 9 :13). "Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandest them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant" (vs. 14).

Just because it says that He made known to them the Sabbath doesn't in any way mean that it wasn't known before. No where in there does it say that the Sabbath was not known before the Israelites went into captivity in Egypt. I also showed you where in Exodus 16:28 "And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?" that they had knowledge of the commandments before Mount Sinai. There is no need to reconcile the passages in Nehemiah 9 and these scriptures. Why is it so hard to understand that in Nehemiah 9 he is stating that God made known to them the commandments. That doesn't mean they weren't in effect before. As we see in Nehemiah 8 they kept the feast of Tabernacles for the first time since Joshua. Nehemiah 8:17, "And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness."

What this shows is that they hadn't had knowledge of the law or God's festivals in the past. Thus it is an easy thing to forget what has been established in the past. Just a moment for a little common sense please. Why would God change the Commandments? They were written in Stone to show that they could not be changed. In Revelation 12 it says those who will be in God's kingdom are they who have the testimony of Jesus and keep the commandments. Why is it so hard for people to admit that God wants us to keep the commandments? Revelation 12:17, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

The Sabbath rest in Hebrews has everything to do with Sabbath rest. Hebrews 4:9, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." The Greek word used here is 4520 *sabbatismos sabbatismos sab-bat-is-mos'* from a derivative of *σάββατον*; TDNT-7:34,989; n m AV-rest 1; 1) a keeping sabbath. It is different from the other rest in God. In verse 82664 *katapauw katapauo kat-ap-ow'-o* from 2596 and 3973; TDNT-3:627,419; v AV-restrain 1, rest 1, give rest 1, cease 1; 4 1) to make quiet, to cause to be at rest, to grant rest These are two entirely different words with two different meanings. That is why Paul wrote there remains a rest for us. meaning a Sabbath rest. Hence the word *Sabbatismos*. We do not go to synagogue on the Sabbath.

We observe the Sabbath in our church building just as Paul did in Acts 19 with the Gentiles when they left the synagogue and went to the school. They were still observing the Sabbath. It doesn't say they worshiped on any other day.

We observe the Sabbath because it is the fourth of the ten Commandments. Deuteronomy 5:1-4 is a new agreement with the children of Israel that if they would do all His law they would receive material blessings. God did not make the material blessing covenant with Abraham, He made a different covenant with him. This covenant with the children of Israel was to be a peculiar people blessed above all nations. They were to be an example to the rest of the nations of the world. Deuteronomy 14:2 "For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth."

We do not stone people who do not keep it. God will judge. We observe it like Jesus did in the New Testament. There was no restriction on Sabbath activity except daily work you did to make a living. The additional laws of the Jews were never part of God's law anyway. We also observe the Holy annual Sabbaths like Jesus and the apostles did in the New Testament. We observe the food laws that the apostles observed in the New Testament. These are our examples we follow. Yes the law was changed in Hebrews. Hebrews 7:12, "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." That is why we observe the things that we find examples of in the New Testament.

Hebrews 1:1 "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." Hebrews 1:1-2 does not say He had other laws at any other time. It just says that He spoke to the prophets. and that Jesus spoke to us in this day. And Jesus said if you would enter into life, keep the commandments.

Matthew 19:17 "And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou

wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Which commandments? all of them. He summarized them like this. love God above all and love your brother as yourself. These are restatements from the Old Testament.

Deuteronomy 6:5 "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." Leviticus 19:34, "But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God."

We have a new high priest. Jesus fulfilled the sacrifices and offerings of the Law. No, we do not sacrifices because Jesus is our sacrifice. He is our Passover. I wonder if you have a foot washing service when you observe the Lord's supper? Jesus said He gave us an example that we were to follow. We observe the Passover service like Jesus did.

It's funny that you do not seem to understand what I said about Jesus' resurrection. I said that Jesus was gone when the apostles came to the tomb on the first day of the week. You say the tomb was empty when the apostles got there. That is what I also said. But you say He was resurrected on the first day of the week. That is not what the apostles said. They said He was already risen **when they got there** on the first day of the week.

Yes, there will be dead carcasses in the valley of destruction. It will take the buriers seven months to bury all the bodies. This world will be transformed into the garden of Eden during the thousand year reign of Jesus on this earth. by the way you haven't given me a scripture that says that anyone is going to go to heaven yet. I believe that Jesus said the meek shall inherit the earth. Didn't He also say that David would rule over the whole house of Israel in the kingdom of God. and isn't it odd that God in Revelation 21 is coming here with new Jerusalem, a city 1500 miles square, to this earth? It also says that after Jesus sets up the kingdom on earth that everyone will keep the feast of tabernacles or there will be plagues and droughts on them.

Zechariah 14:16, "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain."

Just to clarify a couple of points. maybe this will help you understand me better. It is my belief that Jesus our example. We are to live our lives as close to His example and the example of the apostles. We observe the Sabbath because it is commanded and Jesus and the apostles observed it. There is no scripture in the Bible that tells us to worship on any other day. In Romans it says that we are grafted into the tree that is Israel. We are spiritual Israel. We have God's law written in our hearts and minds. Please remember we do not have the law of the pharisees for they had made the law of none effect by their traditions. When Jesus came He magnified the law giving the spiritual intent of the law. We have searched the Scriptures to see what the apostles did observe and what they didn't and what Jesus said about the law and what He said about the Jews law. We found that Jesus restated the commandments and we show love to God by observing those things He said to do. John 14:1, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

We observe the festivals in the New Testament tradition, the Passover as Jesus observed it. We observe the rest of the festivals as they were outlined in the New Testament. We also observe clean and unclean animals as food sources. We believe that God had food laws in effect from the beginning. God told Noah to take two of every unclean animal and seven of every clean animal. Thus there God (Jesus) made distinction in food laws in Genesis before Abraham and before the flood. These things we observe. I hope this clears up a little confusion about what we believe. **Foster**

John: I was just looking at Acts 20.7 And <1161> upon <1722> the first <3391> **day of the week** <4521> (**This word means the Sabbath not the week.**), when the disciples <3101> came together <4863> (5772) to break <2806> (5658) bread <740>, Paul <3972> preached <1256> (5711) unto them <846>, ready <3195> (5723) to depart <1826> (5750) on the morrow <1887>; and <5037> continued <3905> (5707) his speech <3056> until <3360> midnight <3317>. When they came together This verse should read like this And upon the first of the Sabbath when the disciples <3101> came together to break bread Paul preached unto them ready to depart on the morrow and continued his speech until midnight When they came together. That is the first time I had looked at the Greek about this verse. (**Editor's note:** Foster is citing this from an unnamed Greek English study book). **Foster**

JOHN WADDEY'S FIFTH RESPONSE

Dear Foster: I hope this finds all well with you. I have been occupied with other things the last few days and am just now able to respond to your last two letters.

* Nehemiah says that God came down upon mount Sinai and "made them know unto them thy holy Sabbath..."

Foster says, not so, God made it known to them long before then.

Whom shall I believe? Nehemiah or Foster?

* You continue to confound the word "commandments" with the Sabbath law. David wrote that when God was creating the heavens and the seas "he commanded, and it stood fast" (Ps. 33:9). There we see God's commandment but it did not have anything to do with the Sabbath. Before you can assume the terms "commands or commandments" includes the Sabbath there has to be some clear indication that such is the case. You do not have such a clear indication for the pre-exodus period. You assume such to be the case, but assumption is not proof.

* It is true that God wrote his ten commandments on tables of stone but that was in c.a. 1440 B. C. not in Eden.

* Paul describes that which was written and engraven on stones as a "*ministration of death*" (II Cor. 3:7). He notes that we Christians have a new covenant; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. Moses gave Israel that ministration of death written and engraven on stones that which Moses gave them on tables of stone "passeth away" while our new covenant, given by the Spirit, remains in glory (II Cor. 3:10-11). Why do you prefer to cling to that system written on tables of stone which is a ministration of death?

* Later Paul says that Christ took "the bond written in ordinances (that was against us (Gentiles) out of the way, nailing it to the cross..." consequently, we are to let no man judge us in meat, or in drink or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day which are a shadow of things to come (Col. 2:14-17).

Paul says that no man has the right to judge me regarding meats (unclean), feast days (annual holy days such as Passover and Pentecost), or a sabbath day (Saturday observance).

But Foster says, to be acceptable to Christ, I must keep the food laws, feast days and sabbath day.

To which source should I pay heed? Foster or Paul?

* Have you noticed when reading the New Testament, that you can find nine of the ten commandments incorporated into the teaching of Christ and his apostles. But you cannot find a command to remember the Sabbath day. Can you explain the reason for this glaring omission? It is because Christ gave us a new day for worship, a day that would celebrate his resurrection (John 20:1), not the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage (Deut.5:15).

* The writer of Hebrews says that if Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken afterward of another day (Heb. 4:9). But Joshua did lead the Hebrews in keeping the seventh day Sabbath. So when he spoke "afterward of *another day*" he was speaking of something other than the seventh day Sabbath which they already had and observed. He spoke of our rest in Christ, now and in eternity. The writer continues, "Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest..." If, as you say, they were already keeping the Sabbath day, they would have no need to "enter into *that rest*." Would they?

* As in other places, you assume what is not stated in Acts 19. You assume that when Paul visited the Jewish synagogues for evangelistic purposes the church was meeting there for worship. You assume that when he separated the disciples and met in the school of Tyrannus it was a church building. You assume that when the church in Ephesus met for weekly worship it was on the Sabbath day. Yours is a faith built upon assumptions. Faith should be built upon the word of God, not our presuppositions (Rom. 10:17).

* I find it interesting that you select those portions of the Law you will observe and keep. You keep the Sabbath day but you forgo the punishment for disobeying it. You keep the food restrictions but you do not perform the animal sacrifices. You keep the holy days but you do not make the pilgrimages to Jerusalem. Is this approach, loving God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength?

* You are correct in saying Jesus is our High Priest. You concede that the law had to be changed before he could assume that office which Moses' Law had restricted to the family of Aaron the Levite (Heb. 7:12-14). Now if God could and did change one of his ancient laws, why is it impossible that he could change the day appointed for worship in the new age

of Christianity?

* Yes, Jesus is our Passover lamb. We have Paul's clear statement for that truth (1 Cor. 5:7). Please show me a clearly stated verse that says Christians are to worship God on the seventh day of the week.

* You did not respond to my point on Zechariah 14. You, from it, conclude that heaven will be here on earth because Jesus will stand on the Mount of Olives. Looking at your proof-text, I read that "Jehovah cometh" (vs.1), Jehovah shall go forth and fight against those nations..and his feet shall stand ...upon the mount of Olives" (vs. 3-4). May I ask how you deduce from this statement that Jesus will host our eternal home here on earth? Your logic runs thus. "I read that Foster is going to Rome. Therefore I know that John is going to Rome." Your conclusion does not follow. If you are counting on that as your heaven, read the rest of the chapter. It is not going to be pleasant experience. There will be earthquakes (vs. 5), darkness (vs. 6), plague (vs. 12) slow consuming death to many (vs. 12), war (vs. 13-14) you will be keeping the feast of tabernacles (vs. 19) which was observed by sleeping in temporary shelters called booths. Is this what you are looking forward to? Think what it will smell like if it takes seven months to bury all those corpses. Is that your heaven? In addition your earthly heaven is going pass away with a great noise and be dissolved with fervent heat (II Pet. 3:10). It is going to be burned with fire and melted with fervent heat (3:12). Does it not occur to you that this (Zech. 14) and similar passages in the prophets are highly figurative and not to be interpreted literally? Whatever it means, it refers to Jerusalem (vs. 2) and God's judgements on her. When Jerusalem is destroyed, the living waters of salvation will go out to all nations (14:8). God's enemies shall be destroyed and Messiah will reign as king over all the earth (14:9).

* We are agreed that Jesus is our example (I Pet. 2:21). The question is, do you, Foster, observe everything he did? Animal sacrifices were offered following his birth. He was circumcised. He worshiped in a Jewish synagogue. He went to the temple in Jerusalem for holy days. Do you do these things? If not why? We do not because they were part and parcel of Jesus' life as a Hebrew. He was born under the law (Gal. 4:4). With his death, he took the old law out of the way, nailing it to his cross (Col. 2:14-15). He gave us a new and better covenant (Heb. 8:6).

* Yes, Christians are the new spiritual Israel (Gal. 3:29). We have a new High Priest, a new covenant, a new worship and a new day on which to worship. The good olive tree of Romans 11 is not political Israel, it is spiritual Israel, those who have the faith of Abraham. That is why Jews who wish to be saved must be grafted in again to the good olive tree (11:17-24).

* You will be greatly helped in your studies when you understand that arguing from the silence of God proves nothing. To determine what God wants us to believe and do we must see what it is that he has told us either by command or an approved example. You reason, since God does not say, "Thou shalt not worship on the Seventh day sabbath, therefore it is authorized. Similarly, God does not say "Thou shalt not have hamburgers and fries for communion, therefore they are authorized. No, they are not! He has told us that the communion involves the bread and fruit of the vine. That is all we are authorized to use. We are told the disciples assembled on the first day to worship (Acts 20:7). That is authorization for our worship on the first day of the week.

* Regarding your note on Acts 20:7, I assume you are gathering your materials from **Strong's Concordance** and dictionary. Right? I suggest that the 200 or more scholars who have given us our standard Bible translations did not understand the Greek text as you suppose. They were chosen as translators because of their vast knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek languages used by the sacred writers. We who are not so gifted must be very careful lest we venture into waters above our heads and speak of things we know not. Remember any doctrine that requires you to rewrite the Bible to prove it is highly questionable.

Have a good day. **John Waddey**

FOSTER'S SIXTH LETTER

(Foster chose in this letter to cite quotations from my previous letter and then post his answer. My statements are set in quotation marks (" ") to distinguish them from his responses which are not.)

Hello John: I thought you had written me off your list. **I interspersed my responses after your comments.**

* "Nehemiah says that God came down upon mount Sinai and 'made them know unto them thy holy sabbath...'" It doesn't say that the Sabbath wasn't known before that time. Why do you assume it wasn't?

"Foster says, not so, God made it known to man long before then. Whom shall I believe? Nehemiah or Foster?" Don't believe me, believe the Bible.

* "You continue to confound the word 'commandments' with the Sabbath law." The Sabbath is the fourth commandment, How can you disagree with that?

"David wrote that when God was creating the heavens and the seas 'he commanded, and it stood fast' (Ps. 33:9)." That was a command from God, not one of the ten commandments. There we see God's commandment but it did not have anything to do with the Sabbath.

"Before you can assume the terms 'commands or commandments' includes the Sabbath there has to be some clear indication that such is the case. You do not have such a clear indication for the pre-exodus period." If there was sin and I think you agree that there was sin then there was law. And if Law then the Sabbath was included in that law. That is what sin is, the breaking of the law.

"You assume such to be the case, but assumption is not proof." You are assuming it is not and have no proof that it was not either.

* "It is true that God wrote his ten commandments on tables of stone but that was in c.a. 1440 B. C., not in Eden." God said Abraham kept His commandments statutes and laws. Deny this if you can.

* "Paul describes that which was written and engraven on stones as a 'ministration of death' (II Cor. 3:7). He notes that we Christians have a new covenant; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. Moses gave Israel that ministration of death written and engraven on stones That which Moses gave them on tables of stone 'passeth away while our new covenant, given by the Spirit remains in glory (II Cor. 3:10-11). Why do you prefer to cling to that system written on tables of stone which is a ministration of death?" I don't, I live in the New Covenant that says that He will write His laws in our hearts and minds. However, I, in the New Covenant, have the law written in my heart and mind. I keep them because I love God. You want to do away with them completely, Why?

* "Later Paul says that Christ took 'the bond written in ordinances (that was against us (Gentiles) out of the way, nailing it to the cross...' consequently, we are to let no man judge us in meat, or in drink or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day which are a shadow of things to come (Col. 2:14-17)." These are shadows of things to come. We observe these festivals in the New Testament tradition, including the Sabbath. We do this because in them we see the plan of God laid out and they are yearly reminders to us. We see that Jesus and the apostles kept them, therefore we keep them.

We find that Peter ate clean animals in Acts 10:14. God never said that we were to eat unclean animals. God made distinction in clean and unclean animals at the flood. Why do it then, if it weren't important to us. God knows what is good for us and what is not. It's not to kill you if you eat pig, but in the long run it will ruin your health. The same is true with eating any scavenger.

"Paul says that no man has the right to judge me regarding meats (unclean), feast days (annual holy days such as Passover and Pentecost), or a sabbath day (Saturday observance)." I'm not judging you in anything you do. There will be one that judges you and one that judges me. I judge no man. I merely asked you a question. Then I gave you my reasons for doing what I do.

“But Foster says, to be acceptable to Christ, I must keep the food laws, feast days and Sabbath day. To which source should I pay heed? Foster or Paul?” I never said that either. You are making false accusations.

* “Have you noticed when reading the New Testament, that you can find nine of the ten commandments incorporated into the teaching of Christ and his apostles. But you cannot find a command to remember the Sabbath day. Can you explain the reason for this glaring omission?” The word's “Sabbath day” are used 25 times in the New Testament. Paul said it was his custom to go into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. The reason that we do not see that particular commandment repeated is because it would be ludicrous to think anyone would break the Sabbath in that day and time. Everyone kept the Sabbath. Show me one command to keep the first day of the week. Even the Catholics think it is stupid for Protestants to keep the first day of the week because it was changed by the Catholic church. I have many quotes from the Catholics, Baptist, Methodist, and other church theologians that show that the Sabbath is the day we are supposed to keep.

“It is because Christ gave us a new day for worship, a day that would celebrate his resurrection (John 20:1), not the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage (Deut.5:15).” We went over when Christ was resurrected already, When they got to the tomb before daylight it was dark and He was gone. This does not tell us to worship on this day. You are making an assumption.

* “The writer of Hebrews says that if Joshua had given them rest, he would not have spoken afterward of another day (Heb. 4:9).” I'm sorry but you have misquoted this verse. Verse 8 says, “For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.” Vs. 9, There remaineth therefore a rest (*Sabbatismos*) 4520 *sabbatismov sabbatlsmos sab-bat-ls-mos*' from a derivative of 4521; TDNT-7:34,989; n m 1) a keeping sabbath to the people of God.

“But Joshua did lead the Hebrews in keeping the seventh day sabbath. So when he spoke “afterward of another day” he was speaking of something other than the seventh day sabbath which they already had and observed.” The word Joshua in Hebrews 4:8 refers to Jesus not to Joshua.

“He spoke of our rest in Christ, now and in eternity. The writer continues, “Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest...” If, as you say, they were already keeping the sabbath day, they would have no need to “enter into that rest.” Would they?” There are two words used here. One in 2663 *katapausiv katapausis kat-ap'-ow-sis* from 2664; TDNT-3:628,419; n f AV-rest 9; 9 1) a putting to rest 1a) calming of the winds 2) a resting place. This word is used in verse ten. But the word used in verse 9 definitely means Sabbath. There is a rest in God and there is a Sabbath rest. Christians should strive to enter into both.

* “As in other places you assume what is not stated in Acts 19. You assume that when Paul visited the Jewish synagogues for evangelistic purposes the church was meeting there for worship. You assume that when he separated the disciples and met in the school of Tyrannus it was a church building. You assume that when the church in Ephesus met for weekly worship it was on the sabbath day.” You assume it wasn't, you have no proof it wasn't on the Sabbath. We have Paul saying that it was his custom to worship on the Sabbath. What is your proof that it wasn't on the Sabbath. “Yours is a faith built upon assumptions. Faith should be built upon the word of God, not our presuppositions (Rom. 10:17).” I agree with your last statement. You should not base your faith on assumptions. As far as I can tell, your observance of the first day of the week has no merit at all. You say that it is instituted by Christ, but there is no scripture that Christ ever instituted this as an observance. You say that Paul observed the first day of the week but Paul said His custom was to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath. When He left the synagogue he went and taught in a college. It does not say it was on the first day of the week. Why would you assume it was?

* “I find it interesting that you select those portions of the Law you will observe and keep. You keep the Sabbath day but you forgo the punishment for disobeying it. You keep the food restrictions but you do not perform the animal sacrifices. You keep the holy days but you do not make the pilgrimages to Jerusalem. Is this approach, loving God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength?” We keep the things that were observed in the New Testament. And yes this is loving God with all our mind soul and strength. Jesus said where two or three are gathered in my name. I will be among them. There is no where that we are directed to go to Jerusalem for a pilgrimage. It says to observe these things where God has placed His name.

* “You are correct in saying Jesus is our High Priest. You concede that the law had to be changed before he could assume

that office which Moses Law had restricted to the family of Aaron the Levite (Heb. 7:12-14). Now if God could and did change one of his ancient laws, why is it impossible that he could change the day appointed for worship in the new age of Christianity?" I ask you to show me concrete scripture where Jesus changed the day of worship.

* "Yes, Jesus is our Passover lamb. We have Paul's clear statement for that truth (I Cor. 5:7). Please show me a clearly stated verse that says Christians are to worship God on the seventh day of the week." 2 John 1:5, "And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it." Do you believe John? Who's commandments are we to be walking after? God's commandments and the fourth is Keep the Sabbath Holy.

" You did not respond to my point on Zechariah 14. You, from it, conclude that heaven will be here on earth because Jesus will stand on the Mount of Olives. Looking at your proof-text , I read that 'Jehovah cometh' (vs.1), Jehovah shall go forth and fight against those nations..and his feet shall stand ...upon the mount of Olives' (vs. 3-4). May I ask how you deduce from this statement that Jesus will host our eternal home here on earth?" Revelation 20:6, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. It says in Zachariah 14 that all the earth will come to Jerusalem to worship the king. This is during His reign. Isaiah 9:6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:7 "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."

David's throne is on this earth. Jesus Himself said the meek shall inherit the earth. Nowhere in the Bible does it say that we are to go anywhere other than this earth. What it does say, is that Jesus is preparing a place for us so that where He is we will be also. He is coming back to this earth. In the end New Jerusalem will be on this earth descending from heaven with God the Father in that city (Rev. 21).

"Your logic runs thusly, 'I read that Foster is going to Rome. Therefore I know that John is going to Rome.' Your conclusion does not follow. If you are counting on that as your heaven, read the rest of the chapter. It is not going to be pleasant experience. There will be earthquakes (vs. 5), darkness (vs. 6), plague (vs. 12) slow consuming death to many (vs. 12), war (vs. 13-14), you will be keeping the feast of tabernacles (vs. 19) which was observed by sleeping in temporary shelters called booths. Is this what you are looking forward to?" Absolutely, If you have never kept the feast you have missed a great spiritual experience.

"Think what it will smell like if it takes seven months to bury all those corpses. Is that your heaven? In addition your earthly heaven is going pass away with a great noise and be dissolved with fervent heat (II Pet. 3:10). It is going to be burned with fire and melted with fervent heat (3:12). Does it not occur to you that this (Zech. 14) and similar passages in the prophets are highly figurative and not to be interpreted literally?" No! Whatever it means, it refers to Jerusalem (vs. 2) and God's judgements on her. When Jerusalem is destroyed, the living waters of salvation will go out to all nations (14:8). God's enemies shall be destroyed and Messiah will reign as king over all the earth (14:9). That is correct, the world is in for a terrible time. But the good news is this, God is going to take a thousand years to turn this earth around and make it a paradise. Read Isaiah's prophesies of the millennium. Jesus said in Matthew 24 that unless the time was cut short that there would be no flesh saved, (and that means alive.)

* "We are agreed that Jesus is our example (I Pet. 2:21). The question is, do you, Foster, observe everything he did? Animal sacrifices were offered following his birth. He was circumcised. He worshiped in a Jewish synagogue. He went to the temple in Jerusalem for holy days. Do you do these things?" We do not do sacrifices. Jesus is our sacrifice. We observe these festivals. We have church services on the Sabbath. There is no command to go to a Jewish synagogue We do observe these holy days. If not why?

"We do not because they were part and parcel of Jesus' life as a Hebrew. He was born under the law (Gal. 4:4). With his death, he took the old law out of the way, nailing it to his cross (Col. 2:14-15). He gave us a new and better covenant (Heb. 8:6)." What are the tenants of your new law? Please show me the scriptures that enumerate this new law.

* “Yes, Christians are the new spiritual Israel (Gal. 3:29). We have a new High Priest, a new covenant, a new worship and a new day on which to worship. The good olive tree of Rom. 11 is not political Israel, it is spiritual Israel, those who have the faith of Abraham. That is why Jews who wish to be saved must be grafted in again to the good olive tree (11:17-24).” You have that totally backward. Read it closely. Israel is the good tree. We as Gentiles are grafted in. We are warned that we must not condemn them because we are grafted in. Romans 11:17, “And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou (Gentiles, Romans), being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree” Romans 11:23, “And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.” God is going to graft the Jewish people in again.

* “You will be greatly helped in your studies when you understand that arguing from the silence of God proves nothing. To determine what God wants us to believe and do we must see what it is that he has told us either by command or an approved example. You reason since God does not say, “Thou shalt not worship on the Seventh day sabbath, therefore it is authorized. Similarly, God does not say “Thou shalt not have hamburgers and fries for communion, therefore they are authorized.” No, they are not! He has told us that the communion involves the bread and fruit of the vine. That is all we are authorized to use.

“We are told the disciples assembled on the first day to worship (Acts 20:7). That is authorization for our worship on the first day of the week.” Do you even read my responses? I covered this last time. Look at the Greek it says that at the first of the Sabbath they came together. This is what the scripture says. I cannot help that the translators screwed it up.

* “Regarding your note on Acts 20:7, I assume you are gathering your materials from Strong's Concordance and dictionary. Right? I suggest that the 200 or more scholars who have given us our standard Bible translations did not understand the Greek text as you suppose. They were chosen as translators because of their vast knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek languages used by the sacred writers. We who are not so gifted must be very careful lest we venture into waters above our heads and speak of things we know not. Remember any doctrine that requires you to rewrite the Bible to prove it is highly questionable.” Just like they screwed up and put Easter in the Scripture when it should be Passover. Acts 12:4, And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quarternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter (Passover) to bring him forth to the people. Right and when we stop studying and questioning we wind up like the millions of people following stupid traditions like Christmas and Easter with pagan backgrounds that God has said He hates. If that is insulting I apologize, but God said it I didn't .

Ezekiel 8:15, “Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these. And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD'S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshiped the sun toward the east.” Did you ever observe an Easter sunrise service?

Have a wonderful week John, I will be gone ... for the Feast of Tabernacles for the next two weeks. We save ten percent of our income to observe these feast each year. We eat great food, and wine and strong drink if we have the urge. But no one gets drunk. We try and do all things in balance.

I will be thinking of you. **Foster**

JOHN WADDEY'S SIXTH RESPONSE

Since Foster's last letter offer nothing new and provided no substantive responses to my arguments, we will conclude the discussion with three brief observations,

1. We agree that the King James translators were mistaken in rendering Pascha by “Easter.” It should read Passover which all subsequent translations provide.
2. As a New Testament Christian I do not participate in special Easter services since they are without biblical authority.

3. The passage in Ezekiel 8:15 refers not to an Easter worship service conducted at sunrise, but to the idolatrous practices that the Hebrews had borrowed from the pagan Canaanite worshipers who adored Baal the sun god.

END

(The following brief lessons will be helpful to anyone seeking to understand questions regarding Sabbath worship)

APPENDIX I

ARE WE UNDER THE OLD TESTAMENT?

(The root cause for confusion about Sabbath keeping is a failure to understand the relationship between the Old and New Testaments. If this is understood properly no person will be trying to worship God on the seventh day Sabbath.)

Intro: Must we obey the Old Testament commandments? Many churches and preachers will tell you yes. The careful student of the Bible knows we need not do so. The Old Testament was given to the Jewish nation (Ex. 20:2). It was their rule for worship and acceptable living. For 1450 years the Jews sought justification by the law of Moses. Every man found it impossible to live it perfectly. It condemned the violator (Gal. 3:10). It offered no permanent forgiveness of sins (Heb. 10:4). It could not justify the sinner (Gal. 3:11). The apostle called it a "yoke of bondage" (Gal. 3:11) and a ministration of death (II Cor. 3:7). In view of these facts, why would anyone desire to live by it?

The Old Testament is Not a Rule for Us Today. Jesus fulfilled it (Matt. 5:17). He took out of the way nailing it to His cross (Col. 2:14). "He taketh away the first (law) that He may establish the second" (Heb. 10:9). "If the first covenant (Old Testament) had been faultless then should no place have been sought for the second" (Heb. 8:7). Actually, the first covenant was perfect, but it demanded perfection in order to justify. This no man, save Christ, could give. Thus we read, "Finding fault with *them*...the Lord saith, I will make a new covenant" (Heb. 8:8). Now "Jesus is mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Heb. 8:6).

The New Testament of Christ is Our Only Rule. When Peter would equally honor Moses, Elijah and Christ, God said, "This is my beloved Son...hear ye Him" (Matt. 17:5). "God hath spoken unto us in His Son" (Heb. 1:1). The words of Christ will judge us in the last day (John 12:48). The New Testament is the good news of salvation (Rom. 1:16). It offers grace, mercy and forgiveness (Heb. 8:8-12). It presents Jesus as our high priest and his blood as our sin offering (Heb. 11-12). It gives us all things that pertain to life and godliness (II Pet. 1:3). It makes us complete, thoroughly furnished unto every good work (II Tim. 3:16).

The Old Testament is God's Word. It was the law for ages past. We read it and benefit (Rom. 15:4). But the New Testament is the guide for us today. Read and obey it for salvation and acceptable service to God. **JHW**

APPENDIX II

SHOULD WE KEEP THE SABBATH DAY?

Intro: This question is posed by many. Biblical answers to the four questions below will provide a reliable answer to questions regarding the proper day of worship.

I. **To whom was the Sabbath given?** To the Hebrews only! Moses said, "...God made a covenant with us (Hebrews) in Horeb, not...with our fathers, but with us...who are...here alive this day...I am Jehovah...who brought thee out of the land of Egypt...therefore...thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day" (Deut. 5:2-15). One cannot read of God imposing the Sabbath on any people but the Hebrews.

II. **When was the Sabbath given?** In the wilderness of Sin, after Israel's escape from Egypt (Ex. 16:1, 23). This was a new experience. It had to be made known unto them. When a man broke the Sabbath, they had to ask what to do unto him (Num. 15:32-36). There was no Sabbath day for man prior to 1450 B. C.

III. **Why was the Sabbath given?** "...It is a sign between me and you (Hebrews)...that ye may know that I am Jehovah who sanctifieth you" (Ex. 31:13). Also the Sabbath helped them remember their servitude in Egypt and how God delivered them (Deut. 5:15).

IV. **Are we to observe the seventh day?** No! God told Israel to keep the Sabbath for a perpetual covenant (Ex. 31:16). But he also said, "I will also cause all her mirth to cease...and her Sabbaths" (Hos. 2:11). In setting up his kingdom, Christ abolished the entire Old Covenant (Eph. 2:14-15). This included the Sabbath! Paul says, He took the old law out of the way, nailing it to the cross. Therefore we should let no man judge us in respect of a Sabbath day (Col. 2:14-16). Jesus gave us a new covenant (Heb. 9:15). It does not bind the Sabbath.

The following rules were enforced on the Sabbath day: *Do no work (Ex. 20:9-10). *Gather no food and no cooking (Ex. 16:23-26). * Buy no food (Neh. 10:31). *Build no fire (Ex. 35:3). * Bear no burden (Jer. 17:21-22). * Could not leave the city (Neh. 13:19). * Stay near home (Ex. 16:29). * Two lambs were offered by the congregation for sacrifice (Num. 28:9-10). * Worship was by the law of Moses (Acts 15:21). * Violators were put to death (Ex. 31:14). Are there any "Sabbath keepers" that observe the Sabbath according to God's word?

Conclusion: Early Christians worshiped on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2). On this day faithful Christians worship God in the 21st century. **JHW**

APPENDIX III

IS SUNDAY THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH DAY?

Mr. Waddey: Is Sunday our Christian Sabbath Day? Is it wrong for us to work on Sunday? M. J.

Dear M. J.: Thank you for writing. If we were Jews living under the old covenant, we would be forbidden to do any menial or servile work on the Sabbath Day (Ex. 20:8-10). But we are not Jews and we do not live under the Law of Moses. We are Christians, living under the reign of Christ and his New Covenant. In his death on the cross, Christ took the Old Law out of the way, nailing it to the cross. Consequently we are to let no man judge us in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day which were a shadow of things to come, but the body (the reality) is Christ (Col. 2:14-17). We are to obey all things Christ commanded (Matt. 28:20).

As we examine the New Covenant, we find incorporated within it nine of the Ten Commandments, but not the Sabbath law. Christ did not tell us to treat the First Day of the Week as a sabbath (i.e. a day of rest) nor did he order us to abstain from work on that day. Our obligation on the First Day is to worship God and remember Christ's death and suffering in the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:24-26; Acts 20:7). Having done that, we can use the day for other legitimate purposes. For some that would be work, for others recreation. Others might visit with family and friends. Some might use it to rest.

Some try to make the Lord's Day "the Christian Sabbath Day" and insist that Christian not work on that day. But they ignore other stringent prohibitions of the Mosaic Sabbath law, especially the penalty for violation of the sabbath. No food was to be prepared for eating on the Sabbath day (Ex. 16:22-29). No fuel for fire was to be collected on that day (Num. 15:32-36). The penalty for violating the Sabbath was death (Num. 15:32-36). We are not free to pick and choose the portions of God's law we wish to observe.

Given all the above, there is nothing wrong if you wish to spend the First Day of the week resting (Rom. 14:5-6). We can all profit from a day of rest out of each week. But neither is there anything wrong if a brother works or plays on that day, so long as he takes time to worship the Lord. **JHW**