

**HISTORICAL
QUOTATIONS
ON
SABBATH / LORD'S DAY
OBSERVANCE**

COMPILED BY

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The following compilation grew out of research done in connection with a college course on "Cults," that involved a discussion of the "Sabbath" question. Besides a thorough study of the pertinent Old and New Testament passages relating to the observance of the Sabbath Day and Lord's Day, it was decided to consult the writings of the "Church Fathers" to determine the thinking of people during the first few centuries of Christianity.

To accomplish this project the indexes of The Ante-Nicene Fathers, published by Eerdmans Publishing Company (and several other writings) were carefully consulted. Key words used in the twenty-seven items in the following "Table of Contents" were then checked to see what each writer had to say about them. Photo copies were made of the pages containing relevant quotations, together with their contexts. The result was a long list of photocopied quotations on nearly every facet touching on the controversy surrounding Sabbath or Lord's Day observance.

For many years these photo copied pages were kept in a loose-leaf notebook, then utilized whenever the college class was taught or when the need arose to furnish them to others. Recently, when becoming aware of Charles Dailey's course on the Book of Acts making use of a few of these quotations, he and I discussed putting a fuller treatment of the subject into print. Charles graciously consented to access the quotes and format them into the following pages. (The material is also available on Charles' web site: <http://www.worldaccessnet.com/~cdailey/sabbath>)

To make the best use of the material the student should first look over the "Table of Contents" list carefully. Then note that following the name of each ancient writer in the body of the work, there appears the word "Significance," with corresponding numbers and descriptions. These alert the reader to the quotation below as containing, especially in the bold face type portion, a significant statement concerning what was believed, taught or practiced by professing Christians at that time in history.

It is hoped that making these quotations available to others in this format will aid their study of the subject and furnish a greater understanding of this controversial topic.

--- William E. Paul
Lincoln's birthday, 1999

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SOURCES:

- Barker, William P., *Who's Who in Church History* (Baker Book House, 1977)
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 Cairns, Earle B., *Christianity Through the Centuries* (Zondervan Pub. House, 1977)
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 Ferguson, Everett, *Early Christians Speak*, (Sweet Publishing Co., 1971)

The Transition from Sabbath to the Lord's Day

The Church was born in a Jewish environment and those who were part of it had a Jewish heritage.¹ Without a doubt, the Jews who accepted Jesus as the Messiah of Israel continued to attend the Jewish synagogue on the Sabbath day. But they had their own meetings, too.² At first they met in the Temple areas and in homes.³ In other communities away from Jerusalem, the Jewish Christians continued with attending the synagogue, such as the case of Ananias.⁴ The focus of the early Church was never on what day to meet, it was on the tremendous truth that Jesus of Nazareth had arisen from the grave and now reigns from heaven over His willing subjects.

But after a few years, the separation and distinction from the synagogue became clear. As pagan Gentiles were added to the Church, they did not have a Sabbath-keeping heritage. By Acts 20, the church clearly had its own first day of the week meeting.⁵ The writers quoted in the following page vary a little on their view of continuing with the Sabbath. Ignatius, in his long version, seems to allow room for some minor Sabbath observance, but the main focus was the Lord's Day.⁶ Likewise, the *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles* allows Sabbath observance yearly.⁷

To say the newborn Church abruptly began meeting on the first day of the week and discontinued meeting with the synagogue on the Sabbath day cannot be supported in the transition period early in Acts. But to say that the Church continued to meet with the synagogue as it reached beyond the limits of Judaism is also contrary to the written record. Finally, all doubt is removed as we read the instructions of church leaders in the years beginning about A. D. 100 and continuing for several centuries.

— Charles Dailey, 1999.

¹ Acts 2:5.

² Acts 2:42-47; 4:32; 5:1-15; 6:1-6.

³ Acts 2:46.

⁴ Acts 22:12.

⁵ Acts 20:7.

⁶ Page one of these notes.

⁷ Page 11, center of page.

Ignatius: [? - about A.D. 117; Bishop of Antioch of Syria; Wrote about A.D. 110-115]

Significance: 1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.
2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.
6. Sabbath day was different from the Lord's day.

Short version:

If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's Day, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him and by His death--whom some deny, by which mystery we have obtained¹

Significance: 1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.
2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.
3. Lord's day was the day after the Sabbath day (Sunday).
4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."
5. Lord's day was "the eighth day."

Long Version:

Let us therefore no longer keep the Sabbath after the Jewish manner, and rejoice in days of idleness. . . . But let every one of you keep the Sabbath after a spiritual manner And after the observance of the Sabbath, **let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's Day as a festival, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all the days** [of the week]. Looking forward to this, the prophet declared, "To the end, for the eighth day,"[2] on which our life both sprang up again, and the victory over death was obtained in Christ"²

Let us therefore no longer keep the Sabbath after the Jewish manner, and rejoice in days of idleness; for "he that does not work, let him not eat." For say the [holy] oracles, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread." But let every one of you keep the Sabbath after a spiritual manner, rejoicing in meditation on the law, not in relaxation of the body, admiring the workmanship of God, and not eating things prepared the day before, nor using lukewarm drinks, and walking within a prescribed space, nor finding delight in dancing and plaudits which have no sense in them. **And after the observance of the Sabbath, let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's Day as a festival, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all the days** [of the week]. Looking forward to this, the prophet declared, "To the end, for the eighth day," **on which our life both sprang up again, and the victory over death was obtained in Christ,** whom the children of perdition, the enemies of the Saviour, deny, "whose god is their belly, who mind earthly things,"

¹ CD ANF-01, Acrobat Page 48, bottom.

The *Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians*, Chapter 9, Page 62, Volume 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan

² CD ANF-01, Acrobat Page 48 - 49.

The *Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians*, Chapter 9, Page 62-63, Volume 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan

who are "lovers of pleasure, and not lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." ¹

Significance: 4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."
6. Sabbath day was different from the Lord's day.

On the day of the preparation, then, at the third hour, He received the sentence from Pilate, the Father permitting that to happen; at the sixth hour He was crucified; at the ninth hour He gave up the ghost; and before sunset He was buried. **During the Sabbath He continued under the earth in the tomb in which Joseph of Arimathaea had laid Him. At the dawning of the Lord's day He arose from the dead,** according to what was spoken by Himself, "As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man also be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." **The day of the preparation, then, comprises the passion; the Sabbath embraces the burial; the Lord's Day contains the resurrection.** ²

Significance: 6. Sabbath day was different from the Lord's day.

If any one fasts on the Lord's Day or on the Sabbath, except on the paschal Sabbath only, he is a murderer of Christ. ³

Barnabas: [? - ?; Unknown person, not New Testament Barnabas; Wrote after A.D. 130?]

Significance: 1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.
5. Lord's day was "the eighth day."
7. Sabbath day and eighth day were different.
8. Eighth day was "the resurrection day."

A. Further, He says to them, "Your new moons and your Sabbaths I cannot endure."Ye perceive how He speaks: **Your present Sabbaths are not acceptable to Me, but that is which I have made, [namely this,] when, giving rest to all things, I shall make a beginning of the eighth day, that is, a beginning of another world. Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead.** And when He had manifested Himself, He ascended into the heavens. ⁴

¹ CD ANF-01, Acrobat Page 49, top.
The *Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians*, Chapter 9, Page 63. Volume 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

² CD ANF-01, Page 56.
Epistle of Ignatius to the Trallians, Chapter 9, Page 70, Volume 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

³ CD ANF-01, Page 101.
Epistle of Ignatius to the Philippians, Chapter 13, Page 119, Volume 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

⁴ CD ANF-01, Page 123.
Epistle of Barnabas, Chapter 15, Page 147, Volume 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles: [Writer unknown; Wrote A.D. 90 - 120?]

- Significance:
- 2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.
 - 9. Breaking of bread (the Lord's Supper) was partaken of on Lord's day.
 - 10. Breaking of bread (the Lord's Supper) was partaken of on every Lord's day.
 - 23. Christians assembled every Lord's Day.

CHAP. XIV -- CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY ON THE LORD'S DAY.

But every Lord's day do ye gather yourselves together, and break bread, and give thanksgiving after having confessed your transgressions, that your sacrifice may be pure. But let no one that is at variance with his fellow come together with you, until they be reconciled, that your sacrifice may not be profaned. For this is that which was spoken by the Lord: In every place and time offer to me a pure sacrifice; for I am a great King, saith the Lord, and my name is wonderful among the nations.¹

Justin: [A.D. 100 - 165; Christian teacher/author; Wrote after A.D. 150]

- Significance:
- 2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.
 - 11. Sunday was the day Christians met.
 - 12. Breaking of bread (the Lord's Supper) was partaken of on Sunday.
 - 13. Sunday was "the resurrection day."
 - 15. Resurrection day was the day after the Sabbath day.

And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, **bread and wine and water are brought,** and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, **and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons.** And they who are well to do, and willing, give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succours the orphans and widows and those who, through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds and the strangers sojourning among us, and in a word takes care of all who are in need. **But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead. For He was crucified on the day before that of Saturn (Saturday); and on the day after that of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, having appeared to His apostles and disciples, He taught them these things, which we have submitted to you also for your consideration.**²

¹ CD ANF-07, Page 421.

The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, Chapter 14, Page 381, Volume 7, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

² CD ANF-01, Page 152.

The First Apology of Justin, Chapter 67, Page 186, Volume 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

Significance: 1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.

And when they ceased, I again addressed them thus:--

"Is there any other matter, my friends, in which we are blamed, than this, that we live not after the law, and are not circumcised in the flesh as your forefathers were, **and do not observe sabbaths as you do?** Are our lives and customs also slandered among you? And I ask this: have you also believed concerning us, that we eat men; and that after the feast, having extinguished the lights, we engage in promiscuous concubinage? Or do you condemn us in this alone, that we adhere to such tenets, and believe in an opinion, untrue, as you think?" ¹

Significance: 12. Breaking of bread (the Lord's Supper) was partaken of on Sunday.
15. Resurrection day was the day after the Sabbath day.
16. First day after the Sabbath (Sunday) was the eighth day.
19. First day of the week was resurrection day.

He then speaks of those Gentiles, namely us, who in every place offer sacrifices to Him, i.e., **the bread of the Eucharist, and also the cup of the Eucharist,** affirming both that we glorify His name, and that you profane [it]. The command of circumcision, again, bidding [them] always circumcise the children on the eighth day, was a type of the true circumcision, by which we are circumcised from deceit and iniquity through **Him who rose from the dead on the first day after the Sabbath,** [namely through] our Lord Jesus Christ. **For the first day after the Sabbath, remaining the first of all the days, is called, however, the eighth, according to the number of all the days of the cycle, and [yet] remains the first.** ²

Significance: 1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.

"There are such people, Trypho," I answered; "and these do not venture to have any intercourse with or to extend hospitality to such persons; but I do not agree with them. **But if some, through weak-mindedness, wish to observe such institutions as were given by Moses, from which they expect some virtue, but which we believe were appointed by reason of the hardness of the people's hearts, along with their hope in this Christ, and [wish to perform] the eternal and natural acts of righteousness and piety, yet choose to live with the Christians and the faithful, as I said before, not inducing them either to be circumcised like themselves, or to keep the Sabbath, or to observe any other such ceremonies, then I hold that we ought to join ourselves to such, and associate with them in all things as kinsmen and brethren.**" ³

¹ CD ANF-01, Page 167.
Justin Martyr's *Dialog With Trypho*, Chapter 10, Page 199, Volume 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

² CD ANF-01, Page 183.
Justin Martyr's *Dialog With Trypho*, Chapter 41, Page 215, Volume 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

³ CD ANF-01, Page 186.
Justin Martyr's *Dialog With Trypho*, Chapter 47, Page 218, Volume 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

Theophilus of Antioch: [A.D. 115-181; Bishop of Antioch of Syria; Wrote after A.D. 180.]

Significance: 17. Sabbath day was the seventh day.
24. Sabbath day was observed by the Jews.

For even if any truth seems to have been uttered by them, it has a mixture of error. And as a deleterious drug, when mixed with honey or wine, or some other thing, makes the whole [mixture] hurtful and profitless; so also eloquence is in their case found to be labour in vain; yea, rather an injurious thing to those who credit it. **Moreover, [they spoke] concerning the seventh day, which all men acknowledge but the most know not that what among the Hebrews is called the "Sabbath," is translated into Greek the "Seventh" (ἑβδομάς), a name which is adopted by every nation, although they know not the reason of the appellation.**¹

Irenaeus: [A. D. 140 - 202; Missionary/Bishop of Gaul; Wrote A. D. 182 - 188.]

Significance: 11. Sunday was the day Christians met.
13. Sunday was "the resurrection day."

For neither could Anicetus persuade Polycarp to forego the observance [in his own way], inasmuch as **these things had been always [so] observed by John the disciple of our Lord, and by other apostles with whom he had been conversant;** nor, on the other hand, could Polycarp succeed in persuading Anicetus to keep [the observance in his way], for he maintained that he was bound to adhere to the usage of the presbyters who preceded him. And in this state of affairs they held fellowship with each other; and Anicetus conceded to Polycarp in the Church the celebration of the Eucharist, by way of showing him respect; so that they parted in peace one from the other, maintaining peace with the whole Church, both those who did observe [this custom] and those who did not.²

This [custom], of not bending the knee upon Sunday, is a symbol of the resurrection, through which we have been set free, by the grace of Christ, from sins, and from death, which has been put to death under Him.³

¹ CD ANF-02, Page 81.
Theophilus to Autolycus, Book 2, Chapter 12, Page 99, Volume 2, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

² CD ANF-01, Page 527.
Fragments from The Lost Writings of Irenaeus, Chapter 3, Page 569, Volume 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

³ CD ANF-01, Page 527.
Fragments from The Lost Writings of Irenaeus, Chapter 7, Page 569, Volume 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

Clement of Alexandria: [A.D. 150 - 215; Christian philosopher/writer; Wrote after A.D. 190.]

Significance: 2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.
4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."
5. Lord's day was "the eighth day."

And the Lord's day Plato prophetically speaks of in the tenth book of the Republic, in these words: "And when seven days have passed to each of them in the meadow, on the eighth they are to set out and arrive in four days." By the meadow is to be understood the fixed sphere, as being a mild and genial spot, and the locality of the pious; and by the seven days each motion of the seven planets, and the whole practical art which speeds to the end of rest. But after the wandering orbs the journey leads to heaven, that is, to the eighth motion and day. And he says that souls are gone on the fourth day, pointing out the passage through the four elements. **But the seventh day is recognised as sacred, not by the Hebrews only, but also by the Greeks;** according to which the whole world of all animals and plants revolve. ¹

The same holds of pleasure. For it is the highest achievement for one who has had trial of it, afterwards to abstain. For what great thing is it, if a man restrains himself in what he knows not? **He, in fulfilment of the precept, according to the Gospel, keeps the Lord's day, when he abandons an evil disposition, and assumes that of the Gnostic, glorifying the Lord's resurrection in himself.** ²

Tertullian: [A.D. 160 - 230?; North African priest/writer; Wrote A.D. 196-212.]

Significance: 1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.
11. Sunday was the day Christians met.

But you, many of you, also under pretence sometimes of worshipping the heavenly bodies, move your lips in the direction of the sunrise. **In the same way, if we devote Sun-day to rejoicing, from a far different reason than Sun-worship, we have some resemblance to those of you who devote the day of Saturn to ease and luxury, though they too go far away from Jewish ways, of which indeed they are ignorant.**³

Significance: 1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.

Who can maintain or defend this? **The Holy Spirit upbraids the Jews with their holy-days. "Your Sabbaths, and new moons, and ceremonies," says He, "My soul hateth." By us, to whom Sabbaths are strange,** and the new moons and festivals formerly beloved by God, the Saturnalia and New-year's and

¹ CD ANF-02, Page 436
The Stromata, or Miscellanies, Book 5, Chapter 14, Page 469, Volume 2, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

² CD ANF-02, Page 512
The Stromata, or Miscellanies, Book 7, Chapter 12, Page 545, Volume 2, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

³ CD ANF-03, Page 17.
Tertullian, *Apology*, Chapter 16, Page 31, Volume 3, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

Midwinter's festivals and Matronalia are frequented -- presents come and go -- New-year's gifts -- games join their noise--banquets join their din! ¹

Significance: 2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.

Oh better fidelity of the nations to their own sect, which claims no solemnity of the Christians for itself! Not the Lord's day, not Pentecost, even if they had known them, would they have shared with us; for they would fear lest they should seem to be Christians. ²

Significance: 2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.
20. Eucharist (the Lord's Supper) was partaken of on the Lord's day.

We take also, in congregations before daybreak, and from the hand of none but the presidents, the sacrament of the Eucharist, which the Lord both commanded to be eaten at meal-times, and enjoined to be taken by all alike. As often as the anniversary comes round, we make offerings for the dead as birthday honours. **We count fasting or kneeling in worship on the Lord's day to be unlawful.** We rejoice in the same privilege also from Easter to Whitsunday.³

Significance: 1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.
11. Sunday was the day Christians met.

CHAP. XIII.(1)--THE CHARGE OF WORSHIPPING THE SUN MET BY A RETORT.

Others, with greater regard to good manners, it must be confessed, **suppose that the sun is the god of the Christians, because it is a well-known fact that** we pray towards the east, or **because we make Sunday a day of festivity.** What then? Do you do less than this? Do not many among you, with an affectation of sometimes worshipping the heavenly bodies likewise, move your lips in the direction of the sunrise? **It is you, at all events, who have even admitted the sun into the calendar of the week; and you have selected its day, in preference to the preceding day as the most suitable in the week for either an entire abstinence from the bath, or for its postponement until the evening, or for taking rest and for banqueting. By resorting to these customs, you deliberately deviate from your own religious rites to those of strangers. For the Jewish feasts are the Sabbath and "the Purification," and Jewish also are the ceremonies of the lamps, and the fasts of unleavened bread, and the "littoral prayers," all which institutions and practices are of course foreign from your gods. Wherefore, that I may return from this digression, you who reproach us with the sun and Sunday should consider your proximity to us. We are not far off from your Saturn and your days of rest.** ⁴

¹ CD ANF-03, Page 60.
Tertullian, *On Idolatry*, Chapter 14, Page 70, Volume 3, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

² CD ANF-03, Page 60.
Tertullian, *On Idolatry*, Chapter 14, Page 70, Volume 3, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

³ CD ANF-03, Page 84.
Tertullian, *The Chaplet, or De Corona*, Chapter 3, Page 94, Volume 3, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

⁴ CD ANF-03, Page 114.
Tertullian, *Ad Nationes*, Chapter 13, Page 123, Book 1, Volume 3, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

Significance: 1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.

And let us not annul this power which God has, which reforms the law's precepts answerably to the circumstances of the times, with a view to man's salvation. **In fine, let him who contends that the Sabbath is still to be observed** as a balm of salvation, and circumcision on the eighth day because of the threat of death, teach us that, **for the time past, righteous men kept the Sabbath**, or practised circumcision, and were thus rendered "friends of God."¹

Significance: 1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.
17. Sabbath day was the seventh day.
21. Christians were to observe an "eternal Sabbath."

It follows, accordingly, that, in so far as the abolition of carnal circumcision and of the old law is demonstrated as having been consummated at its specific times, **so also the observance of the Sabbath is demonstrated to have been temporary.**

For the Jews say, that from the beginning God sanctified the seventh day, by resting on it from all His works which He made; and that thence it was, likewise, that Moses said to the People: "REMEMBER the day of the sabbaths, to sanctify it: every servile work ye shall not do therein, except what pertaineth unto life. **Whence we (Christians) understand that we still more ought to observe a sabbath from all "servile work" always, and not only every seventh day, but through all time. And through this arises the question for us, what sabbath God willed us to keep? For the Scriptures point to a sabbath eternal and a sabbath temporal.** For Isaiah the prophet says, "Your sabbaths my soul hateth;" and in another place he says, "My sabbaths ye have profaned." **Whence we discern that the temporal sabbath is human, and the eternal sabbath is accounted divine;** concerning which He predicts through Isaiah: "And there shall be," He says, "month after month, and day after day, and sabbath after sabbath; and all flesh shall come to adore in Jerusalem, saith the Lord;" **which we understand to have been fulfilled in the times of Christ**, when "all flesh"--that is, every nation--"came to adore in Jerusalem" God the Father, through Jesus Christ His Son, as was predicted through the prophet: "Behold, proselytes through me shall go unto Thee."**Thus, therefore, before this temporal sabbath, there was withal an eternal sabbath foreshown and foretold;** just as before the carnal circumcision there was withal a spiritual circumcision foreshown. In short, let them teach us, as we have already premised, that Adam observed the sabbath; or that Abel, when offering to God a holy victim, pleased Him by a religious reverence for the sabbath; or that Enoch, when translated, had been a keeper of the sabbath; or that Noah the ark-builder observed, on account of the deluge, an immense sabbath; or that Abraham, in observance of the sabbath, offered Isaac his son; or that Melchizedek in his priesthood received the law of the sabbath.²

¹ CD ANF-03, Page 142.

Tertullian, *An Answer to the Jews*, Chapter 3, Page 153, Volume 3, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

² CD ANF-03, Page 144.

Tertullian, *An Answer to the Jews*, Chapter 4, Page 155, Volume 3, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

- Significance: 8. Eighth day was “the resurrection day.”
15. Resurrection day was the day after the Sabbath day.

In the matter of kneeling also prayer is subject to diversity of observance, through the act of **some few who abstain from kneeling on the Sabbath**; and since this dissension is particularly on its trial before the churches, the Lord will give His grace that the dissentients may either yield, or else indulge their opinion without offence to others. **We, however (just as we have received), only on the day of the Lord's Resurrection** ought to guard not only against kneeling, but every posture and office of solicitude; deferring even our businesses lest we give any place to the devil.¹

As for ourselves, according to our tradition, only on the day (which commemorates) our Lord's Resurrection should we refrain from this custom; . . . (Editor: of kneeling to pray.)²

Bardesian: [A.D. 154 - 223; Christian teacher of Edessa; Wrote after A.D. 220.]

- Significance: 22. Christians assembled on the first day of the week.

"And what shall we say of the new race of us Christians, whom Christ at His advent planted in every country and in every region? for, lo! **wherever we are, we are all called after the one name of Christ - Christians. On one day, the first of the week, we assemble ourselves together**, and on the days of the reading we abstain from taking sustenance.³

Cyprian: [A.D. 200 - 258; Bishop of Carthage, N. Africa; Wrote after A.D. 246.]

- Significance: 3 Lord's day was the day after the Sabbath day (Sunday).
5. Lord's day was “the eighth day.”
16. First day after the Sabbath (Sunday) was the eighth day.
18. Eighth day was “the resurrection day.”

For in respect of the observance of the eighth day in the Jewish circumcision of the flesh, a sacrament was given beforehand in shadow and in usage; but when Christ came, it was fulfilled in truth. **For because the eighth day, that is, the first day after the Sabbath, was to be that on which the Lord should rise again, and should quicken us, and give us circumcision of the spirit, the eighth day, that is, the first day after the Sabbath, and the Lord's day, went before in the figure; which figure ceased when by and by the truth came, and spiritual circumcision was given to us.**⁴

¹ CD ANF-03, Page 690.

Tertullian, *On Prayer*, Chapter 23, Page 689, Volume 3, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

² Tertullian, *Tertullian, Disciplinary, moral and Ascetical Works* Chapter 23, page 182. Translated by Arbesmann, Daly, and Quain, Fathers of the Church Incorporated. 1959

³ Bardesian, *Book of the Laws of Countries*, Page 733, Volume 8, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

⁴ Cyprian, *The Epistles of Cyprian*, Epistle 58, Paragraph 4, Page 354, Volume 5, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

Anatolius: [A.D. 230 - 280.]

- Significance: 2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.
4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."

Following their example up to the present time all the bishops of Asia-as themselves also receiving the rule from an unimpeachable authority, to wit, the evangelist John, who leant on the Lord's breast, and drank in instructions spiritual without doubt-were in the way of **celebrating the Paschal feast**, without question, every year, whenever the fourteenth day of the moon had come, and the lamb was sacrificed by the Jews after the equinox was past; not acquiescing, so far as regards this matter, with the authority of some, namely, **the successors of Peter and Paul, who have taught all the churches in which they sowed the spiritual seeds of the Gospel, that the solemn festival of the resurrection of the Lord can be celebrated only on the Lord's day.** ¹

- Significance: 4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."

And the other party, passing the day of the Lord's Passion as one replete with sadness and grief, hold that it should not be lawful to celebrate the Lord's mystery of the Passover at any other time but on the Lord's day, on which the resurrection of the Lord from death took place, and on which rose also for us the cause of everlasting joy. ²

- Significance: 4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."

But if it proves to be the moon's fifteenth or sixteenth, or any day up to the twentieth, then **our regard for the Lord's resurrection, which took place on the Lord's day, will lead us to celebrate it on the same principle**; yet this should be done so as that the beginning of Easter may not pass beyond the close of their festival, that is to say, the moon's twentieth.³

The Constitutions of the Holy Apostles: [A.D. 200 - 300.]

- Significance: 2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.
4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."

Do not you therefore scatter yourselves abroad, who are the members of Christ, by not assembling together, since you have Christ your head, according to His promise, present, and communicating to you. Be not careless of yourselves, neither deprive your Saviour of His own members, neither divide His body nor disperse His members, neither prefer the occasions of this life to the word of God; but assemble yourselves together every day, morning and evening, singing psalms and praying in the Lord's house: in the morning saying the sixty-second Psalm, and in the evening the hundred and fortieth, but principally on the Sabbath-

¹ Anatolius, *The Writings of Anatolius*, Chapter 10, Page 149, Volume 6, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

² Anatolius, *The Writings of Anatolius*, Chapter 10, Page 149, Volume 6, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

³ Anatolius, *The Writings of Anatolius*, Chapter 16, Page 151, Volume 6, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

day. **And on the day of our Lord's resurrection, which is the Lord's day, meet more diligently, sending praise to God that made the universe by Jesus,** and sent Him to us, and condescended to let Him suffer, and raised Him from the dead. Otherwise what apology will he make to God who does not assemble on that day to hear the saving word concerning the resurrection, on which we pray thrice standing in memory of Him who arose in three days, in which is performed the reading of the prophets, the preaching of the Gospel, the oblation of the sacrifice, the gift of the holy food? ¹

Significance: 2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.
4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."

We enjoin you to fast every fourth day of the week, and every day of the preparation, and the surplusage of your fast bestow upon the needy; every Sabbath-day excepting one, and **every Lord's day, hold your solemn assemblies, and rejoice: for he will be guilty of sin who fasts on the Lord's day, being the day of the resurrection,** or during the time of Pentecost, or, in general, who is sad on a festival day to the Lord. For on them we ought to rejoice, and not to mourn.²

Significance: 2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.
4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."
6. Sabbath day was different from the Lord's day
14. The Sabbath was different from Sunday.

But keep the Sabbath, and the Lord's day festival; because the former is the memorial of the creation, and the latter of the resurrection. But there is one only Sabbath to be observed by you in the whole year, which is that of our Lord's burial, on which men ought to keep a fast, but not a festival.³

Significance: 2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.
4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."
25. Christians assembled every Lord's day.

On the day of the resurrection of the Lord, that is, the Lord's day, assemble yourselves together, without fail, giving thanks to God, and praising Him for those mercies God has bestowed upon you through Christ, and has delivered you from ignorance, error, and bondage, that your sacrifice may be unspotted, and acceptable to God, who has said concerning His universal Church: . . .⁴

¹ CD ANF-07, Page 465.

Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, Book 2, Section 7, Chapter 59, Page 423, Volume 7, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

² CD ANF-07, Page 496.

Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, Book 5, Section 3, Chapter 20, Page 449, Volume 7, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

³ CD ANF-07, Page 520.

Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, Book 7, Section 2, Chapter 23, Page 469, Volume 7, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

⁴ CD ANF-07, Page 521.

Constitutions of the Holy Apostles, Book 7, Section 2, Chapter 30, Page 471, Volume 7, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

Victorinus: [A.D. ? - 304; Bishop of Petau.]

- Significance:
1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.
 6. Sabbath day was different from the Lord's day.
 9. Breaking of bread (the Lord's Supper) was partaken of on Lord's day.

On this day also. on account of the passion of the Lord Jesus Christ, we make either a station to God, or a fast. **On the seventh day He rested from all His works, and blessed it, and sanctified it. On the former day we are accustomed to fast rigorously, that on the Lord's day we may go forth to our bread with giving of thanks. And let the paraseve become a rigorous fast, lest we should appear to observe any Sabbath with the Jews,** which Christ Himself, the Lord of the Sabbath, says by His prophets that "His soul hateth;" **which Sabbath He in His body abolished,** although, nevertheless, He had formerly Himself commanded Moses that circumcision should not pass over the eighth day, which day very frequently happens on the Sabbath, as we read written in the Gospel. Moses, foreseeing the hardness of that people, on the Sabbath raised up his hands, therefore, and thus figuratively fastened himself to a cross.(3) And in the battle they were sought for by the foreigners on the Sabbath-day, that they might be taken captive, and, as if by the very strictness of the law, might be fashioned to the avoidance of its teaching.¹

Peter: [A.D. 260 - 311; Bishop of Alexandria; Wrote A.D. 306]

- Significance:
1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.
 4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."

On the fourth day, indeed, because of it the Jews took counsel for the betrayal of the Lord; and on the sixth, because on it He himself suffered for us. **But the Lord's day we celebrate as a day of joy, because on it He rose again, on which day we have received it for a custom not even to bow the knee.** ²

Eusebius: [A.D. 260 - 339; Bishop of Caesarea/historian; Wrote about A.D. 325.]

- Significance:
1. Sabbath day was not observed by Christians.
 6. Sabbath day was different from the Lord's day.

These men, moreover, thought that it was necessary to reject all the epistles of the apostle, whom they called an apostate from the law; and they used only the so-called Gospel according to the Hebrews and made small account of the rest. **The Sabbath and the rest of the discipline of the Jews they observed just like them, but at the same time, like us, they celebrated the Lord's days as a memorial of the resurrection of the Saviour.** Wherefore, in consequence of such a course they received the name of

¹ CD ANF-07, Page 391.

On the Creation of the World, Pages 341 - 342, Volume 7, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

² *The Canonical Epistle*, Page 278, Volume 6, The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

Ebionites, which signified the poverty of their understanding. For this is the name by which a poor man is called among the Hebrews.¹

Significance: 2. Lord's day was observed by Christians.
26. Lord's day observance included the reading of Christian writings.

There is extant also another epistle written by Dionysius to the Romans, and addressed to Soter, who was bishop at that time. . . . In this same epistle he makes mention also of Clement's epistle to the Corinthians, showing that it had been the custom from the beginning to read it in the church. His words are as follows: "To-day we have passed the Lord's holy day, in which we have read your epistle."²

Significance: 4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."

But it was not the custom of the churches in the rest of the world to end it at this time, as they observed the practice which, from apostolic tradition, **has prevailed to the present time, of terminating the fast on no other day than on that of the resurrection of our Saviour.** Synods and assemblies of bishops were held on this account, and all, with one consent, through mutual correspondence drew up an ecclesiastical decree, **that the mystery of the resurrection of the Lord should be celebrated on no other but the Lord's day,** and that we should observe the close of the paschal fast on this day only.³

Significance: 4. Lord's day was "the resurrection day."

Among them was Irenaeus, who, sending letters in the name of the brethren in Gaul over whom he presided, maintained that the mystery of the resurrection of the Lord should be observed only on the Lord's day.⁴

One of the prophets, when he saw beforehand with the eye of the Divine Spirit that which was to be, was so astonished at it that he cried out, **"Who hath heard of such things, and who hath spoken thus? Hath the earth brought forth in one day, and hath a nation been born at once?"** And the same prophet gives a hint also of the name by which the nation was to be called, when he says, "Those that serve me shall be called by a new name, which shall be blessed upon the earth."

If any one should assert that all those who have enjoyed the testimony of righteousness, from Abraham himself back to the first man, were Christians in fact if not in name, he would not go beyond the truth. 7 For that which the name indicates, that the Christian man, through the knowledge and the teaching of Christ, is distinguished for temperance and righteousness, for patience in life and manly virtue, and for a profession of piety toward the one and only God over all -- all that was zealously practiced by them not less than by us. They did not care about circumcision of the

¹ CD NPN-01, Page 125
The Church History of Eusebius, Page 159, Volume 1, The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.

² CD NPN-01, Page 145
The Church History of Eusebius, Page 202, Volume 1, The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.

³ CD NPN-01, Page 170
The Church History of Eusebius, Page 242, Volume 1, The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.

⁴ CD NPN-01, Page 171
The Church History of Eusebius, Page 244, Volume 1, The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.

body, neither do we. **They did not care about observing Sabbaths, nor do we.** They did not avoid certain kinds of food, neither did they regard the other distinctions which Moses first delivered to their posterity to be observed as symbols; **nor do Christians of the present day do such things.** ¹

Athanasius:

Significance: 27. Communion was partaken of on the day after the Sabbath (Sunday).

But Alexander, the Bishop of Constantinople of blessed memory, resisted them, saying that the inventor of the heresy ought not to be admitted to communion; whereupon Eusebius and his fellows threatened, declaring, 'As we have caused him to be invited by the Emperor, **in opposition to your wishes, so to-morrow, though it be contrary to your desire, Arius shall have communion with us in this Church.**' It was the Sabbath when they said this. ²

¹ CD NPN-01, Page 76

The Church History of Eusebius, Page 89, Volume 1, The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers.

² *Letter of Athanasius*, Page 565, Volume 4, The Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers.