

# My Answer To A Roman Catholic

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Recently I had a phone call, followed by a letter from a Roman Catholic gentleman. He was very earnest and challenged me to answer his questions. This I gladly do. As I do not have the time to answer the many letters I receive, I will make this available to others also who have similar questions. In his letter this gentleman said he was giving a copy of his letter to others, so I will do likewise. Therefore, my reply will be as an open letter. The questions are good questions and worthy of a clear reply.

He quoted 1 Tim.3:15 where it states that "The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." He is quite right in concluding that the whole of the church membership will not apostatize. Many of the church, even a majority may apostatize, but not all. God always will have a true church. It will be a small church, for truth has never been popular. But to that church Christ whispers:

LUKE 12:32. "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

MATTHEW 7:14 "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life, and few there be that find it." From these plain statements of the Lord Jesus Christ it must be clear that those standing as "the pillar of the truth" must be "few" and only "a little flock".

In view of these facts could the great dominating church of the middle ages be the true church? The facts of history confirm Scripture as we shall see. Now we come to the questions. I quote his own words:

Question No. 1.

"Since only some shall depart from the faith it means that some still keep the faith. Therefore they must have had the same doctrines as Seventh-day Adventism. I therefore challenge you to show me any individual, sect, or even individual persons in the first 1500 years of the history of Christianity, who held all the Seventh-day Adventist doctrines as: man not being immortal; hell not existing; and the devil not existing; the Trinity; and of course the seventh day being still in force for Christians. Of course you would also have to show where such a church existed all the days from the time of Christ to the present time."

You give me an easy and pleasant task. You ask for individuals who kept the seventh-day Sabbath in the first 1500 years of Christianity. I will start with those who are highest in your thinking. First I would name the Blessed Virgin Mary.

LUKE 23:52-56 "This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how his body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment."

On that fateful Friday afternoon, of the crucifixion of our Lord, you will notice that the Scripture especially mentions "the women" this included the mother of Christ - "they rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment." The next verse –

LUKE 24:1 states "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them."

You will notice that the mother of Jesus kept the seventh-day Sabbath. But on Sunday morning she did not go to mass, but she did go forth to do a work that she would not do on the Sabbath. You see friend, the Blessed Virgin Mary kept the seventh-day Sabbath but not Sunday. How can you accuse me of doing wrong when I do what the Virgin Mary did? Can I be wrong in doing what she did? Was she wrong? How can you claim to be a catholic and refuse to do what the Virgin Mary did? Our Lord Jesus did likewise.

LUKE 4:16 "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read."

Our Lord kept the Seventh-day Sabbath. You will notice, that Sabbath keeping was His custom.

ACTS 17:2 "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures."

St. Paul, like his Lord kept the Sabbath. Of Christ we read it was His "custom". Of St. Paul "as his manner was." Every good man, in the Holy Scriptures was a Sabbath keeper. The booklet "The Lord's Day Through the Ages" by G. Burnside shows Sabbath keepers in every century since. In the last days, Jesus points out His saints, with these words.

REVELATION 14:12 "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

Note they are-Christ's "saints", they "keep the commandments of God" which must include the Holy Sabbath, for that is the 4th one of the commandments of God. The Scriptures close with these solemn words:

REVELATION 22:18, 19 "For I testify unto every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

We must not take away from the Bible and we dare not add to it. Sunday has been added to the professed church's teachings without any authorization by the Word of God. Where is Sunday ever called in Holy Scripture the Lord's day? You have referred to Sunday as the Lord's day but calling Sunday the Lord's day, does not make it the Lord's day.

The facts are that our blessed Lord never claimed it as His day, but He did claim the Sabbath as His own. It is a recognized rule that when approaching a historical problem, it can only be approached from the past. This is the only legitimate approach that can be followed. Sunday is never mentioned anywhere in Scripture as the Lord's day, and the fact that in later years it was so named, does not make it the Lord's day. It merely proves how far professed Christians had fallen away from truth when they would take a sacred title and apply it to a counterfeit day. A few facts clearly revealed in our Lord's Word show this.

1. Our Lord worked on Sunday (Genesis 1:1-5)
2. The Lord calls Sunday a working day. (Ezekiel 46:1)
3. He commanded work on Sunday. (Exodus 20:10, 11)
4. Our Lord never kept Sunday.
5. His Father never kept it.
6. The Lord never blessed it.
7. He nowhere forbids work on it.
8. The New Testament nowhere forbids sport on Sunday.
9. Our Lord never pronounced any penalty for its violation.
10. He never promised any blessing for its observance.
11. It is never called in Scripture the Lord's day.
12. There is no record that our Lord ever mentioned it.
13. Our Lord never asked us to break bread on Sunday.
14. He never asked us to keep it as a memorial of His resurrection.

Sunday is not the Lord's day, it never was and never will be. You also challenge me to show that man is not immortal. That is certainly easy.

1 TIMOTHY 6:15, 16 "The only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality." The Scriptures continually refer to man as "mortal man." Our God "only has immortality. You have challenged me, but I could ask you where is man referred to in Scripture as immortal?

1 CORINTHIANS 15:51-54 "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

Immortality is given to the saints at our Lord's return. You challenge me to show that hell is not existing. If by that you mean a present and eternally burning hell, I would suggest you read:

2 PETER 2:9 "The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."

The "unjust" are not in hell fire now, according to St. Peter. Don't you believe St. Peter? He tells us that the unjust are reserved unto judgment. So there is no hell fire now, no purgatory or limbo. St. Peter was a Sabbath keeper and like all good Seventh-day Adventists he did not believe in a present burning hell. You are correct in teaching the grand truth of the holy Trinity. Our Lord taught this and so do Seventh-day Adventists.

MATTHEW 28:19, 20 Christ said we are to Go and teach".

Then baptize into the threefold name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. People are first to be taught and then baptized. This rules out baby baptism. Until a person is old enough to be taught, he is not old enough for baptism. These people are to be taught "All things whatsoever I have commanded you." Therefore Christ instructs us to teach all of His commandments. Where do you find Sunday sacredness in the teaching, or commandments, of Jesus. You certainly find the Holy Sabbath in both Christ's teachings and example. He tells us to "Follow" Him. That would include Sabbath keeping. To those who teach people to keep Christ's commandments He will be with them by His Spirit "even unto the end of the world." - Or "all the days." The Holy Spirit is given to those that obey Christ.

ACTS 5:32 St. Peter states "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."

Note the Holy Spirit is "given to them that obey Him". This was St. Peter's teaching. That is what Seventh-day Adventists follow.

JOHN 14:15, 16 Jesus says "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."

The Holy Spirit is given on condition of obedience. He is "given to them that obey Him" is the clear statement of St. Peter. Don't you agree with St. Peter? Do you teach the opposite to St. Peter? When people ceased to obey Christ, they ceased to be members of His true church. Sad to say this was the tragic fact of history. Your "Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume 7, page 414 states "One is forced to admit that the gradual corruption of Christianity began very early."

I can give you plenty of historians that testify to this tragic apostasy or falling away from truth by the vast majority of professed Christians, only the few remained true to Christ's teachings. Cardinal Newman testifies that the things of paganism were brought into professed Christianity.

"Confiding then in the power of Christianity to resist the infection of evil, and to transmute the very instruments and appendages of demon worship to an evangelical use. The rulers of the church from early times were prepared, should the occasion arise, to adopt, or imitate, or sanction the existing rites and customs of the populace, as well as the philosophy of the educated class." "Development of Christian Doctrine," John Henry Cardinal Newman, pages 371,372.

"In the course of the fourth century two movements or developments spread over the face of Christendom, with a rapidity characteristic of the church; the one ascetic, the other ritual or ceremonial. We are told in various ways by Eusebius, that Constantine, in order to recommend the new religion to the heathen, transferred into it the outward ornaments to which they had been accustomed in their own." "Development of Christian Doctrine," John Henry Cardinal Newman, page 373.

"In the interval between the days of the apostles and the conversion of Constantine, the Christian commonwealth changed its aspect. The Bishop of Rome - a personage unknown to the writers of the New Testament - meanwhile rose into prominence, and at length took precedence of all other church men. Rites and ceremonies, of which neither Paul nor Peter ever heard, crept silently into use, and then claimed the rank of divine institutions. Officers for whom the primitive disciples could have found no place, and titles which to them would have been altogether unintelligible, began to challenge attention, and to be named apostolic." "The Ancient Church," William D. Killen, D.D., Preface to original edition.

"One hundred years after the death of the apostle John, spiritual darkness was fast settling down upon the Christian community; and the Fathers, who flourished toward the commencement of the third century, frequently employ language for which they would have been sternly rebuked, had they lived in the days of the apostles and evangelists." "The Ancient Church," William D. Killen, D.D., period 2, section 2, chapter 5, page 418.

I mentioned to you on the phone that I was in full harmony with the original catholic church. This is what we need to get back to; The first church; To Christ; To St. Peter and the other apostles. Not to the "fathers," but to the grandfathers. The originals. There they used the Scriptures.

LUKE 16:31 "And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

JOHN 5:46 Your own Dictionary states "There was far more extensive and continuous use of Scriptures in the public service of the early Church than there is among us." Page 509

"Our present convenient compendiums - the Missal, Breviary, and so on - were formed only at the end of a long evolution. In the first period (lasting perhaps till about the fourth century) there were no books except the Bible, from which lessons were read and Psalms were sung." "The Catholic Encyclopedia," Volume 2, page 296.

I do not write with any bitterness. I love people but I am opposed to deception or anything that is contrary to the Scriptures that were solely used in the original church. I was reared a strict Sunday keeper but I left the Sunday keeping church of my forefather because I wanted to do as Jesus and His saints have done. You will be interested to know that well over one hundred thousand Roman Catholics leave Catholicism to become Seventh-day Adventists every year. They too want to be like Jesus. I can easily introduce you to some ex-Catholic Seventh-day Adventists if you desire.

Question No. 2.

"Can you give me the positive statement of any Christian especially a Christian scholar of the 2nd, 3rd and 4th centuries who contradicts the statement of St. Ignatius of Antioch, who wrote about 107 AD: "If we still live according to the Jewish observances, we confess that we do not accept the grace of Christ. Those who once lived according to the Old Law have come to a new hope, no longer observing the Jewish Sabbath, but the Lord's day on which our Lord rose from the dead."

Yes it is a simple matter to give you authorities that show that your quotation regarding Ignatius is a fraud. Hence your quotation carries little or no weight with me. Even the best of historians, acknowledge this to be spurious. I quote from but a few:

Dr. Killen, a Sunday keeper, in his "Ancient Church" page 413, 414 "In the sixteenth century, fifteen letters were brought out from beneath the mantle of a hoary antiquity, and offered to the world as the productions of the pastor of Antioch. Scholars refused to receive them on the terms required, and forthwith eight of them were admitted to be forgeries. In the seventeenth century, the seven remaining letters, in a somewhat altered form, again came forth from obscurity, and claimed to be the works of Ignatius. Again discerning critics refused to acknowledge their pretensions; but curiosity was roused by this second apparition, and many expressed an earnest desire to obtain a sight of the real epistles. Greece, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt were ransacked in search of them, and at length three letters are found. The discovery creates general congratulation; it is confessed that four of the epistles so lately asserted to be genuine, are apocryphal; and it is boldly said that the three now forthcoming are above challenge. But truth still refuses to be compromised, and sternly disowns these claimants for her approbation. The internal evidence of these three epistles abundantly attests that, like the last three books of the Sibyl, they are only the last shifts of a grave imposture."

Prof. C. F. Hudson, also a Sunday keeper states:- "Ignatius of Antioch was martyred probably AD 115. Of the eight epistles ascribed to him, three are genuine; viz., those addressed to Polycarp, the Ephesians, and the Romans." "Future Life, page 290.

The three epistles which he regards as genuine, do not include the epistle from which you quote on behalf of Sunday. Sir Wm. Domville states:- "Every one at all conversant with such matters is aware that the works of Ignatius have been more interpolated and corrupted than those of any other of the ancient Fathers; and also that some writings have been attributed to him which are wholly spurious." "Examination of the Six Texts," page 237.

The doubtful character of the so called Ignatius epistles is clear, but even if they were genuine, the passage you quote is a deliberate fraud in its translation. The word "day" is not there at all. The passage claimed to be by Ignatius reads "but, living according to our Lord's life." The translator put in the word "day" instead of "life". Fraud and deceptions were common as admitted by your own Catholic Encyclopedia. This is a glaring example and it appears you have been the victim of these deceptions. "Substituting of false documents and tampering with genuine ones was quite a trade in the Middle Ages." Catholic Encyclopedia Volume 6, page 136.

The original church of Christ, the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Peter and the other apostles were pure in teaching. They used only the Scriptures. In the centuries that followed the truth was corrupted. Your own church states:

"One is forced to admit that the gradual corruption of Christianity began very early." Catholic Encyclopedia Volume 12, page 414

The contrast between the original church of the New Testament is strikingly different from the Catholic church of today. The original church of St. Peter, Christ, and the Virgin Mary had:

No Sunday Sacredness,  
No present burning hell,  
No immortal souls,  
No priests;  
No cardinals,  
No popes,  
No celibacy,  
No candles,  
No holy water,  
No incense,  
No rosary,

No crucifix,  
No indulgences,  
No Christmas,  
No scapulars  
No penance,  
No purgatory,  
No mass,  
No monasteries,  
No inquisition,  
No lent,  
No relics, or Images.

These contrasts confirm the fact that there has been a change in the teachings of your church from its great Original. The boast that they never change falls apart, the plain facts rebel against the boast.

Question No. 3.

"Why is it that when a man asked Jesus which commandments he must keep in order to be saved, Jesus gave him a list of commandments, leaving out any reference to observing the Sabbath day? (Matthew 19:18, 19; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20.)"

This question is also very easy to answer. Notice our Lord did not quote the first commandment.

EXODUS 20:3 "Thou shall have no other gods before Me." Does that mean that this commandment is of no account? Is the second also of no account?

EXODUS 20:4-6 "Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shall not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."

The third commandment, which also was not quoted by Christ on this occasion reads:

EXODUS 20:7 "Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain."

Notice carefully that God will not hold as guiltless any that takes His name in vain. This is vital and it certainly could cost the one who breaks this commandment eternal life. The next commandment is the Sabbath commandment.

EXODUS 20:8-11 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shall not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

In the days of Jesus there was no question regarding the first four of the Ten Commandments. That is the reason Jesus did not quote these vital commandments. Jesus quoted only from the last six of the commandments. They dealt with our duty to our neighbors.

These were the commandments that were neglected. Truth always emphasizes the neglected truths. That is why Jesus quoted these commandments. The commandments that deal with our duty to God, Christ did not quote, for on these there was no question. Christ, however, makes very clear the way to heaven: Keep the commandments.  
MATTHEW 19:17 "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

MATTHEW 19:21 "If you shall have treasure in heaven" the young man was to "come and follow Me."

Following Jesus, in the way of His commandments, He says is the way of "eternal life."

I close by using published statements of your own church that bear out what I have been endeavoring to place before you. The first appeared in the Sun Herald - June 25, 1961, Sydney. By Father Phillip O'Donnell. "Religion and Life."

The Ten Commandments established a moral code of the Old Testament, and their binding force under the New Law is specifically stated by Christ. In the Sermon on the Mount, Christ declared: "Do you think that I have come to set aside the Law and Prophecy; I have not come to set them aside but to bring them to perfection. Believe me, heaven and earth must disappear sooner than one jot, one flourish disappear from the Law. It must all be accomplished. Whoever then sets aside one of these Commandments, though it were the least, and teaches men to do the like, will be of least account in the Kingdom of Heaven; but the man who keeps them, and teaches others to keep them, will be accounted in the Kingdom of Heaven as the greatest. Mankind is created by God according to a plan in the divine intelligence. Man fulfils that plan when he lives according to the Ten Commandments. Not man - not even God Himself - can destroy these precepts. Christ came 'not to set them aside, but to bring them to perfection. They are the supreme test of loyalty: 'If any man loves Me he will keep My Commandments.'"

"The Manual of the Holy Catholic Church" published 1906 by James J. McGovern (Eleven pages of commendatory testimonials by 27 leading Catholics of the world).

"God is unchangeable, always the same. God Himself says, 'I am the Lord, and I change not.' Malachi 3:6." page 7

"The doctrines of the church are unchangeable." page 131, 132

Q.  
What is the Law of God?

A.  
It is the manifestation of His will to man, declaring what He requires of man to do and to avoid, in order to please Him and save his own soul.

Q.  
In what light ought we to consider the law of God?

A.  
First, as our rule and guide, given to direct us in our pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world, and to conduct us to true happiness both here and hereafter. Second, as our judge, because it is by this law that we will be judged at the last day, and be either rewarded with eternal happiness, or condemned, according as we have obeyed this law, or transgressed it in our present life.

Q.  
When did God give His law to man?

A.  
First, at the creation. He imparted in the heart of man the sense of right and wrong, and gave him that inward monitor, his conscience, moving him to do the one and avoid the other. When the posterity of Abraham were grown into a great nation, and God took them under His particular protection, He made a second publication of His law to them.

Q.  
Where do we find the law of God clearly expressed?

A.  
In the Ten Commandments, Exodus 20.

Q.  
When were they given?

A.  
They were first given by the Almighty to the Israelites, through the ministry of Moses, and were afterwards ratified and confirmed by Jesus Christ.

Q.

Are we strictly obliged to obey the law of God as found in the Ten Commandments and the gospel?

A.

Yes; First, God who is a lawgiver, is our sovereign Lord and Master, who created us...and gave us all we are and all we have consequently, we are wholly at His disposal, and therefore are strictly obliged to do whatever He requires of us. Second, We have seen above, that He has made our obedience to His law one essential condition of our salvation. Third, because the Scripture assures us, that 'the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with the angels, of His power, in a flame of fire, yielding vengeance to them who know not God, and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction.' 2 Thessalonians 1:7.

Q.

Are we obliged to obey the whole law in order to be saved?

A.

We are: for the Holy Scriptures say, 'Whosoever shall keep the whole law, but offend in one point, is become guilty of all,' James 2:10; that is, he becomes a transgressor of the law in such a manner, the observing of all the other points will not avail him to salvation." page 166. "By our own natural strength alone without the help of God's grace, we are not able to keep the commandments and God, who requires us to keep His commands, is never wanting on His part to give us sufficient grace for that purpose:" Ibid.,

I close with-another Scripture this time from Revelation 14:12. Knox translation. "This is the test which the saints endure, keeping true to God's commandment, and the faith of Jesus."

Your friend in Christ, G. Burnside.

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