

A CHRISTIAN CAVEAT  
TO THE OLD AND NEW SABBATARIANS.

BY EDWARD FISHER, ESQUIRE.

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The following article is taken front the fifth edition of a work with the above title, printed in London, 1653. The book was written in defense of the orthodox doctrine of the Church of England," respecting festivals, against the " Sabbatarian novelties," as they were called, of the Puritans. While it demolishes the claims set up on behalf of Sunday or Lord's Day, it fully establishes the claims of the Sabbath or Seventh. Day. And it is worthy of note here, that it is not possible to refute any of the erroneous views in regard to the Sabbath and Lord's flay, without taking positions which necessarily lead to the observation of the Seventh Day. How much easier it would be to fasten the claims of the Sabbatical institution upon the consciences of men, if we were satisfied to take the fourth commandment as it reads, and enforce it by Thai swathe Lord."

" The third opinion is, of the new Sabbatarians, who dream of a middle way betwixt a Jew and a Christian; and this they usually lay down in two propositions. The first is, That the Lord's Day, or first day of the week, namely Sunday, may be called the Sabbath: the next is, That the observation of the Lord's Day is a moral duty, enjoined by God himself, and declared both by the doctrine and practice of Christ and his apostles. The first appearance of this kind of teachers was in the year of our Lord 1595, near the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth: and because they are neither able to produce direct Scripture, nor solid reason for what they say, they labor to support their conceits by fallacies, falsities and wresting of God's holy word, as upon scanning their proofs will be manifest to the meanest capacity.

"For their first proposition, they allege two reasons why he Lord's Day may be called the Sabbath. One is because the Sabbath signifies a rest; and therefore the Lord's Day being a rest, may be called the Sabbath. But to this we answer, it is false that the Sabbath signifies a rest; for when by custom of speech a common name is restrained to a par titular place, thing, or person, it then becomes a proper name, and so losing its community, does signify that only particular, unto which by custom of speech it is applied; as for instance, the temple is a common name, signifying the Church; yet in London, where by custom of speech this name, Tice Temple, is restrained to an Inns of Court, it is false and absurd to say you were at the Temple, and mean the Church of St. Giles. In like manner the Sabbath is a common name, signifying the rest; yet in the Christian Church, whereby custom of speech, according to God's holy phrase throughout the Old and New Testament, thit name, the Sabbath, is restrained to the Jewish weekly festival, it is false and absurd to speak of the Sabbath, and mean the Lord's Day. Their other reason why the Lord's Day may be called the Sabbath, is, because the Lord's Day succeeded in the room of the Sabbath. But if this argument be good, then may baptism be called circumcision, the Lord's Supper the Passover, and King James Queen Elizabeth.

" As for the second proposition, wherein they assert the morality and divine institution of the Lord's Day, we shall here notice only three of their reasons. The first is, because Adam, according to God's command, kept the Sabbath in the state of innocence. But what is the sanctification of the Sabbath spoken of by Moses in the second chapter of Genesis, to our observing the Lord's Day? That was appointed to be kept on the seventh and last day of the week; this is kept on the first day of the week: that was the day in which God rested from his work of creation; this is the day in which God began to create the heavens and the earth: that was our Saturday; this is our Sunday. Their second proof for the morality of the Lord's Day, is from the fourth commandment, where they seek to corrupt the very text, and would persuade us that for the seventh day, we must read a seventh day; as if God did not there set apart a certain day of the week, but left it to man to keep which of the seven he pleased. Unto which we answer, that this conceit is not only against the letter of all our translations, but eves repugnant to the sense of the commandment; for the words are express that God blessed and hallowed the Sabbath day; that Sabbath day was the seventh day; that seventh day was the day in which God rested from his six days' work of creation. Nay, grant it were true (as these men would have) that this special precept does exactly oblige us, and that no particular day of the seven was by God appointed to be kept holy, then may we set apart Monday, or Tuesday, or any other day to God's service, as well as Sunday; and so, by their own argument, the Lord's Day is no more moral than any other day of the week. Their third proof is from the title or name, Lord's Day, which (say they) cannot be for any other reason, but because it is of the Lord's institution. We answer, this is false; for the Lord's Day was not so called because it was instituted by the Lord, but because it was dedicated to the Lord; as we commonly say, Saint Mary's Church, or Saint Peter's Church; which no man did ever imagine were built or founded by Saint Mary or Saint Peter."

Near the close of his book, after having examined each of the positions here referred to, he comes directly to his design, and says:—

" In vain, therefore, it is, and most absurd, for you our opponents to charge us with befooling and misleading the people. Your own practice, your own doctrines, shall bear witness betwixt us.

" You who say one while, that God did not appoint the seventh day, the day on which he rested, to be kept holy, but a seventh day, and so one day in seven be observed, no matter which of them ; another while; that by this commandment God enjoins us to keep holy the first day of the week on which he began his work of creation—Do you not befool and mislead the people?

" You who (forgetting your own doctrine of the fourth commandment) do teach, that the keeping holy the first day of the week, or Lord's Day, was appointed and practiced by Christ and his apostles, yet cannot produce so much as one example for it, much less a precept—Do you not befool and mislead the people?

" You who infer, because St. Paul, and the disciples at Troas, spent the whole night of the first day of the week in praying, preaching, and heavenly conference, in regard he was to leave them and depart on the morrow; therefore. St. Paul and the disciples at Troas met that night to keep holy the day past; therefore the disciples at Troas met every first day of the week, to keep that day holy; therefore the Church at Philippi, the Church in Cilicia, and all Christian Churches, did then keep holy the first day of the week; therefore all the apostles did constantly keep holy that day; therefore Christ and his apostles appointed the first day of the week to be forever celebrated, instead of the Sabbath—Is not this pitiful logic Do you not befool and mislead the people?

"You who tell stories of an old Sabbath and a new Sabbath, a Jewish Sabbath and a Christian Sabbath, a Sabbath of the seventh day and a Sabbath of the first day of the week; that so you may slyly fix the name Sabbath on the Lord's Day, and then persuade the simple and ignorant that all those texts of Scripture wherein mention is made of the Sabbath day, are intended of the Lord's Day; when indeed to call the Lord's Day the Sabbath, is as senseless as to call Sunday Saturday, or the first day the last day of the week, when throughout the Old and New Testament, we have not the least intimation of any other weekly Sabbath, save the old, Jewish, seventh day Sabbath; when you yourselves confess that the name Lord's Day, is more proper and particular, and less obvious to exception, than the name Sabbath; and at the name Sabbath is in dignity inferior to both Lord's Day and Sunday—Do you not befool and mislead the people? You that condemn the yearly observance of Christ's birthday as heathenish, yet acknowledge this feast to be a constitution of the ancient primitive Church—Do you not befool and mislead the people?

" Take ye heed; these are not small matters; consider well with yourselves what it is to stand guilty before God of belying Christ and his apostles, and willfully wresting the Holy Scriptures. Be advised; take time while time is to repent of those notorious slanders wherewith you have aspersed the ancient approved ways of God's worship; and let the sincerity of. your repentance appear by the speedy abandoning of your unchristian practices and principles; lest the heavy judgment of seducers, to wax worse and worse, fall upon you, and God in the end deliver you up to such strong delusions, that you should believe your own lies."

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