

# 119

## SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY RESOURCES

---

### How Christianity Went from Sabbath to Sunday

---

#### TEACHING SUMMARY

The Bible commands God's people to observe the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week. This instruction is found in the Ten Commandments and is part of God's Torah. However, most Christians today worship on Sunday instead of the seventh-day Sabbath.

Many people believe that the Sabbath was changed from Saturday to Sunday in the New Testament. However, the New Testament does not record such a change.

In fact, the apostles continued to observe the Sabbath after the resurrection of the Messiah. The book of Acts repeatedly shows Paul and other believers gathering on the Sabbath to worship and teach.

Some passages mention believers gathering on the first day of the week, but these passages do not indicate that Sunday replaced the Sabbath. Instead, they simply record certain meetings that took place on that day.

Historical evidence shows that many early Christians continued to observe the Sabbath for centuries after the time of the apostles. In many places, believers gathered for worship on both the Sabbath and Sunday.

During the first and second centuries, conflict between the Roman Empire and the Jewish people created pressure for Christians to separate themselves from Jewish practices. In certain regions, this pressure contributed to the decline of Sabbath observance.

A significant turning point came in the fourth century when the Roman emperor Constantine issued a decree making Sunday a day of rest. This civil law encouraged Christians to associate Sunday with the concept of Sabbath rest.

Later church councils and authorities increasingly promoted Sunday observance and discouraged Sabbath observance. Over time, Sunday gradually replaced the seventh-day Sabbath in many Christian traditions.

This historical development did not originate in Scripture but developed through political decisions and church traditions.

The Bible continues to identify the seventh day as the Sabbath. Believers are encouraged to follow the example of the apostles and honor the day that God set apart as holy.

---

## SUMMARY POINTS

- The Sabbath commandment instructs believers to rest on the seventh day.
  - The New Testament does not record a change of the Sabbath to Sunday.
  - The apostles continued observing the Sabbath after the resurrection.
  - Some early Christians met on both Sabbath and Sunday.
  - Pressure from Roman persecution contributed to distancing from Jewish practices.
  - Constantine declared Sunday a day of rest in the fourth century.
  - Later church councils promoted Sunday observance.
  - The biblical Sabbath remains the seventh day.
- 

## FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

### Basic

1. The Sabbath is observed on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of the week.
2. The Sabbath commandment is found in the \_\_\_\_\_ Commandments.
3. The apostles continued observing the \_\_\_\_\_ after the resurrection.
4. The book of \_\_\_\_\_ records Paul teaching on the Sabbath.
5. Some early Christians gathered for worship on both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The Roman emperor \_\_\_\_\_ declared Sunday a day of rest.
7. Later church \_\_\_\_\_ promoted Sunday observance.
8. The Bible identifies the \_\_\_\_\_ day as the Sabbath.

---

## Challenging

1. Many people believe the Sabbath was changed to \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. The New Testament does not record a \_\_\_\_\_ of the Sabbath.
  3. Conflict between the Roman Empire and the \_\_\_\_\_ influenced early Christian practices.
  4. Some Christians distanced themselves from \_\_\_\_\_ practices.
  5. Constantine issued his decree in the \_\_\_\_\_ century.
  6. Later church authorities discouraged \_\_\_\_\_ observance.
  7. Believers are encouraged to honor the day that God made \_\_\_\_\_.
- 

## GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think many Christians believe the Sabbath was changed to Sunday?
  2. What does the New Testament reveal about the practices of the apostles?
  3. How can historical events influence religious traditions?
  4. Why is it important to distinguish between Scripture and tradition?
  5. What does the Sabbath teach us about trusting and honoring God?
  6. How can believers apply the principle of Sabbath rest today?
-

## ANSWER KEY – GROUP GUIDE

### Basic

1. Seventh
2. Ten
3. Sabbath
4. Acts
5. Sabbath / Sunday
6. Constantine
7. Councils
8. Seventh

### Challenging

1. Sunday
2. Change
3. Jews
4. Jewish
5. Fourth
6. Sabbath
7. Holy