

A Critique of Which Day is the Christian Sabbath?

By William Hohmann

Introduction:

This book was one of the basic tools of Armstrong for putting forth his theology of the Sabbath for the Worldwide Church of God and later by those groups that split off. It was written by Herbert W. Armstrong and originally produced by the Worldwide Church of God. Those that had their first introduction into Sabbatarianism via the Worldwide Church of God were encouraged to study their Bibles, but through the filter of the literature of the "church."

The law (arguably the law of Moses), and specifically the Sabbath, is presented in his booklet as required of Christians. Various "proofs" are presented. The purpose of this article is to demonstrate where and how these "proofs" are lacking. The final decision is up to the reader concerning this issue. This is written in order to compare and critique this belief and these "proofs" with what one otherwise would not be aware of or exposed to.

UPDATE:

It has been 16 years since I first critiqued this booklet, and in the intervening years, I have learned much more about the subject of the Sabbath. Therefore, I have decided to rewrite / edit my critique of this article written by Herbert Armstrong.

Since his death, now 34 years ago, quite a number of splinter groups have developed, all claiming to be heir to the Armstrong legacy, and many of them have produced their own Sabbath articles that tend to follow the outline of Armstrong's booklet.

In the title of the booklet, we find a loaded question; a "false dichotomy" that is a method of deception. The unspoken premise is that there exists a Christian Sabbath, and that this article will reveal which day it is. If the author were being honest with the reader, the question would have been stated more honestly, asking, "Is there a Christian Sabbath?" We could reasonably ask why "truth" requires such a blatant use of a deceptive argument. But the question as stated serves a purpose. It weeds out those educated and knowledgeable in Christianity on this subject, so that those who are left are those easily influenced by deceptive logic and reasoning. This is Armstrong's target audience: people who are not well educated when it comes to the meat and potatoes of Christianity. When he is through, their education will be slanted and biased in his favor.

Over the course of time I have been out of the Sabbatarian based theology, I have learned that there are rules to proper biblical study and interpretation, and methods employed in deceptions and deceptive reasoning. Instead of producing a list of these things here, they will be touched on throughout the critique. I would like to mention up front that while attending Ambassador, the students were never exposed to any proper method of Systematic Theology and hermeneutics. Armstrong had the absolute say as to the interpretation of Scripture. When some in the Theology department began the "Systematic Theology Project" it took HWA no time at all to shut it down once he heard about it, along with a demand that all copies of the research be destroyed.

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" ~Ephesians 4:14

Preface:

Jesus said he came to set men free, and His was a law of liberty—not a law of oppression. (Galatians 6:2) In the New Testament, the old covenant is described as being a "yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1) and a law that brought about death, not life. Once we are able to comprehend this, and begin to think "outside the Armstrong box" then we can begin to make progress toward understanding what it was that Christ and the apostles said and what was written.

The WCG practiced a form of "Old Testament Christianity". Adherence to the law, especially the Sabbath, was mandated with all the zeal of the Pharisees of Jesus' time.

Adherence to the law is described in the New Testament Scriptures as being a veil over the eyes. (II Corinthians 3:15-16) Only when the focus is taken off the law and placed on Christ is the veil removed. With all this prefaced then, it should be easier for one who was immersed in Armstrong legalism to begin to discern the truth, and the errors taught by the WCG. As Herbert Armstrong was fond of saying—don't believe me, believe your own Bible. Good advice.

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Note: Throughout this critique, Herbert Armstrong's words will be indented. Not all of HWA's words from the book are quoted.

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Chapter 1 ... But Does it Make Any Difference?

There is a preface statement right before this chapter begins that says in part: "Does the Bible establish Sunday as the Lord's day? Was the Sabbath given for the Jewish people only - while Christians are commanded to keep Sunday as the Lord's day?"

This sounds innocuous enough, but, the language is being loaded. Christians are not commanded to keep any day. This is not a case of either/or; a "false dilemma", which is but one of many methods employed in deceptive reasoning. The apostle Paul writes of Christian Liberty, and the freedom to esteem a day to God, or not. (Rom. 14)

Armstrong starts off chapter 1 with a statement designed to instill fear and phobia in the reader. You could be committing a sin resulting in a death sentence without even knowing about it. You could end up condemned over something you are ignorant about. You need to educate yourself so as to avoid being condemned by a loving God over your ignorance, and Armstrong is here to guide you and see to it that you do not end up dead for all eternity. How altruistic. How caring and concerned he is for your spiritual welfare. Surely, he has no ulterior motive. Yet I am reminded of the movie, "The Music Man" where the con artist uses the situation of a new pool hall in town as a means of claiming there is trouble brewing, and he is there to help prevent the inevitable, should the conditions extant with their youth go unchecked.

Inducing fear and phobia then is a method used to deceive and mislead people to act in a desired manner and response. Many people at this juncture will admit their ignorance on the subject at hand, and conclude it is better to err on the side of doing *something*, even if it may be wrong or unnecessary, than to continue on and risk suffering the consequences of inaction.

[Few realize, today, but the Sabbath vs. Sunday controversy raged during the first three centuries of the Christian era. Violence and bloodshed mounted. Millions were tortured and put to death over this question. \(p. 7\)](#)

One of the offshoots led by one of Armstrong's leading ministers created a Sabbath article using this same claim. I contacted them and asked for the historical documents and sources they used. They responded and informed me that they did not have access to the source material used by the author. In other words, they did not know where the author came up with this information, but they did not question its validity. Neither did they feel a need to ask the author about his source material. It did not appear to bother them that they had a claim in their Sabbath article that they could not back up as true. But again, statements like this serve a purpose; to cull out those who are thinking for themselves, for what they seek are those who accept what is told to them without question. They seek minions who will accept things as though they are self-evident. People who think for themselves are troublesome, and once within the system, independent thought is suppressed through a number of means.

It was Hitler that championed the concept of "The Big Lie." The bigger the lie; the more outrageous the claim, the more likely people are going to believe it, without question. The result is the acquisition of an army of minions who will follow you loyally; blindly.

Armstrong then proceeds to list arguments and reasons people might raise in order to balk at keeping the Sabbath, yet his listing out of these things is nothing more than an elaborate straw-man argument; a logical fallacy, again designed to deceive and mislead. The *real* issues are conspicuously absent from this tirade.

["Anyway," one may reason in conclusion, "what possible difference can it make WHICH day, or WHETHER we observe it?" These questions – and more – must be answered! And will be, in this booklet. \(p. 10\)](#)

Armstrong never addresses the issue of "*whether*" in this booklet. The debate is reduced to one of two choices; Sunday or the Sabbath. Sunday is the *straw-man* in this argument, and once Sunday is knocked down, the Sabbath will be left standing, uncontested and the winner, without ever having to stand on its own merit. Another method of deception is to focus on some triviality so as to take the focus off of what is really important.

If we are to keep the Sabbath, then we should be examining what the Bible has to say about the Sabbath, and not be distracted by discussing another day. The Bible either supports Sabbath keeping in the New Covenant era, or it does not.

Armstrong demands "By what AUTHORITY do Christians observe Sunday; . . ." The implication being that there must needs be a command from God for everything we do, and not do. Christian Liberty is reduced to some Orwellian liberty and freedom. You are "free" to keep the Sabbath, or perish.

In Galatians 4:21-5:1, those under the law, given at Sinai, are described as slaves. "To a slave, all that is not expressly granted is forbidden. To a son, all is permitted except that which is forbidden." – Dave Melton

Is there any *authority* for observing Friday, or Sunday, or Saturday? It certainly is apparent all do not recognize the *same* authority. (p. 10)

This begs the question, who or what is our authority? Shouldn't it be Jesus Christ? Do we find a specific command from Jesus to keep any day? Or do we have to resort to *inference*, *assumption* and *rationalization* in order to flesh it out? If keeping the Sabbath is a life or death matter for eternity, isn't there a reasonable expectation Jesus and the apostles would have covered this topic in detail for those destined to become Christians, following Christ?

God is emphatically *IN* the PICTURE, whether a man recognizes that fact or not! That Great God has set in living, inexorable motion invisible LAWS respecting this very question. (p. 10)

Quite a claim. "Invisible" laws not only govern the Sabbath, but pretty much everything. What, exactly, is the "issue" though? So far, he has not really stated a question beyond the "which day, Sunday or Saturday" question, when he also said he would be addressing the "*if-whether*" question also. So his statement here is in fact rather vague. What I see as inferred is the question as to whether we should keep the Sabbath or not, with the Sabbath being prefaced with this claim regarding "law" looming over us; laws that are irresistible and absolute in their description.

There is again in this section of the booklet, a bit of fear and phobia indoctrination. Your eternity hangs in the balance in relation to "LAWS." I would like to remind the reader that there is a "*law of faith*" in Scripture, described as a law that leads to life, and this law is contrasted to another law that leads to death; whose fruit is death; a law the apostle Paul referred to as the ministration of death and condemnation, *engraved in stone* (II Corinthians 3:7). What law set in Scripture do we find *engraved* in stone?

So first of all, we must settle once and for all, WHAT, or WHO, is the SUPREME AUTHORITY before whom we shall stand in judgment. Does such authority explain WHY it makes a difference – and what are the consequences for disobedience or neglect? (p. 11)

Our authority should be the Author of life, Jesus. We should be looking then to what He had to say in relation to the Sabbath. There are two things of note I will mention here for the reader to dwell on:

- 1) In relation to the Sabbath, Jesus said to the people that they should not judge according to appearance, but to judge righteous judgment. Jesus was being judged and condemned for working on the Sabbath, healing people.
- 2) That it is *lawful* to do well (good) on the Sabbath as contrasted to doing evil.

Armstrong, and other Sabbatarians, seek to reconcile the teachings of Jesus with the law and the Sabbath so as to preserve the Sabbath as given in the law by claiming there is no conflict; that Jesus upheld the law in all respects, especially the Sabbath. Yet what Jesus did and said was quite a departure from the law, for the law commanded that no one was to do "*any*" work. What modern Sabbatarians do in this regard is to resort to what I label as "Clintonian semantics" by claiming "any" doesn't really mean "any," citing the example of pulling an ox out of a ditch. This, however, complies with what Jesus said and taught regarding doing good works on the Sabbath, despite the law's prohibition against "any" work. It is an example of judging righteous judgment, as contrasted to judging according to appearance, which by contrast must be defined as *unrighteous* judgment. What happens here as a consequence is that righteous judgment is not practiced as a result of a legalistic Sabbatarian paradigm. All too often, a work is judged good or evil, not based on its own merit, but by whether said work is performed on a Sabbath or not; the opposite of what Jesus said and taught. But what Jesus actually said and taught is inconsistent with the desire to maintain a Sabbath requirement, so what Jesus had to say gets redefined; another method employed in deceptions. What I want the reader to keep in mind here is the admonition of Jesus to judge righteous judgment, looking ultimately to the heart and intent of heart, and not according to appearance; unrighteous judgment. For one ensconced in a Sabbatarian paradigm, it can be a very difficult concept to accept, but even when it comes to the Sabbath, God judges righteous judgment, which is why Jesus could declare that good works are lawful on the Sabbath, as contrasted to evil works. More on this later.

Did you realize that there is one religious body which lays claim to being the sole infallible authority? It claims the Bible "is not a sufficient guide to heaven." It claims, through its own church leaders, that it, by its own infallible authority, substituted Sunday for the Sabbath. (p. 11)

Does the reader realize the back story to this? The Protestant Reformation was making the claim that they believed in *Sola Scriptura* as the basis for their beliefs, and not a combination of Biblical and Catholic dogma for their religious convictions. Those within the Catholic church responded with this claim in order to make the case that the Protestants were not *Sola Scriptura* when it came to Sunday worship, claiming Sunday worship to be their creation, with no basis in Scripture. The Protestants called bluff on the Catholic claim, as put forth in the *Augsburg Confession*, where the Catholics were reminded that the early church was observing Sunday worship long before there was a Catholic church, and that there were sound biblical reasons for doing so. But Armstrong sees no reason to delve so deeply into the facts of history on this matter. What serves his purpose is the claim, regardless of its validity.

Some time ago one ecclesiastical authority stated that you may search the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you cannot find one line or verse authorizing Sunday observance -- that the Bible enforces the keeping holy of the seventh-day Sabbath -- and that the sole authority for Sunday observance is based on the edicts of men. (p. 11)

Who is this ecclesiastical authority? Why would Armstrong neglect to inform us of the identity of this authority? Simple, really... he is citing himself. He is his own authority. He is his own witness. He claims Sunday observance is an edict of men in accusatory language. Christian Liberty is again seen as Orwellian in nature. But stop and think.... something Armstrong doesn't want of his followers... Is there something *wrong* with worshiping God on a Sunday, or resting? How about a Monday? Or are we only "free" in our Christian Liberty to "worship" God or rest only one day a week? Did Abraham, the father of the faithful, only worship or rest on the Sabbath? And what of Jesus' statement regarding worshiping in spirit and in truth? [John 4:23-24] If this were something just coming about as the context shows, then what was worship before then and up to that point in time? Worship was done as a matter of compulsion, dictated by the law even in relation to the time and location. So if Armstrong is dictating the day and the location, that being within his church on the Sabbath, then how is this worshiping in spirit and in truth?

There is one other issue in relation to this discussion, and that is the wording Armstrong uses here: "observance." In what way were the people commanded to observe the Sabbath? Were they to observe it as a day of rest; cessation of labor, or were they to observe it as a day of corporate worship, or both? Armstrong is being intentionally vague on this point, for he will resort to playing it both ways, depending on need. Yet the Bible did not require or command corporate worship on the Sabbath, for the law demanded that the people remain in their dwellings on that day, even though the day was described as being a holy convocation. That too gets redefined to mean *only* a physical gathering. The term designated the understanding that the people were seen as being in the presence of God on that day, and no one can be in the presence of God and be sinning. What is conveniently overlooked in this regard is that God declared that their works were "*evil even from their youth*." This was due to the condition of their hearts, described and defined as deceitful and desperately wicked. More on this topic and concept later.

The claim is that a succession of human ecclesiastical leaders has replaced the authority of Jesus Christ. (p. 11)

No, that is not the claim; that is Armstrong's accusation – a false accusation, that ignores the teachings and commandments of Jesus Christ. If anything, Armstrong rejects the authority of Jesus Christ in favor of the old covenant law, designed for, and given to a stiff-necked, rebellious and faithless people.

Can you PROVE, also, that THE HOLY BIBLE is the very authoritative WORD OF GOD – His inspired Message and instruction Book to all mankind – the SOLE INFALLIBLE AUTHORITY, by which humanity shall be JUDGED? (pp. 11-12)

Herein lies a false claim; that it is by the Book all mankind will be judged. The Book reveals that it will be Jesus who judges mankind, and not the Book itself. What Armstrong is setting up here though is the idea that all mankind will be judged and condemned for not keeping the Sabbath, which command is located within the confines of the old covenant; in the "book of the law;" a legally binding accord or contract between the two parties, God and Israel of old, and no others. So what Armstrong is leading up to here is that you are going to be

judged by God for breaking the conditions of a covenant law you are neither a legal party to, and a covenant that legally ended. Is God going to deal with mankind illegally like that?

Armstrong then proceeds to spend a great deal of verbiage establishing that it is Jesus who is the founder and head of the church, the church being a *spiritual organism*, and not a church building or church corporate; all are baptized into one body. (p. 15) Elsewhere, he redefines this in order to make the case his church is the "one true church" corporate; the *real* body of Christ.

On page 16, he states a Christian is a "begotten" child of God. This is, to HWA, distinct from being a "born" child of God; a concept Armstrong rejects, for such a concept does not serve his purpose, keeping people dependent upon him as their spiritual leader and adviser. If you believe your salvation is not secure, that you could possibly "abort," you will remain compliant, subject to him and his interpretations. But Scripture reveals that Christians are indeed now *born* of God, no longer subject to spiritual death or separation from God. Our future change is one of putting off a corrupt body for a spiritual incorruptible body, and not a birth. You can read the narrative of this in I Corinthians chapter 15. Scripture reveals that you are either a child of God, or a child of the devil. If you are not yet a true child of God, then whose child are you?

A few relevant Scriptures to contemplate:

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." - Romans 8:14

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." - 1 John 3:1

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." - 1 John 3:2

So we have found the one and ONLY infallible AUTHORITY to *settle* this Sabbath question once and for all!

That SUPREME AUTHORITY is Jesus Christ, and His written Word, THE BIBLE. (p. 16)

Jesus indeed is the authority we should turn to. And the Bible needs to be taken in context. As this is the case, would it make sense then to go looking for answers back in the Old Testament writings? Wouldn't what Jesus had to say and teach in regard to the Sabbath be sufficient?

God Almighty put humanity on earth for a PURPOSE! His laws and His decrees determine your happiness, well-being and success here and now – and your fate for eternity!" (p. 16)

Which of His laws and decrees? Old covenant laws and decrees? Was all mankind made a legal party to that old covenant? Let's examine a possible scenario that fits Armstrong's interpretation of this and see if it holds true. You are a woman, married to an abusive husband. The law says you cannot divorce your husband unless one of you commits adultery. Your husband has not committed adultery, so you, as an abused wife, are happy and content, seeing as you are living in obedience to the law and decrees. However, the man is allowed to divorce you for just about any reason he feels justified in using! So he hands you, his wife, who is happy and content in your compliance with the law, a bill of divorcement, and shoves you out the door, all nice and legal; all in accordance with His laws and His decrees.

Oh wait! My bad.... The law does not have a provision in it where a wife can divorce her husband, even if *he* commits adultery. Well, at least that law is there for your happiness and well being!

On page 17, Armstrong now turns his attention to sin, using his typical flowery writing style, full of capital letters and italic print for emphasis. We don't have the right to determine what is sin and not sin. Only God determines what is sin, and reminds us that the penalty for sin is death, for all eternity. He doesn't bother to tell or remind his readers the good news in this regard; that Christ came and paid that penalty for us. I guess he didn't get the memo! As a result of His sacrifice, the believer is described as dead to sin, and freed from sin.

SIN is doing what GOD SAYS is harmful and injurious to you – and / or others! Sin is doing what *deprives* you of God's blessings – peace, happiness, security, abundant and

joyful living, as a condition to God's supreme gift of ETERNAL LIFE! (p. 17)

Thankfully, when it comes to the Sabbath issue then, Jesus informs us that it is *lawful* and *not a sin* to do good works on the Sabbath. Are your works good, or evil? Good thing that God's inspired, written Word informs us that a Christian's works are wrought in God, and that which is wrought in God cannot be sin, regardless of the day. (John 3:21) If, however, you conclude a good work is sin if performed on a sabbath, how is this not a case of judging according to appearance?

How comforting also to know that Christians are described as being dead to the law and dead to sin, neither having any power whatsoever over the Christian believer. What sort of man then would seek to resurrect you back to sin and the law, opening you back up to the condemnation of that law?

I would also ask the reader to look carefully at what Armstrong wrote here. What is it that is a condition to God's *gift* of eternal life? The gift has conditions? If so, then it is no longer a gift; it is a payment. Further, the grammar looks like he is saying sin is the condition! Armstrong is simply rambling along, trying to scare his readers into submission.

Yes, the Living Jesus Christ – and the Holy Bible – constitute the sole Supreme AUTHORITY to settle this question once and for all! The question of WHICH DAY is directly concerned with *your connection* with God! And *that* is directly connected with your welfare here and now, and your ETERNITY. (p. 17)

Any pretense that Armstrong was going to address the issue of *whether* we are required to keep the Sabbath has now been conveniently dropped.

Now, please pay close attention to the first sentence quoted above. Both (the two of them) Jesus and the Bible constitute the "sole" supreme authority. Does the reader get the implication here? The two of them constitute one authority. Can two be one authority? More double talk.

Guess which "half" of this "sole" authority will take precedence in this mix when it comes to what mankind is supposed to be doing? If you work from the assumption both Jesus and the Bible (which will be redefined to mean the old covenant law) are in agreement, then there will be no conflict in your mind. You might as well tear the pages out of your Bible where Jesus is actually in conflict with the law, despite what you have been taught.

Furthermore, is your connection and relationship with God dependent on one day a week? Does God dwell within the believer, or not? Or does God abandon the believer for six days a week?

Jesus Christ is the Living *personal* Word of God. And the Holy Bible is the *written* Word of God, by which CHRIST speaks to you! Christ is the active HEAD of the only True Church. We have found the Supreme AUTHORITY!" (p. 17)

Indeed, Christ speaks to us through the pages of the Bible, but not everything written in the Bible is addressed to all mankind. And what does Armstrong mean here with the term "the only True Church"? He said earlier the church constituted the Christian collective. This usage appears to imply a "True Church" corporate. If this is about the Christian collective, there would be no need to preface the statement with them being "True."

So now let us see what CHRIST, through the BIBLE, says about *which* is the day to keep in this NEW Testament era – and whether it makes any difference. (p. 17)

Without any explanation, the possibility of a day not being required has been dismissed entirely without examination. There was no examination of the evidence for or against this possibility regarding the New Testament dispensation.

Armstrong's approach here has not been as scholarly, or intellectual and methodical as it should be. His methodology has been an appeal to emotion and psychological extortion.

Now, if we are going to determine what Christ has to say about the Sabbath and its impact on the New Testament era, would we go looking for answers to this in the Old Testament era and dispensation?

The hook has now been baited, with a combination of threats of severe punishment (death) and incredible blessings from God in relation to which day Christians are supposed to be observing; two potent baits that are nearly irresistible to people. The avoidance of a terrible fate should one neglect all this, or something of great value to be gained. Now comes the time to "dangle the bait" and see who bites.

Chapter 2: Who Made and Established the Sabbath?

Jesus Christ had considerable to say and to teach about the Sabbath, and its observance. (p. 21)

Armstrong is not going to go through what Jesus actually had to say about the Sabbath. He is going to leave that up to assumption and inference. Jesus indeed had considerable to say and teach about the Sabbath, and it was not in support of the Sabbath. If Armstrong were truly seeking the truth of the matter, there would be a comprehensive examination of everything Jesus did and said in relation to the Sabbath. Don't hold your breath...

Mark 1:1: "The beginning of the GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST." The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not a gospel from MEN about the PERSON of Christ. The GOSPEL OF CHRIST IS Christ's Gospel — the Gospel Christ preached — the Gospel GOD SENT by Jesus for mankind! (p. 21)

There is a devilish subtlety in what Armstrong has written here, easily overlooked. "The gospel is not a gospel *from men* about the person of Christ." This is indeed true. *Men* did not come up with the gospel about the person, Jesus Christ. But Armstrong declared on many an occasion that the gospel was not *about* the person of Christ, but rather *about* His message. However, the gospel has nothing to do with any message *of men*, regardless. Armstrong is playing with semantics. The gospel is a message of salvation *through* the person Jesus Christ. **The gospel is about Him**, and He declared the gospel to the people, often couched in the terminology of parables so as to obscure the meaning from them. Armstrong also obscures the meaning with this comment that the gospel is not *about* Him, personally, with his own brand of deceptive reasoning. **Without Jesus, there is no gospel.** But if you want to proffer a false gospel of works, such as keeping the Sabbath, then the alternative has to be diminished in some way, else you cannot make the case of other things, such as works of the law as being necessary and required, which Armstrong has already indicated.

Armstrong proceeds to cite Jesus proclaiming a gospel *about* the kingdom of God which he interprets to mean the government of God. This interpretation is a bit of a stretch, but not entirely off base – yet. Like the frog in the pan of water being slowly brought to a boil, the temperature here is just slightly above ambient.

Again I am reminded of the movie, "The Music Man" and how a con artist drives people's attention with a song: . . . "Trouble . . . with a capital "T" and that rhymes with "P" and that stands for Pool!" It's just like Armstrong starting with "kingdom of God" and progressing to "government of God" then to "law of God."

So, government implies rule over those governed, which in turn requires a legal system of governance, which requires a law. Guess which law set Armstrong has in mind? I would simply point out that the writings of the New Covenant era speak of two categories of people; slaves and the free who are now called the sons and daughters of God. The kingdom of God will be populated with sons and daughters, and not the slaves, who live by a different set of "rules." Those who live by the old covenant law are seen as being in bondage to it; slaves.

"Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." - Galatians 4:21-5:1

I cite this knowing full well that those who are ensconced in the teachings of Armstrong will not see this for what it says, as I also, for over 25 years could not see it for what it plainly says. We were taught to believe that the

New Covenant was the old covenant now written on the heart, and not a separate covenant, totally different from the first. Scriptures that differentiated between the two were simply spun away. We also did not want to admit we were wrong, for to do so would be to admit we were indeed deceived, when we thought ourselves to be too smart and above deception and deceptive reasoning.

So let us carefully examine what Paul wrote.

Paul identifies two covenants, and equates them symbolically to the two sons of Abraham, one through a slave, Agar (Hagar), and the other through the free woman, Sarah.

Agar's son is equated with Sinai, where the old covenant, which covenant includes the Sabbath, was given: all equated with bondage. This covenant and her children are equated with Jerusalem, Sinai, and bondage; slavery.

We (Christians) are equated with the other covenant, along with the son of the free and the free woman, equated with the Jerusalem from above (spiritual) and promise. Promises, or covenants of promise, were made with Abraham and his offspring coming down through Isaac, and not Ishmael, who was the son of Hagar. This covenant then is a covenant of promise, and not law. In the covenant of law, one had to perform what was required in the law in order to receive the "payment due" or conversely, suffer the penalty for non-performance. A covenant of promise is just that; something is promised without any performance (work) required in return. It is a promise, a.k.a. a *gift*, and our salvation is described as being a gift, and not payment in return for work performed.

Paul summarizes with a warning not to let anyone come along and remove you from the liberty you have in Christ in relation to the New Covenant of promise in which we are free, back to the old covenant law and requirements that result in bondage and slavery; a covenant law that includes the command to keep and observe the Sabbath.

Sabbatarians respond, claiming they do not keep the Sabbath in order to be saved; they keep it because they are saved. A simple question then, in the hope Sabbatarians will be honest with themselves: What happens to your salvation should you quit keeping the Sabbath?

What a shame so many have allowed that to happen, succumbing to the subtleties of deceptions, being brought back under the bondage of the old covenant that included the Sabbath; a covenant law which could only condemn.

[He called His disciples, and immediately "they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the SABBATH DAY he entered into the synagogue" \(verse 21\). It was Jesus' CUSTOM to attend the synagogue services on the Sabbath \(Luke 4:16\). \(p. 21\) ⁴](#)

Armstrong would have you conclude Jesus was thus "keeping" or "observing" the Sabbath. But to truly keep it was to remain in one's dwelling on that day. Furthermore, synagogues were a fairly recent development in Judaeen society. The oldest synagogues date back to no earlier than 150 BCE. They were not houses of worship; they were houses of prayer. Also, Luke, writing to a target audience of Gentiles, informs his readers this was something Jesus did as a matter of *custom*, and not *command*. A custom is something done as a matter of habit. To claim Jesus was thus keeping or observing the Sabbath by attending a synagogue is quite a stretch of reason and logic, resorting to "Confirmation Bias". One kept or observed the Sabbath by refraining from work on that day, and not by attending any religious service or gathering of sorts on that day. Armstrong and the SDA both blur the distinctions in this regard, so that "worship" becomes equated with "rest", and *rest* becomes equated with *worship*. This association is absolutely necessary in order to further proffer the straw-man argument regarding Sunday worship.

Right below this statement by Armstrong is a caption for an inserted picture in the booklet that exclaims Jesus "kept the Sabbath" there at that synagogue at that time and place.

Page 22 has Armstrong pointing out that the Sabbath was something that was made, and that it was Christ who did so. The implication is clear; if Jesus made it, and made it "for man" then if we are "men" it was made for us; all of us. We can ignore the legalities and legal parties of the old covenant for here we have Jesus Himself declaring Jesus, as the Lord of the Sabbath, made it for "man."

This, however, is one of the more classic examples where eisegesis results in error when it comes to interpreting the Scriptures.

The context is about the disciples picking and eating grain on a Sabbath; something the law forbade.

Jesus did not deny they had broken the Sabbath. In defense, He cited the example of David, who ate the show-bread that was unlawful for him and those with him to eat, yet he, too, was blameless. Why? Because, even with

the Sabbath, God judges righteous judgment, and not according to appearance. Jesus summarizes the situation by declaring Himself to be Lord "also" of the Sabbath, and not the Sabbath being lord over men or Himself. The Sabbath was to serve man, and not man created to serve the Sabbath.

There are two other issues with the text and context that show beyond any doubt that this does not address or apply to all mankind:

1) The Jews at that time and place, including Jesus, never referred to Gentiles as "man/men; the Greek word here being "anthropos." To the Jews, only Jews were "men."

2) Anthropos can mean anything from one man, such as the man who stood before Jesus with a withered hand, to any subset of men, or to all mankind, *depending on context*. When you take into consideration the above facts, it is the "plain truth" that "man" here in this context refers to the subset of men known as the Jews; those who were a legal party to the old covenant law and Sabbath.

Only by violating the proper rules of biblical interpretation, and applying some of the methods of deception do you end up with this resulting in all mankind being concluded.

Now, in debate with Sabbatarian apologists, many have been adamant insisting anthropos in context must mean all mankind. Of course this interpretation, that ignores all the evidence to the contrary, provides a convenient justification for the belief the Sabbath is required for all mankind. It is a good example of a belief driving one's interpretation of Scripture, instead of letting Scripture drive one's belief and understanding. Were all mankind standing before Jesus with withered hands? Of course not.

The subject of the passage was not about all mankind, and whether all mankind were to keep it. If Jesus had made such a declaration, and if it was understood by those present to mean that, a whole new argument would have naturally developed, as the Jews understood quite emphatically that the Sabbath belonged to them, and none else.

When we come to page 23, Armstrong makes an argument that God/Jesus, a.k.a. the Spokesman, made the Sabbath on the seventh day of that Creation Week. The context reveals that God did indeed *rest* from His work carried out on the previous six days. He "rested" or better translated, "ceased" from that work on the seventh day because He was *finished* with that work. The possible interpretation of this Hebrew word being "rested" developed long after the narrative was written.

Armstrong claims, without any examination of the context, that this was the Sabbath He "created" on the seventh day. But what actually do we find in the context? It was God who worked, and it was God who rested or ceased from that work. He blessed and sanctified *that* day. It does not say, and neither does it logically follow, that He blessed and sanctified every recurring seventh day. This idea is read into the text by Sabbatarians that found that if they had any chance of Sabbatarianism being justified, they had to find it here in Genesis instead of where it was introduced to the Hebrew people much later in history as recorded in Exodus chapter 16. Why? Because it is easy enough to prove that only the Hebrews were being commanded to keep the Sabbath as the sign of that covenant established between them and God. It was *the* sign of that covenant between those two parties. As such, it could not have been a requirement for all mankind. However, the Sabbatarian argument here is that mankind had abandoned Sabbath keeping after the Creation event of Genesis; consequently, it was possible to incorporate it into that "old" covenant as the sign of that covenant as a result!

There are quite a number of problems with this whole scenario, that is beyond the scope of this critique. For more in depth information on this subject, you can go to www.lyingforgod.com and access the book, "Lying for God" that you can download as a PDF or read online.

For now, I will cover just what needs to, given what is said and claimed by Armstrong in this booklet.

This seventh day was blessed and sanctified. To sanctify something is to *set it apart*. In this case, the seventh day was being set apart as a memorial for all time in relation to what God did in this Creation event. Why point this out? Simply because Sabbatarians insist on ignoring *this* fact. It was "set apart." As such, it is impossible to be a recurring Sabbath day without negating its status as set apart / sanctified. It is one day, unique, for all time.

Psalms 95 and Hebrews 4 inform us what this "day" really is, being a day that is lacking the suffix phrase, and the evening and the morning. This "day" has no end to it, because God is still "resting" or "ceasing"; in a condition where this work is complete. He did not, on the day after that seventh day, pick up where He "left off" and continue a work of Creation. Armstrong tries to claim this was not a work of Creation, knowing this throws a "monkey wrench" into his take on Scripture here. This is "God's Rest", entered into through faith, also called "another day" in

Hebrews, and the weekly Sabbath is in fact a shadow of God's Rest that He entered into on that seventh day of creation week. It is the rest one finds in Christ Jesus. It is permanent, based on the *finished* work, which Christ performed on our behalf.

God's Rest is what is established in Genesis, and the Sabbath God gave to Israel was patterned after Creation Week. They "entered into" the weekly Sabbath passively, when it came to them at the end of a six day work interval. The Rest of God in Hebrews 4 is "Sabbatismos" with a suffix ending showing action. One "actively" enters into God's rest, through faith, while it is called "To day." The Sabbatarian theology rejects this spiritual rest entered into for all time in favor of the temporary physical rest from labor that is but a shadow as so stated in Colossians 2:16-17, which even Sabbatarian theologians have, reluctantly, agreed is the weekly Sabbath.

When we get to page 25, Armstrong glosses over the fact that this seventh day of Creation was a sanctified day. He mentions it, but does not elaborate on the consequences of it. He then shifts focus to the Sabbath, pointing out that it was "hallowed"; made holy. But we do not see the Sabbath in Exodus 20:11, which he cites, being sanctified. God does not sanctify the Sabbath. He does tell the Hebrews to sanctify the Sabbath, to set it apart from the other days of the week.

Armstrong makes it a point to emphasize the "holy" aspect of the Sabbath, insisting that only God can make something holy, including a space of time. Then we have another theological sleight of hand made by Armstrong:

[God set it as that space of time from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset. Whenever that time comes to us, we are in holy time! It is GOD'S time, not ours! God MADE it HOLY – and in the Ten Commandments, as we shall see in detail a little later, He commanded us to keep it holy! Many do not realize today that it is a SIN to profane that which is HOLY to God! \(p. 25\)](#)

It is unlikely that Armstrong's limited background in real theology included an understanding of the lunar calendar used by all ancient civilizations that were advanced in astronomy. The Hebrew lunar calendar reset the week every month on the new moon, hence the references in Scripture regarding its prevalence. The new moon day was treated like a Sabbath, with no work performed on that day, along with requisite sacrifices, followed by six days of work, then followed by the weekly Sabbath on the 8th day of the month. When juxtaposed with our modern calendar with our fixed weeks, the real Sabbath wanders through our fixed weeks. You can look this information up on a number of places on the internet, including the Kariate Jew's website where this is covered in detail. The PDF book, *Lying for God*, has an entire volume dealing with this issue.

Realistically, "Saturday" is therefore not the Sabbath of the Bible. It is the seventh day of a fixed week calendar system that developed long after Israel was given the law, with the Sabbath commandment.

Another aspect of time that Armstrong neglects is that, if the Sabbath were "holy time" in the manner he claims, then it would be the holy time for everyone at the same time, for how can you claim the same block of time is holy for one group of people and at the same time elsewhere it is not holy for another? His take on this belies a "flat earth" mentality, for the Sabbath as a day would not be the Sabbath day at all points on the earth at the same time. After all, we live on a round earth, and not a flat one. Some Adventists realized there was a potential problem here, and they actually tried to get their prophet, Ellen G. White, to make a declaration that we do live on a flat earth!

We are also confronted with the problem of how to determine which day is the Sabbath according to a fixed week calendar based on which direction we travel from Israel, which would by necessity be our starting point for determining the Sabbath. If we go west, paying attention to sunsets, then the Sabbath in the USA would be on what we call Saturday. If we went east paying attention to sunsets, then the Sabbath in the USA would be Friday! So do we adhere to the "dictates of men" and calculate it going west, or are we free to base the Sabbath upon our own personal observation based on the guidelines of Scripture, should we go east? And why was this problem never even mentioned? What is extant over this issue is that it was man that made the decision, and it was man that decided to place the International Dateline in the mid Pacific instead of the mid Atlantic, which if this arbitrary line had been so set, people in the Americas who are Sabbatarian would now be keeping the day we presently call Friday as the Sabbath.

Armstrong also claims here that God commanded "us" to keep it holy in the Ten Commandments. This is an outright and blatant deceptive statement, for the Bible is quite specific that it was the children of Israel who were being addressed and commanded to keep that covenant law and Sabbath. Again, Armstrong is relying on people's ignorance regarding the Scriptures in order to slip this one in under the radar.

Last here, Armstrong claims that to profane that which is holy to God is a sin. This too is false, unless you take the word of Armstrong over that of Jesus Himself who informs us that the priests who served at the temple profaned the Sabbath, yet were blameless, which, by the way, means they were sinless regarding their profaning the Sabbath by working on that day at a job that was extremely difficult and strenuous. There is also the matter of sacrifices deemed to be holy. Using this argument of Armstrong's, shouldn't we be performing sacrifices then? To neglect something holy is a sin, isn't it?

On page 26, Armstrong is relating the situation where Moses had to take off his shoes while standing on holy ground. The argument he is trying to make is that we have no right to tread on the Sabbath, treating it as a common thing. The Sabbath is holy time. He explains why the ground was holy, due to God's presence then and there, but like so many other situations, he tries to distract us from what is truly important with something else.

Moses was in the presence of God. Likewise, the Hebrew people were in the presence of God on the Sabbath, therefore the day itself takes on a holy significance. The Sabbath was a "holy convocation" in this regard. They were forbidden to work, not so much because it was the Sabbath, but because they were in the presence of God, and no one can be doing or performing evil in the presence of God! Allow me to reiterate what Jesus had to say in regards to the Sabbath: It is **lawful** to do good as contrasted to doing evil on the Sabbath. So then, what can we conclude, given the evidence of all this? The works of the Hebrews were evil in the sight of God. Holy Writ confirms this:

"For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth: for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands, saith the LORD." - Jeremiah 32:30

If their works were evil in the sight of God, then what of the works of a Christian, whose works are described as being "*wrought in God?*" Can their works be construed as evil in the sight of God? A Christian's life is dedicated to Christ, and a Christian's works are a reflection of that dedication. Furthermore, a Christian is not in the presence of God just on the Sabbath, but every day and always. Christians have entered into God's Rest *with* God. God now dwells in the believer; the Christian. The Sabbath as a day of rest or cessation of labor becomes superfluous. God's Rest has rendered the Sabbath shadow obsolete and irrelevant.

Jesus Christ is still the SAME, today, as He was yesterday, and shall be forever (Heb. 13:8). Do you believe that? Is your Bible an AUTHORITY? Do you accept it as AUTHORITY? Unless Jesus Christ, in Spirit, is today living in your flesh — actually living your life for you — you are none of His — you are not a Christian (Rom. 8:9). And if He is, HE HAS NOT CHANGED — He is still putting His presence in His SABBATH! (pp. 26-27) ⁵

Jesus is indeed the same today and for ever, but the conclusions drawn by Armstrong are not supported by this declaration. His conclusion is a "Non Sequitur." Jesus' presence is not in the Sabbath. The people were in the presence of Him *on* the Sabbath. Furthermore, Jesus/God has always judged according to righteous judgment, and not according to appearance. By shifting the focus off of Christ and placing it on the Sabbath, Christ is thus depicted as judging unrighteous judgment as a result, should you, as a Christian "work" and therefore "sin" on the Sabbath. A false Christ and a false gospel result from this line of twisted, sick reasoning.

Armstrong then cites Isaiah 58:13-14, applying this to Christians, or non Hebrews, also, ignoring the implications of what God declared:

"If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." - Isaiah 58:13-14

God was calling upon them; the ones whose father was Jacob (the Hebrews, and no one else) to be doing good works on the Sabbath, instead of the works they were known for that they practiced routinely; works that were self-serving, doing their own ways, seeking out their own pleasures and speaking their own words. If they would do as God requested, performing good works instead; works that honor God and are done with God in mind, God would indeed be greatly pleased. Just in case you missed it though, let me further emphasize what is being said here. God is calling them to good works *on* the Sabbath, and not rest from works. He wanted them to

abandon their evil works and embrace good works in the eyes of God. This then is prophetic, for the day would come that they would do this, when the Holy Spirit would be poured out on them, thereby enabling them.

Armstrong then switches his emphasis off the Sabbath and the contrived holy time for all mankind and mentions something that needs to be pointed out that is crucial to understanding his motive regarding the Sabbath:

God commands: "Take your foot off MY HOLY TIME! Quit trampling all over that which is HOLY and SACRED TO ME! Quit profaning MY HOLY THINGS — whether it be MY name, My tithe of your income, or MY holy day." (p. 27)

What will be a hard pill for many to swallow here is that all this talk and discussion about keeping the Sabbath comes down to justifying people paying tithes of their wages to Armstrong. Through a process of subtle incrementalism, this is what Armstrong was seeking to achieve. The seemingly slight alterations of Scripture go unnoticed by many, and once they have bought into a slight alteration or addition to Scripture, such as adding Christians to the old covenant Sabbath commandment, he could then move one more step in alteration and make this claim regarding tithes of one's wages, which is nowhere commanded in the Bible Armstrong claims should be our authority! The biblical tithe was a tenth of the increase of one's produce and/or livestock, and was *never* assessed of one's wages. Various rationalizations were put forth by Armstrong and his church in order to overcome and overthrow this fact of Scripture. The real irony here is that Armstrong would cite Matthew 5:17-18, stating that the law remained inviolate even down to jots and tittles, then alter that same law way beyond jots and tittles in order to convince people to tithe of their wages, contrary to the law!

What does a wolf in sheep's clothing seek to do? He seeks to feed his own belly at the expense of a flock. How does he go about accomplishing this? By altering Scripture that God declared is not to be altered through addition or deletion. What did Armstrong do? He added Christians to the old covenant law and Sabbath command. He added tithing of one's wages, and added giving that tithe to him instead of those who the law deemed to be in receipt of tithes. And although we may not want to admit it, we share in his culpability for also allowing these alterations of Scripture, contrary to the Word and authority of God. We let the word of a man over-rule and overthrow God's Written Word. [Refer to my article: [Tithing and Wolves in Sheep's Clothing](#)]

So far, the "evidence" Armstrong has provided to support his claim that all mankind is commanded to keep the Sabbath is because the Sabbath was made holy by God. Conspicuously absent from his argument is a "thus saith the Lord" all mankind is commanded to keep it. He has also claimed that the Ten Commandments address "us" when in fact the context easily demonstrates God was not addressing "us" but only the Hebrews gathered there who heard the words of that covenant, and were made a legal party, along with their progeny to that covenant as a result. Transference or substitution theology is not a valid form of biblical interpretation; it is a method of deception.

Is the claim the Sabbath being holy a valid argument to conclude all mankind should abide by it? The apostle Paul declared that the law is holy – all of it. But it has also been argued by Armstrong that there is a distinction between the "law of Moses" and the "law of God" with the law of God being the Ten Commandments, and the rest of the law being the law of Moses, so as to work around the declaration in Acts 15 that states Gentiles are exempt from keeping the law – of Moses. However, the sacrifices were also referred to as holy, so we have a bit of a dilemma here. Are only those things deemed holy found in the Ten Commandments binding on Christians, or all things listed in the entire law deemed holy required? If however we take Acts 15 to mean everything outside the confines of the Ten Commandments to be the law of Moses, holy or not, then critical thinking forces us to ask, "why then does Armstrong insist on tithing as a requirement that can affect one's salvation? Where is tithing found? In what Armstrong called the law of Moses. So now, realistically, we have a theology that does indeed cherry pick through the law.

What I would like to point out here is the proclivity of Armstrong to bolster his unsubstantiated claims with other unsubstantiated claims or claims lacking proper, credible evidence. It is a house of cards, built on sand. Are the Ten Commandments a separate law, independent of the rest of the law known as the law of Moses, or is it all one law and one covenant? In a way, it doesn't matter, for either way, it can adequately be shown that the legal parties are still God and the Hebrews, and no others. But what does the actual evidence show? It was the book of the law, sometimes referred to as the book of the law of Moses, and sometimes referred to as the book of the law of God that was ratified as the old covenant, sprinkled with blood along with the people, for that covenant law was also a testament, put in force through the spilled blood of substitute animals. I would also remind the reader here that the New Covenant / Testament was ratified through the spilled blood of Jesus, so which one of the two do you think is the greater covenant / testament? I have already cited Galatians 4 where these two covenants are treated

as separate and distinct, despite the unsubstantiated claim of Armstrong (and the SDA) who claim the two covenants were actually the same covenant, the difference being the location where they were written!

Next on Armstrong's agenda is to make the case that Abraham, the father of the faithful, kept the Sabbath, beginning on page 28.

He starts off again with a sprinkling of fear and phobia, warning the reader of impending doom should they go with what they think is right, for the reader cannot rely on his or her own reason in this regard.

Men evolve many arguments to evade the commandments of God — because the carnal mind is hostile to God, and is not subject to His LAW! (Rom. 8:7.) When men reject the commandments of God, that they may hold to their traditions (see Mark 7:6-9) they must devise *arguments* to justify rebellion. One of the arguments is that God's Commandments did not exist until the children of Israel reached Mt. Sinai. (p. 28)

In Romans 7 and 8, two laws are being discussed and contrasted by Paul.

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." - Romans 8:2

Armstrong is implying this law referred to in 8:7 is the law of the old covenant.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." — 1 Corinthians 2:14

It is that which is of the Spirit that man is hostile against, as well as God, and not the old covenant law.

Now, let's examine what Armstrong cited here on page 28 and compare that to what Armstrong has done. He claims tithing is a commandment of God. He points out that by embracing traditions, the commandments of God are abrogated. Jesus berated the Jews for this sort of thing, declaring that they were trying to keep the commandments according to their traditions instead of following the commandments in the manner prescribed in Scripture:

"Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." - Matthew 15:2-9

Armstrong takes the law of tithing, and he turns it into something else through addition and deletion, contrary to a direct command of God. He is guilty of the very thing he claims others do out of malice. He deceives while claiming it is others who deceive through the same process, taking commandments of God and altering them into traditions and commandments of men. He said men must devise arguments to justify their rebellion. So what did Armstrong do when claiming people tithed to him based on their wages instead of tithing according to the commandment? He argued that we no longer lived in an agrarian society. What then was the "society" Armstrong preached to in his early years in Oregon? Farmers. And what was their economy? Produce and livestock.

Do you see the hypocrisy of Armstrong in all this, or are you an ardent supporter, who turns a blind eye to what he actually did? Do you agree with his argument whereby he altered the law here way beyond jots and tittles, and altered the tithing commandments through addition and deletion? Do you use circular reasoning to justify his claims, insisting that he was a true prophet, therefore he had the right to do those things, even though they are contrary to the Word of God? And yet, that is exactly what his supporters have done, and continue to do, despite their denial. The capacity for the human mind to deceive the self is practically limitless. Either the Bible; the written, inspired Word of God is authoritative, without alteration by the whims of men, or it is not.

But Abraham kept God's commandments 430 years before his descendants reached Sinai.

READ IT IN YOUR OWN BIBLE! "Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, MY COMMANDMENTS, MY STATUTES, AND MY LAWS" (Gen. 26:5) GOD is speaking. He is explaining why He made the great promises to Abraham.

So ABRAHAM KEPT GOD'S SABBATH! (p. 28)

This is "Assumptive Reasoning" and "Confirmation Bias" which are general methods of deception. Armstrong is assuming that the commandments, statutes, laws, etc. that Abraham had and kept were the same commandment laws the children of Israel had, including the Sabbath commandment. However, Deuteronomy 5:1-3 refutes this notion:

And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them. The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day." - Deuteronomy 5:1-3

What covenant law follows? The Ten Commandments, where we find the Sabbath commandment. Furthermore, if Armstrong were right, and treating the subject properly, he would have addressed this "apparent" contradiction and explained why it did not conflict with his claim if it were so. But he is silent in this regard. Proper biblical scholarship demands that any apparent evidence to the contrary be examined and explained, else what you are actually doing is **indoctrination**, and **not education**.

We could ask ourselves why Moses would write this about Abraham in such a manner, citing commandments, statutes, laws, etc. A likely reason for doing so would be in order to impress upon the Hebrews that Abraham, the father of the faithful, performed all that God required of him, and that they were expected to do the same. But to conclude this is all about the *same* commandments given to both Abraham and the Hebrews is a gross assumption, and assumptions lead to deceptions. If Abraham was keeping the sign of the old covenant 430 years before the giving of that covenant, that would be strange indeed. But where is the evidence? Where do we find Abraham keeping the Sabbath? Where do we find Adam and Eve keeping the Sabbath, or anyone prior to Exodus 16 keeping the Sabbath? If it were *half* as important as Armstrong claims, there is a reasonable expectation we would see evidence of it. But no, all we have are inferences, assumptions, and rationalizations. These are not the things we should be basing our beliefs on, especially things of significance with the potential of affecting one's salvation as Armstrong continually intimates.

It has further been argued by Armstrong apologists that in pointing out the absence of any credible evidence that Abraham and others kept the Sabbath is to resort to a logical fallacy; an appeal to silence! But, the appeal to silence is in respect to trying to prove something true, and not in demonstrating the opposite, pointing out a lack of evidence.

We read in the New Testament that to break any one of the commandments is SIN (James 2:10-11). (p. 28)

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." - James 2:10-11

First, did James say transgressing the law was in fact sin? No, he did not. He is merely pointing out the nature of a covenant law; that it is all, or nothing at all. Break one point, you have broken or violated the covenant, as it stands written. If the result is, without exception, sin, then Jesus lied when he said David, who ate the showbread that was unlawful for him and those with him to eat, was blameless.

Armstrong also neglects to inform his readers here that James is using the old covenant law as an **example** to explain how the Christian law of Liberty works in similar fashion in that, should you show partiality just once with one person, you are guilty, even as one was guilty should they violate even one point of law in the "whole" old covenant law, for that is how covenants work. Every requirement in a covenant has to be complied with, else you are in violation of the covenant. But Armstrong wants his readers to think James is talking specifically about the law in relation to Christians, and that a Christian sins by breaking any one point of that *whole* law. But what is that covenant law in its entirety? The SDA unashamedly claim this "whole" law is just the Ten Commandments, seeing the examples cited by James are restricted to the Ten. And yet, the topic about showing partiality in love is not among the "Big Ten!"

Armstrong merely claims that this law of Liberty is in fact that old covenant law without elaboration, but we know from other teachings of the Worldwide Church of God, it is the Ten to the exclusion of all else Christians are supposed to abide by, without mentioning the issue regarding the tithing law which I remind the reader was just mentioned by Armstrong a few pages back as a law and commandment binding on Christians. Regardless, we have already covered what Paul wrote in Galatians, and that the covenant made at Sinai was a covenant of bondage, and not Liberty.

Jesus called Abel "righteous" (Matt. 23:35) so Abel kept the Sabbath. Enoch "walked with God," so Enoch kept the Sabbath — and he was "translated" less than a hundred years before Noah. They knew which day was the same seventh day all through this time.

Noah certainly learned from them, and others, which was the same seventh day. And Noah kept it, because Noah was a preacher of RIGHTEOUSNESS (II Peter 2:5) — and "all thy commandments are righteousness" (Psalm 119:172). (p. 29)

What we see here is the building block technique Armstrong used, where he first made the false claim that the patriarchs such as Abraham had the law and Sabbath, and now builds on this with the claim that righteousness therefore was a result of keeping that law set with the Sabbath, going back to even Abel. Given this claim, let's look at the evidence in Scripture regarding these people, and what it was that determined or resulted in them being righteous.

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:" — Hebrews 11:4-9

Romans 4:3: "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

Galatians 3:6: "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

James 2:23: "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God."

Romans 4:13: "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, **was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law**, but through the righteousness of faith."

Scripture equates their righteousness through faith; a function of faith, and not law. You may try to equate faith with keeping the law, but even Paul wrote emphatically that the law is not of faith. (Galatians 3:12)

The point Armstrong is making in this section of his booklet is about whether time has been lost, and is another item of distraction he uses to make the case there is righteousness derived only through law and Sabbath keeping. Time was not "lost" but time did *change*, in that people over time altered how they kept track of time. As mentioned earlier, the world shifted to fixed week calendars, and even the Jews went to a fixed week calendar in 359 CE. So the *true* Sabbath of the Bible does not always fall on Saturday.

On page 30, Armstrong makes the case that the law of Moses differs from the law of God, and that this law of God contains the Sabbath command. The case has been put forward in other teachings of Armstrong that the "Law of God" is eternal, having always existed. As such, this would require the Sabbath to predate even the Creation of Genesis, and extend out through all time even when there is no longer an earth and a cycle of day

and night. But Armstrong isn't interested in getting in that deep, so he does not address issues that have the potential to topple his theology and get people thinking critically about the absurdities of his teachings. Those who did raise such issues were quickly shown the doors that "swung outwards," followed by the mandatory explanation for their departure being their "disgruntled" attitude, swayed by the devil.

Was it not all right to go ahead and work on the seventh day, and then rest on the first day of the week? Just like most professing Christians today, some of these Israelites thought that would be better. (p. 31)

This claim is over the top, even for the most ardent Armstrong supporter. Absolutely nothing in the narrative supports this claim that any of those Israelites desired to work on the Sabbath, and rest on the first day of the week. This claim only serves one purpose, and that is to disparage people from observing Sundays in any fashion, and not as an actual day of rest as he implies, but as a day of corporate worship and prayer, even as the early Church did! It is just another attempt to "poison the well" regarding any religious practice on Sunday, or any day besides the Sabbath, deemed by Armstrong to be strictly on Saturdays. We have to thank Armstrong for doing such a thorough job of indoctrination as well as instilling so much fear and phobia into the members so that absurd statements like this were published without objection by anyone associated with the printing of his material.

On the six weekdays GOD had HIMSELF gone to the WORK of raining down manna. But GOD HIMSELF DID NONE OF THIS WORK ON HIS SABBATH — HOLY TO HIM! On this seventh day GOD HIMSELF *rested* from sending them manna! (pp. 31-33)

Remember Armstrong wrote that he was going to examine what Jesus had to say and teach regarding the Sabbath? How often has Armstrong now referenced anything said by Jesus? Once, and that being an eisegetical evaluation of what "the Sabbath made for man" means. Jesus declared that the Father in Heaven works on the Sabbath. Here, Armstrong claims God does not work on the Sabbath. So then, those of you who agree with Armstrong here; that God didn't work on the Sabbath, I have a fairly simple question for you: Who was working to keep the Manna from spoiling on the Sabbath?

And if God was resting on the Sabbath, what was He doing in relation to those places on the earth at the same moment the Sabbath was not occurring? Was He working there? Once again, Armstrong hits us with an absurdity that defies critical thinking and reason. Jesus declared it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath, as contrasted to doing evil, which would be true for any day. But it does beg the reasonable question as a result: Were the works of God evil? Do you see how Armstrong's claim God rested on the Sabbath even as He commanded the Hebrews to do so defies Scripture as well as reason? Jesus said God (the Father) works on the Sabbath. Jesus said He works on the Sabbath. Armstrong says God rested on the Sabbath, inferring God rests on all Sabbaths. What a tough choice: God or Armstrong, and who we are to believe...

If we follow the typology here, where everything points to Christ, the lack of manna on the Sabbath reflects the absence of Jesus on that last Sabbath, where the "bread of life" was not available while He was in the grave.

And after that blazing rebuke from God, the people rested on the seventh day! It certainly does make a difference to GOD! And God is the SAME today as he [sic] was yesterday, and will be forever (Heb. 13:8). (p. 33)

The inference being, if God (Jesus Christ in the actual reference) is the same, unchanging as He is, then whatever He commands stands forever and unchanging also. The conclusion also lacks collaborative credible evidence. What then happened to the commandment of God for all (Hebrew) males to be circumcised in the flesh? It is a commandment of God that we can definitely see existed prior to the giving of the law to Israel as well as being incorporated into that law, and it even takes precedence over the Sabbath commandment! What's that you say? It was raised to the spiritual plane, where circumcision is of the heart? Ah, I see, but for some strange, inconsistent reason, rest does not rise up to the spiritual plane, even though Jesus declared there is a rest to be found in Him, and a rest of God that is entered into through faith while it is still called "To day." Circumcision was a shadow of spiritual circumcision of the heart, a.k.a. conversion, but the Sabbath, despite the plain and simple language of Colossians 2:16-17 is not a shadow after all...

What then is the implication of Armstrong's declaration here that God/Christ does not change when it comes to His commandments? God judges unrighteous judgment. He looks to that law and sees it as an absolute, despite the condition of one's heart and intent of heart. Christians who do not keep the Sabbath are accused of being in rebellion, keeping a "pagan" day that God made no commandment concerning any observance on that day. For

Christians to be guilty before God, given what Christ reveals regarding righteous and unrighteous judgment, all these Christians would have to be aware and intentionally disregarding God in relation to their worship.

When then did the pagans manage to steal a day from God, thereby forever spoiling it for any godly purpose?

When?

If you understand what it means to judge righteous judgment and unrighteous judgment, there would be no need for someone like myself to refute what Armstrong wrote and taught, exposing the lack of proper biblical scholarship in his teachings, and the constant use of deceptive methods of interpretation. In all the years I was a member of the Worldwide Church of God, I never once heard a sermon on righteous versus unrighteous judgment. This knowledge; this understanding, would have been devastating to the whole theology of Worldwide. Little wonder it was never spoken of in any depth. Armstrong's God is a harsh, condemning God who will send you packing off to hell for eternity over things you don't know about and don't understand. Your ignorance in this system will be your destruction. Faith takes a back seat to the Sabbath and the law, regardless of how you want to define it.

On page 34, Armstrong again brings up Sunday as a straw-man argument. Sunday is irrelevant in the long run. He has redefined the debate to that of either Sunday or the Sabbath, ignoring the real issue; whether we are required to keep the Sabbath or not, and he jumped into the fray, claiming we have to without providing any "thus saith the Lord" to that effect beyond taking that which God commanded of the Hebrews and magically and mysteriously applying it all to Christians and indeed all mankind. So why then did God see fit to make that a *covenant law*? If even the Ten Commandments are required of all mankind, then we could only conclude, logically, that God was being deceptive, hiding the fact, seeing as He made even the Ten Commandments a *covenant law*, with the legal parties being the Hebrews and Himself! Or – Armstrong is wrong – dead wrong, and all this fear mongering is just the ranting of another deceiver, bent on deceiving people into sending him money through the guise of tithes, starting off with the Sabbath as the introductory bent doctrine that leads to even more bent and twisted Scripture to achieve his goals.

Armstrong now relates a story where he claims he sat in on a Sunday school men's Bible class. It seems a bit strange to me that he would do so, seeing as doing so related to *paganism* as he related earlier, but no matter... He says the lesson was about Moses giving the Jews the Ten Commandments, and claiming that this was not true and unscriptural. This is a good example though of a half-truth, at best. Scripture does show that it was God who spoke the Ten Commandments in the hearing of all the people. What is overlooked is the "why."

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD." - Exodus 19:9

God spoke the Ten Commandments to the people for the *shock and awe* factor, so that they would believe and follow Moses. Moses was the mediator of that covenant law. Jesus (remember Him?)... Armstrong said we were going to study and consider *His* sayings and teachings in regards to the Sabbath in the New Testament dispensation. Jesus attributes the giving of the law (not one of two laws) to Moses. And if there were two laws, one being "God's law" and the other being "Moses' law," why do we find no one in either the old or New Testament eras making mention of this? It is a man-made construct; a "doctrine of men" and Armstrong adequately covered the aspects and consequences of that sort of thing, didn't he...

The book of the law, wherein is written all "law," is also called "the book of the law of Moses" and "the book of the law of God." There is one law, and one book of the law.

Jesus, our authority in the Bible, attributes the giving of "*the*" law to Moses. He even does so in the context of the specific law about killing. Where is the prohibition against killing found, hmm?

"Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?" - John 7:19

Chapter 3: God—Not Moses—Gave The Law

With this chapter title, we see another distraction designed to take our focus off of the more important issues. No one claims that Moses, on his own, came up with the law. What needs to be taken into consideration is Moses' role with the law. He was the mediator. As such, Jesus attributes the "giving" of the law to the Hebrews to Moses. (John 1:17) We can argue semantics all day long, but the fact that should interest us is how Jesus related to the law. Jesus never referred to the law as "God's law." He did reference commandments of God as listed *in* this law. But this law set is not "God's law" for He has a law, and this is not it! Armstrong wants to make the case that this is *the* one and only law of God, the Ten Commandments, which serves to bolster the claim all people are required to keep the Sabbath.

And what was to come from the very VOICE OF GOD for them to obey? A great law that already existed even as the laws of gravity and inertia — the laws of physics and chemistry — already existed. Only this was a SPIRITUAL law! God's voice was to reveal that living, inexorable law in specific words, as a definite code. (p. 37)

Where's the evidence to back up these claims? The only thing that has any biblical support is the claim regarding its being "spiritual" but there are nuances to this term to consider. What makes something, ultimately, spiritual? It did originate with God, but God "distances" Himself from it by having Moses as the mediator of this law, where Jesus attributes this law, as a result, to Moses, and as Moses giving the law to the Hebrews.

There is no credible evidence that this code of law existed prior. You would have to avail yourself of several methods of deception in order to attempt it. You would have to ignore all the evidence to the contrary that refute these claims.

The language used in Hebrew where the Sabbath command is introduced uses an anathrous noun construction that indicates it was a new thing, and this is how anything new was introduced.

Moses himself declares the patriarchs did not have this covenant law. If it already existed and inviolate even as the laws of physics and chemistry, gravity and inertia, Moses would not and could not have written what he did in Deuteronomy 5:1-3, cited earlier. This is but another gross exaggeration on the part of Armstrong who seems intent on using every conceivable argument to convince people they have to keep the Sabbath.

On page 37, Armstrong asks if the law is a harsh law, then proceeds to make claims about the law being necessary for a number of reasons, all good. He doesn't bother to explain in what ways the "law of Moses" was deemed to be a burden and a yoke of bondage, for after all, Armstrong is referring to the "vastly superior, spiritual, moral, eternal law" known as the Ten Commandments. And yet, Jesus chided the religious leaders of His time, pointing out to them that they had neglected the "weightier matters of the law": (righteous) judgment, mercy, and faith. These things are conspicuously absent from the Ten Commandments and their application in the Armstrong theology. Note also that Jesus references minor issues found in the law that they did adhere to, and that Jesus confirmed they were supposed to do, such as tithing down to the minutia of the law regarding their *produce*. But this particular example Jesus uses is found where in the law? What Armstrong calls the "law of Moses" which law is the law of burden and a yoke according to him! This law set He insisted was "nailed to the cross" to the exclusion of the Ten Commandment law set. But he manages to resurrect this part of the law, tithing, by citing Jesus' words in this example! Again, we are distracted by him regarding what is actually important; justice in judgment, mercy, and faith. There was precious little of that in the Armstrong regime.

Armstrong proceeds to further claim the Ten Commandments to be a law of love. One of the mantras of Worldwide (and Adventism) was that the Ten Commandments taught us how to love God in the first four commandments, and how to express love for fellow man in the latter six. It was repeated so often that no one gave it a second thought. If however I were to ask someone who still holds to the teachings of Worldwide or a member of the SDA where in the Bible it says the Ten teach and demonstrate our love for God and fellow man, they will balk and claim it is self-evident! No evidence is needed for this claim, and indeed this is what everyone was taught to do when it came to claims and evidence. You didn't *really* need any evidence as long as the claim could be made to look reasonable and logical in relation to everything else that was taught, also without any credible evidence. It was a merry-go-round of claims supporting claims with no supporting evidence.

Is telling you not to murder an example of having love for another? No, it is telling you to refrain from murdering

others, due to the stony, wicked and deceitful heart everyone was born with that has the proclivity to hate others. Hatred is the spirit of murder. Is telling you not to have other gods besides God an example of loving God? No, these are the things you tell people to do, or rather not to do, who do not have love for God and others! But by believing the unsubstantiated claim these are all a reflection of love, what is found elsewhere can be easily dismissed such as what Paul had to say about the law, and how the law was for the unrighteous and sinner in I Timothy 1:9-10. "Well! Seeing as this Ten Commandment, perfect, moral, loving law of God, is "THE" supreme law of God, Paul cannot be referring here to the Ten Commandments... it must be the law of Moses he is writing about..." This, by the way, is "Confirmation Bias" at work, where evidence to the contrary is rejected.

Armstrong even calls this "law" a gift from God to all mankind. Yes, it would be the ultimate disgrace and sin to reject this "gift" from a loving God now, wouldn't it? We should rather be full of gratitude to live by laws that do not alter a heart of stone; a wicked, deceitful heart, but merely tries to regulate it.

Human nature is the inward pull of vanity, selfishness, greed. Selfishly, it wants to take everything God's WAY of life would bring — but, rebelliously, it resents traveling that road to obtain these lavish blessings. (pp. 37-38)

The Hebrews, who we could describe in the terms used by Armstrong here, desired all these things, and thought they could be achieved through the law! They, too, walked a "path" or road of law, instead of the strait and narrow path of faith that leads to life.

Of course this vast congregation of people looked only to the end-PROMISE — to what they would GET — and glibly agreed to the terms of God's proposition before they heard them. (p. 38)

And how are the people that followed Armstrong any different? They, too, thought they would acquire (GET) blessings and even eternal life.

Then, many centuries later, on that day of Pentecost, 31 A.D., with a tremendous and awesome manifestation, God gave HIS HOLY SPIRIT to His people — the LOVE OF GOD to fulfill that law. And that came at the founding, and setting up, of GOD'S CHURCH on earth! (p. 42)

But, according to Armstrong, it was a law of love to begin with, where "keeping" it was a reflection of one's love for God and fellow man... so which is it?

The scriptural definition of what it means to "fulfill" the law and Armstrong's definition are at variance to one another. Scripture states that it is love that fulfills the law, as contrasted to merely keeping it, despite the heart and intent of heart. One can "keep" the law that says not to murder, yet with the heart of stone, still harbor hatred for another, which is the spirit of murder. Or, one can "fulfill" the law through love, for love harbors no ill against another. The Spirit of God is a Spirit of love, and once a person is in receipt of the Holy Spirit, they in turn have the ability and capacity to now perform this love of the Spirit. One is no longer motivated by the stony heart. They are motivated by the "new heart" God gives the believer, which is God dwelling within the believer, and God does not condemn Himself. With this understanding, the old covenant letter of the law is rendered moot and obsolete, as Paul wrote; that law that dealt with the old stony heart.

Both James and Paul touch on fulfilling the law through love. Paul states that love fulfills all of the law, without exception. This comes back to what Jesus had to say about the Sabbath. It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath, good being defined as works that are wrought in God, where God has a part in your works and new heart that He gives the believer. There is a diametric difference between how God perceives the believer, and how Armstrong sees the believer. To God, the believer is now sanctified, and in a condition of righteousness, free from the law, and free from sin and the consequences of both. I need not tell you how Armstrong views the believer, demanding the believer keep the law or sin, thereby coming under condemnation.

Armstrong continues now to argue semantics. Moses did not give the people the law, the law being redefined to mean just the Ten Commandments, redefinition being a form of deception.

On page 43, Armstrong makes a bit of a slip up:

The Ten Commandments did not come from Moses but from GOD! The Ten Commandments were not given to the people by Moses, but by GOD to all the nation,

assembled. Moses says: "The ETERNAL talked with you face to face" — with the vast assembly of the whole PEOPLE! (p. 43)

Earlier, Armstrong made the claim that this Ten Commandment law was given to all mankind, but here he states what the Bible states, that is, this law was given to the Children of Israel; the "nation" of Israel, assembled there at Mt. Sinai. At this juncture, he does not want to attract attention to his claim about this law being for all mankind when he is trying to distract the reader with the claim that this law was not given to those same people by Moses. Like a magician, there is sleight of hand. While you are paying attention to one thing, he is slipping something else by you, unnoticed.

Armstrong then proceeds to claim that the Ten Commandment law set was a complete law because Moses declared that after God spoke these commandments, "God added no more." This ignores the context. This is taking a passage out of context, and treating it eisegetically in order to proffer a desired understanding. Why did God add or speak no further, then and there? Because He was finished giving it?

"These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me. And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders; And ye said, Behold, the LORD our God hath shewed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth. Now therefore why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: **if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die.** For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? **Go thou near, and hear all that the LORD our God shall say:** and speak thou unto us all that the LORD our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it. And the LORD heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the LORD said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken. O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever! Go say to them, Get you into your tents again. **But as for thee, stand thou here by me, and I will speak unto thee all the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which thou shalt teach them,** that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess it. Ye shall observe to do therefore as the LORD your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. Ye shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess." - Deuteronomy 5:22-33

The people were scared half to death, and they couldn't bear to hear any more. They were dismissed, and God continued, speaking only to Moses, who was to in turn relay to them what all God commanded and required of them.

The context provides us with evidence that is completely contradictory to the claim of Armstrong regarding that law being just the Ten Commandments. It was the Ten Commandments that were engraven in stone, this following the pattern of similar covenants kings would make with the peoples of that time in those cultures extant in that region: A short list of the rights of the king, in this case their king being God, followed by a short list of the rights of one's fellow man, with a *ceremony of rehearsal* found in the middle, in this case, the Sabbath, serving the function as a memorial to what all had transpired. The balance of a covenant would be written down and stored in whatever repository the culture had. So this phrase "and He added no more" can and does relate to that which was to be engraven on the tablets of stone, where the people could not bear to listen any further. But it cannot be interpreted to mean it constituted a complete legal code, given the context where further explanations such as *how* to keep the Sabbath and more commandments, etc., were given in a continuance with Moses alone, to in turn be given to the people. I would remind the reader that it was the "book of the law" that ended up being ratified; sprinkled with blood, along with the people, that made up that covenant between the two parties, God and the children / nation of Israel. ¹

¹ The book of the law, ratified as the OC, was the entire 5 books from Genesis to Deuteronomy, which included "law" beyond the scope of just the specific covenant law made with the children of Israel.

Now, I will remind the reader that if Armstrong's interpretation were correct, you then have to explain why tithing and other conditions and requirements found in the "law of Moses" were deemed necessary by Armstrong; a law set that according to his theology fits into the yoke of bondage, not binding on Gentile Christians.

"And He added no more." That was a COMPLETE LAW! It is a SPIRITUAL LAW. It is COMPLETE. He added no more — to THAT LAW! Any other laws are different, separate laws — NO PART OF THAT SPIRITUAL LAW! It is complete in itself!

And if you think this law was for "Jews only," you couldn't be more wrong! Have you not read, in Acts 7:38, that those Israelites "received the lively oracles to give unto US" — for US who, under the NEW Testament, are Christians? (p. 43)

"This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us: To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt," - Acts 7:38-39

This is the martyr Stephen, standing before the Sanhedrin and the high priest. This is not a case where the "us" refers to his fellow Christians, but rather his fellow Jews who were being addressed by Stephen. One of the most important rules of biblical interpretation is, "who is speaking and who is being spoken to" and Armstrong can't even get it right on this level of simplicity. His interpretation here is nothing less than gross negligence with Scripture.

Before we get too far away from the above quote of Armstrong, note again his claim that the 10 constitute a complete code of law, and that any other laws are different and separate laws. What is utterly amazing then is how his followers; members of his church, didn't apply the tithing law in relation to what Armstrong was clearly saying here. They were conditioned to accept, without question the cognitive dissonance inherent in what he taught.

This was the BASIS upon which the Old Covenant was made — but what is the basis of the New Covenant? Read it, in Hebrews 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." (p. 44)

This is a citation, quoted from Jeremiah 31:31-4, being a prophesy for Israel. Armstrong lifts verse 10 out of context, and again, now with boring regularity, ignores the context, claiming in the next paragraph that this was no temporary law that ended at the cross, and no special law for one nation only, forbidden to other nations, seeing, as he rationalizes, God is no respecter of persons.

"But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. **For if that first covenant had been faultless**, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: **Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt**; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. 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: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, **and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more**. In that he saith, A new covenant, **he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.**"
- Hebrews 8:6-10

I know and understand from personal experience that the conditioning and indoctrination received at the hand of Armstrong results in a mental condition that tends to reject any and all information and even scriptural evidence that conflicts with what he taught his followers. As a result of this, I am going to try and be as thorough as possible with this example.

This covenant and law, placed within the believer by God is a better covenant, with better promises. The first (old) covenant, was made with the fathers at the time when they left Egypt. Both Jeremiah and the author of Hebrews are not mentioning two separate covenants given at that time. I will remind the reader that it was the book of the law that was codified and ratified as the old covenant, and the book of the law contained the Ten Commandments as well as the rest of the law, this being sprinkled with blood along with the people. (Hebrews 9:19) If the Ten Commandments are a separate covenant law, then where in Scripture do we find it being ratified as such? Either it does not exist as such, or God has been really careless down through history, failing to inform us of the importance of this, or God is hiding this information from mankind if you accept Armstrong's stance.

So it isn't how carefully and methodically you study the Scriptures, it's what God reveals to you apart from His written Word!?? Does God really work like that? Jesus warned of deceivers to come, with very convincing deceptions. Was that not a warning to be *extremely* careful in how one treats Scripture? And wouldn't a deceiver be tempted to claim divine revelations for his "understanding" of Scripture, even if it means conflicting with Scripture? Armstrong, in his writings elsewhere, claimed divine inspiration regarding his understanding of Scripture; that God revealed truths to him in a way other religious scholars and people down through the centuries were not. He claimed his experience was unique, similar to Paul's.

This newer covenant is not like that old one, made at Sinai after they left Egypt. But Armstrong and the SDA claim it is the same covenant, the difference being the location where it is "written." But this interpretation conflicts with the context here on a number of levels. The two are being contrasted. They are not the same. With the old covenant, there was a remembrance of sin every year on the day of Atonement. With this new covenant, there is NO remembrance of sin. And the concluding statement here is that the old is "ready to vanish away" from the time frame of the author of Hebrews, and it was not long after that, that the last remnant of that covenant vanished with the destruction of the temple.

Part of the reason a totally New Covenant is rejected in favor of the old covenant being what is written on the heart is because the New Covenant and even the old are not understood by many. Both old and New covenants are also testaments, which were put in force by death and the spilling of blood. The old was instituted with the blood of substitute animals, sprinkled on the book of the law and the people. The New was instituted with the blood of Jesus Himself. A testament goes into force upon the death of the testator, and a covenant remains in force as long as the parties to the covenant live. The idea that the old is the New reconstituted defies these concepts.

What then is the New covenant if it is not the old? What "law of God" is written on the heart which law results in there being no more remembrance of sin as was extant in the old? Right here it is a dead giveaway how wrong Armstrong is, for his "New" covenant is rife with the potential to sin and one's loss of salvation.

Scripture reveals that there are three things described as being placed in the believer by God: 1) A new heart of flesh that replaces the stony heart one is born with. 2) His Law. 3) His Spirit.

These three things are all the same thing. Scripture says the "law of God" converts the soul, and that the "law of God is perfect." Here in Hebrews 8 and Jeremiah 31, the old covenant law is shown to be flawed, and not perfect. Armstrong and other Sabbatarians merely claim that relates to the law of Moses minus the Ten Commandment law which is perfect and converts the soul. But I must ask, where is it specifically written it is perfect and where does it say it ever converted anyone's soul? Conversion is a result of God's Spirit being placed in a person, and not a codification of any written, law set. It is those who are careless with Scripture that stumble over it, and equating God's law/Spirit/new heart with the Ten Commandments is indeed careless.

God places His Spirit within the believer. The real questions then are these:

Does God's Spirit affect a change in the believer? Yes. One now becomes a son (or daughter) of God. The person is now "born again". These things, by the way, are summarily rejected out of hand by Armstrong.

Does the Holy Spirit guide or lead the believer?

"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." - John 16:13

If the believer is led or guided by the very Spirit of God, is there a need to be led also by the old covenant law, seeing as the Holy Spirit is a Spirit of love, and love fulfills the law?

No, else there is the unspoken declaration that the Holy Spirit is an insufficient guide in the life of the believer,

which limits God and His Spirit, resulting in such a person having in essence "another" god besides the One True God who now dwells within the believer. Even Armstrong stated that you are the servant of the one you serve. If you serve that law, then that law is your master; your "god."

The old law, engraven in stone, is defined by Paul as being the ministration of death and condemnation; its fruit is death. This law of the Spirit, law of faith, law of Christ is the law that leads to life, for the Spirit of God imparts life. The spiritual definition of life and death is related to whether one is with God, or cut off from God. A sinner is seen as being dead in his sins and trespasses; cut off from God, and again, Scripture states that the first, old covenant law, was for the sinner and lawless (1 Timothy 1:9-10).

There were two trees in the garden of Eden, and not one. The one tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, whose fruit was death, is symbolic of that old covenant law. It teaches a knowledge of good and evil, and rightly and justly condemned the transgressor. The other tree represents Jesus Christ and the law of the Spirit, wherein one gains life and their sins are remembered no more.

Sabbatarianism is but one method out of myriad other things taught by a great number of people and churches that distract people from what is important; salvation through faith *only* in Christ, and not faith in Him plus anything else, such as keeping the old covenant law and Sabbath. Sabbatarians like Armstrong try desperately to transform the one tree into the other and the old covenant into the New. And like Adam and Eve, people keep picking the wrong "tree." The narrow path that leads to life that few find is that walk of faith. The just walk in faith. Add anything to faith, and you widen the path into a path of destruction. Add anything to faith and you dilute faith, and negate faith. In the Armstrong theology, faith is subordinated to the Sabbath. This cannot be.

Armstrong in the book now pulls what I call the "shotgun" approach where a flood of proof texts are put forth together, in an effort to make something look like there is comprehensive evidence in support of a belief, when in fact it is just a flood of assumptive reasoning. This will take some time to wade through.

"REMEMBER the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8). God said REMEMBER this day! (pp. 44-45)

Rule of biblical interpretation: Who is speaking, who is being spoken to? God is speaking to the Hebrews; the children of Israel who were brought out of Egypt, with whom God made that covenant, the Sabbath being the sign of that covenant between them. They were told to remember the day, that day being the "*ceremony of rehearsal*" or "*ceremony of remembrance*" located in the middle, just like similar covenants between kings and citizens of a kingdom or another nation in the Middle East. Armstrong claims this "remember" is in relation to what they already knew to do, further claiming it supports the conclusion it was a Creation Week ordinance. But if we take the interpretation to mean "remember what you already knew", then we can just as easily claim they were being told to remember what they were told and taught to do back in Exodus 16, where the wording in Hebrews shows that it was given to them at that time as something new, and not previously known.

Again, who is God telling to remember the Sabbath day? Israel. No one else. Why, after stating that it is Jesus the Christ that we should look to for the answer to this question, we are still trying to find the answers to the New Testament in the Old?

Christ said, in the sermon on the mount: "THINK NOT not that I am come to destroy the law," so professing Christians think He *did* come to destroy it! (p. 45)

This, however is not what Christ is cited as saying in Scripture, and it is another example of pulling a passage out of Scripture and ignoring the context. It is also another example of distraction. What did Jesus come to do in this context? Fulfill the law. Did He succeed? And if so, in what way?

"And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." - Luke 24:44

Note now what it actually says in Matthew 5:17 that Armstrong so *conveniently* left out.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, **or the prophets**: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." - Matthew 5:17

Armstrong left out the reference here to the "*prophets*." Why do you suppose he would do that? By leaving it out, the assumption is that Jesus was talking about the *legalities* of the law. But when rendered as written, "the

law" becomes understood to mean the first 5 books of Moses, that contain much more than just the legalities of the law. Also, there are no laws codified in the prophets with the potential to be fulfilled or destroyed, these two concepts requiring further clarification and definition also. What then is found in both the law and prophets with the potential to be fulfilled or destroyed? Prophecies.

If, however, we conclude this is about the legalities of the law, we run into a number of problems contextually. If the law; the points of law in the old covenant, remain inviolate down to jots and tittles (see verse 18), then how is it that Jesus can alter points of that law way beyond jots and tittles later in the same chapter? And how do we flesh out just the Ten Commandments if the reference says the law and prophets? Doesn't this imply a greater scope of law than just the Ten if this were about the legalities of the law? Furthermore, how to you "fulfill" a law set; the Ten Commandments, that is already perceived to be perfect, eternal, spiritual, etc., to begin with? And even more conflicts pop up in verse 19! Once this "law" is *fulfilled*, and heaven and earth pass away², so too passes away this perfect and eternal, everlasting law!

Christ said, in the same sermon on the mount: "Swear not," so professing Christians universally hold up their right hands and swear.

Christ said: "LOVE your enemies," so professing Christians — pretending to follow Him, HATE their enemies and go to war to kill them.

Christ said: Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," so, professing Christians say, "It's impossible to keep God's Law, let alone to be perfect. Christ kept it in our stead, and then abolished it."

Christ commands "DO!" — and His professed followers DON'T! Christ commands "DON'T! and His professed followers DO! (p. 45)

What is the commonality above? They are all claims couched in accusations.

Was Armstrong perfect? Was he sinless? Scripture says if we say we are sinless, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us (1 John 1:8). But Armstrong infers that his way results in this perfection. This is more distraction from what is really important.

The "be you therefore perfect" statement is found in a discourse where Jesus says that if your eye offends you, to pluck it out, and if your hand offends you, cut it off, rather than end up in hell. So do you suppose that if you sinned by looking lustfully upon a woman, assuming for the sake of argument you are a man, do you think plucking out one of your eyes solves the problem? No, for you can still see a woman with the other eye, and the problem would remain, or so it would seem. So you pluck out the other eye and now you are blind, and can see nothing, including a woman. Is your problem solved now? No, because you can still *think* about lust. No matter how desperate the actions you take are, you would still stand condemned before God in this regard. Jesus is showing the futility of trying to do it all on your own; that the problem ends up being the heart, for Christ also taught that it is what is in a man that defiles him, ultimately; the evil thoughts and imagination that tend to, but not always, be manifested through action. So then Jesus ends up with this command that you also have to be perfect even as the Father is perfect, which is ultimately utterly impossible for you to do! Why? Because keeping or breaking the law in the long run has absolutely nothing to do with it! The law was there to prove men sinners, incapable of achieving the perfection of God. But, if you are so deluded that you think you can be perfect even as the Father in Heaven is perfect, then by all means "keep" the law and Sabbath. Just try not to act too surprised when you stand before Christ condemned. Being or becoming perfect even as the Father is, will not be accomplished through law. Only God is truly perfect. You can only be "perfect" if this perfect God the Father dwells in you; where He becomes a part of you, inseparable.

When we come to page 46, Armstrong once again bashes Sunday worship as his straw-man argument, distracting us from the real issue; whether we are required to keep the Sabbath, or not. Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath. No one contests this fact. So what did the Lord of the Sabbath have to say in regards to the Sabbath? Suddenly, the Lord of the Sabbath isn't so important, as Armstrong continually focuses on the Old Testament / covenant dispensation, looking for validation of the Sabbath for the New Covenant dispensation, where Jesus frankly takes on the role of a figurehead monarch who has no real power over his subjects. The Law is what ultimately rules.

² Until heaven and earth pass needs to be understood in its historic and cultural context, where the temple was understood by every Jew at the time to be the place where heaven and earth came together, and it did pass out of existence. People tend to look at this passage, and assign it our modern day understanding of cosmology instead.

Right here, let's put an end to the rebellious ARGUMENTS about Sunday being the "Lord's Day." I will make to any reader this challenge: Produce any passage in the Bible identifying Sunday — or the first day of the week — as "the Lord's Day," and I will proclaim the truth of that passage to the millions of people who hear *The WORLD TOMORROW* program on the air in every inhabited continent on earth, and publish it prominently in *The PLAIN TRUTH*, which now has a reading audience of about seven million people around the world. (p. 46)

Armstrong sets the parameters, knowing full well that no one is going to meet the challenge as written. And this is still a distraction regarding the real issues. He also uses this opportunity to brag about the scope of his influence around the world, showing himself to be an authority on the subject to millions of people; an appeal to his own authority. This too can be a logical fallacy. What we would be looking for in Scripture regarding Sunday, or the first day of the week, is whether Christians were gathering on that day, or the Sabbath. As it turns out, the only assembly we can identify as being strictly a Christian assembly where the day is also identified is found in Acts chapter 20, and that day is the first day of the week. There is also no example of a strictly Christian assembly being conducted on the Sabbath. Of course, when you point this out, they waste no time spinning it away, usually with the distraction of all the times Paul went into synagogues on the Sabbath, claiming he was keeping the Sabbath as a result. I have also seen examples of Sabbatarians claiming some of those gatherings at synagogues were Christian gatherings. That is a classic example of "Confirmation Bias" where one sees what they believe in places where it does not exist, and refuse to see any and all evidence to the contrary.

The irony of the problem here is that the modern advocates of the law and Sabbath are people who in fact have very little understanding of the law and Sabbath. They keep the Sabbath, not in the manner put forth in the law, rather they keep it in accordance with the traditions and commandments of men who have set themselves up as the authorities on the Sabbath. As a result, there is a blurring between "rest" and "worship." It is assumed that keeping the Sabbath included attending a religious service on that day; "worship" of God, as well as being a day of rest, as the Sabbath was identified in Scripture as being a "holy convocation" which they interpret to mean a gathering together of the people.

But this, too, is a misrepresentation of Scripture, for this "holy convocation" was in relation to the people remaining in their dwellings on that day. A holy convocation in this context is where the people, everywhere throughout Israel, were seen as being in the presence of God on that day. Corporate worship was restricted to specific days and location, that location eventually being where the temple was.

Remember the discussion between Jesus and the Samaritan woman? The age old debate regarding where people were to gather to worship God was brought up by her, and Jesus pointed out that "the day was coming, and now is (then) when people would worship God in spirit and in truth." Up till then, worship was not in spirit and in truth, seeing as it was done as a matter of compulsion, and not desire. Christian Liberty "allows" people to worship whenever and wherever they so desire, but Sabbatarianism denies this Liberty, taking people back to worship according to dictate and compulsion.

Christians chose to worship on the first day of the week because they could. The early church chose this day for a variety of reasons, one which would never occur to the modern Sabbatarian. The Jewish Christians would be free to gather with their Gentile counterparts, seeing as they continued to keep the law, including the Sabbath, by remaining in and about their dwellings on that day!

The examples found in the writings of the early church show that Christians gathered on the first day of the week, either very early in the morning before going off to work, or later in the evening after work, as what appears to be the case in Acts 20. They did not treat the first day of the week as a day of rest, nor did they treat the day as being holy. Only centuries later did some Christians, as a matter of choice again, decide to rest on the first day. This is all about Christian Liberty; the right to esteem a day or not to God as Paul discusses in Romans 14:5-6, and not about replacing the Sabbath with *Sunday* as the Sabbatarian argument and claim goes that incorporates an accusation of pagan worship. How this claim and accusation complies with Jesus Christ's command not to judge according to appearance has never been explained by Sabbatarians to my knowledge.

On page 48, Armstrong plays the mandatory, "*sin is the transgression of the law*" card. (I John 3:4) He doesn't bother to mention that this passage is translated from the one Greek word, "*anomia*" usually translated iniquity or lawlessness. Most modern translations render it as such; i. e., "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness/iniquity, and sin is lawlessness/iniquity." If, however we are to conclude sin is the transgression of

the law, then David, by eating the showbread was guilty, and not guiltless as Jesus insisted. What Armstrong is saying flies in the face of what Jesus taught regarding righteous judgment, judging according to the intent of heart. The teachings of the "Lord of the Sabbath" are summarily dismissed by Sabbatarians, as well as what the Sabbath law says, forbidding "any" work at all on the Sabbath. Armstrong had his own list of what could and could not be done on the Sabbath as "work".

In James 2:9-11 you will read which law defines sin. It is a law subdivided into "Points" (verse 10). One of its "Points" is "Do not commit adultery," quoted from this very law (Ex. 20:14, and another of its ten "Points" is "Do not kill," also quoted from this same law (Ex. 20:13). (p. 48)

Without explanation, Armstrong limits this law to just the Ten Commandments. However, James states that breaking any one point of the law in the "whole" law constitutes a violation of the covenant. (James 2:10) Sabbatarians do not keep the "whole" law, so the law again gets redefined to mean just the Ten Commandments, so once more I ask how is it that Armstrong can claim not paying your tithes based on your wages is a sin, punishable by eternal death?

Armstrong in this booklet demonstrates an incredible lack of love, making accusation after accusation against Christians whose faith is in Christ, such as accusing them of pagan worship by participating in corporate worship on the first day of the week, thereby judging them according to appearance which is unrighteous judgment, compounded with this lie, bearing false witness against them.

You cannot sin against a covenant law you are not a legal party to, or a covenant law that ended, and that old covenant law qualifies on both counts. It ended, and as Paul wrote, where there is no law, there is no transgression. Romans 4:15: "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression." Or, do you prefer being subject to transgression, sin, wrath and condemnation?

Next, Armstrong jumps back into Exodus 20, and tries to make the case that the seventh day of Creation Week is the weekly Sabbath that was being instituted there in the law. What he neglects here is how the Sabbath is patterned after the "rest" of Creation Week, and all the evidence of Scripture shows them to be two different things, and not the same thing, being the weekly Sabbath. But he knows the power of constant, incessant repetition.

One thing of interest, which is in fact minor, is that Armstrong contradicts himself here regarding the creation of Adam and Eve, where he says that both Adam and Eve were created before the hallowed seventh day, whereas earlier in this booklet he claimed Eve was created later. I wonder if he realized the difficulty in making the case for the two of them keeping that first Sabbath if Eve wasn't there to do so. Regardless, it seems odd that God would have commanded either or both of them to rest the day after they were created, and before they had ever performed any six days of work previously. It was God who worked, and it was God who rested / ceased. God never returned to that work. He does not rest from any other work, as Armstrong claimed also, basing this on God not providing manna on the Sabbath, which would have been a case of God working. Again, it begs the question as to whether God was working in order to prevent the manna from spoiling on the Sabbath. There is also an interesting conclusion to be drawn here from the perspective of Typology. Jesus was/is the bread of life. Like that manna, Jesus was not to be found on that last Sabbath before His resurrection.

Conclusion of chapter 3

The issue in this chapter was the claim that it was God, and not Moses, who gave the law. As stated, this is but another distraction. The law originated with God – all of it. The law is attributed to Moses, seeing as he is the mediator of that law. The blood spilled, ratifying that covenant law, was that of substitute animals. God distances Himself from that law in all this.

Jesus claims it was Moses who gave the people the law, and never once references the law as being the "law of God." The commandments of God are found within the law, required of the Hebrews, with the weight of God's authority behind them.

Armstrong wants desperately to emphasize God's ownership over that old covenant law in order to bolster the Sabbath claim. I would mention in this regard that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was God's tree, yet it was still not a good idea to partake of it.

Chapter 4: A Special Eternal Covenant

Let's do a review of what we have seen so far. We have seen a number of rationalizations presented, heavily salted with dire warnings should we choose to ignore his teaching. Armstrong seeks to motivate us through fear more than anything else; fear of eternal punishment, or perhaps more accurately, punishment that is permanent. There is an instilled dread among the followers of Armstrong, that looms over their heads like the sword of Damocles.

One of the rationalizations of Armstrong earlier was that the Sabbath was holy time, and I wish to touch on this a bit more. The sacrifices associated with the worship of God had to be performed at the temple in Jerusalem. If you tried to practice sacrifices elsewhere, were your sacrifices considered holy? No, they were not. The holy sacrifices were dependent upon location and time. What of Passover? It could only be participated in within the confines of the territory the Israelites then occupied. One who left Israel could not keep the Passover. Unless they were within the borders of Israel, they were out of luck. This same concept holds true for the Sabbath, for when the Sabbath is occurring in Israel, there are places on the earth where it is not the Sabbath. Can holy time both exist and not exist at the same time? This is the sort of thing Armstrong tries to avoid in his attempts to convince you to keep the Sabbath in this booklet. I would also point out and remind you that he had a vested interest in the outcome; a very heavy vested interest, for once the initiate bought into the belief they had to keep the Sabbath, Armstrong knew that he would have the initiate conditioned to swallow any rationalization Armstrong wanted to throw at them, such as tithing in a manner Scripture does not support. Compromise a little to begin with, compromise a lot later.

Consequently, many have used the argument, without any Scriptural authority of course, that the Ten Commandments were abolished at the cross. Of course they never stop to realize that, if there is no law, there is no transgression — as Paul plainly states in Romans 4:15 — and no one has sinned since the cross — and therefore we should not need a Saviour! (p. 50)

Note that Armstrong takes the claim and belief regarding the fate of the Ten Commandments should it have ended at the cross and responds to it, not with biblical evidence, but a rationalization and accusation regarding sin and subsequently the conclusion being no one would therefore need a Saviour. There is a lot to unravel here.

First, we see an accusation, that people have concluded that the Ten Commandments were abolished at the cross and that this action is without any Scriptural authority. Where then did these people get the idea in the first place, if it were not from Scripture or, at the least, thought to be from Scripture? We can actually demonstrate Armstrong's statement to be false using his own brand of reasoning to do it. Armstrong admits that Jesus was the God of the old covenant incarnate. It was Jesus, he claims, that authored the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are a covenant law, made with the children of Israel, even as Armstrong has pointed out in this booklet. What then happens when either party to a covenant, a.k.a. a contract, dies? Said covenant ends, and the apostle Paul uses a marriage covenant to explain this in Romans chapter 7, which, the last time I checked, was located in what even Armstrong would admit is part of Scripture. When Jesus, who was God Incarnate, died on the cross, something terminated upon His death with Him. Paul calls them in one place the "handwriting of ordinances that were against us." Armstrong and other Sabbatarian leaders and churches have insisted this could not be the Ten Commandments, for a variety of reasons and rationalizations, such as what Armstrong does here in the section under discussion. They try to claim it was the law of Moses, sans the Ten Commandments, that ended at the cross. With this rationalization, we, too, can produce rationalistic concepts to disparage the idea even as Armstrong did. If it were the law of Moses that ended at the cross, then tithing is no longer required. Armstrong is being careful though not to take the thought out that far.

Another flaw in the reasoning is that, without the Ten Commandments being extant and in force, there would be no sin, and if there is no sin, there is no need of Jesus as Saviour. But there was, and is, sin outside the Ten Commandments. Armstrong builds a house of cards of falsehood and deceit. This construct is dependent upon the belief that sin is strictly and solely the transgression of the law, the law here being interpreted to mean only the Ten Commandments. And if I try to claim the Ten did not exist until the giving of this covenant law at Sinai,

Armstrong has an arsenal of proof texts at his disposal, some of which he has already launched, to refute this claim, despite the Biblical evidence to the contrary. But sin has several other definitions in Scripture, one being the declaration by the apostle Paul that whatever is not of faith is sin, as well as a quote from him that the law is not of faith. Passages like this are summarily dismissed by simply claiming it relates to the law of Moses, and not the law of God's Ten Commandments, again going back to another false claim that there were two covenant laws, and not one.

So then, one covenant made between God and Israel terminated upon the death of Jesus, and the other did not? How does that work? When we take what Paul wrote, cited by Armstrong, a different picture comes to light. Where there is no law, there is no transgression. For the believer then, that law can no longer accuse and condemn the believer to death. Sounds like "good news" to me, and not bad news, unless you are some sort of masochist who likes punishment. But without sin and the law to wield, people like Armstrong have no power and control over other people where they can demand tithes from them, contrary to the law they also claim no longer exists, having been nailed to the cross.

There is such a jumble of falsehoods, that one critic of Armstrong referred to it as a "*Tangled Web*³," where it becomes nearly impossible to untangle it all in order to get to the truth. When someone becomes thoroughly enmeshed in Armstrong's web of deception, the concept of being freed from the condemnation of sin and "the" old covenant law is perceived to be unreal and impossible; even unbiblical, hence Armstrong's claim here, dismissing Paul's statement applying to the Ten Commandments law.

You have need of a Saviour, not because you sinned against the Ten Commandment law; and not because you failed to keep the Sabbath and have broken the Sabbath, but because you are a defiled sinner due to what exists from within you; what you are:

"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man:" -Matthew 15:19-20a

Why were the people destroyed in the Noachian flood condemned? Because they violated this "eternal" Ten Commandment law of God?

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that ***every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually***. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD." - Genesis 6:5-8

As mentioned a number of times earlier, and I will no doubt continue to mention it, seeing as this is so important, and gets constantly side-stepped by Armstrong who continually uses the Ten Commandments and Sabbath as a distraction in this regard, the *real* issue is the sinful, wicked, deceptive heart you are born with.

The problem is not solved by trying to keep the law or the Ten Commandments, or the Sabbath. They are distractions designed to take your mind off of the real issue and where the real problem exists: Who and what you are. You can say you keep the Ten Commandments and Sabbath perfectly, and still stand before God condemned. When the law becomes an end in itself, the heart and condition of the heart gets overlooked and ignored. You end up thinking you stand before God blameless because of what you have done by your own effort, in this case keeping and complying with the Ten Commandments and the Sabbath. But there is a pretense to this also, for it really all comes down to just the Sabbath, with the entirety of the law embodied in the Sabbath for Sabbatarians. I have known Sabbatarians who have committed adultery, and justified the action in their own minds, where they fall back on the Sabbath in this regard! They kept the Sabbath! Somehow, this makes everything alright and justifiable.

When the Sabbath comes to be an end in itself, all else gets evaluated and judged in relation to the Sabbath. That is what we see happening in this booklet. We don't look to the heart; we ignore the heart. We don't look to righteous judgment, we look to the law and Sabbath and judge according to that standard, judging works as either good or evil by whether they are performed on that day or not.

³ "Herbert Armstrong's Tangled Web" – Robinson. This book is available on this website as a PDF download. <https://exitsupportnetwork.com/pdf-downloads/>

A work that is deemed good one day is evil and sin should it be done on the Sabbath. Everything is backwards from what Jesus taught regarding the Sabbath, the law, and righteous judgment. And the poor person, caught up in the web of Armstrong, cannot see or comprehend what has happened to him or her. Their involvement has, like the proselyte of the Jews, resulted in them becoming a worse child of hell than they were before, all the while thinking they have drawn closer to God through the law and Sabbath. Their hearts however moved farther away from God. They are no longer the sinner before God, humble and contrite as a result. They are (self) righteous, and those who are now as they were, stand condemned now before them.

If I speak with a Sabbatarian (I do not refer to them as actual Sabbath keepers, for they do not really keep the Sabbath in the manner prescribed in Scripture) and I tell them the truths of Scripture, that Jesus worked on the Sabbath, that Jesus broke the Sabbath, that Jesus even declared that the Father in Heaven works on the Sabbath (Armstrong claimed God in Heaven rested on the Sabbath), and that Jesus said it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath as contrasted to doing evil, and that the works of a Christian cannot be sin, even if wrought on a Sabbath, seeing as the works of a Christian are wrought in God, I am condemned as a liar and as a deceiver and as a blasphemer, destined for the lake of fire as a result. Is that the response of one who now possesses that *heart of flesh* (Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26) that has and shows love for even an enemy? Or is that the stony heart speaking?

Again I ask, who stood before God justified? The contrite sinner who confessed he was a sinner, or the Pharisee who boasted in the law and in himself, while disparaging the other, sinful man?

But the natural man does not like looking to the inside. The natural man wants to look to the outside; the exterior in an attempt to cover and cloak what is on the inside. Some cloak their evil, stony hearts with a cloak of religion and even the Sabbath.

Armstrong now proceeds the narrowing process. There was the law, whittled down to the Ten Commandments, and now he is going to make the case that the Sabbath is a stand alone covenant on page 50. Fifty pages have transpired, and he is still making the case we are all supposed to be keeping the Sabbath. If there were a Scripture that declares Christians, or all mankind were required to keep the Sabbath, all this would have been accomplished in one paragraph. If only we could now confront him with his own brand of reasoning in this regard, demanding him to produce a definitive Scripture where God commands all mankind or even Christians to keep the Sabbath, where he would in turn broadcast and preach this revelation throughout the whole world.

[You will remember that to the Ten Commandment Law, God added no more \(Deut. 5:22\). Any other law, or Covenant, coming later, is NO PART OF IT, but a separate law or Covenant. Paul makes this plain: "Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto" \(Gal. 3:15\). \(p. 50\)](#)

There is a most subtle distraction here. He is working from the premise regarding the content of a covenant, and ignoring the issue of the parties to a covenant. He points out, rightly, that once a covenant has been signed off on, no one can add to it, or take away from it. But Armstrong is busy, adding other parties to it, forging their signatures to it! This too violates covenants. Do you honestly think Armstrong doesn't know this?

[The Ten Commandment Law is complete — God added no more. Also, the Old Covenant was confirmed, as described in Exodus 24:4-8. It cannot be added to. \(p. 50\)](#)

"And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words." - Exodus 24:4-8

What is interesting in regards to false beliefs and teachings, is that they not only conflict with the truths of Scripture, they will also conflict with other deceptions. Here, Armstrong "shoots himself in the foot" claiming the Ten are a complete law, and that God added no more. So then, again, where in the Ten do you find the

command to tithe?

What was being confirmed here as the "Old Covenant"? The book of the law. The book of the "covenant" singular. It does not say the book of the covenants, as to imply more than one that these people were becoming a party to. What was written in this book of the covenant? What we have today known as the first five books of the law, penned by the hand of Moses. Were the Ten Commandments written in the book of the law? Absolutely. Where do you think your knowledge of the Ten Commandments came from? Did you see the tablets of stone, or did you see the Bible? Were the tablets of the law, the Ten Commandments, confirmed here as a separate covenant, or as an integral part of the book of the law? Who were the legal parties to this covenant? What all was sprinkled with the blood of the covenant? The book and the people, and the altar, and the declaration by Moses regarding those people and all the words written in the book of the law. Note especially, please, that the altar plays a part in this covenant, being sprinkled with blood. The altar, where sacrifices were performed in accordance with the law is also an integral part of this covenant. If there are no sacrifices, there is no covenant in force. That old covenant came to a complete end upon the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D. The party of the first part died on the cross earlier, legally ending that covenant at that time and His participation in it. The Jew who was alive at that time, died to that covenant symbolically through baptism; a death and resurrection, so as to be legally free to enter into the New Covenant as we read in Romans 6, for both old and new covenants are described and defined as being marriage covenants, the first between God and Israel of old, described and defined as being an adulterous wife, and now the New Covenant "wife" who truly loves her husband and will not stray. Given this understanding, it helps to understand the nature of that old covenant, in that it was designed to expose that "wife", Israel, for what "she" truly was: a stiff-necked, rebellious, faithless, cheating wife. Armstrong sees the law, regardless of whether you want to see one or two, as what determines this rebellion based on whether or not one transgressed it. God sees the law as the means for exposing the sinful, faithless nature of those people in that they would transgress it as a natural result of their condition to begin with. From a marital perspective, it was the "pre-nups" designed to trip up the cheating wife, so that there would be no question as to the validity for God's later divorce with Israel.

When God does anything, or makes anything, there is a reason — an important PURPOSE. (p. 51)

Armstrong has a firm grip on the obvious. Where he fails is in determining what the purpose is.

God, through "The Word" (John 1:1-3) who became Jesus Christ, *made* the Sabbath. He made it *for* man. (p. 51)

This is one of the Armstrong mantras. One of the proper methods of biblical interpretation is to take words and examine how they were used at that time and place, considering the etymology of the word. Man here does not mean all mankind. It is an impossible interpretation, based on the proper methods of interpretation and translation. It was made for the man to whom it was given; the Hebrews who were a legal party to that covenant. I have covered this in detail elsewhere.

Armstrong also resorts to more semantics regarding whose Sabbath(s) these are being discussed. They were "given" and made for man, but they aren't really man's... Let's take this concept and apply it to the "law of Moses." Who gave this law to Moses? God. But somehow, this law is not God's law, despite the evidence which is quite similar to how we find the Sabbath law being discussed. Armstrong plays it both ways, depending on need. The book of the law of God contains the "law of Moses" that isn't really God's law also. Just some of the book of the law of God is the law of God –

In this construct of Armstrong's, there is a progression of sorts, from the book of the law, narrowed to the law of Moses and then the law of the Ten Commandments, to the law of the Sabbath, with each becoming more important as the progression proceeds. When finished, if you are not keeping the Sabbath, any further law keeping downstream from this is just wasted effort on your part.

If we appropriate it for ourselves — for our own use, whether work, pleasure, or what, we are STEALING THAT TIME FROM GOD! (p. 51)

We all know what Armstrong means here and what He is getting at, and the irony here is how close he comes to a universal truth about God, but still manages to miss the point. What of a life where everything they do, God is

not an integral part of their lives? Is that sin to God? Yes. It is a lifestyle of sin. What of the life and works of one who has repented – turned to God and now whose life is hidden in Christ, where they live now for Christ? Is this person's works sin, being now "wrought in God?" Or can his works be sin if performed on a particular day of the week, and not sin if performed on another day? And if his works, regardless of the nature of the work, are deemed to be sin on a Sabbath, then please write to me and explain how this is not a case of judging according to appearance, and what Jesus related to be the opposite of righteous judgment. Jesus reveals the problem is found in a man's heart, and the declaration we all need to be born again, with a new heart of flesh, and with God's Law/Spirit indwelling. And I will repeat myself in this regard, that God is a jealous God, and the Spirit of God is a sufficient guide in the life of a believer, a son of God. You cannot serve two masters, both God and the law. The law's overall function was to bring people to Christ, when they got to the point they realized their nature proved them sinners, with the law being there to prove it to those stiff-necked, rebellious and faithless Hebrews. As Paul writes in I Timothy 1:9-10, the law was made for the lawless, the sinner, the unrighteous. Christians are defined as being in the righteous category, having put on the righteousness of Christ, seeing as no man can truly produce his own righteousness by way of that law, no matter how you chop it up. The law proves men sinners, and not righteous. Even if you could keep the law, you would still be a sinner based on your heart.

Armstrong makes the accusation we are stealing that time from God. What would God want us to do with that time? To do good, and not evil, according to Jesus Christ, and what was inspired to be written about the Sabbath even in the Old Testament dispensation, as cited earlier, which bears repeating.

"If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing *thy* pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:" - Isaiah 58:13

The Hebrews were always "doing their own ways" and not doing anything with God foremost in their lives. Think of a contractor you hire to do work on your home. A carnal contractor may well be motivated to get the job done quickly, and see how much he can charge you for it, while taking short-cuts on construction, not caring about the later consequences to you. He's a "hit and run" contractor. Then there can be a contractor who is a true son of God, who, out of godly love for others, cannot and will not take advantage of you, for he is going to see to it that you get what you are paying for, and he is not going to overcharge you for it, and he wants you to be happy with the results of his work and be safe. He takes no short-cuts.

Contractor #1 keeps the Sabbath. Contractor #2 does not. Which one do you want working on your house?

Of course, a Sabbatarian would insist the scenario is a set-up, yet I was in the Worldwide Church of God long enough to see the truth of this repeated over and over again, where contractors in the church even took advantage of other members, where the ministers got involved, yet nothing was ever truly done about it. The Sabbath does not a saint produce.

Notice again! He said: "My Sabbaths ye shall keep." In Exodus 20:8 we saw that He commanded to "keep it HOLY" — God *made* it HOLY TIME, and commanded us to *keep* it holy — NOT TO PROFANE WHAT IS HOLY TO GOD. (p. 52)

More of the same. God did not command "us" to keep it holy. God commanded those Israelites to keep it holy, via a covenant. I'm beginning to wonder how many times Armstrong has been repetitive in this regard. Regardless, I'm still waiting for when he gets to where he will cover what all Jesus had to say about the topic, seeing as he claimed Jesus had much to say about it. So far, Armstrong has only cited part of what was said in Mark chapter 2.

Armstrong now switches his attention to the issue of the Sabbath being a sign. He elaborates on what a sign is, distracting us to the fact that it was a sign of that covenant between the two parties, God and the Hebrews. If you are a Gentile, your ancestors were not sprinkled with that blood. They were not a legal party to that covenant, regardless of whether you want to claim the Ten being a separate covenant or not. God does not deal with us; with humanity, illegally, holding us to the conditions of a covenant we are not a party to, or a covenant that has legally ended.

Armstrong then claims the Sabbath is what identifies to the people who God is. But how did God identify Himself

through the examples of the Bible? Did He declare, "I am the God of the Sabbath?" Think about it.

When the apostle Paul revealed who the "unknown God" was, did he say, it was the God of the Sabbath; the Sabbath God? No, he didn't. This is just another in a nearly unending list of contrived arguments, designed to circumvent the evidence of Scripture, and the proper methods of biblical interpretation. This methodology is designed to wear down the reader with a constant barrage of rationalizations and distractions.

BUT DOESN'T EVERYBODY KNOW WHO GOD IS? ABSOLUTELY NO! This whole world is deceived — so says your Bible (Rev. 12:9). (p. 53)

The book of Revelation is not where you go to develop or even back up beliefs and doctrine. The world, collectively, may well be deceived, but are we to conclude this being deceived is in relation to who the God of all things is? In a way, Armstrong's claim here is vague. Deceived in what way? Doctrinally? In relation to the nature of God? Or strictly in the sense of Christ being "Lord of the Sabbath" which ignores the actual context being "Lord *also* of the Sabbath"? Let's take the thought out a bit further then. The "world" is deceived because the world is full of deceivers, claiming others are deceiving, and being deceived.

But do they actually call themselves the ministers of CHRIST? Read the verse just before the two just quoted — verse 13: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." Yes, Satan is the great counterfeiter. (p. 53)

What is the biblical definition of an apostle? It was one instructed personally by Christ. Even Paul related that he spent two years being taught by Christ. So when was Armstrong taught by Christ? He claimed his education was similar to Paul's in other writings of his, being unique, but then also says it was the result of his intensive study of Scripture, with God speaking to him from the pages of the Bible. How then is that unique? How did that qualify him as the "end time apostle"? And is this not a good case of more distraction? He rails that there are false ministers out there claiming to represent Christ. Does not this rhetoric serve to take the focus off of himself in the process? And, realistically, wouldn't we expect a deceiver to do just this sort of thing?

What else would we expect a deceiver to do, or a wolf in sheep's clothing? We would expect them to twist and pervert Scripture to their own advantage, and justify the alteration of Scripture through any number of rationalizations in order to appear justified in doing so; something God's Word explicitly commands people not to do.

I was once talking to the wife of a man who contacted me and asked me to try and reason with his wife who had joined one of the Armstrong splinter groups headed by [David C. Pack](#). I pointed out to her this statement in Scripture, and pointed out how David Pack had violated it regarding the tithing law, and she responded by saying that, because David Pack was a prophet of God, that gave him the right to alter Scripture, and that I was a servant of the devil. I said in response, "So I, in holding to what Scripture says, am of the devil whereas David Pack, who is altering Scripture, is not of the devil?" "Yes" she replied.

"Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" - Galatians 4:16

He palms himself off as GOD. He is called, in your Bible, the god of this world. (II Cor. 4:4). He palms off his ministers as the ministers of CHRIST — accusing the true ministers of Christ of being "false apostles" to divert suspicion from themselves! (p. 53)

No comment. Well, okay, a small comment that I find also amusing. The "uniform" of a minister was a wool suit. Interesting, don't you think, that Jesus refers to false ministers as wolves in "sheep's clothing"?

Does this world's "Christianity" *really* know the TRUE GOD? It is *deceived* into believing it does, and a deceived world may be sincere in that false belief. But the TRUE GOD is the one whom we obey.

This world is not taught to OBEY GOD! Its false "Christianity" teaches that God's Law is "done away." It actually puts human conscience, actuated by Satan's false teaching, in place of God's Law! It does not teach, as did Christ, that we must actually *live* by every word of God — of the Bible!

It OBEYS Satan by sinning! (p. 54)

More of his shotgun approach. More accusations. God condemns deceived people who are sincere in their

beliefs, which translates into God judging people, not with righteous judgment, examining the heart and intent of heart, but rather unrighteous judgment, according to appearance.

Then obedience to God is equated with obedience to the law (read Sabbath). The claim being that to obey the law is to obey God, despite what Jesus had to say in contrast to that law.

"False Christianity teaches that God's Law is 'done away,' " yet Armstrong taught that about 98% of "God's law" was done away with by defining it as being the "law of Moses" as distinct and separate from the Law of God Ten Commandments. And, if we are to live by every Word of God, unaltered through addition or deletion, then Armstrong condemns himself. Does God's "Word" include that which He dictated to Moses that became what Armstrong claims as being the "law of Moses" distinct from the Ten Commandments? Does the Word of God show that God was addressing the Hebrews, to the exclusion of all other peoples? So applying what He addressed to the Hebrews to the rest of mankind would not be obeying what God inspired to be written. Any addition or deletion of what God's Word states would be, by default, being obedient to Satan, would it not?

And let's not forget what this "Word of God" says where the Armstrong believer is to live by "every" word... That Sabbath law says not to do "any" work... none whatsoever. So why were we students made to get up early on a "Sabbath" morning on a rotational basis and go to work in the dining hall, preparing meals for everyone on the Sabbath; meals that the law of the Sabbath stated were to be prepared the day before? Why were we being forced to work on the Sabbath? Who then was "doing away" with this law?

There is an accusation here however that I overlooked all these years... read it again:

"It actually puts human conscience, actuated by Satan's false teaching, in place of God's Law!

If one has received the Holy Spirit, then is it really "human conscience" directed by Satan? Is this borderline blasphemy?

God gave man His Sabbath, for THE PURPOSE of keeping mankind in the true knowledge and true worship of the TRUE GOD. (p. 54)

Where in Scripture does it say this? It is but another unsubstantiated claim. And if we are buying into this construct regarding the Ten Commandments sans the "law of Moses," then to comply with the Ten is to base your Sabbath on what is written there, and not what was written in the "law of Moses!" Nothing in the Ten says anything about worship!

Knowing who the True God is, is not dependent upon a day. We know who the True God is, regardless. He is the One who created all things, as contrasted to false gods who are of the creation.

Only the seventh day of the week points back to CREATION. (p. 54)

I thought Armstrong just said earlier here that the Sabbath pointed back to God, revealing the True God.

Then, Armstrong agrees that it is creation that is the proof of God, and not the Sabbath. Creation "identifies Him!"

You would think that people would pick up on the conflicting statements of Armstrong, but studies in psychology demonstrate that when people are confronted with this sort of thing, they actually become more dependent upon the person making the confusing and conflicting statements.

So God took the most enduring, lasting imperishable thing a man can know — a recurring space of TIME — the only day that is a memorial of THE ACT OF CREATING. (p. 54)

The most enduring, lasting imperishable "thing" a man can know is not a day or a space of time, it is Jesus the Christ.

In Armstrong's continuing treatment of the weekly Sabbath, he now elevates it to the status of a god, claiming it is "imperishable" which is another way of claiming the Sabbath to be eternal. Only God is eternal.

Time is something that was also created. Linear time is dependent upon the physical creation. And Scripture says the creation will come to an end.

"And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax

old as doth a garment;" - Hebrews 1:10-11

He commands His people to assemble for WORSHIP — the day man is commanded to REST from his own work and physical pleasure — and to be refreshed by assembling with other obedient worshippers in spiritual fellowship. (p. 55)

The reader may be surprised to know that Scripture does not command people to assemble and worship on the Sabbath. This is part of the Sabbatarian construct designed to disparage "Sunday" corporate worship. Worship was restricted and commanded to be conducted at the temple, if they wanted to worship God, on commanded days there. The people were commanded to remain in / around their dwellings on the Sabbath day. Regardless, the Ten do not address worship. You have to go to the "Law of Moses" to find worship, and if this law was done away, then you can't go there, can you...

The Jews developed a rule of distance called a "Sabbath days journey" that would not constitute going on an actual journey to another location in the sense of traveling for business. Attendance in synagogues was something that developed long after the giving of the law, and was strictly NOT about corporate worship.

True, Satan has deceived a deluded world into supposing Christ's resurrection occurred on Sunday morning at sunrise — the very time which has always been the time of pagan SUN-worship. BUT THIS IS NOT TRUE! (p. 55)

More deceptive reasoning and distraction. Christianity teaches a "Sunday" resurrection, but not at sunrise. Furthermore, the time and day of pagan sun worship is totally irrelevant. Part of the argument against Sunday was this pagan association with the day, as though pagans stole the day from God. Now a pagan association is made with the time of day – sunrise. I remind the reader again, that the name "Sunday" was not associated with calendars until Constantine made a 7 day week calendation part of the official calendar. To Christians prior to this, the Greek names of the days of the week were in use if one was not just numbering the days besides the Sabbath.

And, further, nowhere in the bible does God tell us to celebrate the day of Christ's resurrection! That is a pagan custom of MEN, on apostate MAN'S authority alone — contrary to the commands of GOD! (p. 55)

I guess the apostle Paul was an apostate, for he wrote, in Romans 14:5-6, that we have the Christian liberty to esteem a day to God, or not. Armstrong is saying that if you decide you want to esteem the event of Christ's resurrection, an absolutely pivotal event in the history of mankind in relation to man's salvation, Armstrong claims to do so is to be apostate and pagan; contrary to the commands of God. You have gone from being a Christian to being a pagan in one fell swoop. You don't get to decide anything in Armstrong's theology. If God doesn't say to do it, you don't do it. He would deny you the right to worship God on days other than the Sabbath. He would deny you the right to worship and esteem a day in celebration of Christ's resurrection and/or birth. And he does this through accusations of being in rebellion against God, pagan and apostate. I rather imagine the devil would try to prevent us from worshiping God as much as possible also, as well as to prevent us from celebrating the two most important events in human history.

But most revealing of all... Nowhere in the Ten Commandment law set does God instruct us or anyone else to carry out corporate worship. Therefore, using Armstrong's own logic, to do so is to be apostate.

Whoever, or whatever you *serve and obey* is your god! (p. 57)

Armstrong is now rubbing your nose in your ignorance. You are, indeed, truly, the servant of the one or the thing you serve and obey, and he is trying mightily to convince you to serve and obey the Ten Commandments, and especially the Sabbath. Armstrong seeks to have you embrace the false god of legalism.

Christians are commanded to embrace faith and love. Christians are not to embrace a law set the true apostle Paul wrote was the ministration of death and condemnation (II Corinthians 3:7,9).

On pages 56-57, Armstrong cites that we are supposed to be doing the will of the Father. But he ignores what Jesus reveals as the will of the Father, now that the ministration of faith and life has come, in favor of God's "will" for the Hebrews, to follow the old covenant law.

On page 58, Armstrong goes to *Webster's* to provide a definition of "covenant." I always thought it odd that he

and other Sabbatarian authors would go to secular dictionaries in order to provide biblical definitions. But the *Webster's* definition will help. It is a contract between parties where one promises payment for the performance by the other. The old covenant is like this. But it is also a testament, and likened to a marriage covenant. Does this definition define a marriage covenant? No. So this definition is inadequate. Still, God does not treat the various types of covenants illegally as Armstrong repeatedly claims otherwise.

The covenant God made with Abraham, and expanded upon with the patriarchs that came from Abraham, were covenants of promise, without stipulations or requirements of performance. God promised blessings to Abraham due to his faith, where he already followed God. The children of Israel; faithless, stiff-necked and rebellious, were given the old covenant, based on the type described by *Webster's*. The New Covenant is patterned more after a marriage covenant between Christ and the church, a.k.a. the bride of Christ. Armstrong tried to compromise this by claiming the marriage was not to occur until the return of Christ. So if there is no marriage covenant between the church and Christ now... then, he reasons, the only other covenant is the one that otherwise would have legally ended upon his death! But Romans 6 and 7 shows that baptism was a way one could "die" to the old covenant in order to be free to enter into the New Covenant, so this line of reasoning of Armstrong's is defeated by Scripture – again.

Once a covenant is signed, sealed, or ratified, — confirmed — it cannot be ADDED TO (Gal.3:15). Anything appearing beneath the signature is not legally any part of the covenant. (p 58)

What signature? Just God's, in the case of the old covenant, or of the people also? You are not a legal party to a contract unless you place your signature on it also. There are also verbal contracts, but regardless, the legal parties were God and the children of Israel, extending even out to their future offspring. But once more, Armstrong paints a picture that we are bound to the conditions of this contract that God signed, but we did not, neither did we give consent. Armstrong is forcing this contract on us illegally, using coercive (criminal) tactics to do so. The only provision in that covenant law for those *not* of Israel to enter into that covenant, and be required to abide by it, was if they underwent circumcision. Were Gentile Christians required to do so? No. God does not require a Gentile convert to undergo circumcision first, becoming a Jew, so as to become a Christian second.

The NEW Covenant is founded on BETTER PROMISES (Heb. 8:6), which consist of "ETERNAL inheritance" (Heb. 9:15). p. 58

What Armstrong fails to mention, is that it is also a "better Covenant", but citing this does not serve his purpose in getting people to accept the old covenant Ten Commandments as being the sole basis of the New. If the New is better, then it is better than what? That which preceded it; the old covenant with the Sabbath requirement.

Everything Armstrong is covering here in his little "blitzkrieg" is designed to overwhelm the reader. But the main overall flaw is the "Replacement Theology" he advocates, that no self-respecting biblical scholar is going to validate as legitimate. It is but another method of deception. It is taking what God commanded of one group, and assigning it to another. God made all those laws "covenant" laws, with legal parties to them so as to leave no doubt as to what God wanted of one group to the exclusion of all others. God does not deal with mankind illegally. Men deal with each other illegally, hence the practice of using covenants that are contracts!

Now, does God have TWO KINDS of Christians? Is it SIN for a Jewish Christian to break the Sabbath, and sin for all others to KEEP IT? Must Jewish Christians assemble on the Sabbath, and those of other nationalities on Sunday? Didn't Jesus say a house divided would fall? (pp. 59-60)

So much deceptive reasoning, over and over again, wearing the reader down. Many Jewish Christians continued keeping the law, and keeping the Sabbath, not so much as a matter of command as much as cultural custom. They were, after all, no longer under the law as a covenant, having died to it via baptism. They rested on the Sabbath day, according to the law, remaining in their dwellings, or at least not straying more than a "Sabbath day's journey." On the next day, they could just as easily assemble with their Gentile counterparts as they did, either early in the morning before going off to work, or later in the evening after work, with no restriction on distance, and no restriction based on the law's command against worship in locations other than at the temple! But again, the truth does not serve Armstrong's purpose and agenda. The "new man" made from the two must

be Israelite, according to Armstrong, and bound to the law/Sabbath, despite the statement that in Christ, there is *neither Jew or Gentile*. There is a new creation; a new created man. (II Corinthians 5:17)

Armstrong then proceeds to his next argument for keeping the Sabbath; that the peoples of the USA and British Commonwealth are genetically Israelites. Genetic studies conducted since Armstrong wrote this book have *proven* this to be untrue. It is another lie by this man who claimed to be preaching the "Plain Truth."

[**Note by ESN:** Read: [Theological claims that assert a racial lineage in British Israelism](#) (covers "Lack of consistency with modern genetic findings") [offsite article]

Page 61 has Armstrong making another accusation; that people disrespectfully and sneeringly refer to the Sabbath as "the Jewish Sabbath" in order to deride the Sabbath. Really? John referred to the Passover as being a feast of the Jews. Was he being disrespectful?

Next, a quick history lesson that ignores what happened later, in describing the etymology of the "Jews", being a tribe at war against Israel. The context of the NT writings is that the Israelites who returned to Israel, being a majority of Jews, all ended up being known collectively as Jews. Paul identifies himself as being of the tribe of Benjamin. It's as though, as a matter of habit, Armstrong just can't resist twisting Scripture in some fashion.

In Armstrong's quick history lesson, he once again slips one by his readers, and this time, it's a big one:

[So immediately Jeroboam set up two great idols for his own people to worship. He ordered the fall Festivals to be observed in the EIGHTH month, at a place in the NORTH of HIS choosing — instead of the seventh month, and at Jerusalem as GOD ordered \(I Kings 12:28-32\). Also Jeroboam changed the Sabbath day from the seventh to the eighth — that is, to the day *following* the seventh day, which, actually of course, was the *first* day of the WEEK. Thus, he set the day for worship to coincide with the pagan DAY OF THE SUN, now called Sunday! \(p. 62\)](#)

This last part about changing the Sabbath to the next day is a complete fabrication on the part of Armstrong. Originally, I thought it was just sloppy scholarship on his part. But now I realize this was quite intentional. Again, Armstrong wants people who will follow him blindly, without question. Anyone who might check up on what he claimed against Scripture would quickly realize what nonsense this all was, and shy away from him and his organization. (Read ESN article: [Did Jeroboam Change the Sabbath to Sunday?](#))

Apparently, this false claim of his; this "addition" to Scripture that violates Scripture, must have come back on him, for when he later wrote his "Mystery of the Ages" book, he merely alleges this *might* of happened. Only a die-hard Armstrongite would give him a pass on this total fabrication; this outright lie.

Lastly, was the first day of the week at that time and in that geographical location known as "Sunday?" No.

[Through the rule of 19 kings and nine successive dynasties, the ten-tribed house of ISRAEL continued in the basic twin sins of Jeroboam – idolatry and Sabbath-breaking. Several of the kings added other evil and sinful practices.](#)

First, Armstrong makes the false claim that Jeroboam changed the Sabbath to Sunday at a time and place in history where the first day of the week had no association with the label "Sunday". Next, he associates Sunday (worship) as being equivalent to idolatry and Pagan sun worship. This argument is meant to mean that should you worship God on a Sunday, of all days, you are as guilty before God as if you had embraced idolatry and sun worship! I will remind the reader, again, that this is judging according to appearance.

So now, for comparison's sake, I offer up something a bit more substantial than this contrived association, based on an outright lie on the part of Armstrong.

Romans 6 and 7 is a narrative of how a Hebrew (Jewish) person dies to the old covenant law through baptism, and is raised a new man. Why? So that he (or she) can now legally enter into the New Covenant personified in Christ. You cannot be married to both the old covenant law, and Christ at the same time – spiritual adultery and idolatry! As even Armstrong earlier wrote, you are the servant of the one you serve. You are either bound to the law, hence the Sabbath, or you are bound to Christ, which is to embrace the "spirit of the law, and not the letter" as written in Romans 7:6 and 2 Corinthians 3:1-6. Idolatry is, for a Christian, serving anything other than Christ

Himself, and that includes the old covenant law and the sign of that old covenant, the Sabbath. God / Christ is a jealous God, who will not abide you serving two masters; that is, Him and the law, making the law another god besides Him. But, you might say, it is "God's Law"! Okay... and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was God's tree! It still was not a good idea to partake of it. And the Hebrews were faithless. They were not going to follow God, so God gave them a law to be under in order to demonstrate this fact. So then, you who advocate following the law, regardless of how you chop it up, do you actually follow or keep that law? Are you now perfect even as the Father in Heaven is perfect as a result? Your mind never strays into sexual lust when you see some members of the opposite sex? You *never* have a thought of hatred for another? Or has your deceptive, wicked heart fooled you into thinking you really do keep that law? Oh, you will admit you sin, once in awhile, and you "repent", but even if you only sinned once in awhile, it is still evidence you don't actually keep that law! Breaking it is not keeping it. Trying to keep it is not keeping it. Paul even pointed this out to the Jewish Christians who also continued in the law, thinking they, too, kept the law. And all sorts of claims, again unsubstantiated, revolve around this theme. It is claimed that the Holy Spirit enables the believer to keep the law, redefined again to just mean the Ten Commandments. If that were truly the function of the Holy Spirit, then you would, indeed, keep the law, perfectly, as required. But you do not. What is the purpose of the Holy Spirit in you? Among other things, to guide you into *truth*. Is the claim the Holy Spirit enables you to keep the law, true? No; therefore, this is a lie, and the Holy Spirit is *not* in one to guide one into lies!

Armstrong tried to get around this fact by claiming the Christian was not truly "married" to Christ now, thereby concluding that we are still under the law until that time. So then, what happens later, according to Armstrong, when the church is married to the bride, Christ? Then and only then we are no longer bound and under the old covenant; to the husband who died? Then we are freed from the old (marriage) covenant law and Sabbath? Absolutely not!

Armstrong does an excellent job, once again, at distracting people from the real issue – spiritual idolatry with the law and Sabbath through this contrived association between Sunday and idolatry with the reign of Jeroboam, and it worked quite well for him. As Jesus declared regarding deceptions, if it were possible, even the elect would fall for them.

[These Israelites were removed from their farms and their cities, and taken to Assyria on the southern shores of the Caspian Sea AS SLAVES. But the HOUSE OF JUDAH — the Jews — a separate and different nation, was not invaded until 604 B.C. \(p. 63\)](#)

Now get this – the Jews, who continued keeping the Feasts at the right time, and continued keeping the Sabbath, were still taken captive and removed from their land, just like those "idolatrous Sabbath breakers," the Israelites.

[King Jeroboam had changed their day of worship from the seventh to the first day of the week — the DAY of the SUN — Sunday! All succeeding kings followed this practice, as well as idolatry! \(p. 63\)](#)

Dear reader, please think! If Israel was taken into captivity for idolatry and Sabbath breaking, and Judah was taken into captivity, but didn't practice idolatry and Sabbath breaking, then something else was the cause! Or, both were taken into captivity for idolatry, and the Sabbath was irrelevant. Could they have "worshiped" false gods on the Sabbath? And at what point in history did the first day of the week become associated with the title, "Sunday"? A couple hundred years *after* Christ in those areas influenced by Rome and their calendars. Furthermore, neither Judah or Israel during the time mentioned here, used the Sabbath as a commanded or required day of worship! Armstrong is making all this stuff up out of thin air!

There was no *weekly* day dedicated to sun worship. *Real* historians inform us that sun worshipers in the ancient world had one day a *month* dedicated to their sun god. None of this construct of Armstrong's has any basis in fact or truth. It is simply designed to disparage people worshiping on a Sunday now, where he is still busy knocking down this Sunday straw-man.

(Read my article: [What About Sunday Worship? You can find it at: www.exitsupportnetwork.com](http://www.exitsupportnetwork.com))

When did God, who created all things, including the days of the week, falter and let the pagan sun worshipers steal a day from Him, thereby forever spoiling every repetition of that day for all time for any godly use or purpose? What are they going to steal from God next? What is really being stolen here is people's eternity, through false accusations and the construction of false gospels.

Chapter 5: Which Day for Gentile Christians?

I wonder why Armstrong even bothers with chapter headings. It is all repetitive. He will cover something, then go back and re-hash something again from earlier, then add something, and later repeat that. He keeps hammering on the same things and themes, incessantly.

We are over halfway through the book and he has still not examined all that Jesus had to say in relation to the Sabbath as he claimed he would do early on. Instead, we are still, with very little exception, wading through the old covenant and taking what God commanded of the Hebrews via the old covenant law, and trying to apply it to everyone else, with a heaping helping of accusations and predictions of terrible things should you doubt him.

Because so much of this is repetition, I will try to limit my comments to anything new he throws into the mix and leave it up to the reader to look up the context in the book.

Page 66, he again claims Israel migrated northwest into Europe and the British isles, as well as into North America. The problem? Scripture:

"My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them." - Ezekiel 34:6

"And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth." - Isaiah 11:12

Armstrong then proceeds to claim that America and Britain, due to their pagan worship, will, as a result, have the blessings that were bestowed on them, promised to the offspring of Abraham, taken away, beginning with a great famine that was just starting at the time this was written, in the early 1960s. Did this famine occur? No. Not even close. So much for the modern prophet's prophetic pronouncement. Armstrong called it a prophesy for now, which was then, that didn't happen. But I can hear his defenders, now, claiming he never claimed to be a prophet; he just made prophetic statements found in Scripture, and "misinterpreted" their application. God's end time apostle made a lot of mistakes from a biblical standpoint! But he is still, somehow, a "prophet"... of sorts.

Ellen G. White of Adventist fame, used the same dodge. She never claimed to be a prophet, even though she made prophetic declarations. You can't be a false prophet if you aren't a prophet, period, right? And if you are keeping score, Armstrong in his last book "Mystery of the Ages" he makes a back-handed prophesy that Christ would return before the end of the 20th century, with just enough vagary to pull out of it, should it not happen.

Armstrong continues, citing "her" new moons and feasts, associated with Christmas, New Year, Easter, etc., "pagan" new moons and feasts, as contrasted to God's new moons and feasts. So under Armstrong, what happened to God's new moons? They were to be treated like the Sabbath in that no work was to be done on that day. It got lost in the Armstrong shuffle, dismissed as a "ceremonial law," found in the law of Moses... like tithing.

This diatribe, citing Hosea 2:6-11, is used by Armstrong and claimed to apply to us today, us being Israel. But what is of interest is that the context, starting earlier, and mentioned specifically at the end of chapter 1, is that this applies to both Israel and Judah, collectively being Israel, with the reference to "her new moons and her Sabbaths and feasts." So either Judah abandoned these things of God, or what Armstrong wrote earlier was false regarding Judah. The interesting, and useful thing here is to understand that when one holds to a false belief and claim, it will conflict with Scripture and even other false claims and beliefs. Now if only his followers and supporters could recognize the truth of this.

When we get to page 67, Armstrong restates he is applying this prophesy to our people today, and further cites Hosea 2 regarding the time God visits our people in slavery in order to establish the New Covenant with us *then and not now* or back when Christ died, and spilled His blood; the blood of the New Covenant. Why later, and not then? Just in case anyone realizes these things Armstrong insists on are not required under the New Covenant, he can claim we are still under the old, or in some transitional phase where the New is not quite yet. There is hardly an angle to all this that Armstrong has not thought of, and sought to capitalize on.

[At the very beginning of humanity, God talked to Adam and Eve personally. He gave them His instruction — preached to them His Gospel. They knew that God offered them eternal](#)

life as His gift. They knew the wages of sin is DEATH. But they reasoned their way around this truth — just as some of you reading this are reasoning *your* way around what God would like to give you. Adam and Eve rebelled. They willingly obeyed Satan. (pp. 68, 70)

Speculation aside, living forever was about partaking of the tree of life, and not the other tree, a tree that God made, "God's tree" that represented what? Will anyone argue that the tree of life represents Christ? So then, why do people refuse to see the truth of the other tree? What in the Scriptures is about attaining a knowledge of good and evil, whose fruit is death? The law. Even Paul stated that he would have not known about sin if the law had not told him about it. The law imparts a knowledge of good and evil, and prescribes a death penalty for transgression; committing evil. This is the "fruit" of the law, and Armstrong is trying desperately to get you to partake of the wrong tree, even as Adam and Eve did. It seems that mankind gravitates to law, thinking there is life to be found there.

Notice Armstrong's subtlety here though... "They willingly obeyed Satan." Did Satan (the serpent) command Adam and Eve to eat that fruit? Did he command or tell them to do anything? No! He put doubt in their minds about God and what He said to them. As a result, they no longer believed; had faith in God. They believed the Devil. They transferred their faith to him, thus becoming the children of the devil now, and that was their sin; the sin of unbelief. Armstrong uses the same methodology so that you believe him, and not God's Written Word. And if you believe the typology here, your embracing of what Armstrong said over that which God inspired to be written down in the Scripture has a similar result – you are driven away from God and your mind is blinded to the truths of God and Scripture as a result. Read carefully.... VERY carefully, II Corinthians chapter three and who it is that has a veil before their eyes, binding them from seeing the true Christ. It is those who buy into living by that law, penned by, and taught by Moses. And this blindness is so pervasive that, should you be one who is a supporter of Armstrong, you can read that, along with what I just wrote, and you will not see it. I have witnessed this many times. You will reject it out of hand, but will you offer an alternative explanation? None ever has.

"And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." - Romans 7:10

Satan quoted Scripture. But Satan took Scripture out of context and tried to imply things unsupported by the rest of Scripture, when tempting Jesus. Armstrong did the same thing, and more, totally misrepresenting Scripture, as we have already seen. So whose example is Armstrong emulating? If you believe what he taught, and believe what he claimed, and he lied and twisted Scripture, then where does that leave you? Pretty much in the same boat as Adam and Eve. They, however, had a naïvety, that Satan could easily take advantage of, which in the long term was going to be of benefit to mankind overall, for when it is all said and done, people will understand what faith in God really entails, and the consequences of taking your faith and trust off of Him, regardless of how insignificant the circumstances may appear.

God does not allow man to reason out or to decide *what* is sin. But God *forces* every man to decide **WHETHER** to sin. God has made it **SIN** to break His Sabbath. (p. 70)

More distraction from what is truly important. You do not have a choice when it comes to sin. You are, by nature, being a son of Adam, a sinful being. It is not about what you do, it is about what you are, and the "cure" is not in making a decision as to "whether" to sin or not. You will.

Now let's examine carefully Armstrong's claim there that it is a "sin" to break His/the Sabbath. Jesus "broke" the Sabbath as related in John 5:18. Armstrong would have you believe John was being sloppy in his statement; that Jesus didn't *really* break the Sabbath; that He either broke the "added restrictions put on the Sabbath by the Rabbis" or that John was writing from the perspective of the Jews who merely *claimed* He broke the Sabbath. But what does the law actually say, and what does the context tell us? The law prohibited "any" work on the Sabbath. It is hypocritical of Sabbatarians to claim "any" does not mean "any" yet "forever" which in the Hebrew does not mean "forever" means forever anyway when it comes to the Sabbath. [Read: [Jesus and the Sabbath](#) for more regarding this.]

What then about the "added" restrictions placed on the Sabbath by the Rabbis? An examination of them actually reveals the opposite: they are about works that are allowed! You can carry a chair, for instance, just don't drag it along the ground, which would be equivalent to plowing/preparing soil for crops. These "additional laws" are not in fact laws, but further attempts to understand and comply with the law even as the "law of Moses" develops on the themes established in the Ten Commandments. When you do away with the "other" "law of Moses" – you lose the explanations revolving around how one actually was to keep the Sabbath, and

what constituted breaking it! Result? What Jesus referred to as "commandments of men" that negate commandments of God.

The Sabbath commandment in the Ten Commandments says to rest on the Sabbath. If you throw out the rest of the law because it was done away with and nailed to the cross, then how do you define rest? How do you define work? You can't. But Armstrong does! Instead of the restriction being against "any" work, like the SDA, he produces an arbitrary list of do's and don'ts that would make any Pharisee proud. Rest also gets further re-definition, like the SDA, to include worship. The concept of worship is ingrained into the Sabbatarian psyche, equated with rest so that the two become indistinguishable.

Jesus said it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath, as contrasted to doing evil. This concept is so foreign to the Sabbatarian paradigm and psyche, it cannot be accepted at face value. It has to mean more than what Jesus related. Surely, to the Sabbatarian, good works must be in the context of "approved" works that do not "violate" or "break" the Sabbath. You can't really go looking to what is found in the "law of Moses" for that law ended up on the cross, so what defines a "good" work from an "evil" work?

By defining what constitutes a good work on the Sabbath, what constitutes an evil work is conveniently overlooked. An evil work is wrong to perform on any day. But the Sabbatarian take on this doesn't go there. Instead, a good work is defined to mean an allowed work on the Sabbath, and any work that does not fit their own arbitrary and capricious list is, by default, an evil and sinful work if performed on the Sabbath. Result? A work that would be good on a day other than the Sabbath becomes an evil and sinful work if performed on a Sabbath. Is that really what Jesus was trying to get at? Or was He looking to the heart and righteous judgment? For in the context of the Sabbath, Jesus spoke on this, saying to the people they were not to judge according to appearance, but to judge righteous judgment.

Seeing as men cannot discern the heart and intent of the heart of a man, they default to the law and the judgment prescribed against the actions that follow intent, assuming that the intent was evil, based on the actions of a person! That is what happens when you are hung up on the law. That is what happens when you believe you have to keep the Sabbath. That is what happens when you opt for law over Christ. You will judge unrighteous judgment as a result.

Jesus said it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath, as contrasted to doing evil. He did not say a work was deemed to be good or evil as a result of said work being performed on a Sabbath as interpreted by Sabbatarians. They think that Jesus upheld the law, especially the Sabbath, so they redefine what Jesus said and taught, altering those things so as to force them into complying with their interpretation of the law.

Judging righteous judgment has to do with a person's motive. What is your motive when it comes to the work of employment or business? What was the motive of this sort of work to a Hebrew who was under the law? What is the motive of a Christian in this regard?

Motive doesn't matter to the Sabbatarian. The law (Ten) says to rest and not work on the Sabbath, so you better not work, and if you do, you better have a really good explanation to hand to your overseer in the "faith". Your works are not defined as good or evil based on their own merit; they are based on whether they are performed on the Sabbath or not, and even then, if on the Sabbath, they have to comply with their contrived list of what is exempt, written in a loose leaf binder. Is it a sin to eat out on the Sabbath, or not? You are not working, but you are exacting the labor of others, which concept was prohibited in the Sabbath Ten Commandment law. But you might say, they were there working anyway. But what if all the patrons were Sabbatarians!?

If you are like most people, you have to work for a living, in order to support yourself and your family. Scripture says that a man who does not provide for his family is worse than an infidel. (I Timothy 5:8) So is your working for a living good, or evil? But suppose you don't have a family, and you chose a profession where you could make a lot of money, and it didn't matter to you who you stepped on, or who you cheated to get ahead. Is your work good or evil?

But Armstrong paints a picture of a God who judges according to appearance; unrighteous judgment, ready to condemn you for working on the Sabbath; you who claim to be a Christian, whose works are good, and "wrought in God." Not only that, this God will condemn you for daring to worship Him on the wrong day, and especially if that day should happen to be a Sunday! And if that is not about judging according to appearance, I'd be very interested to see how you manage to define that.

Armstrong was very fond of pointing out how the human heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, and that those who said they were giving their hearts to the Lord were trying to give to God something God didn't want. But he

stopped there, and I don't recall him ever stating that is why God gives us a new heart to replace that one; a new heart with a new motivation of heart, where one's works comply in what was written back in Isaiah 58:13:

"If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing **thy** pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, **not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:**"

Shouldn't you be doing these things every day? Of course. So then, what of the Christian in this light? The Christian, the believer, has entered into "God's Rest," His *sabbatismos* that is not a specific day, but a condition extant always for the believer; "Today." The Hebrews were doing their own ways, seeking their own pleasures, and speaking their own words. Their lives were devoid of any involvement with God. God declared they only gave Him lip service, whereas their hearts were far from Him.

A Christian then has entered into God's Rest. God dwells in the Christian. This is why a Christian is dead to sin, and freed from sin, for God in the Christian cannot be accused or condemned for sin. The Christian is one with God. You cannot condemn the one for sin without condemning the other!

Jesus said it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath. Jesus worked on the Sabbath. What He did, He called "work" and informs us that even the Father in Heaven works on the Sabbath. The devil would love to condemn you and Christ in you. The devil would love to see you call good, evil, and evil, good.

Everything you were ever taught about the Sabbath was skewed. God wanted the Israelites to rest on the Sabbath from their works which were evil. The Sabbath was a holy convocation. They were in the presence of God on that day. That is, in part, why they could not work. A Christian however is *always* in the presence of God, seeing as God now dwells in the believer, every day. God's "Rest" is every day. We enter into His Rest, through faith, and not law.

In regards to the heart then, and righteous judgment based on intent of heart, if you are struggling with this concept, then answer this: If the devil fed a starving person, did the devil do good; a good work? Think about it long and hard, and consider what Jesus said about good "trees" and bad "trees" and the fruit they produce; trees being by analogy here people.

[It was in such a world — cut off from God — that the Eternal called out a despised, humiliated, SLAVE people, descended from Abraham. They had listened to and obeyed God. It seems human nature and human degradation are such that God had to take a debased, beaten-down SLAVE people as the only ones who were humbled enough to listen to and obey the Creator. \(p. 70\)](#)

The further we get into Armstrong's booklet, the more outrageous the claims. Is that what the Children of Israel did? My Bible shows that they were practically dragged out of Egypt kicking and screaming in protest. Did God refer to them as a stiff-necked and rebellious people as a result of them being obedient as Armstrong claims?

"I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name. I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts; A people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face;" - Isaiah 65:1-3a

"But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." - Romans 10:20-21

"For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?" - Deuteronomy 31:27

Page, 71, Armstrong makes his case for the church now as being charged, even as Israel was, to be an example of obedience to the world. Implied is that this obedience is to the law/Ten Commandments. N.T. Scripture however says Christians are obedient to the faith, and not the law.

At the bottom of page 71, Armstrong cites how the Gentile believers were strangers when it came to the covenants of "**promise**" and not law. Now, they are no longer strangers and foreigners in relation to these

forementioned covenants of **promise**. By now, Armstrong is convinced he has the reader under his power, translating this to mean, or at least include, the covenant of law.

Next? Page 72, where Armstrong now claims Christians are spiritual Israelites, the argument being, if you are a spiritual Israelite, you are required to keep the law of Israelites, that were given to physical, carnal Israelites – and in going through the KJV, there is no mention of Christians being spiritual Israelites.

Armstrong then makes the case that Gentiles were always able to enter into the covenants of Israel (remember, though, that he redefined the Ten Commandments covenant as not being just a covenant of Israel; another example of playing it both ways) through physical circumcision, according to the law. But the circumcision of a believer is of the heart, and not in the letter of the law, in the flesh. So why is the Sabbath the exception here, where we are to keep the Sabbath in the old manner of the letter? There is an inconsistency here that is arbitrary, and we are made to believe this is justified because the Sabbath is located in the Ten Commandment “eternal, spiritual, moral law” and circumcision is not, even though circumcision took precedence over the Sabbath, and said to be an everlasting requirement also. If we were to use the Scriptures that revolve around circumcision and God's covenant with Israel, and gave it the same rationalization Armstrong applies to the Sabbath, we could easily make a stronger case for Christians being required to practice circumcision than keeping the Sabbath. And if it were not for circumcision being specifically addressed as something Christians are not required to undergo, Armstrong would probably be insisting on this, also. But he doesn't need circumcision to convince you to tithe to him, through the same process of rationalizations he gets people to accept the Sabbath argument.

Page 73. Armstrong continues to build the intensity, and increases the deceptive reasoning proportionately. There is a blurring of righteousness and salvation, yet to come. What are we being distracted with? You have no salvation now. It is not assured. Jesus' righteousness has yet to come, also. In the meantime, one waits and goes about with one's own righteousness, derived through law and Sabbath observance, as Armstrong claimed earlier regarding those righteous he listed, from Abel forwards.

Next item to be blurred and obscured is one's reward, brought by Christ at His return, based on works, equated with one's salvation in accordance with Christ's righteousness.

We need to go back to the top of page 73 as a reminder of what started this line of reasoning:

[Continue: ". . . Keep ye judgment, and do justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed." \(p. 73\)](#)

Did Jesus teach that we keep judgment and do justice by keeping and administering the law and Sabbath? No! Just judgment was about righteous judgment, and not about judging according to appearance! And that law often judged one according to appearance. Break the Sabbath, and stand condemned by the administrators of law if one is found working on the Sabbath, where you thought your works were good. Jesus worked on the Sabbath, and in doing so, broke the Sabbath. The administrators of law condemned him for it. They judged unrighteous judgment, looking to the letter of the law, interpreting it however they wanted, and there were times Jesus pointed out their hypocrisy in this regard with how they wielded the law. Jesus revealed their sin as being hatred; "They hated me without a cause," and they used the Sabbath law as a weapon to destroy Him. They also made the accusation that He blasphemed by equating Himself with God, despite His observation that even the law declared that they were called "gods" and to condemn Him over this was to condemn themselves.

We are to practice this just form of judgment, *because* Jesus' salvation is near to come, and not far away; *because* His righteousness is to be revealed, and not hidden or obscured.

If one then practices righteous (just) judgment, what then do you suppose is one's reward presented to that one upon Christ's return? What would be the reward of one who practices unjust and unrighteous judgment, judging according to the old covenant letter of the law? Those religious leaders ignored intent of heart, and based their judgment upon their own intent of heart, influenced by their hearts of stone. They hated Jesus, and they judged Him accordingly.

Through this creative / destructive muddling of Scripture, Armstrong concludes this section by citing part of Isaiah chapter 56. You will find that this passage is often quoted by Sabbatarian apologists claiming as Armstrong does here that it is a prophesy for the future when Christianity is extant, leading up to the return of Christ. What they all fail to do, or omit doing, is to cite the reference there that makes mention of their sacrifices, while citing everything around it.

"Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of

prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people." - Isaiah 56:7

There are no Sacrifices in the Christian, New Covenant dispensation. There is no altar of God on earth; there is no house of God on earth. These things existed under the old covenant, and not the new. The *context* proves that this is not a prophesy for now.

Before leaving this though, an observation:

"Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil." - Isaiah 56:2

How did one avoid polluting the sabbath? How did one keep the Sabbath? By not doing any evil. There's that word, "any" again. The people were commanded not to do "any" work. Why? Because God said their works were evil, from their youth. Therefore, a good work does not pollute or violate the Sabbath, as Jesus said. He broke the Sabbath law by working. The priests profaned the Sabbath by working. The disciples broke the sabbath by gathering and eating grain. David ate the showbread that was unlawful for him and those with him to eat. They were all blameless before God. When you declare that one sins by breaking the Sabbath, you merely demonstrate your disregard for what Jesus said and taught regarding righteous judgment.

If you are reading along in the booklet, you will see another reference to the "Sabbath made for man" mantra. Whenever Armstrong hammers on something, it's a pretty good indicator it is something that stands on very shaky Biblical ground.

Chapter 6: Why Israel and Judah Made Slaves

Whatever is SIN for an Israelite is SIN for a Gentile! (p. 75)

How about circumcision? Ever read Acts 15? Were Gentiles required to undergo circumcision? No? How can this be, if whatever is a sin for an Israelite is sin for a gentile? Look how important circumcision was to the Israelites. If it was not done, that person was to be cut off (pun intended) from Israel.

Once again Armstrong makes an absurd claim. You would think that someone, somewhere in the past, would have approached Armstrong and asked him if he really wanted to include this or that in the articles and booklets he wrote. But no one dared question him out of fear of reprisal. All who knew him knew he had a vicious temper you did not want to risk running afoul of. I discovered early on that one way to avoid the ire and wrath of the ministers was to claim that what you said or did was in compliance with Armstrong's instructions or take on a particular issue. Even if they were not quite sure of the application, they still would not risk it, unless there was a way it could be done without implicating themselves in the process! Ah, the power of fear. It was quite the motivator for Armstrong, and it is reflected in his writings. But fear as a motivator doesn't always last long. Jesus' motivation was and is much better, based on love.

Do you know WHY the Kingdom of Judah was later taken captive, and scattered over the world?¹ Both houses of Israel were sent into national punishment and banishment from the Holy Land *because they broke God's Sabbath!* (p. 75)

Back on pages 63-64, Armstrong claimed that the ten tribes known as the kingdom of Israel lost their identity because they abandoned their identifying sign, the Sabbath. Yet the Jews; Judah, never lost track of who they were, but here Armstrong is claiming they too broke the Sabbath. Anyway, I read in the Bible they were constantly falling into idolatry.

The TEN TRIBES, known as the House of ISRAEL, lost their identifying tag — God's Sabbath. THAT IS WHY THEY LOST THEIR NATIONAL IDENTITY! (p. 64)

But JUDAH kept the Sabbath! They did not continue long to keep it HOLY, or to keep it God's way — but they did maintain it, to this day, as the day of rest they acknowledge and observe. (p 64)

Talk about waffling! If they did not keep it holy, and they did not keep it God's way, then how can Armstrong claim they still kept it? And how did Armstrong teach the members how to keep it? In compliance with God's way, or another way that violated it being holy?

It would be a simple matter to make a similar claim today; that due to Armstrong's mistreatment of the Sabbath covenant, the church was scattered and splintered, seeing as they did not keep the Sabbath holy or keep it God's way.

This is a good example of what I wrote earlier; falsehoods will conflict with the truth, and even other falsehoods. Armstrong attempts to back-peddle somewhat, but he does not want to abandon this useful argument of his.

Sabbath-breaking was a prime cause of Judah's captivity!

IT was so IMPORTANT to GOD that He punished His own chosen people with the most severe national punishment — defeat in war — being taken from their land, and made SLAVES in a foreign land! (p. 76)

Yes, they broke the Sabbath. Why? What was their motivation of heart? They had no interest in God. They were only interested in their own things, even on the Sabbath. Their motives were evil. Regardless, what they suffered was not the most severe punishment. God informed them that should they stray from Him and embrace idolatry like the nations before them, they too would suffer the same fate and be **consumed**. But God did not consume them. You might want to read Malachi chapter 3, which Sabbatarians also like to quote as a proof text regarding the Sabbath. But the context is showing that, because God does not change, He did not consume them as was so declared in the law.

¹ Armstrong just contradicted himself. Earlier he claimed they ended up in Northern Europe

Armstrong would have you believe Judah was taken away captive only for breaking the Sabbath. It was so much more than just that. Breaking the Sabbath was just one symptom of the disease borne of a stony heart. Their hearts were far from Him.

"Go speak unto the House of ISRAEL," said God (Ezek. 3:1)

But Ezekiel never took that message to the lost House of Israel. He couldn't. He was a slave.

Yet he is taking it to them, today, by means of having written it in his book in the Bible — and by the fact that it is being taken to those very people today, by The PLAIN TRUTH and The WORLD TOMORROW broadcast!

IT IS A PROPHECY! It is a message for OUR PEOPLES TODAY! You are reading it NOW! *God help you to heed!* (p. 79)

Another bald faced lie. God took Ezekiel up and delivered him to the Israelite captives so that he could speak to them. Why this bald faced lie? Simple. If it were a case of a prophesy being delivered to us today, in our modern times, then the case stands regarding the Sabbath still being a sin if violated. Armstrong is also banking on you, the reader, not to check up on what he has claimed in this booklet.

When you get to page 80, there is a disturbing picture of dead bodies piled up in a rail-car with a caption regarding the atrocities of war, all the result of people being disobedient to God's Law. Back on page 75 Armstrong wrote:

God had reason for setting HIS LAW in motion. That REASON was our happiness. Every wail of human woe – every war – every bit of human suffering and unhappiness, has been the result of SIN. SIN robs humans of happiness, joy, and prosperity. (p.75)

This is Armstrong's way of putting the biblical cart before the horse. Does man sin because there is a law, or is there a law because man sins? Is man sinful because he breaks law, or was the law a result of man being sinful?

Again and again, we are made to focus on the effect, and not the cause when it comes to sin. We are distracted from what Jesus said and taught regarding sin and how it all begins in the mind of a man; evil thoughts. You are what you think, more so than what you do. What you do follows what you think, unless something else motivates you not to act upon your thoughts, such as severe punishment should you be caught. But by distracting us into focusing on law, and claiming man's problems are a result of breaking law instead of looking to the inner man, Armstrong can more easily lead men to comply with law, and not just any law; his law.

I say Armstrong's law, for when one takes the "law of (from) God" and alters it in any manner, it is no longer God's law you are dealing with. And in Armstrong's law, you will find happiness, joy, and prosperity once you start following and obeying the law of Armstrong; his "gospel of prosperity."

Keep his law, and you will reap the benefits. Break his law, and unspeakable woe and misery will follow. Tithe to him, and you will prosper, and if you don't prosper, well, then it isn't Armstrong's fault now, is it. There is something else you failed to do, or some secret sin you have that you have not addressed or abandoned. But you will get nowhere in your quest for the good life if you first and foremost don't keep the Sabbath – and send him your tithes, assessed on your wages, ten percent off the top, and not net, along with a third tithe every third year, twice in seven years. Little did you realize you were going to need an advanced degree in math in order to understand tithing and the sacred calendar for determining annual Sabbaths also. So much easier to leave that up to the "advanced" biblical scholars such as Armstrong and those leading ministers trained by him. But you are in good hands with Armstrong. He will see you through into the kingdom, helping you to jump through all the mandatory theological, legal hoops on the way.

He closes out this chapter with another dose of Replacement Theology, with a twist, claiming it all to be a prophesy for our time, and that we are the lost ten tribes of Israel; a notion also proven to be false.

Chapter 7: Is Sunday Mentioned in the New Testament?

Chapter 7 is a later addition to this booklet, found in the version dated 1976. As though all the Sunday bashing was not enough as found throughout the rest of this booklet, Armstrong apparently saw fit to dedicate a chapter strictly to this end.

In researching the background, another, earlier booklet came up, from 1952 entitled, "Which Day is the Sabbath of the New Testament?" This earlier booklet incorporates the map found in this chapter 7 regarding Paul's walk on a "Sunday", thus serving to negate any claim that the early church was keeping "Sunday" along the lines of the Sabbath as a day of rest; impossible if one is engaged on a 19.5 mile long walk. It would appear that Armstrong was not going to leave any stone un-turned in his quest to disparage Sunday observance, in any form.

Chapter 7 begins with more distraction:

THE word "Sunday" does not appear any place in the Bible. (p. 83)

"Saturday" does not appear any place in the Bible either, yet earlier he claimed the Sabbath to be from "Friday" sunset through "Saturday" sunset.

There are a number of things not found in the Bible, but that does not necessarily mean certain beliefs and concepts are thus invalidated. What is interesting to consider here, though, is his earlier claim that Israel started keeping "Sunday" aka the day of Pagan sun worship... yet the word "Sunday" isn't found in the Bible. So how does Armstrong conclude they were worshipping the sun-god on Sunday???

You will not find "first tithe," "second tithe," or "third tithe" mentioned any place in the Bible either. So using what Armstrong infers here regarding "Sunday," how can these categories of tithing be true either? Are they not thus invalidated? Not according to the sliding scale of Armstrongism.

Of course we would not expect to find "Sunday" in Scripture, any more than we would expect to find the word "computer." Saturday is not in the Bible; neither is it associated with being the Sabbath. Yet Adventists claim a pope "changed the day" of the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. Some Adventists even claim this "pope" was Emperor Constantine!

However, Armstrong made the case in this booklet that the ancient Hebrews of Israel and Judah had abandoned the Sabbath in favor of the "pagan Sunday" worship, so he has to continue to work his readers over from that perspective. It is, again, an example where a lie conflicts even with other lies and deceptions, and he is trying to maintain a particular deception in regards to "Sunday worship" taking it back into antiquity.

But the phrase "first day of the week" is found in the New Testament. It occurs in exactly EIGHT places. So it will not take long to examine these eight texts employing this phrase.

If the day was changed by BIBLE authority – if Christians are to find any BIBLE AUTHORITY whatsoever for observing Sunday as the "Lord's Day" today – then we must find that authority in one of these eight texts!

Let us acknowledge at the outset, since the seventh day of the week is clearly established as the Bible Sabbath up until the time of the crucifixion, that there can be no BIBLE AUTHORITY for Sunday observance unless we find it clearly and plainly stated in one of these eight New Testament passages.

So let us examine them carefully, honestly, prayerfully. (p. 83)

If this were all about examining the issue honestly, he would not have "stacked the deck" in dealing us this line of reasoning. The day was not changed. The only ones claiming there was a change in the day are Sabbatarians and the Catholic church where they were trying to lay claim to Sunday, despite the evidence found in their own historical documents.

How do we define "observing" as in observing a day? If a Sabbatarian church gathers for a Bible study on a Wednesday night, is that observing the day, or something else? There is so much left up to assumptive reasoning here in Armstrong's declaration.

Armstrong proceeds from here with an outright bizarre declaration that if the Sabbath had been done away with; that is, "nailed to the cross," then it, as a day, would have ceased to exist as a day of the week. We would, as a result of this reasoning, now have a six day week, with no seventh day, a.k.a. the Sabbath day. It is an overreaction; another straw-man argument. More deceptive reasoning. The rationale here is infantile, at best.

What we actually see here is a "fools quest" sort of like looking for a sky hook or a unicorn. It's all based on a false premise.

What transpires from here are examples where the followers of Jesus continued to keep the Sabbath, and work on the first day of the week. The real debate however was never about what the Jewish Christians did or did not do in relation to the law and the Sabbath. The issue and controversy in Scripture revolved around whether *Gentile* Christians had to keep the law, and hence the Sabbath. Armstrong is still using this distraction tactic in order to make his case, and if his case is that Christians are required to keep the Sabbath, then why all this subterfuge?

When Armstrong gets around to the meeting of Christians in Acts 20:7, he prefaces his remarks with this heading:

Lord's Supper Day – or Workday – Which?

Does the reader now recognize the tactic being employed? It is the same tactic found in the title of the booklet, redefining the issue. He wants to dismiss the idea from your mind that this Lord's Supper Day could not also be a work day. He has to maintain this guise that there is a Christian Sabbath, and regardless, it must be a day where people ceased work on that day.

Here, at last, we find a religious meeting on the first day of the week. But it was not a *SUNDAY* meeting!

Notice, Paul continued his speech *until midnight!* "And there were many LIGHTS in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together." It was AFTER SUNSET, prior to midnight, the first day of the week. Now at that time the first day of the week did not begin at midnight, as men begin it today. It began, and the seventh day ended, AT SUNSET! All Bible days begin and end at SUNSET. Throughout the Roman world at that time, and for a few hundred years afterwards, days began and ended at sunset. The practice of beginning the new day at midnight was started much later. Therefore this meeting, and Paul's preaching, took place during the hours we now call SATURDAY NIGHT – it was not a Sunday meeting at all! (p. 86-7)

First, Armstrong directs our attention away from the opening statement in verse 7. They came together when? Upon the first day of the week. What is the first day of the week called now? Sunday. They came together on what is now called Sunday. Armstrong then proclaims this was not a Sunday meeting. Huh? They didn't meet together at that time and place? How then does Armstrong define "meeting"?

I should mention here that I am somewhat forced to use terminology that isn't entirely accurate, for at that time, there was no "Sunday." There was the first day of the week, according to the text in question, which is the day after the Sabbath. It would not acquire the name "Sunday" for another 300 some years, along with a change in calendation. What is to note here is that this exclusive assembly of Christians did not occur on the Sabbath. It occurred *after* the Sabbath; not on the Sabbath.

His theological sleight of hand comes next, where he claims that, seeing as Paul spoke late into the night, this would, by necessity, be Saturday night, seeing as days in the Bible were determined from sunset to sunset. He even makes this incredible, and false claim:

Throughout the Roman world at that time, and for a few hundred years afterwards, days began and ended at sunset. The practice of beginning the new day at midnight was started much later. (p. 87)

This is patently false. Even in Scripture, the gospel writers switch between Roman time and Jewish time, and the Romans never adopted Jewish time, including reckoning the end and beginning of days at sunset. Furthermore, the author here is Luke, a Gentile, who was writing to a Gentile audience.

Armstrong then proceeds to cite the "Today's English Version" as authoritative in it's rendering of the text to

mean this was on a Saturday evening. This translation was made by one man, Robert G. Bratcher, and his translation was not received well by other Biblical scholars.

Regardless of what method we use to determine when the first day of the week begins in this instance, the result is the same. It is *still* the first day of the week according to the narrative.

What is inferred here is that they were gathered together on the Sabbath, late in the evening, and they remained there after sunset, listening to Paul speak. But does it say they had come together to keep the Sabbath? No. It says they came together to break bread. And whether we want to define this as a communion, or a shared meal, this is the reason given that they assembled. If we remove the convoluted of Armstrong, and take it at face value, along with what we have written by early church fathers, it was customary for Christians to gather like this either very early in the morning before going off to work, or later in the evening after their work was done for the day, which would be fairly late in the evening, shortly before sunset or even after. So when would they likely "break bread" in this context? In the evening, after work. Luke says this happened on the first day of the week. The Greek does not say or even imply this was a Sabbath evening. It was the first day following the Sabbath.

What we don't find here are these predominantly Gentile Christians gathered together on the or a Sabbath. Nor do we find any example of either Gentile or Jewish Christians gathered together on a Sabbath, ever! So while we were being distracted over this issue of events occurring on the "first day of the week," looking for an assembly of Christians on a Sabbath was conveniently overlooked. And now that we found an example of Christians gathered together on a "Sunday," it is dismissed, simply because it does not comply with the confirmation bias Armstrong maintains.

Armstrong proceeds to write about the Passover on page 89. He claims a number of things: Jesus introduced the "Lord's Supper" as part of Passover. He negated the requirement to kill and eat a lamb. Armstrong claimed the Passover to be "forever" (Heb. *owlam*, being an indeterminately long time that does eventually end) for Christians, contrary to the context. Armstrong claims Jesus substituted (changed) the blood of the slain Lamb with wine, representing Jesus' blood. All these things Armstrong claimed Jesus changed in relation to the Passover that was part of the covenant God made with the Hebrews, being a covenant even Armstrong said one could not add to, or take away from, and that this covenant law remained inviolate even down to jots and tittles, citing Matthew 5:17-18. What you really have here is Armstrong claiming Jesus to be a liar, claiming Jesus said the law remains inviolate as is, then claiming Jesus went and altered the law way beyond those jots and tittles after all. There should be a little red flag rising up in your mind, telling you that there is something fundamentally wrong in all this: Armstrong.

He writes at the end of this paragraph:

[They continued to observe the days of unleavened bread \(Acts 20:6\). \(p. 89\)](#)

["And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days." - Acts 20:6](#)

Does this actually "say" they continued to observe the days of unleavened bread, or does it use this as a time reference? But here's the interesting twist:

"And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow. And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus." - Acts 18:18-21

Whatever feast this was, Paul was going to keep it in Jerusalem. The feasts could only be kept in Israel, according to the law, so to say they were all, Gentiles included, keeping Passover, they would all have to travel to Israel to do so, if this were the second Passover a month later for those who missed the "real" Passover at the time the days of unleavened bread were observed. What needs to be pointed out though is that Paul was keeping an annual Sabbath, and most of these required the males of Israel to be present at the temple during those feasts/annual Sabbaths. Does the reader see the implication here? If going to a synagogue was interpreted to mean he was keeping the Sabbath, then why were not all of the males in Worldwide attending the mandatory

gathering in Jerusalem for the three annual feasts that required it? Why were the gentile Christians not going with Paul to the feast being held in Jerusalem? The easy out for Armstrong would be to claim they are all located within the confines of the terminated "law of Moses" where we find the tithing commandment.... and gentiles were not required to keep any of "that" law Paul was still keeping.....

Armstrong continues writing from the perspective of the false premise regarding the existence of a Sabbath day rest for the church, citing the text regarding the collection for the saints in Jerusalem. Much verbiage is spent trying to claim this was all produce, and not money, in order to bolster the claim that the gathering of produce was to be done on the first day, thereby excluding the Sabbath. He does not come right out and say it, but he hints at it, writing how that was . . . "to be the FIRST day of labor of the week, hence the first day of the week, as soon as the Sabbath was past!" But elsewhere, Armstrong claimed these "added" restrictions regarding the Sabbath, such as gathering produce, was part of the "law of Moses," done away at the cross! There is a strange inconsistency with how Armstrong treats the law/Ten Commandments, along with what Jesus said and taught, and what Paul said and taught.

So, finally, we find upon honest examination that NOT ONE of the texts speaking about "THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK" sets it apart as a rest day. Not one makes it holy, calls it the Sabbath or by any other sacred title. In EVERY case, the first day of the week was a common workday. (p. 92)

The legalistic paradigm forces one to conclude, without even realizing it sometimes, that everything is based in law, and not Christian Liberty. And Armstrong goes about reinforcing this paradigm, insisting there could not be a gathering of Christians unless it is associated with a command to do so, or a command not to do so, in this case on a "pagan" day. The idea that these churches set up by Paul could not possibly be assembling as a matter of habit or custom on the first day of the week is suppressed through all these rationalizations and accusations.

Read again Armstrong's declaration here. The first day of the week was not a day of rest. It was not holy. It was not the Sabbath. It has no holy title. It is a common workday. He is right on all counts, but it is the wrong criteria when it comes to Christians gathering together on any day for the purpose of communal worship and prayer. To Armstrong, Christian Liberty is Orwellian in scope and application. Worshiping in spirit and in truth is also Orwellian, where you are free to worship in spirit and in truth only on the Sabbath. You are not free to worship God on any other day of the week with fellow Christians, and especially on a Sunday, deemed by Sabbatarians to be a pagan day, stolen from God, and dedicated to demonic sun worship.

Sunday is MY day. So is Monday, and every other weekday, for my labor and my own needs. But the seventh day is NOT mine — it is the LORD'S! It belongs to HIM, and He made it HOLY, and commanded us to KEEP it that way. We have no right to use it for ourselves. It is HIS DAY! (p. 93)

I will respond in like manner to this. You can search from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find one example where God commands "us" to keep the Sabbath. You have to resort to deceptive reasoning and arguments, taking that which God commanded of those Israelites, and apply it to all Christians, or all people. You have to add Gentile Christians to that covenant / contract that even Armstrong said cannot be done, once ratified and signed off on. The *only* provision in that covenant law for those not born of Israel to enter into, and be required to keep that covenant was if a male underwent circumcision, in the flesh. God does not deal with mankind illegally. Armstrong took only one example where He cited anything said by Jesus regarding the Sabbath, and created a false dichotomy with it; a logical fallacy, claiming Jesus said the Sabbath was made for all mankind. The real dichotomy was about the Sabbath and the law, and not the Sabbath and mankind.

Now briefly let us look through the New Testament to find WHICH DAY Paul kept and taught Gentile converts to keep.

Notice which day Paul and Barnabas used for preaching to Gentiles:

(1) Acts 13:14-15, 42-44: "But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue ON THE SABBATH DAY, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." Then Paul stood up, and spoke, preaching CHRIST to them. (p. 93)

Let's ask some critical thinking questions here. Does it say Paul kept the Sabbath as a result of attending this synagogue on this occasion? No. You have to infer that from the text, reading into it what is not there.

Do we see Paul teaching to the Gentiles there anything about a day they are to keep, that day being the Sabbath?

No.

Do we see evidence that those people were gathered there for a worship service? No, and again, it can only be inferred. Synagogues were where people went to hear the law and prophets read, on the Sabbath. They were houses of prayer; not worship, according to the law. The Hellenistic Jews that had synagogues did have worship in their synagogues, but I would simply point out that Paul was not a Hellenized Jew. He came from the Pharisaical line that were hard-line legalists. If Paul was going to worship, according to the law, He would do so at the temple, and nowhere else. When he came to one town, Philippi, that didn't have a synagogue, the narrative said he and those with him went to a place known for conducting prayers on the Sabbath; *not worship*.

What do we see Paul preaching / teaching about, if not the Sabbath or what day the Gentiles are supposed to observe? He preached Christ to them. According to Armstrong, that isn't even the gospel, seeing as he claimed the gospel was the message *from* Christ, and not a message *of* Christ personally.

"And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the GENTILES besought that these words might be preached to them THE NEXT SABBATH."

Now since Paul was preaching "the grace of God" (verse 43), here was his opportunity to straighten out these Gentiles, and explain that the Sabbath was done away. Why should he wait a whole week, in order to preach to THE GENTILES ON THE NEXT SABBATH? If the day had now been changed to Sunday, why did not Paul tell them they would not have to wait a week, but the very next day, Sunday, was the proper day for this service? (pp. 93-94)

More critical thinking needs to be applied here also.

First, Paul was not preaching "the grace of God" to those in attendance. He preached about Christ. Look up the cited passage and read it for yourself.

Verse 43 states:

"Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God." - Acts 13:43

Armstrong is at his usual tactics, distracting us from what is important, in this case it being Christ that was preached, to the exclusion of all else...the grace of God is revealed through Christ.

Second, Armstrong falls back on his false claim regarding a change in the day (a distraction) in order to overlook and ignore other possibilities. So Sunday, once more, becomes the straw-man here. There is no evidence of a change in the day; consequently, the Sabbath "remains" intact and commanded of all mankind instead of for Israel alone as Scripture confirms.

Third, Armstrong associates the events at that synagogue as being a "service" and I remind the reader again it was actually forbidden to worship outside the confines of the Temple. What needs to be taken into consideration is the historical reasons and purposes synagogues were established in the first place, being a post-diaspora creation, where they served to reinforce Jewish culture and religion. Armstrong seems intent on drawing a comparison between synagogues then, and a modern church service today.

Why did they all wait until a week later, for the Sabbath, instead of gathering together on the next day? People at that time had to work, daily, in order to survive. Even Paul often times had to work in order to provide for himself. Gentiles were allowed to attend synagogues, even though they worked on that day, for the Jews understood their own law. Gentiles, to them, could not keep the Sabbath unless they underwent circumcision and joined themselves to Israel. Otherwise, they were seen as being "devout Gentiles" and not Jews or Jew wannabe's.

Armstrong proceeds to address Acts chapter 15, and again distracts his readers from what is important. He

admonishes here on page 94 to study this whole passage carefully, then proceeds to butcher it.

Men came down from Judaea to Antioch, teaching Gentile Christians they must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be saved. This is not exactly what Acts 15 says. Those from Judaea who went to Antioch only insisted on circumcision. It was the Christian Pharisees who insisted the Gentiles be both circumcised and keep the law of Moses.

These were Jews wanting Gentiles to become Jews first, and Christians second, in order to be saved. More on this in a bit, as this plot thickens, or sickens, depending on your perspective.

What Armstrong relates here from Acts 15 is not as interesting as what he omits and glosses over.

The counsel concludes that the Gentiles are saved by faith, even as they. They understood that their salvation was *not* related to the law, so how could it affect the salvation of a Gentile? It could not. As a result, a letter is written, to be sent out to the predominantly Gentile churches, that they are not required to keep the law.

"Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God: But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood." - Acts 15:19-20

They turned to God. They had repentance granted unto them. The law had nothing to do with it.

Armstrong proceeds now to scramble things here in Acts 15 like eggs.

Armstrong claims that this is the "law of Moses" as distinct from the Ten Commandments law of God; this law of Moses having been done away with at the cross, nailed to the cross... the law where tithing is located... So why is the church leadership reinstating points of law that are no longer applicable? Furthermore, Armstrong is claiming that those Pharisees were insisting that this "law of Moses" is required for the salvation of those Gentiles, but no mention of the Ten Commandment "law of God" being a requirement? How does that work in Armstrong's theology? You would think that if the Ten Commandments were required, and a separate law, they would have been insistent with those Gentiles keeping the Ten Commandment law as they would circumcise and the "law of Moses"!

Then things *really* get messy!

He did not say they should not keep the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments were not in question — but only the ritual law of circumcision, which was an altogether DIFFERENT law. He merely mentioned four prohibitions, and otherwise they did not need to observe the law of Moses. (p. 94)

You cannot prove a negative. If the Ten were a separate covenant law, and required of all, then it seems odd, to say the least, that all these minor things needed to be addressed, and the greater things ignored and not even mentioned... not a peep! Furthermore, Armstrong offers no explanation as to why points of law in a now defunct law set need to be resurrected. He leaves it as is so as to not attract attention to where this would lead, for soon, you would have to conclude and justify the return of *all* that law, seeing as he has also already resurrected tithing in a manner inconsistent with this law, and assigned a death penalty to it should you neglect it!

But why these four things? Are they points of law the church felt needed to be imposed and required of the Gentile believers, after pointing out their salvation is a matter of faith, only? Three of them are related to how Jews and Gentiles related to each other over things such as table fellowship. Eating a communal meal, you know, what Armstrong related to as "breaking bread" when they gathered together in settings like Acts 20? Under such a situation, the Gentile sitting there eating meats that had been sacrificed to an idol, or strangled, or with blood would be highly offensive to their Jewish Christian counterparts. The last item, fornication, was so listed, and addressed by Paul in his letters. The why doesn't help Armstrong's case. They thought, because of their Christian liberty *from* the law, that they could indulge the flesh in that regard. It was addressed, not because it was in the "law of Moses" but because Christians are not to be focused on fleshly matters, indulging the flesh, but spiritual ones. See Romans 8.

This of course brings up an interesting question. Was the prohibition against fornication a ceremonial law? How would you yourself categorize fornication? Ceremonial, civil, sacrificial, moral? If, as Armstrong intimates, the "law of Moses" was an added law, now done away with, then fornication would no longer be relevant, for "where there is no law, there is no transgression" as Armstrong points out elsewhere. You can't have it both

ways, serving your cherry picked beliefs.

But why WRITE this sentence to them? Note it!

"...For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues EVERY SABBATH DAY" (verse 21).

Do you see it? **The law of Moses – the first five books of the Bible** – was being taught in the synagogues EVERY SABBATH DAY. The apostles were WRITING only these decrees, BECAUSE GENTILE CONVERTS WERE GOING TO CHURCH ON THE SABBATH DAY. They had heard God's law read and expounded every Sabbath in the synagogues and did not need further instructions. It shows that the GENTILE CONVERTS HAD STARTED KEEPING THE SABBATH DAY, AND WENT TO CHURCH ON THAT DAY! And the apostles letter did not reprove them for this Sabbath-keeping.

This is very significant, since GENTILES HAD NEVER KEPT THE SABBATH. Therefore it is something these Gentiles had STARTED doing *after they were converted under the teaching of Paul and Barnabas!* (pp. 94-95)

(3) Acts 16:12-15: Here we find Paul and Silas at Philippi. And "we were in that city abiding certain days. And on the Sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made, and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened...and...she was baptized."

Here again Paul and his companions waited until the Sabbath, and then went to a place of worship, and preached, and this woman, probably a Gentile, was converted. The passage indicates it was the custom to meet there on the Sabbath, and that it was custom for Paul and his companions to go to a place of prayer and worship when the Sabbath day came.

Why indeed write this sentence to them? It was not their job to preach and teach Moses and the law, done in synagogues everywhere. Was Moses being read in Christian gatherings? Apparently not, seeing as that is what they did in synagogues. If you wanted to learn of Moses and the law, you went to any synagogue on the Sabbath, when the law and the prophets were read out loud, with an emphasis on the 10 Commandments.

Armstrong proceeds to make a number of assumptions now, due to his confirmation bias. The Gentiles, who were earlier attending Synagogues on the Sabbath, are now Christians keeping the Sabbath. It is inferred. It is assumed. It is a belief driving the interpretation.

Are you, the one who follows the teachings of Armstrong, really that gullible? Paul and Barnabus show up at a synagogue. Present are Jews and devout Gentiles. Paul and Barnabus preach to them Christ, and, as a result, the gentiles start keeping the Sabbath? Was Paul teaching them to keep the Sabbath? Does it say that anywhere?

Note now what I highlighted above in yellow, and understand the significance of it, written by Armstrong himself. The "law of Moses" is what is written in the first five books of the Bible. What is found in those five books located at Exodus chapter 20 and Deuteronomy chapter 5? And what, at this very moment, is your mind trying to do in order to circumvent what Armstrong states regarding this being the "law of Moses?" He made a mistake? Moses wrote down the "law of God" in the "law of Moses" but it ain't really the law of Moses? Only in a false belief can you end up accommodating cognitive dissonance like this. The "law of Moses" aka the "book of the law" sometimes stated as the book of the law of God, and sometimes the book of the law of Moses, is everything penned by Moses; the first 5 books of what we now know to be the Bible. And, the gentiles were NOT required to keep any of it. They were never a legal party to it, and the narrative there in Acts 15 declares that to teach them that law was to subvert their souls. The law undermines faith.

I would also remind the reader that Armstrong wrote, as cited above, that they gathered where they did for prayer and worship. The narrative however says nothing about worship there, as I already explained.

Next Armstrong cites Paul and Silas in Philippi, Acts 16. They seek out a place of prayer on the Sabbath, and Armstrong tries to make this into a case of Paul keeping the Sabbath. It is not relevant whether Paul was keeping

the Sabbath or not. What we do know and understand is that he took the opportunity to seek out synagogues or other places of "prayer" because his goal was to first preach to his countrymen, fellow Jews, first, when entering a new area. If you were Paul, and went to a synagogue on any other day besides the Sabbath, who would you be preaching to? No one. But Armstrong, as well as other Sabbatarians, are not above using these examples as a way to convince people Paul was actually keeping the Sabbath, and by extension, Gentile Christians, when, in fact, there is not one example of Gentile *Christians* assembling on a Sabbath. If the Sabbath were required of them, there is a reasonable expectation we would see examples of them doing so, and an expectation that there would be guidelines and instructions found in the writings of the apostles revolving around Sabbath observance. But the Scriptures are silent in this regard. I have heard Sabbatarian apologists claim that this observation is but an argument from silence, claiming this to be a logical fallacy! But stop and think here for a moment – it is really a claim that the Sabbath is required, and was being kept by the early church *because* there is no example of it!

On page 95, Armstrong again claims that Paul attending synagogues on the Sabbath, preaching to Jews and Gentiles assembled there, constitutes Paul going to "church" on that day, and he again attacks his straw-man Sunday in the process.

Now we find an interesting twist of events, where Armstrong contradicts his own teaching (again).

Now the commandment says: "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work," just as much as it says "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." **There is just as much command to work six days as there is to rest the seventh.** And so if the day had been changed, Paul would have had to work Sabbaths, in order to go to church and preach every Sunday. But here he **WORKED** weekdays and went to church and preached **EVERY SABBATH** – not just on one particular occasion – it says **EVERY SABBATH**. (p. 96) [bolding mine]

When I showed up as a student at Ambassador College in 1972, one of the first things that I found confusing was over this issue; the command regarding the Sabbath, requiring work on the other six days. I asked one minister why people were not working on Sundays there. The next Bible study was taken by Armstrong, who began by exclaiming, in an exasperated tone, how this topic had come up yet again, and proceeded to explain how the other six days were about how one "may" work on those days, and that it was not an outright command that you must work on the other six days. Remember, though, that this chapter was added to the booklet *after* the 1972 printing! And what is Armstrong saying here, quite clearly? I have bolded it above to make it easy for you to find. Again and again, Armstrong reinterprets Scripture to suit his own need, depending on the circumstances at the time!

Now, what if Paul was not abiding by this in the manner Armstrong interprets it so as to influence the reader who is not yet brought into the fold, what would we conclude? What if we found an example where Paul was not working the other six days? If you brought that to Armstrong's attention, you would in turn get interpretation number 2, wouldn't you?

"Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market **daily** with them that met with him." - Acts 17:16-17

"And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing **daily** in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." - Acts 19:8-10

Here's the apostle Paul, not working the other six days, thereby, according to Armstrong's interpretation cited above, breaking that Sabbath commandment by not working the other six days!

What **MORE** conclusive proof could we desire? What **STRONGER** Bible evidence than this, as to the true Sabbath of the **NEW** Testament? For a year and a half Paul continued working weekdays – six days – including Sundays – and preaching to **GENTILES** exclusively **EVERY SABBATH!** (p. 96)

Exclusively? What did I just cite, from Scripture above?

The cited texts above demonstrate how Armstrong lied and misrepresents Scripture. This "conclusive proof" is rife with assumptive reasoning and outright lies. These are the methods of a deceiver, and not the proper methods of biblical scholarship and hermeneutics. It is a sham and a scam, all rolled up into one. Was Paul, according to Armstrong, preaching exclusively to GENTILES in the synagogues on the Sabbath??? Please! Quit turning a blind eye to what Armstrong writes that is so utterly lacking in even common sense! Please see how he continually uses "Sunday" as a straw-man argument! Sunday, or the first day of the week, following the Sabbath "day" is irrelevant! His take on "worship" is skewed, insisting that the Christians just could NOT worship God in spirit and in truth by doing so on a day not designated as "holy time."

And Paul "as his manner was, went in unto them, and three SABBATH DAYS reasoned with them out of the scriptures (Acts 17:2)." It was his MANNER, his CUSTOM, as we have seen by ample evidence showing a total of eighty-four different Sabbaths Paul is shown specifically to have kept. (p. 96)

Let's look at this from another perspective. Let's assume for a moment, and for the sake of argument, that Christians were keeping Sundays along the line of the old covenant Sabbath. Paul shows up in these cities, and now, because the day has been changed to Sunday, he shows up at these synagogues on the first day of the week, Sunday. Who does he preach to? Paul smacks his head and reminds himself, "Oh yeah, the Jews and devout Gentiles come to the synagogues on the Sabbath. I guess I'm out of luck on that score; I can't be seen going into synagogues on the Sabbath! What will other Christians think! My reputation as an apostle would be ruined. Why, they would conclude I had gone apostate and returned to keeping the Sabbath."

Can you see now how ludicrous and insane Armstrong's reasoning is now? He is saying that if Paul showed up to preach to Jews in a synagogue on the Sabbath, that is prima-facie evidence Paul had to be keeping the Sabbath. I would hate to be on trial for a crime with Armstrong as a jurist.

And once more, what is the purpose of pointing out Paul did this as a matter of "custom?" Simple. It was not due to this being some "command" to do so. But if, after all this, you still think it is about Paul keeping the Sabbath, then please point out to me, from the Scriptures, that Armstrong says were not "done away with" leaving just the 10 Commandments as "God's law" where it says, or commands, that the Sabbath be kept and observed by attending a synagogue on that day. Let's see your chapter and verse to back this claim of Armstrong's.

When I read this "God's Law" 10 Commandments, I see nothing about corporate worship carried out on that day. I see a command to refrain from doing "any" work.

Now, using Armstrong's own logic that he used regarding Sunday and that there is no commandment to conduct or participate in corporate worship on that day, how is it this same reasoning and interpretation is not used here also? Do you see a command to conduct or participate in corporate worship on the Sabbath? No, you do not. What then do you, the follower of Armstrong have as a result? Allow me to provide an answer, from the mouth of Jesus the Christ who had something to say about matters like this:

For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. °But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; °And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. °Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, °This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. °But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. – Matthew 15:4-9

There is NO COMMAND to carry out or conduct corporate worship services on the Sabbath in the "law of God."

There is a command not to do "any" work on the Sabbath. "ANY" means all inclusive, without exception.

There is NO COMMANDMENT in this "law of God" to tithe of your income, and give it to anyone.

So it all begs the logical question, regarding your "dedication" to this "law of God" found in the 10 Commandments. Are you following the "law of God" or are you following a man's personal interpretation of it?

Chapter 8: The Amazing Truth about Christian Fellowship

This was originally chapter 7. Somewhere between 1972 and 1976, Armstrong took material from the earlier Sabbath booklet, written in 1952, and added another Chapter 7 where further bashing of Sunday takes place.

This is the last chapter in this booklet. If you were waiting for Armstrong to do as he wrote at the beginning; examine what all Jesus had to say about the Sabbath, sorry to disappoint you.

At the end of Chapter one, Armstrong wrote:

[So now let us see what CHRIST, through the BIBLE, says about which is the day to keep in this NEW Testament era — and whether it makes any difference. \(p 17\)](#)

Christ was/is God incarnate; God in the flesh. As God of the old covenant, He was Christ to be.

Armstrong's purpose here is to determine which day, and not whether a day.

[JESUS CHRIST had considerable to say and to teach about the Sabbath, and its observance. \(p 21\)](#)

Yes He did. Why then does Armstrong not cite and elaborate on what Jesus said and taught? Jesus, the author of your salvation, does not agree with what Armstrong has to say and teach about the Sabbath. Armstrong cannot save you. Jesus can. I suggest you read and study what Jesus said, instead of listening to a self proclaimed end time prophet, apostle, Elijah.

Armstrong proceeds in chapter 8, repeating what he wrote earlier. He claims Jesus' presence is in the Sabbath. Yet Jesus presence is within the believer. The claim here is that gathering on a day Christ is not present in, results in His absence! So then, does the Holy Spirit leave believing Christians if they gather to worship God on the wrong day? That seems to be the inferred result.

Page 84, and another outright lie, where Armstrong makes Christ over into his Sabbatarian image. He claims Jesus still kept the Sabbath upon becoming flesh and blood, and did so "as His custom was." The place where it says this does not show Jesus keeping the Sabbath. It is about Him attending synagogues on the Sabbath. And what, exactly, did Jesus do in those synagogues? Sometimes, He read from the Scriptures, and sometimes He performed the work of healing people. One official of a synagogue was incensed over His actions on a Sabbath in this regard. But Jesus had a different take on the situation. Jesus has a different take on the Sabbath held by even Armstrong. To Him, it was a day of release from bondage, and the N.T. writers make it plain that the old covenant law was a system of bondage and not liberty. A Christian is free; freed from the law, and freed from sin! A Christian resides with Christ, and Christ dwells in the Christian. Christ's presence is in the believer, and no longer in one day a week, where sacrifices had to be performed on behalf of the people in order to cover their sins while in God's presence. The Christian shares in the Rest found in Him, that the Sabbath could only mimic as a shadow.

Armstrong further claims that if Christians gather on a Sunday, God is not there with them, for that is not His day. But what do the Scriptures say?

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." - Matthew 18:20

Anything here that excludes this from happening on a day other than the Sabbath, let alone Sunday? Surely, Christ was remiss in mentioning this that Armstrong is good enough to fill in for us...

Page 85. Armstrong quotes how God is a Spirit, and that His worshipers "must worship him *in Spirit* and in TRUTH" ...on a **physical** day... where people were supposed to rest from their labor performed on the other six days, while remaining in their dwellings.

Armstrong offers a reward for anyone who can produce biblical evidence where Sunday observance is *commanded*. What about proper biblical, credible evidence where Christians are commanded to observe the Sabbath for corporate worship? What examples do we find in Scripture? The only example of Christians gathered on a day happens to be on a "Sunday," a.k.a. the first day of the week in Acts 20. There is no example of a purely Christian gathering on a Sabbath. In the example in Acts 20, a young man falls asleep and drops to the ground,

three floors below, and taken up dead. Paul prays for His recovery, which happens. How can this be, if Christ's presence is not among Christians on "Sundays?"

Armstrong also redefines what a holy convocation is in order to suit his own purpose, defining it as a commanded assembly. So how can it be a commanded assembly in relation to remaining in one's dwelling on that day? It cannot. A holy convocation is a time or event where people are in the presence of God. If it is to also be a commanded assembly, that is stipulated in the command.

The next false claim is that to worship in Spirit and in Truth means worship restricted to a *physical day* and *location*. This actually conflicts with what Jesus was getting at in His discussion with the Samaritan woman, where worshiping in Spirit and in Truth is contrasted to how the Jews worshiped prior, and up to that time, where time and place were dictated by the law.

Armstrong then proceeds to go on a role; a diatribe of accusations and claims that his followers swallow, hook line and sinker. They have taken the bait. All rules of proper biblical scholarship have been circumvented with a liberal smattering of deceptive techniques along with dire warnings of not doing it his way.

Armstrong continues, writing that people are so accustomed to hearing the Sabbath described as the "Jewish" Sabbath that they just take it for granted, contrary to his claims. In this book, Armstrong constantly referred to the Sabbath as a day of worship that his followers also took for granted that it was part of what it meant to keep the Sabbath. He repeats his mantra over and over about the Sabbath being made for "man" that this too is accepted without examination. What we see here is that Armstrong understood this penchant for believing something repeated often enough, and he takes full advantage of it. Most everything in this last chapter is just more repetition.

[Salvation is of the Jews \(John 4:22\). Salvation, however, is for EVERYONE that believes \(in living faith, not death faith\) — to the Jew first, and, through Christ, also to the Gentile \(Rom. 1:16\) \(p. 102\).](#)

Salvation is to everyone who believes what? In keeping the Sabbath? And what is dead faith? It is faith devoid of works. So what is Armstrong actually advocating here? Dead faith, one day a week; the Sabbath, where your good works are deemed sin on that day. Who else do you think would like to see Christians abandoning faith, even if but one day a week?

It took me quite awhile to learn to read, carefully, what Armstrong wrote. Here, I overlooked for years an implied condition. Note it above. Salvation is for everyone... to the Jew first, then, *through Christ*, also the Gentiles. But, what of the Jew? Is their salvation *not* through Christ? Or is a picture being painted that it is really the law that saves, and that the Gentiles needed Jesus to point to them to the way; the way the Jews already knew and abode by?

[Now IF Jesus Christ is IN YOU \(and you are not a truly converted Christian unless He is!\), will He, in you, profane His Holy Day, and observe a pagan day? IMPOSSIBLE! \(p. 103\)](#)

There is no such thing as pagan days! Pagans never stole any days from God. It is IMPOSSIBLE! God created all things, and all things are His. And Christ is our example. We follow His lead. He worked on the Sabbath. He broke the Sabbath. His disciples, the only ones following Him at that time, broke the Sabbath and Jesus said they were blameless. If they could work on the Sabbath, and Jesus can work on the Sabbath, and the Father in Heaven can work on the Sabbath, then we can work on the Sabbath. [Read: [Jesus and the Sabbath](#) for more regarding this.]

On pages 89 and 90, Armstrong makes a bold claim and accusation. Based on Christ's infallible authority, he declares you are no Christian if you are not keeping the Sabbath. Christ will not abide with a Sabbath breaker. Your faith is subordinate to the requirement to keep the Sabbath. Your faith is counted as nothing; your faith, belief, trust, assurance in Christ is negated by neglecting and rejecting the Sabbath. And if Armstrong is invoking "infallible authority," isn't that what the Popes have done? Armstrong makes a claim, and insists it is infallible, based on Christ's teachings of which we have seen precious little of in this booklet.

[LET'S UNDERSTAND! The prohibition against "picking up sticks," or "kindling a fire" on the Sabbath was part of the added CIVIL and RITUALISTIC OR CEREMONIAL law](#)

of Moses — no part of the Ten Commandment SPIRITUAL Law! (pp. 104-105)

The man who was put to death for gathering sticks on the Sabbath did so **before** there was a codification of the "law of Moses" and he was sentenced to death by the spoken Word of God.

Where then does Armstrong get the idea that the Sabbath is a day of corporate worship? Read the text where the Ten Commandments are written out. Anything there about worship? Not a peep. But, to paraphrase Armstrong, it's repeated so often that people just assume that is what it is. Furthermore, is tithing located in the Ten Commandments, or in the added civil, ritualistic, ceremonial law of Moses?

Jesus Christ KEPT THE SABBATH while He lived as a human on earth. And whole CHAPTERS in the four Gospel books are devoted to recording HOW he taught us to keep the Sabbath. (p. 105)

Another lie. Jesus did not spend time teaching "us" to keep the Sabbath. He intentionally went out of His way to do things on the Sabbath that He very easily could have done on other days of the week, irritating and annoying the religious leaders of the day who were hung up on the Sabbath, making it over to a day served by men, raising it to the status of a god they served and obeyed, making it another god besides God.

There is so much twisting of Scripture now at this point in the book that it would be necessary to cite the rest of the book in order to address each one. He claims, for example, that Jesus taught it was right to prepare meals on the Sabbath, yet the people were commanded, based on the miracle of the manna, before there was a "law of Moses" to gather twice as much on the day before the Sabbath, and prepare their meals for the Sabbath on that day. So if this is what Jesus was teaching as allowed, it was a departure from what was commanded of those Hebrews who were being introduced to the Sabbath and how God (who now stood before them in the flesh) wanted them to observe it.

Jesus HEALED the sick on the Sabbath. This was not doing business or labor by which He earned a living. It was an act of mercy — and of LOVE. Jesus said it is right to DO GOOD on the Sabbath day. (p. 106)

How deceptively subtle. He healed people of much more than sickness. He freed people from the bondage of their infirmities on the Sabbath. He loosed them from the bonds of Satan. It was appropriate for them to be freed from *bondage* on that day; a day of *liberty* for them. Armstrong is busy turning the day back into a day of bondage and servitude to the day itself.

Jesus said it was *lawful* to do good/well on the Sabbath. (Mark 3:4) Jesus further defined good and evil by stating that saving life was good, while destroying life was evil. He contrasted this good to doing evil on the Sabbath. What then are the works of a Christian, "wrought in God?" Are they good, or evil? What are the works of one who preaches a false gospel in which there is no salvation? A false gospel destroys lives.

Note another subtle twist... works whereby one earns a living. Again, I appeal to the wording of the Sabbath commandment as given in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. Any mention there of work being associated with works strictly associated with making a living? No. The prohibition is against doing **ANY** work on that day, good or evil. Any means any. Any means all, without exclusion or exception.

Now Armstrong threatens the reader with the Lake of Fire should you reject what he has "revealed" here. In one hand he holds a carrot, just out of your reach, and with the other a club. If you lose your job, whereby you provide for your family, that is a possibility, but you have to step out in this *blind* faith over and in the Sabbath. Again I remind the reader what the apostle Paul wrote regarding faith and law, that the law is not of faith. Of course, that just gets redefined as being the "law of Moses" and not the Ten. Is tithing then a matter of faith, being found within the confines of the "law of Moses?"

God will *save* no person He does not RULE. (p. 107)

God will not save a person who does not place His faith, trust, hope, assurance, in Christ, alone. God will save no one who does not believe God.

. . . I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: – John 11:25

Here, and elsewhere, where Jesus makes similar declarations, He never adds any caveat that people must also believe in, and keep the Sabbath. He is our Sabbath. We find a *permanent* rest in Him.

At the bottom of page 93, Armstrong now claims that there is only one church corporate that is empowered by God; one church that is the TRUE Church of God. His own cited definition of the Church being the Christian collective is now redefined to mean only his church. It is common for cult churches to make this same claim.

[God commands us to seek the body — the Work — which is empowered by God. There is only ONE such Church! \(p. 107\)](#)

Evidence? There is none, besides his only claim to such, and his claim that it is his church that meets his criteria.

How do you, the reader, know if this is indeed the proper criteria, and if there are further criteria that must be met? Did Jesus say you will know what body of gathered Christians is the or a true body of Christians based on their beliefs and doctrines, or some other criteria? Jesus said the criteria was whether they had love for one another. So it looks like, to Jesus, doctrinal issues such as the Sabbath are of lesser importance, if at all. Was there this love extant in Worldwide under Armstrong's regime? Depends on who you ask, and how honest they are willing to discuss the past. I can produce lots of witnesses who will testify there was precious little love.

[It is doing THE WORK OF GOD. It is, as Jesus said it would be, a "little flock," persecuted, despised by the world. But it does have dedicated, consecrated, converted, fully instructed and trained, ordained MINISTERS in all parts of the world — available to call on you, visit you in your home, answer your questions about the Sabbath, explain the Bible to you — IF YOU REQUEST IT! \(p. 108\)](#)

Another lie. The little flock Jesus referred to were His disciples. He never said the church would be, or remain, a little flock. You would think that a dedicated, consecrated, converted, ordained, minister of Jesus Christ would be careful to avoid any appearance of evil, such as lying or even embellishing what he says and teaches.

The distinctive of Armstrong's church is the Sabbath. His ministers would instruct you about the Sabbath. Ministers of Christ would be instructing you about the gospel – a message of salvation available through faith only, without the added baggage of old covenant laws. The gospel addresses the real issues; your stony heart you were born with, and the new heart of flesh you receive through faith, changing your lineage from that of a son or daughter of Adam, or as Jesus put it, a child of the devil, to a son or daughter of God, via the Holy Spirit. You either believe the simple message of the gospel, or you do not, and people tend to reject the gospel in favor of variations of the old covenant law, where your ego is satisfied with the belief that you are contributing to your own salvation through your own efforts, jumping through religious hoops such as keeping the Sabbath. God will have none of that. No one will be able to brag or boast in their own accomplishments, like that Pharisee in his prayer where he looked down upon the other man who was a confessed sinner. You are what you are, and you cannot change yourself into something you are not. A gorilla may dress like a man, and emulate a man, but at the end of the day, he is still a gorilla. You can try to keep the Sabbath, you can tithe of your wages, you can keep or try to keep your cherry picked version of that old covenant law, and at the end of the day, and at the end of your life, you are still a son of Adam.

I have shown you where Armstrong has made unsubstantiated claims. I have shown you where he has lied, blatantly misrepresenting Scripture. I have shown you where he twisted Scripture in order to serve his own interpretation of Scripture. The "truth" of this should be "painfully" obvious, but there is a catch here – an issue in Scripture touched on by the apostle Paul in regards to those who, for whatever reason, decide to embrace old covenant law, even the Ten Commandments, at the expense of the gospel. Paul describes it as a veil before the eyes; a blindness one is afflicted with as a result. You will find this discussed in II Corinthians chapter 3, where he wrote that those who embrace Moses and what he both wrote and taught end up with this veil before their eyes, blinding them from seeing the true Christ, having accepted a false Christ and false gospel as a result. This delusion is a "strong" (Armstrong strong) delusion, and when people like me cite this in discussion with adherents to what Armstrong taught, they just can't see it, even with it being plainly written there for all to see. What did Moses both write and teach? The law, including the Ten Commandments, in the book of the law.

"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this

day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." - II Corinthians 3:14-17

I would point out that this veil; this blindness, is a curse, imposed on those who dare embrace and proffer a false gospel; a gospel of works of the law. Adam and Eve were cursed for opting for the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" in lieu of faith in God; believing God. What did that tree represent? What in Scripture imparts a knowledge of good and evil? The law. What is the "fruit" of the law? Death. All the law could ever do was condemn the transgressor of the law, and all who lived by the law; all who were under the law, transgressed the law. All have sinned, and come up short.

Because the law worketh wrath: – Romans 4:15a

And now, embracing a false gospel that incorporates law, in this case the Sabbath law, results in a curse also, seeing as, once again, faith is being rejected; the gospel of faith, belief, trust, assurance, in Christ, alone. Read the cited passage again, above. The veil is removed upon turning to Christ. In this narrative, turning to Christ requires turning *away* from what Moses wrote and taught: the law.

Liberty: The freedom associated with the New Covenant, as contrasted to the old covenant law, given at Sinai, associated with bondage. (Galatians 4:21-5:1)

Armstrong, and quite a number of other churches down through history, have sought to excise the Ten Commandments from the rest of the law. The Ten have been given the royal treatment by so many for so long, it is even as Armstrong mentioned regarding Sunday worship; people just accept it as true and required as a result. Look at all the claims associated with the Ten Commandments. They are said to be God's moral, eternal, spiritual, law. They are said to teach man how to love God and fellow man. They are claimed to be the law God places within the believer. They are claimed to be the law of Christ; the law of Liberty, the law of faith. Just about everything is defined through the Ten. To obey the Ten Commandments is to obey God and Christ.

Nowhere in Scripture are the Ten Commandments referred to as "moral" law. Oh, we may well recognize laws that deal with morality, or more accurately, man's immorality, but again, we are being distracted from the real issue, and in the process, made to draw a false conclusion. Keeping a "moral" law does not result in you being, or becoming, or declared, a morally upright person. God's Spirit does that.

That law was a covenant law. Are you still intent on referring to the Ten as a separate law? No problem, they are *still* associated with being a covenant, with the legal parties being God and the Hebrews, and none others.

What then constitutes a "moral" law and are the Ten a moral law set?

How would we define a moral law in this context? It would be a law where there is never an excuse for breaking it. It would always be wrong to murder. It would always be wrong to steal, bear false witness, or commit adultery. It would always be wrong to have any other gods besides or in place of the One True God. Can this be said for the Sabbath? If it is never acceptable to break the Sabbath; if there is never an exception for doing so, then Jesus sinned, and you are doomed for eternity. The prohibition in relation to the Sabbath was that no one was to do "any" work. Any means any.

The other issue here is never brought up by advocates of the Ten Commandments, and I would imagine you the reader, who still follows the teachings of Armstrong, never gave it any thought in this light. If you keep these laws, are you in turn made or declared by God to be moral? Does keeping this law set result in you becoming moral? If they are moral law, then the unspoken claim is that you would be seen by God as a moral person as a result of keeping them. But that is not how this or any such law works. This law does not, and cannot, result in you being moral, upright, and righteous in the eyes of God. This law serves the purpose of exposing the fact that mankind is inherently immoral! Given this understanding, we could more accurately say and claim that the Ten Commandments are a law that deals with man's immorality.

Lets look at an example; the prohibition against murder. In the context of the Ten, this would be a case of denying another of their basic right to life and due process in law (do not bear false witness). It is the illegal taking of another person's life in contrast to the lawful taking of a life as a result of a crime committed, or in times of war, or in times of self-defense. So you, being the moral and upright person you are, refrain from

murdering others. Good for you. Quite an accomplishment on your part. But, have you ever hated someone, or had evil thoughts in regards to another person?

That is our human nature coming through. That is the Adamic nature coming out. And that nature condemns you before God, for hatred is the spirit of murder. You can hate another, yet refrain from murder. And human nature tries to convince the self they are right with God, because they didn't murder the person they hate! It is written that the devil was a murderer from the beginning, and those with the Adamic nature are in fact the children of the devil. If you hate someone, which is the spirit of murder, then whose child are you?

Shall I continue? What did Jesus have to say and teach in relation to adultery and even thinking about it? You stand condemned. Jesus said to pluck out your eye rather than risk ending up in hell as a result. You don't have to commit the act of adultery to be guilty of adultery. Your heart of stone condemns you. You can pluck out both eyes, and the problem remains. It is inescapable. All your law keeping and keeping of the Sabbath will have no effect on your salvation because it has no impact on your stony heart you were born with.

So looking to the Ten Commandments as the ultimate law of God for mankind is just another distraction, that allows a person to ignore the real problems; problems of the heart of stone you were born with.

You *must* be born again. You *must* become the offspring of God. You *must* be converted, which happens when you are in receipt of the Holy Spirit.

There are things written in Scripture, designed to trip up the careless, proud and arrogant. God inspired it to be written that the "law of God is perfect, converting the soul." The careless and proud interpret that to mean the Ten Commandments. They unwittingly translate such statements so as to comply with their ego that desires to elevate and boast in the self. God resists the proud, and He has done this through the pages of the Bible, where they get tripped up as a result. Jesus said one must be perfect, even as God is perfect, where they conclude they must achieve this perfection through their own efforts. Revelation states that a true Christian keeps the commandments of God and testimony and faith of Christ. But all they see is that Christians keep the commandments of God, interpreting this to mean old covenant commandments they are to keep, never realizing that those commandments are not in harmony with the testimony and faith of Christ.

They will cite: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." - Isaiah 8:20

To these people, all they see is the "law" being the legalities of the law, ignoring the issue of the testimony of the law, where righteousness is established as a function of faith, and not law, as attested to in the life of Abraham.

Ego does not allow a person to conclude they can't do it; that they cannot live up to the absolute perfect standard of God, and that God, being God, cannot accept anything less than perfection.

That is where Christ comes in. He paid the price for your imperfection, and covers you with His righteousness in return for your faith and trust in Him.

You can never acquire your own righteousness through law. Your ego here though will try to deceive you by telling you, you cannot, as a result, go about sinning, looking to the flawed belief that you can avoid sinning by keeping the law. Christ removed the law, and takes away sin, and the attendant condemnation of that triad arrangement. There is a victory over sin, death, and the law. (I Corinthians 15:55-57)

Armstrong concluded his booklet by claiming he has done what he is required by Christ to do; giving you that warning about keeping the Ten Commandments and especially the Sabbath. I will conclude in like manner, having done what I am compelled to do by the Holy Spirit, exposing the workers of iniquity who seek to deceive in order to feed their own bellies and rob you of the gospel and eternal life. Jesus warned about such deceivers in Matthew chapter 24, and declared that the deceptions would be so good and so convincing that, if it were possible, even the elect would be tempted to believe them.

A proud person thinks he or she is too smart to be deceived. And again, God resists the proud. So the proud end up deceived after all, as a result of being proud. Pride will make you think you can accomplish things on your own; things other "average" people cannot. Pride elevates the self. Pride boasts in the self. Pride abases others. Proud people think God has called them out as a result of their being better somehow than other people. Pride makes people think they have received a special calling from God, and Armstrong plays into this pride. He told

people again and again that people could not understand the significance of the Sabbath unless God revealed it to them; that God was calling out the weak and downtrodden who deserve better than what life has dished out to them. No economic group of people are exempt from ego. Being poor may make it easier to respond to the gospel, as compared to a rich person, only because the rich rarely see the need for salvation, seeing as they have pretty much everything they want in *this* world. But being poor is no guarantee. Scripture says God is calling upon *all* men to repent, and not some select few, based on their genetics as Armstrong claimed regarding the Patriarchs, saying they were a downtrodden people with superior genealogy. It is in this book. In other splinters that came off of Worldwide where they have almost copied this booklet verbatim, they all, to my knowledge, excised this from their versions of "Which Day."

God calls upon all men to repent. Repentance is primarily defined as the life choice to turn to God, and ancillary to this, abandon the earlier *lifestyle* of sin. Even here, Armstrong redefines in order to deceive, and this deception is commonly believed also, redefining repentance as primarily meaning to turn to the law, for if one "repents of sin" then they must turn to that which enables them to quit sinning; the law.

God wants you to turn to Him. Christ calls upon men to come to Him, and He will give that person rest; a rest found in Him, and not the law; not the Ten Commandments.

Believe the gospel.

By William Hohmann

Exit & Support Network™

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Further relevant observations

Sunday is commonly the target of Sabbatarian theology, used for the purpose of creating a classic straw-man argument. By disparaging Sundays, the Sabbath "wins by default." But, it is an apples and oranges comparison. The Sabbath was instituted as a day of rest from labor, commonly done on the previous six days a week. The first day of the week, now called "Sunday" was originally instituted, not as a day of rest, but solely as a day of corporate worship, prayer, and fellowship. It was not treated by the early church in any sacred manner. There are, in fact, no sacred days established in the New Covenant dispensation. That some churches, later in history, applied Sabbath-like attributes erroneously to Sunday does not in turn validate the Sabbath as a requirement in Christianity.

Rest is not worship. Worship is not rest.

Sabbatarian theology appears to be little more than a veiled attempt to disparage Sunday worship more-so than establishing Saturday as their Sabbath. The rules governing the Sabbath are often ignored in Sabbatarian organizations. The fact that the Sabbath was originally determined using an entirely different calendar schema is of little to no interest to them. Theirs is, in fact, a contrived sabbath that bears very little resemblance to the Sabbath of the Bible. More effort is expended knocking down their straw-man Sunday than is expended defending their own position regarding their Sabbath.

Compounding all this is the fact that we live on a round, globe shaped earth. When the Sabbath came about for Israel, half of the earth was not in that time frame of being the Sabbath. And, Scripture does not address the issue regarding the keeping of the Sabbath outside the confines of the nation of Israel.

Do you determine the Sabbath outside the confines of Israel going east or west, paying attention to sunsets?

At first, a Sabbatarian is confused by the very question. But, for every thousand miles (approximately) you go west from Israel, the Sabbath would begin an hour later. Traveling east, the Sabbath would begin an hour earlier. Take one person going west, and one going east, and have them meet on the other side of the world, and they are both keeping the Sabbath on a different day.

God gave prophecies in the Old Testament writings that He would do away with the Sabbath. God did not lie. It is no longer extant. It is no longer relevant. It, like so many other things in the old covenant, was a shadow of a greater, spiritual "reality." There is a rest found in Christ that is permanent, and not temporary like the weekly

Sabbath. There is **God's Rest**, which He entered into on that seventh day of Creation Week, that Scripture states is entered into through faith; something the Hebrews could not do, yet they did enter into the weekly Sabbath-rest that foreshadowed God's Rest, that they did not enter into due to their unbelief. (Heb. 4)

The Sabbath serves but one purpose to the advocates of the Sabbath. It is a means of recruiting people who are willing to compromise with Scripture, a little, even nearly imperceptibly to begin with, who will then in turn compromise more when introduced to tithing as a means of exploiting them into feeding wolves. It is a way to incrementally get people to compromise with Scripture through Assumptive Reasoning. This is the hermeneutic of the deceived. Once instilled with this spurious method of interpretation, it is hard to see it for what it is, and jettison it.

The most common argument (deception) put forth to convince people to keep the Sabbath, and in turn fund the wolves, is to convince the recruit that they are not free to sin, sin being defined as the transgression of the law, (read: the Ten Commandments to the exclusion of the rest of the law) citing the flawed translation found in the King James translation, which translation was lifted from the earlier Geneva Bible, whose translators borrowed it from the even earlier English translation, the Bishop's Bible. This was all in regards to a time when rules of translation were nearly non-existent. Sin could be the result of transgressing the law, for one under the law, but not always even for those Hebrews. Jesus points this out in His discourses in Scripture. Regardless, a Christian, who is not under the law, is also described and defined as being freed from the law, and dead to the law, as well as dead to sin and freed from sin. These concepts are poorly understood by many a Christian, and wolves know how to exploit people's ignorance.

God states in Scripture that He will (and did) take away the Sabbath.

I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts. – Hosea 2:11

The most common argument to circumvent what God prophesied is to claim God is saying “her” Sabbaths, and not “His” Sabbaths. God gave them “His” Sabbaths, along with these other things. They had no such other days. The day would come when all these things would cease. That day was the day that covenant legally ended upon the death Christ; God Incarnate.

The most effective deceptions are the ones that the adherents to them refuse to question. Those who have bought into the Sabbath, end up believing no other possibility exists regarding a belief system. It *must* be true. To them, it is impossible that it might not be true. That is the veil before the eyes Paul wrote about in II Corinthians chapter 3. If you believe in the Sabbath; that you have to keep the Sabbath, you will look at that, and not comprehend. It says those who have that veil before their eyes are those who are hung up on what Moses both wrote and taught; the law, including the Sabbath. Your gaze is on the wrong things. And you pay dearly for your “oversight.”

Sabbatarianism exists for one main, overarching reason. It exists as but another arrow in the quiver of the devil's arsenal to wreck havoc on the true gospel so that people abandon and reject a faith-based Christianity.

If those advocating the Sabbath actually kept the Sabbath, they would be keeping the Sabbath of Scripture, in the manner prescribed in Scripture, using the lunar calendar of Scripture that resets the week every new moon.

Again, it isn't really about keeping THE old covenant law and Sabbath. It is about convincing people to abandon a faith based Christianity. The serpent's deception was to get Eve to not believe God, and belief is tied to faith.

Keeping a fake sabbath and a truncated law is just as effective in this scenario as trying to keep all the law and the real Sabbath of Scripture. Most people would figure out quickly enough that the “whole” law, with all the temple requirements, could never truly be kept today, hence the truncated law embodied in the Ten Commandments. It is a “dumbed-down” law that appears “do-able.”