

SHOW NO DEFIANCE

It has become quite obvious to those of us who are reading and studying the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy that something big is about to happen here in America and around the world that is going to forever change the character of this once great nation, and every other nation for that matter, and unfortunately, according to Bible prophecy, it's not going to be good, and every thinking person recognizes that something terrible is coming. Because of the division we're experiencing in this country at this time, many people believe we are now in a cold civil war here in America and are fearful that it will soon turn physical, and there is some indication that this will happen before the end comes, but I'm going to leave that right there for now and shift to something else that's essential for us to understand before a Sunday law is enacted.

Without going into detail, because we should already know this, we understand that the second beast of **Revelation 13** represents the United States, and this second beast, at first, is identified as a gentle lamb-like creature with two horns representing Protestantism and Republicanism, and isn't that a good description of how this country is portrayed in its founding documents? But something happens to this lamb-like beast, doesn't it? It begins to speak as a dragon, or a persecuting power that is antithetical to the gentle creature it once was, and the apostle John prophesied that it would use force to pressure its subjects into conforming to the dictates of an apostate church that controls the state government, or be killed.

By the way, **Revelation 13** says the second beast makes an image to the first beast, or becomes like the first beast, which is Roman Catholicism with the pope at the head, who is antichrist. All the Protestant reformers understood this 500 years ago and is the reason they separated from it, but today nearly all the Christian churches think Rome has changed for the better and are willing to unite with her; it's called ecumenism, but Rome has not changed because she claims infallibility. In other words, as soon as she is able, she will once again attempt to control the consciences of men through the second beast that has become her spittin' image, or her perfect likeness, and together they will bring on a time of trouble such as this world has never seen.

And how was it that Rome became a persecuting power before the second beast came on the scene? It became a persecuting power when an apostate church controlled the state, which then persecuted those who refused to bow to its dictates. That's what the 1260 years called the dark ages was all about, and that's what the Protestant Reformers

SERMON OF THE MONTH

2024

APRIL

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protested about. And as the second beast images, or becomes like the papacy, it does the same thing, and if we're paying attention we can see that America is now in the process of making that change, in fact, that change has been coming slowly for many years, but today it's becoming more and more obvious, because these changes are more and more open and in your face. That's how sin is! The more ignorant people are exposed to it, the more normal it seems to be, because they don't know history. Do you think the devil wants us to know history? Of course not. And no doubt that's why this kind of history is not being taught in the schools today. Through the Jesuit order the papacy has infiltrated our judicial system, our educational system, and our religious system, which includes Adventism, and should I say especially Adventism, because this is the movement that was supposed to expose the man of sin, but has and is failing miserably today.

We know also that this union of church and state here in America will soon be controlled by religious zealots that will eventually enact a Sunday law with its penalties, and this is the main ingredient as to how America images the papacy, which created a false day of worship, or Sunday sacredness in the first place with no Biblical authority to do so. These things should not be a surprise or new information to any of us, because the Bible predicted it centuries ago, and we've seen this dragon like behavior developing exponentially over the last few years and months, which goes right along with the fact that inspiration has told us that the last movements would be what? Rapid ones.

And so, rather than going into more detail about all these things, what I'd like to do this morning is talk to you about the kinds of things we should and should not do when a Sunday law does arrive, because there's a good chance that this speaking as a dragon will come to maturity during the time of this present generation. And please don't think that it can't happen, because it's going to happen sometime, so why not very, very soon.

Now, having said that, I am well aware of the dangers of time setting, and we must avoid that, because some of the pioneers of our faith were looking at current events and ended up being totally wrong on more than one occasion, so we need to be careful, but at the same time we should not close our eyes to the transformation we see taking place in America and what the end result is going to be, because a day of reckoning is stealing upon us more quickly than we may think.

Without a doubt we are one day closer to the coming of the Lord than we were yesterday, and we will be one day closer tomorrow than today and so on. And even though this is true and that time is marching on apace, there's still danger that we might

become complacent like the apostle Peter said many will become just before the close of human probation, the pouring out of the seven last plagues, and the coming of the Lord.

In fact, it's probably been a while since we've read that in **2 Peter 3:1-4**, so let's take a look at it, shall we? "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of **(what?)** remembrance **(which means he told them these things before)**: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: knowing this first **(in other words Peter says, what I'm about to tell you should hold first place in your thinking)**, knowing this first that there shall come in the last days **(when?)** in the last days scoffers **(or those who will make fun of you for being so deluded as to believe what the Bible says)**, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep **(or died)**, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

And so, you get the idea here that the people Peter wrote to had been told over and over and over again that Jesus was coming, that a preparation was necessary, and that people would scoff at this very idea. And dear friends, we should not have the same attitude as the scoffers and say, "Yea, we've heard that before, in fact we've heard that for years and years. We're 5th generation Adventists and that's what great-great grandpa thought, but we're still here and Jesus hasn't come yet, and we're thinking it may never happen, or at least if it does, it probably won't be in our lifetime."

Is there danger that that could happen to us? Yes, the danger is great, because human nature is just as apt to procrastinate today, if not more so, than it was when Peter wrote these words so many years ago. Then a little farther down in **verse 10** Peter writes, "The day of the Lord will come as **(what?)** a thief in the night **(there's a surprise coming for scoffers and procrastinators and those walking after their own evil desires)**; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

Oh my friends, let's make sure we don't fit into this scoffing category and find ourselves mocking at the thought of Jesus' soon coming to cleanse this sin-cursed earth with fire and be unprepared for the greatest event this world will ever see.

Now, I'm going to say something that might be shocking to some of you, but I'm going to say it anyway, because we need to know this before a Sunday law is enacted. It's quite

obvious as you read the Spirit of Prophecy, and follow what it says, I might add, very important, it's quite obvious that seventh-day Sabbath keepers that do what God says to do, will not, I repeat, will not be thrown in prison or be persecuted, or be killed because of a Sunday law. Not directly anyway. Is that a shock to you? "Brother Jones, are you out of your mind? Of course we'll be persecuted and possibly killed because of a Sunday law." Nope! Not if we do what God counsels us to do. Because we're told plainly that when it comes to working on Sunday or doing things that would be looked upon as violating a Sunday law, that we are to respect that law by refraining from labor on that day or from doing things that would be perceived as a violation.

You see, there's nothing wrong with obeying the laws of the land, in fact we should, except for one caveat, and I think you know what that is, as long as we don't violate God's law in the process, right? Now listen carefully; as a Sabbath keeper there is no sin today in resting from labor on Sunday, is there? Or is there? I've heard some preachers say that the fourth commandment says, "six days shalt thou labour", therefore if one only works a five day work week they're breaking the law just as much as if they broke the Sabbath, but is that true? The Bible does say, "six days shalt thou labour." Sounds like a command to me, but is it? How do we answer someone that says if we keep Sabbath and rest on Sunday we're still breaking the law because we're supposed to work six days? Perhaps you've never thought about it before, but I raise this question just in case you have and didn't know how to answer.

The word "labour" in **Exodus 20:8** is "Abad" in Hebrew means to "serve self." In other words, God says we have six days in which to serve self, but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to Me and not for the benefit of self. And so, when we understanding this correctly there's nothing wrong with laboring, or serving self, however many days we need to in order to pay our bills and put food on the table as long as we don't do it on the seventh day.

I'll read you this one very short statement just to put an exclamation point on this question so there won't be any doubt about it. In ***Testimonies for the Church, volume 4, page 249*** the prophet says, "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work," the usual business of life, for worldly profit or pleasure."

And so no, resting on Sunday, for pleasure or whatever reason, is not a sin today and it won't be a sin when a Sunday law comes and we obey that law by not serving self or doing things that may be prohibited by the law on that day. The test for Sabbath keepers

will come, not because of a Sunday law, but because we'll be told we can no longer observe the true Sabbath, and I'll read that to you in a few minutes.

Years ago Cindy and I went to some of the eastern states to attend meetings, and while we were on our way home to the west side of the country we had the opportunity to stop at Battle Creek, Michigan, and we went through a tour of what's called Advent Village. This is a place where many of the pioneers of our faith lived back in the day, and the story is told of a non-Adventist woman who lived there, and she respected the Adventists so much that she would not wash her clothes on the seventh day and hang them on the line outside to dry so as not to offend her Adventist neighbors.

Now, do you think that was the right thing for her to do as a Sunday keeper, or should she have just disregarded the fact that she was surrounded by Seventh-day Adventists and do her wash and hang her clothes on the line outside anyway as a witness to her deluded Adventist neighbors? There was no law saying she couldn't. But why didn't she? It's because she was trying to be a good neighbor. And herein is a good lesson for us to give heed to as the Sabbath/Sunday issue heats up.

As Christians, isn't it always the right thing to do to avoid offending people's religious beliefs whenever possible? That doesn't mean hiding our own faith in order to do so, but having enough respect for others so as not to needlessly offend them. And besides, when we offend people, especially when it comes to their religious beliefs, what happens? Our witness to them after that point is pretty much destroyed, isn't it? And we will probably never have another opportunity to influence them for good.

I think we should think seriously about these kinds of things, because the time is soon coming when we will have to do the same kind of thing this woman did, only the days will be reversed. We must be wise enough and humble enough to do what inspiration tells us to do in situations such as this or we'll cut short our ability to reach people with the truth and needlessly bring persecution upon ourselves before the time. And so, what does inspiration tell us to do and not do? Let me read you a few lines.

This statement is dealing with how we should relate to the authorities regarding the Sabbath/Sunday issue, and it's taken from Manuscript Releases, volume 2, page 193. Quoting from **1 Peter 2:13, 14** it says, "'Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do

well.' This **(says the prophet)** is to be looked upon as lawful and right for us to do. We should be careful to avoid leaving an impression on human minds that will cut off our influence with them, and hedge up our way. We may tie our hands and hinder our work because by some unadvised word or action of ours, we have awakened prejudice."

And then she quotes **verses 15, 16**, "For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free **(notice, "as free")**, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness (or we might say meanness), but as the servants of God."

Now, we are free and at liberty as servants of God, as far as the commandments are concerned, to labor on Sunday, are we not? Yes! It's one of the six working days and there's nothing sacred about it, but just because we are free and at liberty to do so does not mean that we should when the law says not to, and it's not a sin to obey such a law. The quote continues, "There must be no sharp retaliating between brother and brother, or against those who know not God, or Jesus Christ whom He has sent. These men **(Those who know not God or the truth)** are in darkness and error, and what we as a people restrain from doing **(that would be not purposefully violating a Sunday law just because we're free in God's sight to do so)**, what we as a people restrain from doing that we may leave a correct impression upon their minds, will do more to give a correct knowledge of the work in which we are engaged than all efforts to maintain the liberty given us by God. . . Those who compose our churches have traits of character that will lead them, if they are not very careful, to feel indignant **(or mad)** because on account of misrepresentation their liberty in regard to working on Sunday is taken away. Do not fly into a passion over this matter, but take everything in prayer to God. He alone can restrain the power of rulers. Walk not rashly. Let none boast unwisely of their liberty, using it for a cloak of maliciousness **(or as a justification to be mad about it)**, but as the servants of God. **(and then Verse 17 is quoted)** 'Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.'"

So, as far as God is concerned, we are free and at liberty to do whatever we want on Sunday, but when the Sabbath/Sunday issue becomes agitated, we are to refrain from activities on Sunday that would cause offence and bring unnecessary persecution upon ourselves.

Here's another quote from *The Southern work*, page 69. This was during the time when Sunday-law enforcement was especially severe in the southern states in the 1880s and

1890s. Notice what it says, "In regard to the Southern field, the work there must be done as wisely and carefully as possible, and it must be done in the manner in which Christ would work. The people will soon find out what you believe about Sunday and the Sabbath for they will ask questions. **(In other words, wait for them to ask questions about your Sabbath keeping instead of telling them what you believe before they ask)** Then you can tell them, but not in such a manner as to attract attention to your work. You need not cut short your work by yourself laboring on Sunday. It would be better to take that day to instruct others in regard to the love of Jesus and true conversion."

Then on **page 70** she says, "Refraining from work on Sunday is not receiving the mark of the beast. . . In places where the opposition is so strong as to arouse persecution, if work is done on Sunday, let our brethren make that day an occasion to do genuine missionary work."

Now, this is a very important point that we should not forget, "Refraining from work on Sunday is not receiving the mark of the beast." As we'll read in a minute, the mark of the beast is received when we disregard the true Sabbath and accept Sunday in its place, whether we're fooled into truly believing that, or if we do it to try to save our own skin.

In 1898 Ellen White gave an address to publishing house employees in Australia about how to respond to Sunday issues that were taking place during that time, and in ***Sermons and Talks, volume 2, page 127*** she said the following, "I read in the paper of one man who was one hour late closing his store and he had to pay a fine for it. Now, how does God look upon it? Why, we have got to act as men and women that have minds and souls and that are under obedience to God. Now, if they should come here and say you must close up your work and your presses on Sunday, I would not say to you to keep your presses going, because the conflict **(now listen)** because the conflict does not come between you and your God. **(Why? Because there is no sin in not violating a Sunday law)** When they go a little farther and say you must keep Sunday and you shall not observe Saturday, then everyone that took the position would have the mark of the beast."

Did you get that? Refraining from labor and even everyday domestic chores on Sunday so as not to offend is not receiving the mark of the beast, but when we're told we must keep Sunday and not observe the Sabbath, or that we must replace the Sabbath with Sunday, then to take that position will be to receive the mark of the beast.

The quote goes on, "If the authorities should say, 'Don't carry on work here on Sunday' —"

and we know what they will do—there is plenty you can do. You can go on missionary work and make that a day in which you will see what you can accomplish in the work of drawing souls to Jesus Christ, for God does not want us to gratify the devil by defying the powers. **(Notice, to defy the authorities when Sunday is enforced is to gratify the devil, and anything we do to please the devil is surely going to work against us)** You know, when Peter asked Christ about paying tribute, He said, 'Are not all the children free?' but, said He, lest He should offend them, go down to the sea and the first fish that you take up, open its mouth and take that piece of money and pay for yourself, Peter, and for Me.

Aren't we as Christians supposed to be Christlike? Even though Jesus was the Creator and King of the universe, He did not defy the powers by not paying Tribute to a much lesser power than Himself, and why didn't He? Notice what it says in *The Desire of Ages*, page 434 about this. "While Jesus made it plain that He was under no obligation to pay the tribute, He entered into no controversy with the Jews in regard to the matter; for they would have misinterpreted His words, and turned them against Him. Lest He should give offense **(lest He should what?)** give offense by withholding the tribute, He did that which He could not justly be required to do. This lesson would be of great value to His disciples. **(Are we His disciples? Then this is a lesson for us as well)** Marked changes were soon to take place in their relation to the temple service, and Christ taught them not to place themselves needlessly in antagonism to established order. So far as possible, they were to avoid giving occasion for misinterpretation of their faith. While Christians are not to sacrifice one principle of truth, they should avoid controversy whenever it is possible to do so." And that my friends is good counsel.

Here's another statement from *Selected Messages, book 3, page 399* that gives more good counsel to save us from needless suffering and from destroying our influence while we still have an influence. "There should be a constant walking in all humility. There should be no just occasion for our enemies to charge us with being lawless and defying the laws through any imprudence **(meaning stupidity)** through any imprudence of our own. We should not feel it enjoined upon us to irritate our neighbors who idolize Sunday by making determined efforts to bring labor on that day before them purposely to exhibit an independence. **(In other words we shouldn't have an attitude and say, "you say I can't do my work on Sunday, well I'll show you!" We're not to act like that. We are to comply as far as we can so as not to give offence)** Our sisters need not select Sunday as the day to exhibit their washing. There should be no noisy demonstration. **(There should be no what?)** no noisy demonstration. Let us consider how fearful and terribly sad is the delusion that has taken the world captive and by every means in our power seek to

enlighten those who are our bitterest enemies. **(And guess who our bitterest enemies will be? *The Great Controversy*, page 608 says it will be our former brethren)** If there is the acceptance of the principles of the inworking of the Holy Ghost which he [the Christian] must have to fit him for heaven, he will do nothing rashly or presumptuously to create wrath and blasphemy against God."

Dear friends, we need to get this point in our heads; it is not acting cowardly to comply with a Sunday law, it's acting wisely so we will be free to give witness to the truth as long as we possibly can.

So, when Sunday becomes an issue, we should do everything we can not to irritate our neighbors who idolize Sunday, that's clear. Neither are we to gather a bunch of people together and make a "noisy demonstration" because of "our rights" like many people do today who don't get their way. We are to quietly go about our missionary work and do what we can to help people, and God will open up opportunities for us to share the truth in regard to these things when the time is right.

In *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, pages 232, 233, Sister White wrote the following testimony to an Elder Irwin, who again, was in Australia at the time, and was wondering what would be the proper thing to do or no do on Sunday, and here's what she wrote to him: "I will try to answer your question as to what you should do in the case of Sunday laws being enforced. The light given me by the Lord at a time when we were expecting just such a crisis as you seem to be approaching, was that when people were moved by a power from beneath to enforce Sunday observance, Seventh-day Adventists were to show their wisdom by refraining from their ordinary work on that day, devoting it to missionary effort. (And then she tells him what the results would be if he should ignore this counsel and do things his own way) To defy the Sunday laws will but strengthen in their persecution the religious zealots who are seeking to enforce them. Give them no occasion to call you lawbreakers. If they are left to rein up men who fear neither God nor man, the reining up will soon lose its novelty for them, and they will see that it is not consistent nor convenient for them to be strict in regard to the observance of Sunday. Keep right on with your missionary work, with your Bibles in your hands, and the enemy will see that he has worsted his own cause. One does not receive the mark of the beast because he shows that he realizes the wisdom of keeping the peace by refraining from work that gives offense, doing at the same time a work of the highest importance.

"When we devote Sunday to missionary work, the whip will be taken out of the hands of

the arbitrary zealots who would be well pleased to humiliate Seventh-day Adventists. When they see that we employ ourselves on Sunday in visiting the people and opening the Scriptures to them, they will know that it is useless for them to try to hinder our work by making Sunday laws."

And what will they end up doing when they see that Sunday laws are not bringing the desired results they're looking for? As we read earlier, they will tell us that we can no longer keep the Sabbath and that it's offending God to do so. And when things get to that point our duty is clear, we must obey God rather than men.

The quote goes on, "Sunday can be used for carrying forward various lines of work that will accomplish much for the Lord. On this day open-air meetings and cottage meetings can be held. House-to-house work can be done. Those who write can devote this day to writing their articles. Whenever it is possible, let religious services be held on Sunday. Make these meetings intensely interesting. Sing genuine revival hymns, and speak with power and assurance of the Saviour's love. Speak on temperance and on true religious experience. You will thus learn much about how to work, and will reach many souls."

Notice, when will it be time to hold religious services on Sunday? When Sunday laws are being enforced, that's the context. Not that we should stop having worship services on Sabbath, but in addition to Sabbath there should be Sunday services. But some Seventh-day Adventist ministers have gotten the cart before the horse on this issue and are already holding Sunday services. This is not according to counsel, it confuses the people, and plays right into the hands of the devil!

So, there's nothing about a Sunday law that we should be afraid of, as long as we follow the counsel we've been given. If there is no violation on our part, they won't be able to do anything to us. However, when they see that they can't get us on that point, they will forbid true Sabbath worship, and when we refuse to comply, can they then do something about that? Yes, but it will be short lived, because the coming of Jesus to deliver His saints will be right around the corner.

This reminds me about what Sister White wrote in *Early Writings, page 17* when in vision she encountered some who had previously died just before the 1844 disappointment, and notice what she says, "We all went under the tree (**that is, the tree of life**) and sat down to look at the glory of the place, when Brethren Fitch and Stockman, who had preached the gospel of the kingdom, and whom God had laid in the grave to save them, came up to us

and asked us what we had passed through while they were sleeping. We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out, 'Alleluia, heaven is cheap enough!' and we touched our glorious harps and made heaven's arches ring."

Friends, the Bible says "eye hath not seen nor ear heard the things God has prepared for them that love Him." And I want you to notice something, she says God laid Brethren Fitch and Stockman in the grave for what purpose? "To save them." More than likely they would not have been able to handle the fact that Jesus didn't come when they were so expecting Him, and perhaps would have denounced the truth like so many others had done. And you know, some of us may also be laid in the grave to save us, because God knows who has the physical and spiritual stamina to go through the time of trouble that's coming. If we have to go to sleep for a little while before the Lord comes, that's all right. Better to die beforehand and be spared the suffering and be saved rather than deny the truth and be lost.

However, if the Lord does see fit to allow us to see Him come without seeing death, we will have to go through some suffering, yes, but what is that compared to the reward we have coming? It's as nothingness! It won't seem like nothing when we're going through it, but that's where faith comes in, and that faith must be developed and strengthened right now if we're going to be able to walk by faith and not by sight when the going gets tough. When Sunday sacredness is forced upon us and we're forbidden to keep Sabbath on pain of death, so be it, because you know what? The opposition and persecution we experience will be a good thing for the truth's sake. Because just like in the past, our blood, if shed before probation closes, will be as seed that will add to a vast harvest of souls for God's kingdom.

Notice what it says in **Manuscript Releases, volume 13, pages 71, 72**, and you can find many of these quotes in the compilation titled Last Day Events, but I like to do my research in the original articles so I know what the context is, because many times it makes a difference. Here's what it says, "The zeal of those who obey the Lord will be increased as the world and the church unite in making void the law. **(Where do you think that increased zeal will come from? Could it be the latter rain? It seems so when you consider the time frame when we're told the latter rain will be poured out without measure. But regardless of whether it is or isn't, it's still the Holy Spirit that will make us effective witnesses at that time)** Every objection raised against the commandments of God will

make way for the advancement of truth and enable its advocates to present its value before men. There is a beauty and force in the truth that nothing can make so apparent as opposition and persecution."

Think of the persecution and martyrdom of some of the Protestant reformers and what they had to go through to advance the truth. They were brought before the rulers of the land and the apostate religious leaders to answer for their faith, and as a result the eyes of many people, and even some of the leaders, were opened to the true gospel and joined God's cause, and we today are benefactors of their sacrifice, and so will others be because of ours.

Here's another quote from *Manuscript Releases, volume 2, page 197*, and yes I know I'm reading a lot, but God has not authorized me to tell you what I think, but what He thinks. What I think amounts to a peeled zero, but you can have 100% confidence in what God says, amen?

"The Lord in His providence is far ahead of us. He has permitted this Sunday question to be pressed to the front that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment may be presented before the legislative assemblies. Thus the leading men of the nation may have their attention called to the testimony of God's Word in favor of the true Sabbath."

And guess what? Some of them will accept it and will stand with the people of God through the time of trouble." You can read that in *The Great Controversy*, page 610.

Notice also what it says about this coming conflict in *The Home Missionary, November 1, 1893*, "The adherents of truth (**hopefully that's us**) are now (**that is when Sunday is brought to the front**) are now called upon to choose between disregarding a plain requirement of God's Word or forfeiting their liberty. If we yield the Word of God and accept human customs and traditions, we may still be permitted to live among men, to buy and sell, and have our rights respected. (**So, if you want to keep your earthly possessions and continue to be able to buy and sell, be respected by those who are lost and suffer no persecution, all you have to do is cave to the powers that be, but just know that if you do, you will lose eternal life and immortality at last. Is it worth it? I hope you will say no when that time comes**) But if we maintain our loyalty to God it must be at the sacrifice of our rights among men (that's why she said earlier not to gather a bunch of people and make a noisy demonstration), for the enemies of God's law have leagued together to crush out independent judgment in matters of religious faith and control the

consciences of men. They are determined to put an end to the long-continued controversy concerning the Sabbath, to prohibit all further spread of the truth upon this point, and to secure the exaltation of Sunday, in the very face of the injunction of the fourth commandment."

And so we see here that those who are influenced from beneath to enact a Sunday law will wrongly conclude that the only way to finally have peace, end the chaos, and stop what they believe to be God's judgments falling upon the earth because of the violation of Sunday, is to destroy every last Sabbath keeper, making sure that not one remains. And these religious zealots will no doubt try to justify their course by stating that that's what God told ancient Israel of old to do to their enemies. Kill every last one of them, even women and children in order to stay the judgments of God that are falling upon the earth because of the disobedience of seventh-day Sabbath keepers, but what they don't realize is that these judgments are falling because of their own disobedience to the fourth commandment, and they won't realize it until it's too late. That's why what we do as truth tellers must be done quickly, before human probation is forever closed.

The previous quote continues, "The people of God will recognize human government as an ordinance of divine appointment and will by precept and example teach obedience to it as a sacred duty **(as what kind of a duty?)** a sacred duty so long as its authority is exercised within its legitimate sphere. **(That's the key, isn't it?)** But when its claims conflict with the claims of God we must choose to obey God rather than men. The Word of God must be recognized and obeyed as an authority above that of all human legislation. 'Thus saith the Lord' is not to be set aside for a 'Thus saith the church or the state.'"

Now, after reading all these statements, one could conclude that it might be best not to agitate the Sabbath/Sunday issue at this time in order to keep from bringing on a Sunday law and a time of trouble. What do you think about that? Is it a good idea to just keep our mouth shut about these things and wait for a time when it will come about naturally? That wasn't the attitude of the pioneers of our faith, was it? One only has to read some of the articles the pioneers wrote in the paper called *The Present Truth* and you will see that they didn't mince words when it came to exposing the papacy and the falsehood of Sunday sacredness and the importance of Sabbath observance.

Notice what it says under the heading "Called to be Witnesses" in *Testimonies for the Church, volume 9, pages 19, 20*. I'll be reading excerpts from this very enlightening chapter, but I encourage you to read the whole thing. "In a special sense Seventh-day

Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.

“The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and God's people are to be true to the trust committed to them. . . So far as his opportunities extend, everyone who has received the light of truth is under the same responsibility as was the prophet of Israel to whom came the word: ‘Son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at My mouth, and warn them from Me.’ . . Are we to wait until the fulfillment of the prophecies of the end before we say anything concerning them? Of what value will our words be then? Shall we wait until God's judgments fall upon the transgressor before we tell him how to avoid them? Where is our faith in the word of God? Must we see things foretold come to pass before we believe what He has said? In clear, distinct rays light has come to us, showing us that the great day of the Lord is near at hand, ‘even at the doors.’ Let us read and understand before it is too late.”

We also know that Satan will attempt to personate Christ and make his final attempt to fool people into believing his false claims about the day of worship. In ***Spirit of Prophecy, volume 4, pages 442, 443*** we're told that this is “the crowning act in the great drama of deception. . . Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. . . In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered; he heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion. Like the Samaritans who were deceived by Simon Magus, the multitudes, from the least to the greatest, give heed to these sorceries, saying, This is ‘the great power of God. . .’ The teachings of this false Christ are not in accordance with the Scriptures. . . And, furthermore, Satan is not permitted to counterfeit the manner of Christ's advent. **(Now listen carefully to these next seven points of truth that Satan is not allowed to replicate, and if people would just study for themselves they would not be deceived as to how the**

real Christ will come.) The Scriptures teach that **(#1)** 'as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be;' [Matthew 24:27.] **(#2)** that he 'cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him (not just in different parts of the earth);' [Revelation 1:7.] **(#3)** that he will 'descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God;' [1 Thessalonians 4:16.] **(#4)** that he will 'come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him,' [Matthew 25:31.] **(#5)** and will 'send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect.' [Matthew 24:31.] **(#6)** Those who have received the love of the truth (**received the love of what? The truth according to 2 Thessalonians 2:10**) will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive. (**and #7**) By the testimony of the Scriptures (**Isaiah 8:20**) they will detect the deceiver in his disguise."

How important is it that we have a love of the truth friends? It's eternally important, isn't it? It's not enough to just know the truth, we must love it! Do you love the truth? Do you really? If we truly love it we will be able to have victory over all sin and be able to go through the time of trouble and keep from dishonoring God, but if we don't love it and are depending upon knowledge alone, we will be among the class who will call for the mountains and rocks to fall upon them and hide them from the face of Him that sits upon the throne.

The quote goes on, "To all, the testing time will come. By the sifting of temptation, the genuine Christian will be revealed. Are the people of God now so firmly established upon his word that they would not yield to the evidence of their senses? Would they, in such a crisis, cling to the Bible, and the Bible only? Satan will, if possible, prevent them from obtaining a preparation to stand in that day. He will so arrange affairs as to hedge up their way, entangle them with earthly treasures, cause them to carry a heavy, wearisome burden, that their hearts may be overcharged with the cares of this life, and the day of trial may come upon them as a thief."

Oh dear friends, we have a work to do for our own souls, and we have a work to do to proclaim the truth for these last days so others might have the opportunity to know what we know. We don't want them to ask us some day after it's too late, "You knew these things, why didn't you tell us. Why did you leave us in ignorance?" (**Reflecting Christ, page 243**) And hopefully we will be able to say, "we tried, but you were not willing to listen."

As we consider the things we've discussed this morning, I hope we'll think seriously about what we should do and what we should not do when choices about the day of worship are required, so that when unfulfilled prophecy becomes a reality, we will know just what course to pursue to the honor and glory of God.

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