

A KEY POINT

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Why 'Sunday' is the
Centre of Attack

by Canon Fisher Ferguson, M.A.

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Moore College

There was a point on the field of Waterloo which the contending armies sought to gain, it was won and it was lost and it was won again, because the contending armies knew that the army that ultimately held that position would win the Battle of Waterloo. During one of the darkest periods of the last War in the Battle of the Mediterranean the whole forces of the enemy were turned against the Island of Malta, because the enemy knew, and we knew, it was *a key position* which, if lost, our outlook would be correspondingly dark; I believe the Lord's Day is *one of the great key points* in the battle for the establishing of the Kingdom of God and His Christ.

This Divine Law which we seek to guard, was not something that came from the brilliant mind of man. It was not the product of Greek thought, for, a thousand years before Socrates was born, this law had been initiated. It was not the result of Roman jurisprudence, for, 750 years before Rome was founded, this law had been enacted. It came right from the very heart of God, and

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God, because He is God, does not change His mind. The opponents of the Lord's Day are invariably not the opponents of the Day only, they are the opponents of all for which the Lord of this Day stands, and I want to give you the reasons why some of us are determined that, in so far as lies within our power, we shall not cease to battle for the continued sanctity of our Lord's Day. My approach may be somewhat unusual, but I believe we have to prove to our opponents that we who stand for the sanctity of the Lord's Day are standing for something that is *essential to the welfare and good development of human life*. It is not a whim on our part, it is not some decree even of the Church, it goes beyond that, we believe that when God ordained this Day He did it not only for His own glory, but for the good of our common humanity. Therefore may I point out some of the reasons why we guard this Day.

(1) First for the sake of man's body. God, Who made man, knew what man's need

would be, man is like a seven-day clock, he runs down towards the end of the week, and he needs the quiet rest of the Day that God has given him that he may gain new power for the days that lie before him. It is a scientific fact that in a normal day's work we use one ounce of oxygen from our blood. With an ordinary night's rest we recover five-sixths of the ounce of oxygen we have lost; that means by the time we get to the end of the week we have lost a day's energy, and it was Divine foresight that the other day should be a day of rest and worship so that man could re-create not only his bodily but also his spiritual powers. During the last war the Government asked that all shipyards work seven days a week, and some of the pits did the same, but it was soon discovered that men who were working seven days a week were producing less than they did when they worked six days, because man cannot go against the laws of God without suffering loss. God ordained one day that man may spend in worship of Him and re-creation of our bodily powers through rest

in order that man's body might be fitted for the burdens it has to bear in life.

(2) We guard the Lord's Day for the sake of man's mind. Where men work seven days a week as they do in some parts of the world, there is a low intelligence, for man's mind needs this quietness and this rest just as his body also needs it. You know that in our own age there has been a tremendous growth of bodily diseases. You talk to the average doctor and he will tell you that there is more nervous trouble in our day than there has ever been in any other period of medical knowledge. Therefore the mind of man increasingly needs that pause that will enable him to face the various duties of life. Men have gone on strike to ask for another week's holiday but I sometimes think that we have forgotten that every year over and above our ordinary holiday we get 52 days which mean two months of a normal working week. God knew what the mind of man needed just as much as He knew the need of man's body. We believe that the day is essential to the

full development of man's physical powers and we believe it is essential for that quietness of mind that alone can meet the stress of our modern world.

(3) Then again we guard this day for the sake of man's soul. Man is not a mere body with a soul, he is a soul living for a limited period of years in a body, therefore it is essential that the eternal part of man be considered even more than the mere physical and mental. Our Lord knew this, for we know that every Sabbath Day He went to the synagogue, and, though He was God incarnate, yet He found it essential during His earthly life to turn aside in the quietness of God's House that the wings of the soul might be unfolded and He might learn, thinking of Him humbly, of the wonders and the love of God.

It is said that Turner, the great artist, kept some gems near his easel and every morning of his working life he looked into those gems for half-an-hour so that he might recover and keep his sense of colour.

So man needs the Lord's Day in order that he might recover and keep his sense of the Divine realities without which he will perish. If you have read Dante's great poem *Divina Commedia* you will remember that he tells how through his journeys in the underworld he found men whose souls were in hell but their bodies were still walking the streets of Florence. They had lived for time only, they had lived for the material only and their souls, the eternal part of their being, had perished. When an individual or a nation does that it is on the way to eternal ruin. Look at our own day: we live in a day of infinite wonders, we are reading every day of satellites and the like; the mind of man has discovered infinite wonders, and he has grown to imagine that, because he has discovered some of these wondrous mysteries through the power of science, he can do without spiritual things. What has been the result? In our land, there has been a lowering of the moral standards of the people, there has been a growth of child crime, such as our nation has never known. Today the

prisons of our land are fuller than they have ever been in any period of English history and the age of those inside our prison cells has dropped from 40 and 50 to 20 and 25 on the average. Surely it is because the whole trend of modern life has encouraged man to think that spiritual things do not matter. When man loses his sense of spiritual things then it is quite understandable that he will reject the Lord's Day, and the man who cuts Sunday out of his life is on the road to cutting God out of his life. Therefore we guard the sanctity of this day because it is essential to the growth of man's soul.

(4) Then it is essential for the sake of morality. We are not fighting for something that does not matter. The Lord's Day is essential for the development of the true character of the nation. "Them that honour me I will honour". There has been in our day an appalling growth of the desecration of the Lord's Day, very often supported by those in authority. Parliament reflects the life and the thought of the nation when it

moves towards a greater materialising of this holy day. In Nottingham some years ago there was a great fight for the opening of cinemas on the Lord's Day. All kinds of arguments were put forth why cinemas should be thrown open. What was the desire behind it? There was only one real desire—and that was not the eternal good of the people, it was not the development of their soul, it was not that there might be a greater God-consciousness of His Day—the one paramount desire was bigger dividends and more material gains for the few. They won, and one of the first things that happened was that the Sunday Schools of the city were cut clean in two and multitudes of children, who might have come within the sound of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, were given all the trash that you find on the modern screen. Therefore we guard this day because we believe that the most valuable thing in the life of the nation is not its weapons of war, nor its financial power; the thing that matters is the morality of the people. Destroy the Lord's Day and you have gone a long way

towards destroying morality in the life of the nation.

(5) We guard the Lord's Day for the sake of the Christian Church. I know that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church of Christ. I know that the day will come when the kingdoms of this world shall have become the kingdom of our God and His Christ. I know we are following a glorious, victorious Lord Who will be proclaimed as King of all life, but there is only one *organisation* in the world that exists for the salvation of the human soul and the proclamation of the Gospel of this Christ. It is the whole body of Christ, the Church of God, and today more than ever the Church of God is confronted with bitter and serious opposition to all for which she stands. That is why we should never be ashamed to take our stand alongside The Lord's Day Observance Society that for so many years has stood for the sanctity of the Lord's Day and has done so much to guard the true essential life of the nation.

(6) Finally we guard this day for God's sake. I wonder if a day like ours was in the mind of God when he set a sentinel over the day of worship: "*Remember*". That word "remember" coming from the heart of God is invariably a challenge to His people. Here before this Divine decree stands this sentinel, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy". A nation's attitude to God will determine its attitude to the Lord's Day. When Communism gained power in Russia one of the first things it did, was to abolish Sunday as a day of rest and worship. France we know is a nation with a low standard, speaking from a spiritual standpoint. Communism has made its way through that land and France today is a land where, whilst some may go to church, the Day is regarded not as a day of worship but a day of sport and such like. Therefore, because we have found all that really matters in our love and our faith in God through Christ, we guard the sanctity of this day for the sake of God and the maintenance of His worship and the desire to bring men to know Him through

the saving power of Jesus Christ. One of the Martyrs of the Reformation when dying prayed "Lord open the eyes of the King of England", and we may well pray, as we see the drift in the life of our nation and its attitude to God's appointed day, "Lord open the eyes of this nation, Lord open the eyes of our people and may they remember the Divine dictum, 'Them that honour Me I will honour'."

Let us defend this

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