

Are Christians To Keep The Seventh Day As A Sabbath?

by Bill Crews

“Under The Law,” “Not Under The Law” — What Are The Meanings?

There are passages in the New Testament that speak of certain ones either being “*under the law*” or **not** being “*under the law*.” Seventh-Day Adventists, who maintain that all men are under obligation to observe the seventh day of the week as a sabbath, realized that some of these passages were clearly against their position. For that reason they came up with a peculiar and ridiculous definition of the terms “*under the law*” and “**not under the law**.” They say that “*under the law*” actually means “under the condemnation of the law” because of our inability to keep it and our violations of it, and “**not under the law**” means “not under the condemnation of the law” because we are by God’s grace forgiven of our violations and by God’s Spirit given the power to truly observe the law.

But all of this flies into the face of the plain and simple language of the Scriptures, falls out with all of the scholars of New Testament Greek, mitigates against the truth, and makes non-sense out of the Bible. “*Under the law*” simply means subject to the law — the law is over one, and he is under it, obligated to keep it or obey it. Romans 3:19 reads: “*Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaketh to them that are under the law.*” Paul had been speaking of Gentiles, who were **not under** the law of Moses, and of Jews who **were under** the law of Moses. He had even said in Romans 2:12: “*For as many as have sinned without the law (the Gentiles, who were not under a written law like the law of Moses, but were under an unwritten law — BC) shall also perish without the law; and as many as have sinned under the law (the Jews, to whom God gave the law of Moses —BC) shall be judged by the law.*” Please read carefully Romans 2:13—3: 19 to see that Paul was referring to the Gentiles as not being “*under the law*” and to the Jews as being “*under the law*.” Galatians 4:4 tells us plainly that Jesus, God’s Son, was “*born of a woman, born under the law.*” To say that the Son of God was born under the **condemnation** of the law is blasphemous nonsense! To say that, because He was a Jew in the flesh, He was born subject to the law of Moses, obligated to keep it, is the truth. And He did keep it, without sin, and thus became a sinless offering for the sins of all mankind (1 Peter 2:22; Hebrews 4:15). Seventh-Day Adventists pervert Scripture!

When Jesus died on the cross, He abolished the law of Moses, took it out of the way, nailed it to the cross (Colossians 2:14-17). And the law that Paul is talking about contains ordinances that have to do with meats, drinks, feast days, new moons and sabbath days (v. 16), which the law of Moses certainly did. Romans 6:14 says: “*For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace.*” The law of Moses required obedience, condemned one for disobedience, and provided no means for actual forgiveness (read Galatians 2:16; 3:10-12; Hebrews 10:1-4). The law of Moses is the old covenant spoken of in Jeremiah 31:31- 34, and it gave way to the new covenant of which Christ is the mediator and which does provide actual forgiveness (Hebrews 8:6-13). Romans 7:4 says: “*Wherefore, my brethren, ye also were made dead to the law through the body of Christ.*” The Jews were no longer under the law because they had been made dead to the law through the body of Christ or the death of Christ on the cross. Verse 6 says they were “*discharged from the law, having died to that wherein we were held.*”

There are many other passages on this subject. In 1 Corinthians 9:20 Paul refers to Jews as “*them that are under the law.*” In 1 Corinthians 9:21 he refers to Gentiles as “*them that are without law.*” When in that same verse Paul says that he was “*under law to Christ,*” he certainly did not mean that he was under the **condemnation** of the law of Christ. When Galatians 3:24-25 says, “*So that the law is become our tutor (or schoolmaster) to bring us to Christ; that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is*

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