



A letter from **ALISTAIR BEGG**

SEPTEMBER 2022

I recently noticed in a Scottish newspaper a letter from a Free Church minister in which he maintained that an increase in ferry breakdowns is a sign of “God’s displeasure” for sailing between the mainland and the islands on Sundays. The Free Church is calling on the ferry operators to “cease their breaking of the Lord’s Day for the sake of their business and the community as a whole” because it is the desecration of the Sabbath!

It got me thinking about the fourth commandment. You may be interested to learn that I regularly hear from Seventh-day Adventists taking me to task for observing the Sabbath on Sunday, which from their perspective is clearly wrong.

continued

The late Derek J. Prime helpfully explains, “The Jewish Sabbath came at the end of six days and spoke of a rest to come; the Christian Sunday comes at the beginning of the week symbolising ‘the rest’ that Jesus Christ has won for those who trust Him.” Our Sunday observation is a memorial to His resurrection—although it appears that the general trend of church attendees for the past 70 years has been to regard God’s command to “remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Exodus 20:8) as an option but not a requirement.

Why would we regard a commitment to the Lord’s Day as legalistic but not feel the same about obeying the remaining nine commandments? John Murray wrote, “God does not change; his moral perfections do not change; his moral law does not change. Times change; conditions change; we change.” There was a time in America when God’s people gathered joyfully and expectantly on Sundays, both morning and evening. Now, a church with an evening service is a rarity. I have my own opinions on why this is the case, but that’s for another time.

Growing up in Scotland, there was a refrain running through the circle in which I lived:

A Sabbath well spent brings a week of content
And strength for the toils of the morrow;
But a Sabbath profaned, whate’er may be gained,
Is a certain forerunner of sorrow.

continued

Here is a plea to college freshmen: settle Sunday worship as a priority, and then build your schedule from there.

With my love in the Lord Jesus,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "A. B. C.", written in a cursive style.