

y set down in Scripture." The Bible would have been far too large a book for popular use—it would have extended to many volumes instead of one—if every duty, with all its circumstances, had been made the subject of an explicit command. Besides, it was manifestly the design of God, in the revelation of his will, to afford scope for the exercise of the human faculties, and even to require their diligent and candid exercise in order to the discovery of the real mind of his Holy Spirit, in various parts of the sacred Scriptures. Now we assuredly believe, that we can deduce from the New Testament, by good and necessary consequence, that is the appointment of God our Saviour, that the first day of the week is to be observed, from the resurrection of Christ to the end of the world, as the Christian Sabbath. To be convinced of this consider—

1. There is evidence that our Saviour himself met repeatedly with his disciples, when they were assembled together on the first day of the week, and pronounced a blessing on them in their collective capacity. We read, John xx. 19, "that the same day (on which our Saviour rose from the dead) at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst of them, and said, Peace be unto you." And in the 26th verse of the same chapter, we find, that "after eight days (that is, including the day on which this occurrence took place, which was the usual method of reckoning time among the Jews) again his disciples were within; then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." Although in both these instances, it is said that the doors of the place where the disciples were assembled were shut, and the fear of the Jews is assigned as the cause, yet this does not appear to be the reason of their meeting together, since they could much more easily have concealed themselves by keeping separate than by coming together. The doors, it is plain, were shut, after they came together, to conceal the place of their meeting. The meeting itself appears to have been for religious worship, and to commemorate the resurrection of the Lord; and he sanctioned this procedure, by appearing among them in person, and pronouncing a benediction on them in two instances, and these, the first in which they adopted this practice.

2. It was on the first day of the week, when the primitive disciples "were all with one accord in one place," and probably employed in acts of religious worship, that they received that great and special gift, the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost; by which they were not only enabled to speak at once various languages, which they had never learned, but fully to understand the spiritual nature of the Redeemer's kingdom,

and thus to be qualified to publish the gospel in its purity throughout the world; and by which, also, three thousand converts were made in one day, as an earnest of what might afterwards be expected. We are expressly told that this wonderful event happened on the day of Pentecost, a day which received its name because it occurred fifty days after the second day of the Jewish Passover, or rather of the feast of unleavened bread. From this time, they were to reckon seven weeks, or forty-nine days, to the commencement of the Pentecost. This would bring them to a Saturday evening, preceding the Lord's day morning, so that on this morning—the morning of the fiftieth day—the day of Pentecost, in the accurate language of the sacred historian, "was fully come." On this morning, we accordingly find the Holy Spirit was miraculously poured out, producing all the astonishing effects of which we have an account in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Now, the gift of the Holy Ghost, after the gift of the Saviour himself, is the greatest ever bestowed on our sinful and ruined race: and when we consider that this most remarkable and miraculous instance, or exhibition of the gift, was made on the weekly return of the day of our Saviour's resurrection from the dead; and that when made, it is highly probable the disciples were in the actual observance of that day, as a season sacred to their risen Lord, it seems strongly to indicate that this, in perpetuity, was to be the Christian Sabbath; and that in the religious observance of this day Christians might ordinarily expect that the special influences of the Holy Spirit would be peculiarly imparted—would be more commonly experienced, than on other days—to give a saving effect to the institutions and ministration of the gospel. Nor ought it to pass without notice, that the history of the Church and our own observance demonstrate, that the fact has corresponded with such an indication. The Christian Sabbath has ever been the harvest season, in which, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, souls have been gathered to the Saviour, and the people of God have been refreshed and animated in their Christian course.

3. We have unequivocal evidence that the apostle Paul observed the first day of the week for religious worship, and directed the churches which he had planted to do the same. It is said, Acts xx. 7, that "upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight." You will find, by consulting the preceding verse, that at Troas, where this occurrence took place, the whole time of the apostle's stay with the Church there, on this visit, was seven days. Now, as it is particularly mentioned that he was "to depart on the morrow," he must have arrived among them in