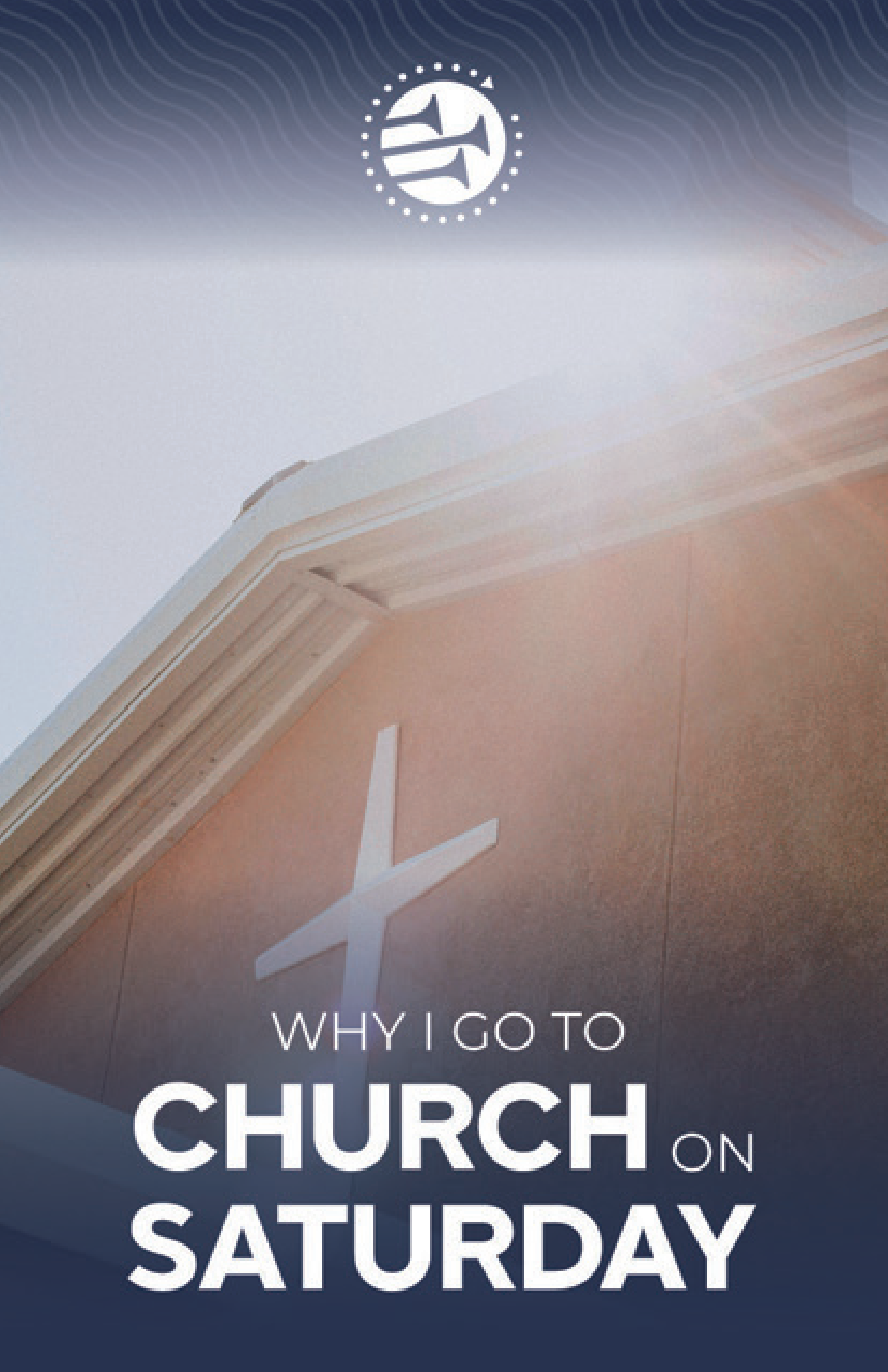

WHY I GO TO CHURCH ON SATURDAY

Often people ask why I go to church on Saturday. They sometimes wonder if I am just confused and got the "wrong day." So, why exactly do I, and millions like me, choose to go to church on Saturday? Consider these three reasons that may surprise you.

Reason One: God's Word

I go to church on Saturday because it is biblical. While God welcomes worship every day of the week, He set aside the seventh day as a special day of rest. This day is called the Sabbath and corresponds to Saturday. It was given to humanity when the world was first created (Genesis 2:1–3). Jesus said the Sabbath was "made for man"—not just for Jews (Mark 2:27). In fact, the Sabbath had already existed for about 2,000 years before the Jewish people came into being.

At Creation, God performed three deliberate acts to make the seventh day uniquely different from the other six: He rested on it; He blessed it; and He set it apart as holy (Genesis 2:2, 3). This is significant. First, God knew that we would need to rest from labor and have time to reflect. God designed us this way. That is why He drew us aside that very first seventh day of Creation for

special time with Him. Next, God placed a spiritual blessing into the seventh day that He didn't put into the other six. Finally, God drew a boundary around this 24-hour period and designated it as a day to be wholly dedicated to pursuing a relationship with Him.

If we examine every verse in the Bible about the Sabbath, we discover some amazing things. All the people of God enjoyed its blessing—and remember, no one was Jewish until Abraham. Jesus honored the Sabbath by keeping it holy every week (Luke 4:16). The disciples kept it holy (Acts 16:13; 18:4). It will be kept holy in heaven and in the new earth (Isaiah 66:22, 23). The Bible presents an unbroken cycle of Sabbath observance from humanity's creation to when the earth is made new.

So why do most Christian churches worship on Sunday? The answer: tradition. The Bible does not record God changing the Sabbath from the seventh day to any other day. The only change to God's law mentioned in Scripture is a misguided attempt by a human power that seeks to change God's "times and law" (Daniel 7:25).

This change from Saturday to Sunday came about long after the disciples of Jesus had died. By the third and fourth centuries, history records

that some Christians were keeping a pagan worship day (Sunday) in Rome and other places where the church had compromised to escape persecution. As the church in Rome grew in political power and developed into the Roman Catholic Church, it officially sanctioned Sunday observance instead of God's holy Sabbath. Today, it points to this fact of history as proof that its authority and tradition are superior to the plain teaching of Scripture.[1]

Reason Two: Love

Sabbath-keeping is an act of faith, not a form of legalism. Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15). The fourth commandment (Exodus 20:8–11) has never been changed by God. Since the Sabbath is the biblical day for weekly worship, and since Jesus kept the Sabbath Himself, I observe the Sabbath out of love for Him.

There are many reasons why I love and obey Jesus. Two primary ones are that He is my Creator and Savior (John 1:1–3; Titus 2:14). Jesus created the earth in six days and rested on the seventh. The Sabbath is God's official memorial, or "sign," between Him and His people that He is our Creator (Exodus 31:17). And just prior to Jesus' return, a message from God will call

everyone to "worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water" (Revelation 14:6, 7). Every time I "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," I honor my Creator as the One who holds my life in His hands (Exodus 20:8–11).

Not only did Jesus create us, He also saves us from sin. The Sabbath is a special sign of this salvation—"a sign between them and Me, that they might know that I am the Lord who sanctifies them" (Ezekiel 20:12). Refraining from normal employment once a week reminds us that we can't work to earn our eternal salvation—it is a gift from God—and we are wholly dependent upon Him (Hebrews 4:4–11). I can trust God to care for my earthly needs one day a week, and I can trust Him for my eternal life.

Every Sabbath reminds me of the love Jesus has given us through creation and redemption. Just as anniversaries are memorials designed to refresh our love for those closest to us, so the seventh-day Sabbath is a weekly reminder of God's love for us and our utter dependence on Him for life in this world and the next.

Reason Three: Experience

The third reason I keep the Sabbath is because I've responded to Jesus' invitation to try

it and see whether His Word is true. God often invites us to test Him. One such occasion is in Malachi 3, where He challenges us to give Him one-tenth of our income (a "tithe"). To those who accept His invitation, He promises to pour out His blessings.

The Sabbath also contains a challenge. God invites us to give Him one-seventh of our time. If we do, He promises to bless us. "If you . . . call the Sabbath a delight . . . then you shall delight yourself in the Lord" (Isaiah 58:13, 14). I experience this Sabbath blessing every week.

Resting on the Sabbath restores me physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. It de-stresses me from the burdens of life. I enjoy uninterrupted time with family and friends that keeps our relationships alive. Worshiping with fellow believers energizes me. I gain insight and inspiration from Bible study and sermons on the Sabbath.

The Sabbath gives me a reason to stop all earthly pursuits every week. Since it is God's command, it leaves no room to compromise for a pressing project at work, or any other priority that might come up. This protects my Sabbath rest from simply becoming a good intention that I will get to one day. It is God's command—no

questions asked—so I happily keep it and leave everything else to the other six days.

I have found Jesus' words to be true: He made the Sabbath for man (Mark 2:27). The Sabbath is a wonderful, loving gift from our Creator. In this busy age in which we live, I treasure all of the blessings I get to experience because God has given us the Sabbath.

I understand that my going to church on Saturday may appear different. But now you know that I do it because I am committed to following the Bible, I love Jesus as my Creator and Savior, and I have discovered God's Sabbath blessing. You can also enjoy this wonderful experience. If you'd like to know how, or would like to find out more, check out the Bible study resource on the back of this pamphlet.

Endnote

[1] See www.globalbibleschool.org.

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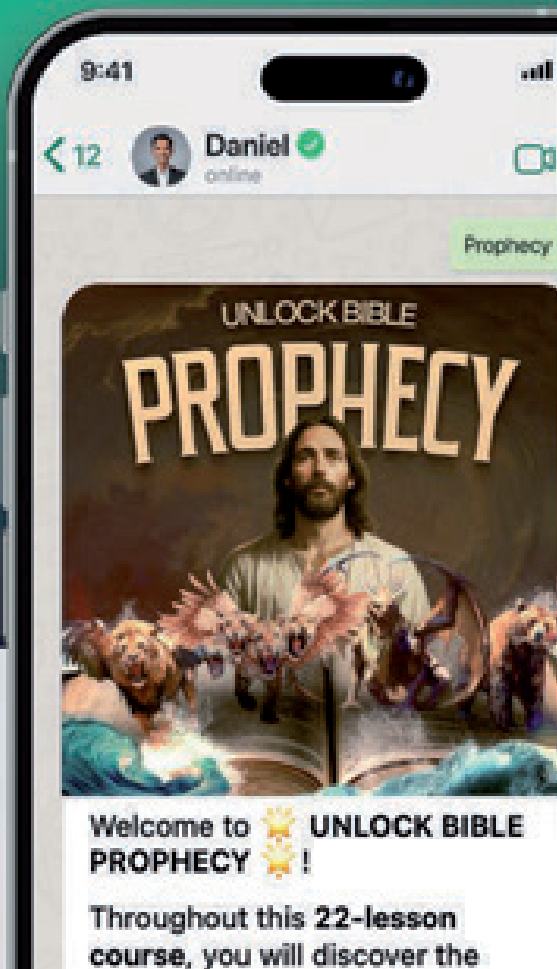

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