

**Do the following texts indicate that the Sabbath Day (4th) no longer applies?
Gal. 4.10, Col. 2.16-17, and Heb. 4.9-10**

Discussion Qs

1) How do you think one might use these texts to deny the relevance of the Sabbath Day to the church of the new covenant? Try to isolate a key point of interpretation for each. Note the quotes below to see how the arguments might work.

Galatians 4:10, ¹⁰ You observe days and months and seasons and years!

“When certain days are represented as holy in themselves, when one day is distinguished from another on religious grounds, when holy days...are reckoned a part of divine worship, then days are improperly observed.”

[Key to the argument: the church is faulted for observing days, so, having a Sabbath Day “on religious grounds” is wrong]

Colossians 2:16-17, ¹⁶ Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

But some will say, “We still keep up some observance of days.” I answer, that we do not by any means observe days...For the substance of those things which the ceremonies anciently prefigured is now presented before our eyes in Christ...”

[Key: the Sabbath Day was a shadow of the reality that came in Christ, the shadow disappears in the light of reality, so, observing a Sabbath Day is up to each individual; no one is to judge others on this matter]

Hebrews 4:9-10, ⁹ So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, ¹⁰ for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

“But I doubt not that the Apostle designedly alluded to the Sabbath in order to reclaim the Jews from its external observance; for in no way could its abrogation be understood, except by knowledge of its spiritual design.”

[Key: the design of the Sabbath was to point to rest in Christ by ceasing from works for salvation; reference to that design shows Jewish Christians that they are free from its external observance by faith in Christ without works]

2) By close attention to the context of each text, what answers can you give in reply to those who deny the relevance of the Sabbath Day to the lives of new covenant Christians (try to reply to the key points of interpretation)?

a) *Gal. 4.10: the legalistic use of days is what the apostle opposes, not a right use. Thus, there are two ways to view the use of days from OT to NT: 1) miss the point of change that means we are free regarding ceremonial days of the Levitical Law because of promise to fulfillment, and 2) not only use what is unnecessary, but use it in a legalistic-merit-conscience binding way.*

b) *Col. 2.16-17: it proves too much to say that all feasts, ceremonies, and days are totally removed from NT worship as shadows to fulfillment because there are new wineskin, fulfillment forms of OT shadows: Passover meal is the Lord's Supper, ritual washings are baptisms, and Sabbath Day can have a similar newness such as the change of day to Sunday with resurrection content.*

c) *Heb. 4.9-10: it is a mistake to take “ceasing from works” as ceasing from something negative such as works for justification. That is not the theme here; instead, the theme is the works of the six days that follow God's example and ceasing has its ultimate form in glory. Since the full realization of the Sabbath Day type remains out in front of us, then, the weekly sign continues to point to it as it has since the foundation of the world.*