


**A WORTHY CAUSE: THE LORD'S DAY IN THE BAPTIST PRESS AMONGST
NINETEENTH-CENTURY UPPER CANADIAN REGULAR BAPTISTS**

By

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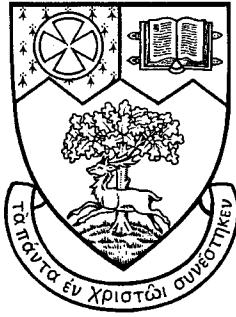
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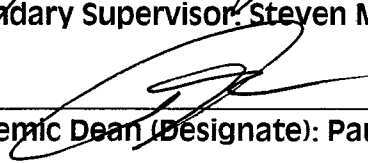
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THESIS ABSTRACT

“A Worthy Cause: The Lord’s Day in the Baptist Press Amongst Nineteenth-Century Upper Canadian Regular Baptists.”

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“A Worthy Cause” brings to life a topic never before researched on the nineteenth-century Regular Baptist position surrounding the preservation of the Lord’s Day (also known as Sabbatarianism) in Upper Canada. Within nineteenth-century Evangelicalism in the province the crusade for the protection of the Lord’s Day was preeminent among social reform initiatives. Canadian Regular Baptists in Upper Canada viewed the observance and celebration of the Lord’s Day as vital and of paramount significance in the quest for social reform and religious piety. Viewing this topic through the lens of various newspapers that made up the Regular Baptist press, this thesis demonstrates why the Lord’s Day was considered to be one of the most worthy causes among nineteenth-century Upper Canadian Regular Baptists. The thesis contends that Baptist support for the Lord’s Day was rooted in a number of interrelated convictions: its scriptural, doctrinal and confessional significance, its observance strengthened personal holiness and the family unit, its desecration was harmful to society, and lastly, its observance would bring a blessing to the nation. The Baptist approach was especially unique in that Baptists, champions of the separation of Church and State and religious liberty, deviated from their evangelical counterparts when it came to the legal enforcement of the Lord’s Day. The thesis is an original contribution to the social and intellectual history of Baptists and the province at large.

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INTRODUCTION

Voltaire said that, “if you wish to destroy the Christian Church you must first destroy the Christian Sunday.”¹ Sometimes it takes someone from outside of a particular worldview to remind those from within a worldview of the critical importance and value of upholding supporting principles such as worship and rest. In much of contemporary and popular evangelical Protestant Christianity (theology, practice and ethics) little emphasis is given to the biblical notion of keeping the Sabbath [שַׁבָּת (Shabbat) = rest or cessation].² It is, however, fascinating and even compelling to look back through the history of the Church and see the many ways that the Christian Sabbath, or Lord’s Day, has shaped and enriched the faith, and also the great lengths many went to protect it. This biblical principle and command has been commonly held by Christians throughout Church history,³ but was especially heightened within Protestantism during the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries.⁴ As Murphy and Perin observe in *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada* (1996), the Lord’s Day was one of the foremost

¹ Tilden, “The Christian Sabbath: its promise today as a basic spiritual discipline,” 2.

² Many modern Evangelicals may at minimum discuss “sabbath time” or “taking your Sabbath” but few emphasize the importance of the keeping the Sabbath or the Lord’s Day. This is evident not only in practice but also in literature. An academic work which evaluates the history of the Lord’s Day within Christianity, but ultimately argues for “sabbath time,” would be Edward Tilden in his article “The Christian Sabbath: its promise today as a basic spiritual discipline” (1982). Well known evangelical and Baptist, Mark Buchanan in *The Rest of God: Restoring Your Soul by Restoring Sabbath* (2006), is a popular work which seeks to re-appropriate the traditional Sabbath by talking about “sabbath time.” On the contrary there are modern works which seek to bolster the notion of the Christian Sabbath or Lord’s Day as one day in seven to be observed and celebrated still today. Robert Reymond in his article “Lord’s Day observance: man’s proper response to the fourth commandment” (1987), offers a compelling modern argument against mere “sabbath time” from a traditional understanding. Traditional Sabbatarian views like his, though in a popular and devotional form, are made known through works like *The Lord’s Day* (1996) by Joseph Pipa and *Call the Sabbath a Delight* (1991) by Walter Chantry. Paul Carter, pastor of First Baptist Orillia, too argues along traditional Sabbatarian lines in a chapter of his book titled *Mile 1* on the importance of Sabbath keeping for modern Christians. These works would provide a starting point for both popular and academic discussions surrounding what it means to keep the Lord’s Day today.

³ This thesis makes no claim to give detailed comment on the history of the Lord’s Day within the entire history of Christianity. For various viewpoints and coverage of the Lord’s Day throughout the history of the Church see the bibliography.

⁴ This point will be demonstrated in Chapter Two.

Evangelical social concerns in nineteenth-century Upper Canada.⁵ Robert Handy also affirms this fact. He writes of Evangelicalism in Canada in *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada*, that “many Christians believed that the neglect of Sunday as a day of rest increased those evils [social ills], and most Protestant denominations officially supported the Lord’s Day Alliance of Canada.”⁶ Handy also notes that Baptists were “strong supporters of movements for temperance and for Sabbath observance.”⁷

This fight to protect and cultivate the Christian Sabbath was a social reality in the evangelical churches in nineteenth-century Canada.⁸ During that century a Christian movement known as Evangelicalism swept the country. This was a trans-denominational movement rooted in Scripture that emphasized the reality of sin, human depravity and the need for atonement and forgiveness through Christ alone.⁹ After one had been powerfully converted from one’s wicked ways there came a great desire to live out the second command of Jesus in the great commandment to “love your neighbour as yourself” (Mk 12: 31).¹⁰ Canadian Evangelicals sought to accomplish this in many different ways through social reforms rooted deeply in Christian theology and moral traditions. These reformers created Sunday Schools in attempts to increase literacy and the knowledge of the Bible, they fought poverty, illness, violence and

⁵ Murphy, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, 153.

⁶ Handy, *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities*, 361.

⁷ Handy, *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities*, 233.

⁸ As a Baptist historian it is my hope to bring the Regular Baptist position to bear on this important nineteenth-century historical discussion surrounding the Lord’s Day. It is hoped that through such research this thesis will not only illuminate an important piece of Baptist life and thought from this particular Canadian era for future generations but will also present contemporary Canadian Baptists with further material to reflect upon concerning the benefits of honouring the Lord’s Day.

Though the historical evidence and argument of this thesis will speak for itself, I must openly state my bias in writing this thesis. While I do not necessarily profess the exact Sabbatarianism which existed in nineteenth-century Christianity in Canada, I do believe strongly in the value of celebrating and observing the Lord’s Day. As a Christian I admit that I appreciate, and even resonate with, the Christian concern expressed over the topic in various pieces of nineteenth-century literature and articles that will be highlighted in this thesis. These works and others under study in this thesis are of great interest historically but the individuals’ profound concern and joy over the subject at hand is an encouragement to me in the value of pursuing this topic.

⁹ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A history from the 1730s to the 1980s*, 1–20.

¹⁰ Murphy, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, 143.

crime. They aided in the abolition of slavery and also fought drunkenness through temperance and prohibition movements.¹¹ They formed societies for the propagation of Christian causes and often engaged in the political arena of their day to promote their aims.¹² Though legislation may have been employed, their primary means of achieving this Kingdom work was through the individual conversion of sinners thereby transforming society (also sometimes referred to as voluntarism).¹³ Foremost among these social concerns that they sought to challenge, alleviate or transform, were the abuses towards the Lord's Day.¹⁴

When one considers the high profile given to many of these other social concerns within history it is intriguing to find the Lord's Day topping the list. Though many Canadian evangelical denominations supported the cause, the driving question of this thesis is why the Sabbath came to receive so much attention in nineteenth-century Evangelicalism, of which Upper Canadian Regular (Calvinistic) Baptists¹⁵ were a part.¹⁶ Writing as editor in 1884 for *The Canadian Baptist*, Ebenezer Dadson, a pupil of Fyfe, boldly stated that "Nothing is more characteristic of Protestant Canada, than the strict observance of Sunday."¹⁷

Why did the Regular Baptists view this day as they did, and why did they seek to promote its observance and celebration? This thesis specifically addresses the Regular Baptists' handling of the Lord's Day throughout the nineteenth-century in Upper Canada. The primary lens and source through which this topic will be examined are the collections of Regular Baptist newspapers that were published in Upper Canada throughout the century. A cross section from

¹¹ Murphy, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, 157.

¹² Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism*, Chapter Six.

¹³ Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism*, 169.

¹⁴ Murphy, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, 157.

¹⁵ This term will be clarified in the following chapter.

¹⁶ Upper Canada is a term used to refer to the modern province of Ontario from 1791–1840, Canada West (1841–1867) and Ontario (1867–present). Appropriate historical terms will be used within the given historical years. Upper Canada will be used when referring to the entire province, as the term remained popular even during much of the time the province was officially called Canada West.

¹⁷ "A Saturday Half-Holiday," *The Canadian Baptist*, 2 Aug 1884.

this specific primary source provides an excellent analysis of the subject over the course of the century.

As this thesis examines the Regular Baptists and the Lord's Day it is to be remembered that these evangelical Baptists of the nineteenth-century were Biblicists and held Scripture in the utmost esteem. Among the many biblical warrants for the Lord's Day was when God commanded the Israelites through Moses in Exod 20:8–11 to “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”¹⁸ Perhaps even more importantly was that this law given to Moses was simply a reiteration of an original creation command (Gen 2:2).¹⁹

Regular Baptists did not see this Scriptural command as merely an accidental command, but rather one that was deeply rooted in the character of God Himself (Gen 2:2–3). As Biblicists, if the Sabbath command had any weight in moral law, it was to be upheld. This is not to mention the practical benefits from obeying this command at a human level that Baptists recognized.²⁰ All of the Canadian Baptist denominations, including Regular Baptists—the largest Baptist body—were among some of the staunchest supporters of this worthy cause amongst Canadian Protestants.²¹ Thus equipped with a biblical mandate, nineteenth-century Upper Canadian Regular Baptists set about to honour, educate and protect society from the evils of desecrating the Lord's Day and of the virtue and heavenly value to those who would honour it.

¹⁸ Exod 20:8–11: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, Six days you shall labour, and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.”

¹⁹ This thesis will not attempt to make exegetical commentary on such texts. It will, however, in the chapters that follow, highlight certain texts and how nineteenth-century Baptists understood them.

²⁰ This point will be supported in the preceding chapters that support the thesis statement.

²¹ Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 42–3. Other Baptists denominations at the time included the General Baptists, who differed from Regular Baptists largely on the issue of Communion as they were still mildly Calvinistic; Free Will who were Arminian in their doctrines; and on the other extreme the hyper-Calvinistic Baptists such as the Particular Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada. One group, a small minority, who would not have shared widespread views about the Lord's Day among the different Baptist denominations were the Seventh Day Baptists who maintained that the true Sabbath was Saturday.

During the nineteenth-century Canadian Regular Baptists in Upper Canada viewed the observance and celebration of the Lord's Day as vital and of paramount significance in the quest for social reform and religious piety. The nineteenth-century Baptist press exhibits this especially well. The thesis contends that Baptist support for the Lord's Day was rooted in a number of interrelated convictions: its scriptural, doctrinal and confessional significance, its observation strengthened personal holiness and the family unit, its desecration was harmful to society, and lastly, its observance would bring a blessing to the nation. The Baptist approach was especially unique in that Baptists, champions of the separation of Church and State and religious liberty, thus deviated from their evangelical counterparts when it came to the legal enforcement of the Lord's Day.

Though not the most popular topic in modern Christian ethics, a historical study of the Sabbath has received considerable attention, especially during the period of Puritan England; the Victorian Era; and even in renewed interest in the Puritan Sabbath in the 1960s and 70s. The Victorian and Puritan Sabbath, the American and Canadian Sunday, along with the history of the Sabbath/Sunday within the Church, all have received ample attention within past decades in secondary literature.²² However, such works remain somewhat general in their scope of study. More recently the topic is reemerging as a focus of devotional and spiritual awareness in a busy world. There are two Canadian academic works that have focused on the history of Sunday in Canada. Sharon Mean and Paul Laverdure have greatly assisted Canadian social and religious history through their works.

The PhD thesis by Sharon Mean titled the "Battle for the Sabbath" (1968), focuses on the Sabbath from the perspective of using the aggressive development of the Sabbatarian lobby in

²² See the bibliography for a wealth of examples. See McCrossen, *Holy Day, Holiday*; Wigley, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Sunday*.

Canada as a case study for examining lobbies in Canadian history. Her work gives ample social, political, and to a degree, religious background to the Sabbath in Canada and especially traces the Sabbatarian lobby through the 1880s and 90s towards the passing of the Lord's Day Act in 1906. Paul Lavendure's work titled *Sunday in Canada* (2004) largely picks up where Mean left off and continues the story of the development of Sunday in Canadian culture well into the twentieth-century. He argues that though a more literal Sabbatarian interpretation and observance of Sunday has declined; still Sunday remains a part of Canadian culture. He asks the question why does almost every nation touched by Christianity have a weekend or Sunday holiday? He investigates the religious grounds that lead to this holiday and how it has evolved within society post-1906 that witnessed Canada become increasingly secular.

However, these works do not focus so much on the religious development of the Lord's Day. Few works, unless specific to nineteenth-century Evangelicalism, highlight the wealth of primary source religious literature that was written on the subject during the era in question. No work has captured the Baptist part in this Sabbatarian story by examining the wealth of primary sources left behind for the historian. In actuality there is a bounty of primary sources that touch on or directly discuss the Lord's Day within the nineteenth-century context. This thesis will not only incorporate wider evangelical primary sources but will also find its strength from the vantage point of the primary sources left for us from the Regular Baptists of Upper Canada.

Primary sources related to this topic come in the form of newspapers, Baptist confessions of faith, period books on the subject, church minute books and hymnals. The Canadian Baptist Archives collection of Regular Baptist newspapers are significant and form the core of the research conducted for this thesis. Through these sources it will be shown that the Lord's Day

was one of the foremost evangelical social concerns in nineteenth-century Upper Canada.²³ Within the Baptist press this point becomes clear just from a cursory view of the consistent language regarding the Sabbath as a day of the week. The reality of observations such as Murphy's and Handy's affirm the historic reality made certain within the Upper Canadian Baptist press by the three hundred and seventy-two direct references and articles that deal with the subject of the Lord's Day.²⁴ This research is conducted in a run of Regular Baptist newspapers from 1838–1899.²⁵ Ample evidence²⁶ is found for the subject throughout the Upper Canadian Baptist press of *The Canadian Baptist Magazine and Missionary Register* (1838–42), *The Montreal Register* (1842–9), *The Christian Observer* (1850–3), and then in *The Christian Messenger* (1854–60), that later changed its name to *The Canadian Baptist* (1860+).²⁷ It is evident in these newspapers that the Lord's Day was of paramount importance to the Upper Canadian Baptist press and its readership. Though the topic ebbs and flows in the media based on prevailing interest and political and social threats, the Lord's Day remained a constant focus in the writings of the Upper Canadian Baptist press during the century.²⁸ These newspaper sources will be supplemented, bolstered and contextualized in this thesis by other significant sources.

²³ Murphy, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, 153.

²⁴ See Appendix I- "Occurrences of the Lord's Day in the nineteenth-century Baptist Press."

²⁵ The development of these newspapers will be examined in Chapter One.

²⁶ In reviewing all of the available Regular Baptist newspapers for the century it is worth mentioning other noteworthy themes that could form the basis of future inquiries. There is no doubt when you see the graph in the appendix that the Lord's Day was an ever present theme, but there were others: temperance-prohibition, closed communion, believers baptism, popery/romanism, revivals and missions (including the Grande Ligne mission), civil freedom (including the clergy reserve and public school question), slavery, chapel dedications, association news, tobacco, the ministry of Charles H. Spurgeon, the Sabbath School, denominational institutions, science and the Bible, doctrines and heresies, sacred music, women in ministry, children and youth ministry, pastoral columns, the promotion of heroes of the faith and the promotion of new church edifices.

²⁷ See Appendix II- "The Development of the Baptist press in Central Canada during the Nineteenth-Century."

²⁸ See Appendix I.

A simple survey of the Baptist confessions from the seventeenth through to the nineteenth centuries reveals that Lord's Day was upheld as an important doctrine within Baptist thought. Widely known Calvinistic Baptist confessions such as the Second London Baptist Confession (England, 1689) and the Philadelphia Baptist Confession (America, 1742) were based upon the famous Westminster Confession (England, 1646). These Baptist adaptations continued to highlight the importance of the Lord's Day first laid down in the Westminster Confession and in prior Christian tradition. Similarly, in 1833 when Rev. John Newton Brown was commissioned to write a more basic and more mildly Calvinistic confession for the New Hampshire Baptist Convention; the Lord's Day continued to hold a strong position. The Philadelphia and New Hampshire Confessions became confessions that many Upper Canadian Regular Baptist congregations would adopt, or would inspire their own articles of faith.²⁹ The wide usage of such confessions, along with the many Baptist congregations in Canada who saw fit to write their own confessions or articles of faith that included the Lord's Day, demonstrates that the Lord's Day occupied great doctrinal significance amongst Regular Baptists in Upper Canada during the nineteenth-century.

Aside from Regular Baptists there were many other evangelical Christians whose handling of the Lord's Day produced an incredible influence on evangelical Christianity at large. William Wilberforce's bestselling work within the English, and non-English speaking world, *A Practical View*,³⁰ touched on the importance of the Lord's Day at length. Together with his inner circle, known as the Clapham Sect, they did much to promote the cause of the Lord's Day in the

²⁹ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 8. This can be clearly seen in the "Articles of Faith" from the Regular Baptist Church of Bayham, 1819.

³⁰ The entire title was: *A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians in the Higher and Middle Classes in This County, Contrasted with Real Christianity*.

early nineteenth-century.³¹ A friend of the Clapham Sect, Daniel Wilson, published a work that is considered to be one of the best nineteenth-century arguments in favour of the Lord's Day.³² It was titled *The Lord's Day* and was first published by The Lord's Day Observance Society, London, England, in 1831. Later in the century Phillip Schaff, a German-American Reformed theologian, published another work on the subject that would become well known throughout the evangelical world. *The Lord's Day* was first published in the 1860s (?).³³ Though no such works by prominent Upper Canadian Baptists appear to remain, this thesis will explore the influence of these works that held sway within Baptist circles. Their inclusion in this thesis will shed further light upon external factors that influenced Regular Baptist thought.

Lastly, one can turn to worship resources of the day such as hymnals and song books from any of the major evangelical denominations (Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist) in Britain, the United States or Canada to see the place the Lord's Day had in the worship structure and routine of congregations. Denominational hymnals centrally locate the Lord's Day within both denominational doctrine and polity and demonstrate that Upper Canadian Regular Baptists were not alone in their beliefs or practices. These primary sources will provide a window into the affairs and sentiments of the Regular Baptist churches during the nineteenth-century on the subject of the Lord's Day. Together with these primary sources, secondary sources will be employed to broaden the support and provide a contextual setting for the thesis.

Perhaps the most important question to ask in highlighting the secondary sources for this thesis is why the great void surrounding the documentation of the subject of the Lord's Day amongst scholars? Though the primary documentation from the nineteenth-century is unanimous

³¹ See: Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age, 1789–1901*; and Tompkins, *The Clapham Sect: How Wilberforce's Circle Transformed Britain*.

³² Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age*, 188–89.

³³ We know Schaff was held in high regard by the Baptist Press. He is praised for his sound judgment and his knowledge when he lectured in Canada. *The Canadian Baptist*, 10 Mar 1887.

in demonstrating the claim that Sabbath observance was a commonly held evangelical conviction and practice, the secondary sources either speak of it or are almost completely silent. For example Murphy and Handy, as already highlighted, cite its importance. Other scholars such as David Bebbington, Nigel Scotland, and Stephen Tompkins devote whole chapters or sections in their books to the subject.³⁴ Still other scholars, whom one would expect would be observant enough to capture the social and intellectual significance of such a movement, elude to its existence or do not cite it. Examples of scholars who do not elaborate on its significance would include, but not be limited to Mark Noll, William Westfall, Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau.³⁵ Some scholars such as John Moir and George Rawlyk touch on the subject but do not stress its importance or provide a detailed account. All such scholars are leaders in their field and for them to miss such a large nineteenth-century issue and cause is curious.

Why this significant disconnect between the scholars and the historic reality present in the sources? There are four possible reasons: 1) the continued fear of Puritanism³⁶ and the taboo of Sabbatarianism as a negative image;³⁷ 2) the unpopularity of the Sabbatarian stance in contemporary culture; 3) that it is excepted as a normative movement within the nineteenth-century and therefore goes unnoticed; and 4) that it was so much a part of Evangelicalism and Baptist churches (similar to point three) that it is just assumed. Perhaps as a result of one or more of these reasons one will often find the Lord's Day present in the macro-histories but not at the micro-historical level.

³⁴ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*; Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age*; Tompkins, Stephen. *The Clapham Sect: How Wilberforce's Circle Transformed Britain*.

³⁵ For example, on p.18 in *Christian Churches and Their Peoples*, Gauvreau and Christie state a list of inter-denominational movements amongst Canadian churches but leave out the Lord's Day completely.

³⁶ "The Sabbath!" *The Canadian Baptist*, 10 Aug 1871. This article argues against condescending views of the Puritans and that they were not a reproach but a blessing. Such Christian values as prayer, reading God's word, family worship, sobriety and the Lord's Day all stem from the Puritans. Indeed, the article argues that England's greatness culminated under the Puritans sway and that the glorious freedoms, prosperity and evangelical presence Upper Canada enjoyed was from the Puritan influence.

³⁷ Tilden, "The Christian Sabbath: its promise today as a basic spiritual Discipline."

Secondary sources that do highlight the topic in a general sense or survey the development of English Sabbatarianism will serve to accomplish a number of essential purposes.³⁸ These sources will aid in understanding the wider historical context of the Lord's Day within the history of the Church specific to the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries. Other secondary sources will also provide the wider context specific to the Lord's Day within nineteenth-century Evangelicalism and of life in the province of Upper Canada.³⁹ There is specific information in the form of books, chapters of books, articles and essays⁴⁰ that elaborate upon why Evangelicalism of the nineteenth-century held so strongly to the Lord's Day and also that help provide the wider context and influencing societal factors that shaped Sabbatarianism. Though some secondary sources are quite specific in their handling of Evangelicalism and the Lord's Day in the nineteenth-century, the collaboration of primary sources, generalized secondary sources, and culturally illuminating works on Upper Canada and Canadian culture will have to be mobilized to situate properly the topic and primary sources concerning Baptists and the Lord's Day.

Despite the Lord's Days wider presence in secondary sources, no major Baptist work deals directly with the subject in depth. Of some of the major works in Baptist history only William Brackney, David Bebbington, and Leon McBeth give mention to the subject at hand.⁴¹ Their handling of the subject largely focuses on questions of early Baptists wrestling with the

³⁸ See Parker, *The English Sabbath*. Most survey books on the development of the Lord's Day within Christian history found in the bibliography also have chapters dedicated to the Puritan Sabbath.

³⁹ Social reform amongst the evangelical churches was very important. Numerous works discuss this including Williams, *Sunday in Toronto*, and, Slater, *Religion and Culture in Canada*. The social and religious legacy of the Sabbatarian movement in Canada is thoughtfully addressed in *Sunday in Canada* by Paul Lavendure.

⁴⁰ On the subject of the Lord's Day there are numerous surveys listed in the bibliography such as: *The Christian Sunday: A Biblical and Historical Study* by Beckwith and Stott, and *From Sabbath to Lord's Day: A Biblical, Historical and Theological* by D.A. Carson. In chapter two of Swartley's hermeneutical work, *Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women*, he overviews different theological interpretation along with summarizing the work of four scholars who write on the subject.

⁴¹ Brackney, *The A to Z of the Baptists*; Bebbington, *Baptists Through the Centuries*; and McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*.

proper day of worship, Seventh Day Baptists, the legitimacy of the State upholding Sabbatarian legislation and mention of the Philadelphia Association's statement of faith. Nowhere in Baptist literature is there a reflection of Murphy or Handy's statements of its importance within Evangelicalism or the reality and existence of the primary sources. Why a topic of such great importance and centrality in Baptist life and thought has been neglected, or has gone unnoticed with Baptist scholarship, is unknown. The topic's absence is likely related to the possible reasons given above. The subject is mentioned in a plethora of Baptists primary sources and works and in some of the more general literature pertaining to Evangelicalism. That it is not specifically handled in Baptist or evangelical scholarship reinforces the need for this thesis to investigate the topic more closely and thoroughly.

This investigation will be an intellectual and social history of the subject matter. As a doctrinal inquiry, and taking nineteenth-century Baptist beliefs seriously, this thesis conducts an intellectual history by investigating what Baptists believed. At the same time it is also social history because through the primary sources the thesis brings to life what was happening in their society in terms of Lord's Day observance and its impact on Baptist congregations and communities at large.

There are three examples that serve as a model for this thesis and its use of newspapers as a primary source. "Forming Sound Public Opinion: The Late Victorian Canadian Protestant Press and Nation-Building" (2006) by Gordon Heath, "The Rise of the Canadian Newspaper" (1990) by Douglas Fetherling, and "A Victorian Authority: the Daily Press in Late Nineteenth-Century Canada" (1982) by Paul Rutherford are just three examples of investigations into the history and methodology surrounding the nineteenth-century media in Canada. These works by Canadian scholars provide models for this work in that they validate the importance of

examining the press as a critical link to the views and issues facing past generations. They also demonstrate the power and influence the press in the nineteenth-century had, and thus the importance of the topics the press promoted. Though this thesis is specific to the Baptist tradition in the wider religious and public press, such works demonstrate the worth of investigations such as this thesis and provide examples for further inquiry into this methodological approach.

Though their context needs to be properly understood, the value of these religious newspapers as sources for primary information on any given subject should not be underestimated. Though arriving on the scene much later than their British and American counterparts, the religious and secular newspapers in central Canada began to increase rapidly in the 1840s.⁴² Merrill Distad states that “the largest single genre [in Canada] was the religious press that accounted for at least one-fifth” of newspapers in Canada.⁴³ Such religious and denominational magazines reported on wide-ranging topics including missionary and local church news, printed sermons, theological discourse, farming news and Christian commentary on a large host of national and international political events. William Magney states that: “historians of national sentiment in Canada who ignore the writings of Church journals, and the declarations of the institutional churches, do so at their own peril, for they overlook one of the most fertile sources of nationalistic writings in existence.”⁴⁴ Likewise, these primary newspaper sources provide a glimpse into Canadian history. An article appeared in the *Canadian Churchman* on 28 June, 1900, stated that, “With regard to the first part of our work, the recording of events in the history of the Church, it is not easy to exaggerate the importance of this department. Long after

⁴² Heath, “Forming Sound Public Opinion,” 114.

⁴³ Merril, “Newspapers and Magazines,” 299–300.

⁴⁴ Magney, “The Methodist Church and the National Gospel, 1884–1914,” 5.

those who are engaged in this work shall have passed away, the columns of this newspaper will be used to furnish material for the history of the Church in Canada.”⁴⁵

It is certain that the contents of Baptist newspapers hold significant amounts of information for the cultural and social historian.⁴⁶ Though these sources can have tremendous worth for the historian, caution still needs to be used towards them when conducting research remembering that they do come from an age that had limited media access. Therefore what do these papers not tell us? What about dissent? Though the newspapers represent the “official” stance of denominations are they biased in simply promoting the direction the editor desires for their denomination, or do they accurately reflect an existing norm? What about those who expressed their dissent and whose comments did not make it into the letters to the editor? Such questions will be able to critique these newspapers in order to access them as a primary source. When examining these sources the researcher also needs to be aware of the context of the time that produced it, the editor and denomination’s motives, as well as the makeup and extent of the readership. Did the paper speak for everyone and was there room made for differing views? These are just some of the questions that need to be asked of a newspaper source.

In examining the Regular Baptist newspapers in the nineteenth-century a book written by Harold Trinier, *A Century of Service: The Story of the Canadian Baptist, 1854–1954*, is invaluable in gaining facts surrounding the publication history from the Upper Canadian Baptist press. Though there are inherent risks when viewing what these newspapers are portraying, at some point they do become the voice of the denomination and should be seen as representing an official Baptist position. These Baptist newspapers, especially surrounding the topic of the Lord’s Day, shaped people’s thoughts, while at the same time reflected a common consensus.

⁴⁵ “The Church Press,” *The Canadian Churchman*, 28 June 1900.

⁴⁶ Heath, “Forming Sound Public Opinion,” 113. Though other sources (books, doctrinal works, hymnals), will be used in this thesis, focus is given to newspapers because they will form the bulk of the primary sources.

This fact will become very evident as sources from multiple decades of the press coalesce to support this thesis on the Lord's Day. Writing about the power of the Baptist press, amidst the growing Sabbatarian crusade of the 1880s–90s, *The Canadian Baptist* stated:

The Christian pulpit and the sanctified press are the great agencies for moulding and unfolding, for welding and wielding on of the greatest forces in social life— public opinion. Christians should use this to protect ourselves against the overwhelming tide of Sabbath desecration...Is it not high time for the artillery of the pulpit and the press to open fire when our rulers abuse their authority, and instead of being a terror to evil doers they 'establish iniquity by law,' and are a terror to them that do well.⁴⁷

A letter to the editor stated a similar view:

The Press as well as the Pulpit are the watchmen and guardians of our public interests, whether sacred, social or commercial, and it is their duty to be on the outlook when danger is near, and when they see the enemy coming in like a flood they ought to lift up their voice like a Standard against it.⁴⁸

Therefore, because of the high attention given to the Lord's Day in the Baptist press, it can be stated that a Sabbatarian theology concerning the Lord's Day was the official stance of the denomination and its readership.⁴⁹

The first chapter of this thesis defines what exactly an Upper Canadian Regular Baptist was in the nineteenth-century. It will trace the denomination's general development from its earliest beginnings as part of a pioneer settlement to becoming the smallest of the four main Protestant denominations with a voice in provincial affairs. The difference between several Baptists groups that existed in the province at the time will also be illustrated so one can see what Regular Baptists "were" and "were not." An overview of the Regular Baptist Press as it developed through the century, along with editors, trials and triumphs, will be examined to place Baptist newspapers in their proper context.

⁴⁷ "Sabbath Desecration," *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 Sept 1888.

⁴⁸ "Sunday Traffic on the Canal," *The Canadian Baptist*, 15 Oct 1896.

⁴⁹ Heath, "Forming Sound Public Opinion," 113. The need to connect "immediately" with the readership of any paper presents the researcher with the immediate perceptions of the period.

The second chapter provides a more detailed background immediately relevant to the Regular Baptist denomination located in the evangelical movement. It will examine the birth (or re-birth) of the modern Sabbatarian movement, which flowed out of English Puritanism and Evangelicalism, and how it shaped English culture and Christianity. The chapter will then transition towards examining the influence of English Sabbatarianism in nineteenth-century Britain, the United States and Canada to place the Lord's Day movement in what was happening in the immediate context of Upper Canada. An overview of several key nineteenth-century Sabbatarian writings will also be examined to demonstrate how evangelicals were handling the Lord's Day. The chapter will end with an introduction to Regular Baptist Sabbatarianism as a segue to the following chapters.

Chapters three through six form the core argument of the thesis. These chapters demonstrate why the Lord's Day was of the utmost significance to the nineteenth-century Upper Canadian Regular Baptists. The third chapter references the essence of Regular Baptist Sabbatarianism by examining what these Baptists generally believed regarding the Lord's Day. This is demonstrated by examining all of the major, and also the less obvious, Baptist confessions of faith that influenced nineteenth-century Upper Canada. An examination of Lord's Day doctrine present in the Baptist press serves to show the consistency of Baptist belief in this regard throughout the century, along with some beliefs that could have been said to form the core of their doctrine. Lastly, and very much at a grass roots level, Lord's Day beliefs are examined from within a selection of hymnals that present themselves as portals into practical worship habits and beliefs of ordinary men, women and congregations.

The fourth chapter moves from Baptist convictions and into the realm of the practical. How was a doctrine surrounding the observance of the Lord's Day lived out? Baptists viewed the

observance and celebration of the Lord's Day as essential for obedience and humility before the Lord's commands, as a vital part in the process of sanctification, and critical for the strength and effectiveness of family worship. The importance of preparation for, and attendance in, weekly worship was seen as equally important; and failure to do so would call down divine punishment. Baptists were also quick to note other physiological benefits of the Lord's Day as serving to bolster the wisdom found in Scripture and tradition. Personal rest was also viewed as essential in the quest for excellence in all other spheres of life. Thus, rest and the Lord's Day were seen as the great provisions for an industrious spirit and the Protestant work ethic.

The fifth chapter traces the practical side of this Baptist belief from the smallest unit in a society, the individual and family, to the next largest of the community at large. It shows how the Lord's Day was viewed as a bulwark against physical and moral decay in the communities in which these Baptists lived. The Lord's Day was also seen as a vital defence over worker's rights against the ruthless wiles of Capitalistic enterprises. Fighting against such encroaching threats in society became a spur to greater Sabbatarian endeavours.

The sixth and final chapter reveals the wider Canadian Christian vision that evangelical Protestants adopted after Confederation and how Baptists viewed the observance of the Lord's Day as a critical component towards developing a Christian nation. A parallel belief was that the Lord's Day would also serve to call down God's blessings so that the young dominion would prosper. Baptist Sabbatarians were also quick to remind others of the penalties and blessings as a nation that was contingent on proper Lord's Day observance. As this issue of morality was so important for many of the evangelical Protestant denominations, legislation was sought to help in this quest to transform the nation. Baptists, as we shall see, deviated from other denominations in

how this was to be handled because of their equally strong conviction in regards to religious liberty.

The thesis closes with the conclusion that succinctly reiterates what has been argued as well as alludes to the beginnings of modern practical takeaways from the subject studied. An appendix has also been included in this thesis to provide helpful supporting evidence such as a graph that depicts the number of occurrences of the Lord's Day in the Baptist press over the century by year and corresponding influencing societal factors; a flow chart that illustrates the development of the Baptist press in the province; The Lord's Day Act of Upper Canada from 1845; a railroad advertisement from *The Christian Messenger*; and lastly, denominational statistics from throughout the century.

CHAPTER ONE

AN UPPER CANADIAN REGULAR BAPTIST HISTORICAL SKETCH

Regular Baptists were forged during the Puritan debates over authority and continued in this evangelical spiritual heritage.¹ Nineteenth-century Baptists were proud of this Puritan connection, of which Sabbatarianism was a part.² To set the subject of the Lord's Day appropriately within the Regular Baptist milieu it is appropriate to give a brief overview of Regular Baptist work in the province, the Baptist press, and of course, a general introduction to Regular Baptists and the Lord's Day.

Regular Baptists were the largest denomination of Baptists in Upper Canada during the nineteenth-century.³ This group was the parent body that spawned both the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec and the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in the twentieth-century. Regular Baptists are not to be confused with other Baptists in Upper Canada during the nineteenth-century such as Free Will or General, Free Communion or Hyper-Calvinistic Baptists.⁴

Regular Baptists' identity was deeply fashioned by their country of origin and also from continued Baptist influences from Britain and the United States. Early Baptists largely came from Nova Scotia and the United States. It was not until after the War of 1812 that English and Scottish Baptists began to arrive en masse.⁵ Over the course of the century Canadian Regular Baptist identity would be forged by immigration, new converts and adherents, and the continuing

¹ Zeman, *Baptists in Canada*, 207; and Torbet, *A History of Baptists*, 54.

² For more info on the development and history of Particular Baptists, which was the equivalent term to the Upper Canadian term see: Hayden, *English Baptist History and Heritage*.

³ They were Calvinistic in doctrine and "regular" in their church polity. This meant that they adhered to closed communion.

⁴ See Chapter One, footnote 21.

⁵ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 19–20.

denominational influence from other regions.⁶ It was an identity that would make notable contributions to Canada's spiritual, economic, cultural and political life.⁷ Some of the earliest congregations in south western Upper Canada included Charlotteville (Vittoria) 1803, Markham 1803, Townsend (Boston) 1804, Beamsville 1807, Queenston, 1808, Oxford 1809 and Malahide 1816, while some of the earliest in eastern Upper Canada included Hallowell 1796, Thurlow 1796 and Cramahe-Haldimand 1798.⁸

Baptists were the largest of the smaller Christian denominations; ever only amounting to the range of five percent of the population.⁹ South of the border the Baptist denomination would become the single largest.¹⁰ In America, Baptists largely maintained a strongly Calvinistic flavour in their theology. Though British Baptists became less Calvinistic over time¹¹ the Canadian Regular Baptists proximity to the United States all but ensured they too would remain Calvinistic.¹² Upper Canadian Regular Baptists were heavily concentrated north of Lake Erie. These Baptists were American in style, Calvinistic in theology and held to closed communion.¹³ This was largely due to the influence of early nineteenth-century American Baptist mission work in the area and American immigration.¹⁴ The British Baptist influence remained strong in Upper Canada: through the culture and tradition¹⁵ imported by immigration; from the numerous articles in the Baptist press that came from Britain;¹⁶ and even from the many pastors from Spurgeon's

⁶ Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 40.

⁷ Zeman, *Baptists in Canada*, vii.

⁸ Ivison, *The Baptists in Upper and Lower Canada before 1820*.

⁹ See Appendix V for national and provincial denominational statistics.

¹⁰ Gibson, *Robert Alexander Fyfe*, 20.

¹¹ See Hayden: *English Baptist History and Heritage*.

¹² Gibson, *Robert Alexander Fyfe*, 28.

¹³ Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*, 2; and Torbet, *A History of Baptists*, 150.

¹⁴ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 17.

¹⁵ Zeman, *Baptists in Canada*, 21.

¹⁶ Zeman, *Baptists in Canada*, 29.

College that came to Canada.¹⁷ Yet open communion newcomers coming to Upper Canada from Britain eventually conformed to the closed communion stance found in the province.¹⁸

The communion issue would become one that embroiled the denomination for much of the century. The further west in Ontario one travelled the more the Baptist congregations became “intolerably ‘regular’” in their polity, meaning that they practiced closed communion.¹⁹ This practice was where one had to be a Baptist (versus a Christian of another denomination), or even more strictly, a member from that particular congregation, to partake in communion. This theological issue, for it was as much theological as it was practical, caused much bitterness and a lack of cooperation among Baptists. For better or worse, this divide was a weakness in that it prevented many Baptists from working more closely together.²⁰

The nineteenth-century would be one of great growth, diversification and identity formation for the entire North American Baptist community.²¹ Circa 1840 the Upper Canadian Regular Baptists were a small denomination with only 16,411 members in 1842. Their small size drove them to greater mission and by 1852 they had grown to 52,000.²² This growth gave them confidence in their effort. When they looked south of the border and saw Baptists as the largest denomination they could sense that, at least on this side of the Atlantic, providence was with them. As Baptists were still persecuted in continental Europe, and remembered their history of persecution in Britain, Baptists were champions of religious liberty. Though a small denomination they challenged established norms such as the Church of England position on the

¹⁷ Zeman, *Baptists in Canada*, 35.

¹⁸ Zeman, *Baptists in Canada*, 29–30.

¹⁹ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 21.

²⁰ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 22–23. For a full investigation of this topic see: Bean, *Open and Closed Communion Among Canadian Baptists*.

²¹ Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 40.

²² Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 31–32.

Clergy Reserve and the University Question.²³ Though Baptists were passionate they did lack influential members to be champions for the denomination in the wider society. Much of their membership came from “simple” farming communities. It was not until later in the century that prominent Baptists would arise like Alexander Fyfe who was a pastor, editor and principal, or influential Baptists in public policy like Prime Minister Alexander McKenzie and Senator William McMaster.²⁴ Some of the denomination’s other important leaders included those editors of the Baptist press that will be examined in this chapter.

As much as the communion debate was a major issue that faced Baptists during the century, perhaps the greatest challenge that faced Baptists, and resulted in so very few well known and influential Baptists, stemmed from the pioneer threat of creating a denomination with coherence in the midst of a frontier setting. One Baptist success in this regard was that, because of their autonomy, Baptists had the ability to adapt to the Canadian setting and begin to raise up their own pastors and institutions.²⁵ However, in the pioneer era of the 1830s and 40s, the lack of education for leaders hampered the denomination’s capabilities as “the frontier community made great demands upon any denomination which sought to serve it adequately.”²⁶ Upper Canadian Regular Baptists were isolated and left alone, caught in a tenuous circumstance. They sought out help for their mission in the province from other Baptists, but “on applying to England for help, they were told that they must look to the United States on account of their proximity; and on seeking aid from the States they are reminded that they are in British dominions.”²⁷ Thus the ministerial problem, or that of training clergy, became a major issue that faced Baptists in the

²³ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 31–32.

²⁴ Rawlyk, *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience*, 201.

²⁵ Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 41.

²⁶ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 14.

²⁷ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 17.

early to mid-nineteenth-century.²⁸ Lack of clergy had a positive effect in that it was not a clergy dominated denomination and there was space for lay participation. Because of this, when the nineteenth-century view of the Lord's Day is given, it is fairly accurate to present the balanced view of both clergy and laity.²⁹

The Regular Baptist denomination fought this pioneer blemish of disorganization through the formation of some key institutions that included the Regular Baptist Union of Upper Canada formed in 1848; its antecessor, the Regular Baptist Missionary Convention (1851–1888); and finally the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec (1888+), which placed less stress on closed communion.³⁰ School institutions included the Baptist Theological College in Montreal (1839–49), which closed largely because it was distant from the Baptist heartland of south western Upper Canada; Woodstock Literary Institute (1860–1926, named changed to Woodstock College in 1883), and finally McMaster University (1887) where graduates from the three Baptists colleges in Canada could be sent.³¹

One of the greatest disputes in the province's public affairs between 1840–67 was the relationship between Church and State.³² This can be seen by contrasting the Methodist Egerton Ryerson who championed voluntarism and Bishop Strachan who championed conservatism in the province. The Rebellion of 1837 and Lord Durham's report on the causes of the rebellion began to move the province towards the voluntarist position.³³ Many of the "free" churches left the old world so they would be free from an established church and wanted complete separation. Baptists were some of the most vocal and determined supporters of this voluntary principle.

²⁸ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 14.

²⁹ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 36.

³⁰ Torbet, *A History of Baptists*, 151–2.

³¹ Torbet, *A History of Baptists*, 151.

³² Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 1.

³³ Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 17–19.

Baptists regarded the agitation against the Clergy Reserves as “part of a great struggle to break the bondage of a State-Church connect and to force all denominations to rely on voluntary giving for their support.”³⁴ In this period of debate and conflict, numerous other issues arose along this general subject line for Baptists including the university question, public education and what to do with the quagmire of Sabbath legislation.³⁵ Baptists ultimately supported separation of Church and State to ensure that the State had no control or monetary persuasion over churches. They did, however, still believe that churches should encourage governments to propagate moral principles.³⁶ This point would bring up a clash between two beliefs to which Baptists were deeply attached, Sabbatarianism and religious liberty.³⁷ The eventual Baptist resolution of these two strongly held beliefs will become evident in subsequent chapters.

By the 1840s the Regular Baptists became more conscious of themselves as a denomination. This was due in large part to the formation and development of a denominational journal.³⁸ Before any formal denominational structure emerged it was, and in large part continued to be, the Baptist press that held together the wider Regular Baptist community. The run of Regular Baptist papers also clearly maintained a strong Sabbatarian stance throughout the century.³⁹ In some issues of the paper numerous Lord’s Day articles were included. Though not every issue included such articles on the Lord’s Day, and bearing the whole century in mind, the Lord’s Day was still a constant theme in the Baptist press. While many issues would come and go throughout the century, the Lord’s Day remained the issue that was the one true constant, with temperance as a very close second. This Sabbatarian stance can also be seen in the language

³⁴ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 1.

³⁵ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 1.

³⁶ Gibson, *Robert Alexander Fyfe*, 21.

³⁷ Bebbington, *Baptists Through the Centuries*, 208.

³⁸ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 28.

³⁹ See Appendix I.

outside of the articles themselves. The term Sabbath or Lord's Day was used well into the nineteenth-century for referring to meeting dates past or present that occurred on that day. The title Sunday was almost never used. As the century wore on, however, the term Sunday became more commonly used, becoming a synonym with the Lord's Day and the Christian Sabbath. The Baptist press focused on three general areas when it came to the Lord's Day. It promoted the Lord's Day for their general readership by lifting it up as a high and lofty and most indispensable Christian doctrine. It encouraged Sabbatarianism by showing how others had failed to keep the day holy and thus profaned something from the Lord. It promoted the Lord's Day by sharing ways in which the readership could improve their own observance of this special day. Lastly, it would also, from time to time, include articles more directed at convicting any of its readers who had slipped into Sabbath neglect and begun to desecrate the Lord's Day. Over time the articles became less devotional in nature, fewer in number and yet increased in length. As noted already, a large number of the Sabbatarian articles came from either the American or British religious press.

Often the papers presented articles like one found in July 1851, which sought to bolster support for the paper. Regular Baptist Associations made resolutions encouraging members to subscribe to the press.⁴⁰ An article reprinted in *The Canadian Baptist* titled "The Religious Paper" from the *Texas Herald* highlights the benefits of the religious paper for the reader. The Baptist press always sought to promote its worth to gain added readership:

- 1) A good religious paper makes Christians more intelligent, 2) It makes them more useful, 3) It secures better pay for the pastor, 4) It secures better teachers for the Sunday School, 5) It secures better attendance at the prayer meeting, 6) It leads to a better understanding of the Scriptures, 7) It increases interest in the spread of the gospel, 8) It helps to settle church difficulties, 9) It gives unity of faith and practice in the denomination, 10) It exposes error, 11) It places weapons in the hands of all to defend the truth, 12) It afford a channel of communication between brethren, 13) It

⁴⁰ *The Christian Observer*, July 1851.

gives the news from the churches, 14) It brings out the talent of the denomination, and makes it useful on a wider scale, 15) It throws light upon obscure questions of practical interest, 16) It gives light on obscure passages of the Bible, 17) It cultivates a taste for reading, 18) It makes the children more intelligent, 19) It makes better parents, 20) It makes better children, 21) It awakens interest for the salvation of souls, 22) It gives general religious news, 23) it gives the more important current news of general interest. All this it furnishes at a very small cost compared with its value.

Until the 1880s all of the incarnations of the Baptist press were privately owned. *The Upper Canadian Baptist Missionary Magazine* began in 1836 as a bi-monthly paper and by 1838 it had run into financial issues and merged with *The Canadian Baptist*, which had been founded in 1837, to become *The Canadian Baptist Magazine and Missionary Register*.⁴¹ This paper ran until 1842. In 1838 a spin off paper, *The Evangelical Pioneer*, was launched and continued until 1850. Reference is made to this paper in the minutes of the Eden Baptist Church in 1849,⁴² so some Regular Baptist support can be found for this stricter and alternative paper to the mainstream Baptist press.⁴³ *The Montreal Register* operated from 1842 to 1849 but may have ceased for similar reasons as the Montreal Baptist College, that is it was too far away from the majority of Baptists in central Canada. The open communion issues may also have been a stumbling block. *The Christian Observer* (1850–53) was another paper that had a short existence.

It was *The Christian Messenger* (1854–60) that was the first attempt at establishing a paper that was to last; and this was not without sacrifice. The lineage of this paper continued for the remainder of the century. In 1851, the Grand River Baptist Association made a resolution expressing the need for a paper to defend the closed communion principle. Within three years Deacon Winter founded the paper with his son-in-law, Rev Davidson, joining in this family

⁴¹ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 15.

⁴² Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 69.

⁴³ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 17.

compact.⁴⁴ Winter sacrificed a lot to get the paper off the ground. As the proprietor Winter stated: “I sold my produce, stock and implements, at a sacrifice, and rented my farm to my father, having to go to Brantford the last week in September, 1854, to help prepare for the first issue of *The Christian Messenger*, on the first Thursday of October.”⁴⁵ The paper would be printed on the second floor of the *Brantford Herald*.⁴⁶ Winter exhibited great commitment to the Baptist cause by attempting to begin this paper to help people store up treasures in heaven; to do this it cost him very much materially. During the previous winter season he had canvassed for the paper and received “a little money, a lot of promises, and some moral support.”⁴⁷ Indeed, throughout much of the century the paper would struggle financially, though financial profit was never its intended goal.⁴⁸ For the first year Rev. Davidson, who had been converted under Daniel McPhail, would be the editor. He in many ways set the tone for future editors. He was a man of strong conviction, deep piety and great activity.⁴⁹ In 1855, John Winterbotham, pastor in Woodstock, took over as the editor. He was revered by many as an influential man, known as “a father in Israel.” He was interested in many topics including the Lord’s Day, temperance, Baptist education and especially religious liberty. In 1859, his two daughters died and so he put the paper up for sale. This pioneer paper and its predecessors became as great source of spiritual strength for these early pioneers as “each week it brought to them news of the world, denominational information, sermons and devotional articles, agricultural bulletins, stock markets quotations, humour and all manner of advertisements.”⁵⁰

⁴⁴ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 23-25.

⁴⁵ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 26.

⁴⁶ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 26.

⁴⁷ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 17, 27.

⁴⁸ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 26.

⁴⁹ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 31.

⁵⁰ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 38.

Alexander Fyfe, pastor of Bond Street Baptist Church in Toronto, purchased the paper and moved its location to Toronto when Winterbotham put it up for sale.⁵¹ Under the new ownership the paper would be printed on the same presses as that of the *Globe* owned by George Brown.⁵² Fyfe is considered one of the most influential Regular Baptist leaders Upper Canada ever produced.⁵³ Even prior to this purchase he had written at least seven articles in the Baptist press.⁵⁴ Though already a pastor of a growing congregation he sought to influence hundreds of others through this purchase and his prolific pen.⁵⁵ He formed the Baptist Publishing Company whose shares were held by the Baptist Missionary Society of Ontario. In 1860, Fyfe changed the paper's name to *The Canadian Baptist*.⁵⁶ Fyfe greatly improved the paper. His biographer, J.E. Wells commented that, "it may well be doubted if *The Canadian Baptist* has ever, during its successful career...been more vigorous, or, in proportion to its size, rendered better service to the denomination and to Christianity, than during the brief period of his proprietorship."⁵⁷

Fyfe made the paper more intellectually relevant and promoted the education of Baptists and the closed communion stance. Fyfe promised "the advocacy of great moral questions and the cherished and distinctive principles of the Regular Baptists...will be faithfully and heartily persisted in."⁵⁸ He stated his editorial duty with *The Canadian Baptist* as follows: "The claims of the Canadian Baptist [are]... to defend the peculiar, and as we deem them, Scriptural view and practices of the Regular Baptist Churches in Canada."⁵⁹ Fyfe helped to set a standard for the paper for the remainder of the century. Winterbotham had strived to create a regular newspaper

⁵¹ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 40.

⁵² Gibson, *Robert Alexander Fyfe*, 238.

⁵³ Gibson, *Robert Alexander Fyfe*, back cover.

⁵⁴ Gibson, *Robert Alexander Fyfe*, 236.

⁵⁵ Gibson, *Robert Alexander Fyfe*, 236.

⁵⁶ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 40.

⁵⁷ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 42.

⁵⁸ Gibson, *Robert Alexander Fyfe*, 238.

⁵⁹ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 48; and Gibson, *Robert Alexander Fyfe*, 243.

with a denominational bias. Fyfe and his antecessor Rev. Hayes Lloyd sought to make the paper an exclusively denominational journal.⁶⁰ Fyfe gave up *The Canadian Baptist* in 1863 after having become the founding principal Canadian Literary Institute in 1860.

Lloyd was the editor and proprietor from 1863–71. He promoted missions, continued to turn the paper into a denominational one, and saved it from financial distress.⁶¹ William Stewart was the editor from 1871–74 and was co-editor with Dr. Muir from 188–82. He too was the pastor of the Bond Street Baptist Church. During Stewart's editorship the paper increased in readership and was able to purchase its own press.⁶² Dr. Muir was the editor from 1874–1880. He reformatted the paper to have specific headings and increased its readership.⁶³ Muir went on to become the denominational secretary.⁶⁴

In 1882, *The Canadian Baptist* became denominational property when it was purchased by Senator McMaster.⁶⁵ After this point, with the denomination now having full control, the main purpose of the paper was explicitly supporting denominational aims.⁶⁶ From 1882–88 the paper's editor was Rev. Ebenezer W. Dadson, who was a pupil of Fyfe. He had been recommended by Stewart. His objectives for the paper were to promote evangelical Christianity, promote and defend the privileges of the Baptist denomination and foster pure literacy among his people. He was also very interested in missions in western Canada. During the duration of his editorship many notable Baptists such as Davidson and Timpany would die.⁶⁷ His editorship marked the end of a great Baptist era and the beginning of a new one.

⁶⁰ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 53.

⁶¹ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 54–55.

⁶² Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 55.

⁶³ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 65.

⁶⁴ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 66.

⁶⁵ Torbet, *A History of Baptists*, 152.

⁶⁶ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 67.

⁶⁷ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 71.

From 1889 to 1898 the position of editor was given to James Edward Wells who was the first of any of the editors to have previous experience in the field. He was accurate, reliable and blunt.⁶⁸ He promoted local church news and was against any form of ecumenism that would sacrifice historic principles. He looked favourably upon scientific discovery, which has been suggested as a reason why he tended to favour the social gospel as God's revealed truth began to be questioned?⁶⁹

As an aside it is interesting to note the stark change between *The Canadian Baptist* of Dadson and *The Canadian Baptist* of Wells. From a cursory reading of the papers of the era there was a noticeable shift from the traditional evangelical stance of the paper to one with a greater degree of modernism. This change in editor, perhaps more than any other, demonstrates how the press could adopt the editor's views while not fairly representing the denominational constituency. During this era modernism was beginning to grow among many denominations in the West. There were many more articles on moralism versus traditional Christianity and Baptist polity during Wells editorship. However, around the year 1896 under Wells the paper decidedly began to take on a different tone. This was likely because during this period the papers readership had dropped significantly to a low of 1,895.⁷⁰ After 1896 the paper seems to have increasingly returned to its old standard and had more articles of substance. In 1887, a sermon from Spurgeon was also run titled "Restoration of Truth and Revival." Wells had taken the newspaper in the direction of the social gospel. After Wells death the paper once again became more evangelical in tone.⁷¹ Any sign of the social gospel soon vanished and *The Canadian Baptist* reverted back to its traditional evangelical stance.

⁶⁸ Zeman, *Baptists in Canada*, 152–5.

⁶⁹ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 80–3.

⁷⁰ See Appendix V.

⁷¹ Zeman, *Baptists in Canada*, 152–5.

This point is raised because throughout the century the Lord's Day movement was viewed through the lens of traditional Evangelicalism.⁷² Certainly Sabbatarianism was part of a practical Christianity that sought to reform the ills of the age, but did Baptists view it purely through its social benefit as Presbyterian, Sabbatarian and social gospeller John Shearer did?⁷³ Though Wells may have entertained modernism, and Baptist articles did take on a social flavour, for Baptists the topic and its arguments remained in the vein of classical evangelical reform (see Introduction) versus a social gospel.⁷⁴

The Regular Baptist papers in the nineteenth-century were the only main media source for many Baptists. Readership was not as high as the papers would have hoped but at times literacy may have been an issue. Though its publication may have been small in number the paper was likely shared between families and within churches so that the second hand readership may have been far greater than the official readership stated in the Appendix Five. Regarding the papers stance on the Lord's Day it is clear that every editor was a Sabbatarian by the constant presence of Lord's Day articles throughout the entire century. Though there was room made for dissent on this point (a point to be seen in coming chapters), and also questions of clarification or advice, the Sabbatarian views of the paper could never had continued as long as they did if they did not also reflect the views of their constituents.

⁷² Zeman, *Baptists in Canada*, 150.

⁷³ He was the first general secretary of the Canadian Lord's Day Association.

⁷⁴ Zeman, *Baptists in Canada*, 149.

CHAPTER TWO

EVANGELICALS AND THE LORD'S DAY

Writing in 1850, William Marsh¹ provides us with a compelling and accurate definition of a nineteenth-century Evangelical. He wrote:

An evangelical believer is a man who believes in the fall and its consequences, in the recovery and its fruits, in the personal application of the recovery by the power of the Spirit of God, and then the Christian will aim, desire, endeavour, by example, by exertion, by influence, and by prayer to promote the great salvation of which he himself is a happy partaker.²

This definition highlights the relevance and importance for the discussion of Evangelicals and the Lord's Day as it provides a framework in which one may see the subject placed within the great truths of God and redemption. That Marsh also stresses evangelical action demonstrates the wider and pivotal role the Lord's Day's promulgation would have in the salvation of individuals and society.

Bebbington identifies four characteristics inherent in Evangelicalism: biblicism, conversionism, crucicentrism and activism.³ These four elements can be clearly seen in Marsh's definition. As the Lord's Day featured prominently within nineteenth-century Evangelicalism, Sabbatarianism goes beyond simply being a crusade that Evangelicals "picked up." Sabbatarianism was itself a movement that matches Bebbington's criteria for defining Evangelicalism. As Sabbatarianism shares these four commonalities it is not odd to find it rooted deeply in evangelical DNA. These four characteristics of what it means to be an evangelical easily come together to show just how evangelical Sabbatarianism was. Biblicism was evident in

¹ William Marsh (1775–1864) was an evangelical priest in the Church of England.

² Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 3.

³ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 3-19. Biblicism would be a particular regard for the Bible; conversionism the belief that sinful lives need to be changed; crucicentrism a stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross to pay the penalty for sin; and activism which is the expression of the gospel in effort.

Sabbatarianism in how it valued the biblical witness as foundational for informing its stance. If someone was true to Scripture then such a powerful command and theme such as this could not easily be dismissed. Conversionism is present in that observance of the Sabbath marked the life of a true and maturing believer and the weekly pause for rest and worship was a tool that could likewise be used to convert. If you were truly transformed you would come to appreciate and value the gift of the Lord's Day. Sabbath observance was not conditional for salvation but was a by-product of it and could be a means to lead someone to Jesus. Crucicentrism was evident in Sabbatarianism's belief that Christ and the Apostles did not do away with the Sabbath itself. Under Christ the Sabbath was tied to piety, sanctification, obedience to Christ and humility. Activism was evident in Sabbatarianism in that both privately and publically transformed believers sought to better their holiness, and communities at large, through the promotion of Sabbatarian views. These are important to keep in mind as Evangelicals, and in particular Regular Baptists, sought to enforce the ethics of the Gospel.⁴ Indeed, the editor of *The Canadian Baptist*, Ebenezer W. Dadson who was a pupil of the former editor Alexander Fyfe, recognized the Sabbath's centrality to Evangelicalism when he stated in 1884 that, "Nothing is more characteristic of Protestant Canada, than the strict observance of Sunday."⁵

It would be impossible to cover the entirety of the topic of the Lord's Day in the history of the Church in this thesis. However, since this thesis focuses on Baptists it is prudent to pick up on the subject in the specific vein of Church history within Evangelicalism. This is immediately related to Baptist circles and will provide the needed context. However, before beginning that study it would be helpful to provide a brief survey of how Christians have viewed the Lord's Day. Within the history of the Church the Lord's Day and worship have always been central.

⁴ Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, 12.

⁵ "A Saturday Half-Holiday," *The Canadian Baptist*, 2 Aug 1883.

There have been several approaches and interpretations of the Lord's Day despite its presence in Scripture and tradition. Though the Regular Baptist approach examined in this thesis only represents one of these (Sabbatarianism), it is helpful to know the wider viewpoints regarding this biblical theme and its implementation throughout history. The classical approaches to the Lord's Day would include the antinomian view, seventh-day Sabbatarianism, the ecclesiastical or dominical view, and of course Sabbatarianism.⁶

The antinomian view became prevalent amongst Anabaptists in the Reformation and has since been used by various Christian groups. This view sees a sharp antithesis between the law and the Gospel. Jewish laws, such as the Ten Commandments, no longer apply to those who are in Christ. Though other "moral laws" like murder may still hold sway, the fourth commandment was abolished by Christ. It would view that "observing the Lord's Day flatly contradicts New Testament teachings that all distinctions of time and seasons are abolished; every day is the Lord's day."⁷ A verse such as Col 2:16 would be drawn upon to support such a view. To the polar opposite of antinomianism would be the seventh-day sabbatarian view. It arose as part of a conscious repudiation to antinomian tendencies. It purports that it is a believer's duty to observe the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday), as was Christ's, and that He did not do away with the law but calls us to fulfill it (Matt 5:17–20). They believe, in variation, that the fourth commandment is binding on all New Testament believers in all its rigour. It involves a virtual repudiation of the impact of Christianity on the weekly Sabbath. Among this group would be the Seventh Day Baptists who this thesis will make reference to.

⁶ For further details on these views see: Hessey, *Sunday, Its Origin, History and Present Obligation*, pp. 4–13; and Bauckham, "Sabbath and Sunday in Protestant Tradition," in ed. D. Carson, *From Sabbath to Lord's Day*, pp. 311–41.

⁷ Gaffin, *Calvin and the Sabbath*, 11.

The third view, and one prevalent through vast portions of Church history, is the ecclesiastical or dominical view. This view believes that the obligation of the fourth commandment ended with the New Testament. The Lord's Day or Christian Sabbath is a distinct ordinance of the Christian Church. It is not a Sabbath or a successor to it. It is something completely different that does not depend on the fourth commandment for its sanction. The authority of the day is apostolic and formed out of necessity in the early Church. It is a day of worship, rest and recreation. It is not a sin to break it. It is established by tradition out of a necessity for a common day for believers to come together.⁸ Similar to the dominical view, but also vastly different, is Sabbatarianism. Sabbatarianism views the Lord's Day, or the first day of the week, as the appropriate successor to the Jewish Sabbath but not because of mere tradition and not based alone on Jewish law. It sees the day of rest pre-dating the fall where God established this day (which is often also associated with worship and family) as a creation ordinance. The day was changed from the last day of the week to the first day to commemorate Christ's resurrection while not repudiating the language or changing the force and essence of the Jewish Sabbath. This was based on the authority of Christ and His apostles. Not only does the Lord's Day function as a day of rest it is also a weekly reminder of Easter. This view rose to prominence immediately after the Reformation when Christians sought to regain the biblical authenticity of the early Church, and was strongly advocated, though present in various forms throughout Church history, by English Puritanism during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. As a result Sabbatarianism became a view found in evangelical Christian circles through lands affected by the British Empire.⁹

⁸ Gaffin, *Calvin and the Sabbath*, 12.

⁹ Gaffin, *Calvin and the Sabbath*, 13.

This story of evangelicals and the Sabbath begins in England with the Puritans.

Sabbatarianism was uncommon in Europe outside of Britain, but British emigrants would carry Sabbatarianism where it would flourish, often more vigorously than in its native land, within British colonies.¹⁰ Baptists have their spiritual roots in the vein of Puritanism and so it is pertinent to begin a study of the Lord's Day with the Puritan understanding of the subject.¹¹ Baptists maintained a high view of their Puritan forbearers as spiritual ancestors.¹² Even the nineteenth-century Baptist "prince of preachers," Charles Spurgeon, was hailed as the "heir of the Puritans." A cursory examination of the "Puritan Sabbath,"¹³ a term used through much of the nineteenth-century, is required to understand both the evangelical and Baptist Sabbatarian approach because the influence of the triumph of the Puritan Sabbath in England was one that continued to be exerted into the nineteenth-century.¹⁴

The rise of the Puritan Sabbath came out of the Reformation. Puritans, or those who desired that the English Reformation had gone farther than where it had left off (with the "compromised" stance of the Church of England), continued the desire to honour God and His word by promoting further reform. Though some have rightly noted that a strong Sabbath view existed in England before the Reformation, it was the Puritan¹⁵ love and value of the day that contributed to it being held in such high esteem.¹⁶

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Sabbath received so much attention in published material that it has been said the Sabbath had no rest.¹⁷ Under their prayerful hands the

¹⁰ Wigley, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Sunday*, 3.

¹¹ Torbet, *A History of Baptists*, 54.

¹² "The Sabbath!" *The Canadian Baptist*, 10 Aug 1871.

¹³ The Puritan Sabbath has received much academic attention in the form of chapters in books or whole books. See: Primus, *Holy Time: Moderate Puritanism and the Sabbath*; and Dennison, *The Market Day of the Soul*.

¹⁴ Dennison, *The Market Day of the Soul*, xii.

¹⁵ Primus, *Holy Time: Moderate Puritanism and the Sabbath*, 17.

¹⁶ Primus, *Holy Time: Moderate Puritanism and the Sabbath*, 2.

¹⁷ Primus, *Holy Time: Moderate Puritanism and the Sabbath*, 1.

English Puritans gave the Sabbath a thorough examination.¹⁸ It was John Hooper who began this trend with his work the *Declaration of the Ten Holy Commandments* (1548). This was the first explicitly Sabbatarian view in Protestant England.¹⁹ Two other noteworthy works included Nicholas Bownde's *The Doctrine of the Sabbath* (1595), which was "enormously influential,"²⁰ and John Well's large volume titled *The Practical Sabbath* (1668), which served to continue to standardize Sabbatarian thought.²¹ The Puritan focus on the Lord's Day stemmed from the issue that "convulsed" England which was the question: "what hath the Lord said." This question was a continuation of the Reformation quest.²² Doctrine was no small matter as doctrine altered practice in which personal lives were transformed or "purified," social customs altered, and economic practices affected. The main question with regards to the Lord's Day was where did religious authority rest: the crown, tradition or the Bible?²³ John Hooper argued that "anything not required by Scripture may not be required by the church."²⁴ The proliferation of the availability of Bibles and the education of the laity allowed any pious believer to reach their own conclusions.²⁵ In the medieval Church the Lord's Day had been instituted by the authority of the Church rather than Scripture and it was less important than the endless list of Catholic and Anglican holy days.²⁶ With the establishment of the Puritan Sabbath it would be the weekly Sabbath that would take preeminence over any other religious observation or festival.²⁷ Even

¹⁸ Dennison, *The Market Day of the Soul*, ix.

¹⁹ Primus, *Holy Time: Moderate Puritanism and the Sabbath*, 17.

²⁰ Carsen, *From Sabbath to Lord's Day*, 323.

²¹ Carsen, *From Sabbath to Lord's Day*, 327.

²² Dennison, *The Market Day of the Soul*, ix.

²³ Another motif present in Sabbatarian thought, and one rooted deeply in the Judeo-Christian tradition, was that of time—that secular time was also sacred time. Since God creates time and participates actively in His creation, time is important (Lavendure, *Sunday in Canada*, xvii).

²⁴ Dennison, *The Market Day of the Soul*, ix. Numerous other issues such as the Sabbath came up such as Arminianism, the office of bishop, the cap and surplice and other ceremonies which were deemed unbiblical.

²⁵ Puritans, 181, and Lavendure, xviii.

²⁶ Edwards, *Sabbath Time*, 19.

²⁷ Edwards, *Sabbath Time*, 21.

Christmas was less important than the Lord's Day. This was a fact that continued well into the nineteenth-century when Christmas was not the sacrosanct holiday it is today. Even *The Canadian Baptist* published newspapers on Christmas Day as if it was any other day of the week. Though Puritan arguments rest heavily, if not solely, on biblical authority, there were many practical reasons to improve the day. Prior to the Reformation the English Sabbath had not been a day of rest but one of brutal sports, drunkenness, fighting, gambling, bawdy theatre, debauched idleness and profiteering as on any other day.²⁸ During the Cromwellian period (1649–60), the Puritan Sabbath received State endorsement and was enshrined in the Westminster Confession of 1644.

At its heart the Puritan Sabbath was highly Trinitarian²⁹ and highly Reformed. Though many doctrinal views that Baptists shared with the Puritans were highlighted in chapter one, a broader theology towards the Lord's Day, seen (but not directly articulated in the Baptist press), can be seen in Puritan theology. There were three biblical motifs that function in their Sabbatarian outlook: the motifs of Creation, Resurrection and Sanctification. It was these three themes that "provided the answers, to the three most hotly disputed aspects of Sabbatarianism: the institution, alterations and celebration of the Sabbath."³⁰ According to George Walker in 1638 the Sabbath was:

the hedge of defense to true Christian religion. [Through] preaching, reading and hearing the word...true piety, and the true knowledge and worship of God, and true faith in Christ, as upheld, maintained, increased and continued among all Christian nations from generation to generation... Without the Sabbath the most effectual means of grace and furtherance's to eternal life and blessedness, would undoubtedly grow out of use, and at length utterly decay and vanish.³¹

²⁸ Edwards, *Sabbath Time*, 21.

²⁹ Primus, *Holy Time: Moderate Puritanism and the Sabbath*, 163. In Puritanism, God the Father established the Sabbath when He created the world; by His Resurrection God the Son re-established the Sabbath as the Lord's Day; and God the Holy Spirit uses the Sabbath as the chief means of sanctification.

³⁰ Primus, *Holy Time: Moderate Puritanism and the Sabbath*, 148.

³¹ Primus, *Holy Time: Moderate Puritanism and the Sabbath*, 178.

Drudgery was not equated with the Sabbath by the Puritans. They saw the Sabbath as a great creation ordinance, restored to its original form, fit for the Gospel age, the age of spiritual sacrifices, Christian liberty and justification by faith.³² Since God's word was the chief means of grace and central to personal piety,³³ the promotion of the Lord's Day was closely tied into biblicism for it not only enabled one to hear the word, but the word also established the Sabbath. The Sabbath was the most important moral law that guided the Christian life. It was viewed as the cornerstone of the Kingdom of God in this world.³⁴

The promotion of the Puritan Sabbath not only had religious implications, but vast social and economic ones as well.³⁵ By the late 1600s the Puritan view had become the dominant view; it had transformed the nation.³⁶ Thus, the Puritan Sabbath became the foundation for the Sabbatarianism found in the evangelical movement of the eighteenth-century and in Victorianism of the nineteenth-century.³⁷ Other powerful Sabbatarian agents, in the line of the Puritans, arose in Britain around the same time, namely a group known as the Clapham Sect who became associated with the figure of William Wilberforce. Their passionate views of the Lord's Day, coupled with their social influence, did much to further the Puritan heritage of the Lord's Day well into the nineteenth-century and the Victorian age. As much as evangelical Anglicanism was Sabbatarian, support rested among Wesleyans, Presbyterians, Baptists and other Free Church members. In the 1780s, with the Wesleyan revival, there was a rekindling of Sabbatarianism in Britain and beyond.³⁸ John and Charles Wesley, though Arminian, were strict

³² Beckwith, *The Christian Sunday*, 43.

³³ Primus, *Holy Time: Moderate Puritanism and the Sabbath*, 176.

³⁴ Primus, *Holy Time: Moderate Puritanism and the Sabbath*, 179.

³⁵ Primus, *Holy Time: Moderate Puritanism and the Sabbath*, 156.

³⁶ Dennison, *The Market Day of the Soul*, xii.

³⁷ Tilden, "The Christian Sabbath: its promise today as a basic spiritual Discipline," 23.

³⁸ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age*, 184.

Sabbatarians, and were both members of the Society for the Reformation of Manners.³⁹ Owen Chadwick states that, “the campaign for a godly Sunday, was a part of the Nonconformist conscience.”⁴⁰ In Great Britain too, Baptists were playing an important role in the forming of a national evangelical stance on the Lord’s Day. This was the social and religious history from Britain that took root in the North American Christian life in the nineteenth-century.

During the nineteenth-century, aside from the Baptist Press (exhibited in chapter one), there is no known Canadian Baptist author who wrote a book on the Lord’s Day. Yet of all the issues that fought against ecumenism within Evangelicalism, causes such as the Lord’s Day were areas where church groups could work together. Writing in *The Canadian Baptist* in 1871, one reads that “the differences among evangelical bodies [is not] so great as to justify...fencing [between groups].”⁴¹ As a result Baptists read other works regarding the Lord’s Day that resonated with and strengthened their own views. Several authors who wrote prominent works on, or related to the Sabbath, that greatly influenced Evangelicalism and Baptists were William Wilberforce (and the Clapham Sect), Phillip Schaff and Daniel Wilson.⁴²

A cursory review of the life of William Wilberforce, his biographies, written works and correspondence, shows that he was a champion of the Sabbatarian cause. He once said, “I truly declare, that to me the Sabbath has been invaluable.”⁴³ In *A Practical View* (1797) Wilberforce promoted a moderate Sabbatarian outlook. This was in part due to John Newton, Vicar of Olney and St. Mary Woolnoth, London, and close friend and mentor of Wilberforce. Against the backdrop of military “workups” against French threats and the drilling of the militia on Sunday

³⁹ Stephenson, *The Puritan Heritage*, 184.

⁴⁰ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age*, 199.

⁴¹ “Sunday in the Wilderness,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 19 Oct 1871.

⁴² This thesis has already demonstrated many commonalities between Canadian and American evangelicals. This was the case in Schaff’s influence. British authors and Evangelicalism, such as Wilberforce and Wilson, also influenced Canada. See: Wilson, “British Influence in the Nineteenth Century,” 21–43.

⁴³ “Sunday,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Feb 1869.

Newton said: “If the breach of the Sabbath was authorized by law, it would alarm me much more, than to hear that fifty or a hundred thousand French were landed or that our Grand Fleet was totally destroyed. I should considered it as a decided token that God had given up on us.”⁴⁴ In Wilberforce’s book, in which the distinction between a nominal and an authentic Christian formed the basis of his argument, he shows how the Sabbath is an integral part of authentic Christianity.

Wilberforce makes numerous statements against nominal Christian’s views of the Sabbath. He wrote, “do they take full advantage of the Sabbath; they see the day as a heavy day; [they] trifle it away with unprofitable discourses; [profane] this sacred season; openly violate the laws and insult the religion of their country; and plead against sensible Sabbath arguments.”⁴⁵ People also seek to “unhallow the Sunday and change its character.”⁴⁶ He asked “are the service and worship of God pleasant to these persons,” because in his estimation any authentic Christian finds the Sabbath delightful.⁴⁷ Wilberforce captures the importance of the Lord’s Day by writing:

The nature, and uses, and proper employments of a Christian Sabbath, have been pointed out more particularly, not only because the day will be found, when thus employed, eminently conducive, through the Divine blessing, to the maintenance of the religious principle in activity and vigour.⁴⁸

Though, as a moderate Sabbatarian, he wrote in 1821 that “often good people have been led by the terms of the fourth commandment to lay more stress on the strictness of the Sunday than on its Spirituality,”⁴⁹ he was an ardent supporter of the cause. In 1795, he voted against having

⁴⁴ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age*, 184.

⁴⁵ Wilberforce, *A Practical View*, 52–3.

⁴⁶ Wilberforce, *A Practical View*, 53.

⁴⁷ Wilberforce, *A Practical View*, 51.

⁴⁸ Wilberforce, *A Practical View*, 52.

⁴⁹ Wilberforce, “Correspondence of William Wilberforce, 1840,” Vol 2 pp. 451–2.

Sunday papers⁵⁰ and as a member of *The Society for the Suppression of Vice* joined the *Society for Promoting the Observance of the Sabbath* in 1809.⁵¹

The force in which Wilberforce sought to promote the Sabbath was realized on a grander scale through the Clapham Sect who by the 1820s had “emerged as a determined group with a strong sense of mission. Through their influence they had “overwhelmed most non-Sabbatarian theologies.”⁵² A fellow member of the Clapham Sect, John Bird Sumner in his *Records of Creation* in 1818, argued that the observance of the Sabbath was the main difference between the heathen and the Christian. He wrote that, “England as a nation stands or falls on its keeping of Sunday...civil society is contained and held together by the Sabbath.”⁵³ This was the theological stance that Wilberforce and the Clapham Sect infused into the Victorian age.

One might presume that such Sabbatarian influences and works did not extend their influence as far as the pioneer frontiers of Upper Canada, but that would be wrong. Wilberforce’s book went through countless editions and was translated into most of the major European languages. It was popularized in Canada too. *The Canadian Baptist Magazine and Missionary Register* had a multi-page entry reviewing *A Practical View* in 1838.⁵⁴ The paper called his work, “a powerful sensation.” It was “acknowledged [that] such an important work had not appeared for a century,” and that “this celebrated work is so well known.” Mr. Hall of Upper Canada stated that it was an “inestimable work” and that it had “done more than any other to rouse the insensibility and augment the piety of the age.”⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age*, 185.

⁵¹ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age*, 184.

⁵² Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age*, 184.

⁵³ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age*, 186.

⁵⁴ This shows its continued influence four decades after its publication.

⁵⁵ “William Wilberforce, Esq., M.P.,” *The Canadian Baptist Magazine and Missionary Register*, May 1838.

Another prominent nineteenth-century advocate for the Lord's Day was Phillip Schaff. He was a Swiss-born, German educated reformed theologian and Church historian. He was also an engaged Sabbatarian, holding the secretariatship of the New York Sabbath Committee from 1863–70.⁵⁶ In North America his Lord's Day stance represented the clearest articulation of the position that most evangelicals accepted. He presented extracts of his work, *The Anglo-American Sabbath* (1863), to the National Sabbath Convention of that same year.⁵⁷ One of the central practical components of Lord's Day observance that Schaff offered was how to maintain its observance without violating the principle of the separation of Church and State. Essentially, he argued that the State can enforce the civil Sabbath on grounds other than religious grounds and cannot force anyone to go to a place of worship. Secular Sabbath laws were no different than laws of monogamy. Schaff argued and that to support these moral stances was actually to enhance the freedom of society for without the law there would only be licentiousness and a ruined people.⁵⁸

He described the Lord's Day as "one of the noblest contributions which Great Britain has made to the cause of evangelical truth and piety. Far from being a relapse, it is a real progress in the cause of Christianity and civilization...It is an essential part of American Christianity and morality, and one of the strongest common bonds which unite the different Protestant denominations."⁵⁹ Schaff clearly struck a chord with the editorial team of *The Canadian Baptist* for he was praised for his sound judgement and his knowledge as he lectured in the United States and Canada in 1887.⁶⁰ In chapter six of his work one can see his Lord's Day application to civic

⁵⁶ "Biography on Schaff," *Christian Classics Ethereal Library*.

⁵⁷ Handy, *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities*, 75.

⁵⁸ Handy, *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities*, 75.

⁵⁹ Handy, *A Christian America: Protestant Hopes and Historical Realities*, 75.

⁶⁰ *The Canadian Baptist*, 10 Mar 1887.

laws being taken up as the official Baptist position. This will become clear in the sixth chapter of this thesis.

In the fall of 1827, Daniel Wilson, vicar of Islington, England, and later the first Bishop of Calcutta, India, preached a series on the Lord's Day. These sermons inspired his people to found the Lord's Day Society in 1827.⁶¹ In 1830 he preached seven more sermons and called the clergy of London to the neglect of the Lord's Day.⁶² These sermons were published into a book in 1831 titled *The Divine Authority and Perpetual Obligation of the Lord's Day*.⁶³ His book inspired the foundation of the Lord's Day Observance Society in England on 8 Feb 1831, which soon formed auxiliaries across the country. He saw the violation of the Sabbath as "a brand on the forehead of nominal religion."⁶⁴ His work became a standard text on the Sabbath in his time.⁶⁵

Though Wilson admitted that "many have preached more heartfelt sermons on the subject in the more powerful and awakening manner" his treatment was to be a survey to support the title of his book. It would iron out some of the early Puritan complexities and maintain a moderate stance.⁶⁶ The premise of his book was based on the authority of revealed truth and the express commands of Almighty God.⁶⁷ In his preface Wilson wrote that "I am more and more convinced, that the Lord' day is one of the grandest practical topics which we are now called to treat." His sermons, which his book was based upon, highlighted how he and many others viewed the Lord's Day:

⁶¹ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age*, 187.

⁶² Wilson, *The Divine Authority and Perpetual Obligation of the Lord's Day*, Preface.

⁶³ Wilson, *The Divine Authority and Perpetual Obligation of the Lord's Day*.

⁶⁴ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age*, 187–9.

⁶⁵ Wilson, *The Divine Authority and Perpetual Obligation of the Lord's Day*, preface. Eight months after his work was first published there were publications made in America.

⁶⁶ Carsen, *From Sabbath to Lord's Day*, 327.

⁶⁷ Wilson, *The Divine Authority and Perpetual Obligation of the Lord's Day*, preface

- I. The Institution of a weekly Sabbath in Paradise, and its continued authority, until the delivery of the Moral Law.
- II. The Authority and Dignity of the Sabbath under the law of Moses.
- III. The Sabbath Vindicated, under the Gospel from Pharisaical austerities, and set forth in more than its original dignity and glory.
- IV. The Sabbath transferred by Divine Authority from the seventh to the first day of the week, or the Lord's day.
- V. The Practical Duties of the Christian Sabbath.
- VI. The unspeakable importance of the right observation of the Sabbath, with the evils of opposite abuse.
- VII. The guilt which is contracted by Christian nations in proportion as the Lord's day is openly profaned.

The reading of Wilson's book gives one of the clearest overviews into nineteenth-century Sabbatarian thought, practice and spirituality that is available.

The year 1800 in North America, and especially in Upper Canada, was a vastly different landscape than in the year 1900. It was a century of change and with societal changes came new impacts towards Sabbath keeping. Despite the transformation, the transatlantic heritage of the Puritan Sabbath remained a key aspect to society.⁶⁸ The Sabbath was so prominent that a French immigrant wrote of the United States in the early nineteenth-century (coming from continental Europe that tended not to observe the Sabbath) that "Sabbath observance was the only true American and national characteristic."⁶⁹ With even greater effect, as it will become evident, Toronto and Upper Canada became the hallmarks of Sabbath observance in the English world. An English visitor to Toronto in 1884 commented that the Sabbath was kept as strictly in that city than in any other city he knew.⁷⁰ In fact, because of its overwhelming evangelical majority, Upper Canada was the heartland of Canadian Sabbatarianism.⁷¹

Because of the strong mark the Puritan Sabbath had made on English Christianity and society, English Evangelicalism continued in the line of the Puritans to be the champions of

⁶⁸ Moir, *The Church in the British Era*, 9.

⁶⁹ Edwards, *Sabbath Time*, 6.

⁷⁰ Rawlyk, *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience*, 42.

⁷¹ Lavendure, *Sunday in Canada*, 4.

Sabbatarianism. The work of groups like the Clapham Sect in Great Britain, noted above, helped to further Sabbatarian causes in the nineteenth-century. Within Evangelicalism as a whole there was a wide breadth for the existence of Sabbatarian thought. Evangelicalism was a heartfelt personal faith that sought comprehensive reform of society.⁷² In many respects it had two goals: convert individuals and transform society.⁷³ It held so strongly to this because evangelical Christianity offered a remedy for the disease of sin, which in their estimation was the root of every individual and social evil.⁷⁴ They were “convinced that social evils were the product of the perverted human will, rather than defects in the social environment, they strove to alleviate poverty, illness, violence, and crime through the conversion of individual sinners.”⁷⁵ Their belief in the Bible assured the evangelical believer of their morals. God could use human agents and institutions in channeling His grace to sinners and society.⁷⁶ Evangelicalism at this time was also post-millennial, believing that by building the Kingdom of God, evidenced by Christian progressed, they could usher in the second coming of Jesus. On the whole, Evangelicalism offered meaning for persons, order for society, and hope for the future.⁷⁷

The Sabbath would find a central place in this evangelical vision of the nineteenth-century. Observance of a strict Christian Sabbath was closely tied to the important sign of evangelical advance and Christian civilization.⁷⁸ Indeed, Sabbatarian opinion is a useful gauge of evangelical social influence during the century in any given social context.⁷⁹ Temperance and the fight to protect the Lord’s Day became evangelical causes second only to the Gospel itself.⁸⁰

⁷² Noll, *The Rise of Evangelicalism*, 53.

⁷³ Wolfe, *The Expansion of Evangelicalism*, 160.

⁷⁴ Rawlyk, *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, 52.

⁷⁵ Murphy, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, 157.

⁷⁶ Rawlyk, *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, 54.

⁷⁷ Scotland, *Evangelical Anglicans in a Revolutionary Age*, 113.

⁷⁸ Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*, 42.

⁷⁹ Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism*, 105.

⁸⁰ Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism*, 239; Moir, *The Church in the British Era*, 188.

The Sabbath also featured centrally in nineteenth-century foreign missions with two primary objectives before missionaries: the Gospel of Christ and Observance of the Sabbath.⁸¹

Nineteenth-century Evangelicalism also embraced societies to propagate their cause. As this thesis will show, this became the case with the Sabbath as well. Writing in 1844 Sir James Stephen described the proliferation of evangelical organization since his father and friends of the Clapham Sect in the 1790s had begun the trend:

Ours is the age of societies. For the redress of every oppression that is done under the sun, there is a public meeting. For the cure of every sorrow by which our land or our race can be visited, there are patrons, vice-presidents and secretaries. For the diffusion of every blessing of which mankind can partake in common there is a committee...is now spreading throughout the habital globe.⁸²

All of the major social causes taken up by nineteenth-century Evangelicalism, such as temperance, anti-Catholicism, slavery, poverty, prostitution, and crime, were held in common between Britain, the United States and Canada.⁸³ A strong commonality though was Sabbatarianism.⁸⁴ In fact, regardless of the country, the desecration of the Lord's Day was often viewed as the root of many of these other social evils.⁸⁵

Sabbath issues were different in each country because though common beliefs existed, each country's setting and history were different, and this directly impacted how the Sabbath cause was viewed. Perhaps the most similar to Canada between Britain and the United States was the later, as it too was a frontier colony (though admittedly one which had more time to develop as a nation). The United States exhibited many evangelical and Sabbath keeping similarities with Canada but also some distinct differences.⁸⁶

⁸¹ Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism*, 135.

⁸² Wolfe, *The Expansion of Evangelicalism*, 162.

⁸³ Rawlyk, *Amazing Grace*, 195.

⁸⁴ Rawlyk, *Amazing Grace*, 42.

⁸⁵ Elgee, *The Social Teachings of the Canadian Churches*, 180.

⁸⁶ For an evaluation between Canadian and American Evangelicals, see Reimer, *Evangelicals and the Continental Divide*.

The strongest commonality between Canada and the United States was how they developed. The United States, with its British heritage and early Puritan history, was a strong Sabbath keeping country. Each began with a frontier culture that progressed into one of an established society full of advancements and cultural achievements. Thus industrialization and the railroad would come to challenge the Sabbath as much to the south of the border as to the north. Large scale immigration from non-Sabbatarian countries such as Ireland and Germany in the 1840s–70s, along with the rise of the public library, all challenged the traditional American Sunday.⁸⁷ The Civil War likely did more than any other event or factor to alter Sabbath keeping customs. The fighting, transport and manufacturing of goods in that total war type conflict chipped away at traditional Sabbath observances. The American Sabbath was menaced by: capitalistic ventures, recreation, hectic pace of metropolitan centres, increased advertisements, the rejection of authority and the lack of appreciation of heritage.⁸⁸ These societal shifts slowly began to turn God's day into man's day; from a holy day to a holiday.⁸⁹ And yet, Sabbatarian influences did not disappear. *The Canadian Baptist* often challenged its readership to not be so critical of American softness in Sabbath observances as some cities offered rival examples of Sabbath keeping practices in Ontario.⁹⁰

Many notable Americans were Sabbatarians including Jonathan Edwards, President John Quincy Adams and Harriet Beecher Stowe. Jonathan Edwards periodically directed his attention to the Sabbath. He felt this long-cherished doctrine was being attacked on all fronts and so throughout his life he turned his formidable theological energies to resisting these forms of Sabbath infidelity. A series of his sermons were published as *The Perpetuity and Change of the*

⁸⁷ Carsen, *From Sabbath to Lord's Day*, 4.

⁸⁸ Kiesling, *The Future of the Christian Sunday*, chapter one.

⁸⁹ McCrossen, *Holy Day, Holiday: The American Sunday*, 5.

⁹⁰ "Editor's Note," *The Canadian Baptist*, 31 Aug 1899.

Sabbath.⁹¹ John Adams, author of *The Wealth of Nations*, said of the Sabbath, “as a political institution [it] is of inestimable value, independent of its claim to divine authority.”⁹² Former President John Quincy Adams presided over the National Sabbath Convention on 27 Nov, 1844 and said:

There is a growing conviction, founded upon experience and observation, that property and life are more safe under the care of those who keep the Sabbath, than under the care of those who violate it; and that the one class are more likely to be blessed and to be a blessing, even in this world, than the other. As the principles and facts become known, all see new evidence that the ‘Sabbath was made for man’ and that in the keeping of it, according to the will of God, there is a great reward.”⁹³

Harriet Beecher Stowe admonished her fellow citizens to keep the Lord’s Day when she said, “woe to America when it ceases to be a Sabbath respecting land.”⁹⁴ An article republished in *The Canadian Baptist* from the Princeton Review highlighted the struggle in the United States:

In the reaction in this country from Puritan Sabbatarianism, the nation has been drifting to the opposite extreme of continental license, and the danger now is, with such vices as have passed current among professedly Christian teachers through many centuries, the divine ordinance, as it was left by Christ and his apostles may be inundated and practically swept away. Are the Christian Churches and this favoured Republic prepared for such a catastrophe?⁹⁵

Though Evangelicalism in Canada differed from its southern neighbour it did share three strong characteristics: a frontier mission field for the Gospel, that progress was linked with Christianity and that the tone of Christianity was evident in public life.⁹⁶ That the fragmentation of religious pluralism was more intense in Britain and the United States allowed Canada, and in particular Upper Canada, to enjoy a stronger Sabbath.⁹⁷ Canada differed from the United States in that it was not influenced by immigration from non-Sabbatarian countries. It was different

⁹¹ Caldwell, “Call the Sabbath a Delight,” 192–3.

⁹² “Sunday,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Feb 1869.

⁹³ Stephenson, *The Puritan Heritage*, 184.

⁹⁴ Stephenson, *The Puritan Heritage*, 181.

⁹⁵ “Sabbath Observance,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 1 Aug 1878.

⁹⁶ Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*, 245.

⁹⁷ Christie, *Christian Churches and their Peoples*, 10.

from Great Britain, which also had a large degree of sectarianism with 60% of its population Anglican and 40% non-conformist, as there was no cultural hegemony. In Upper Canada there was very little sectarianism with the four main evangelical denominations representing 90% of the population. Canadian churches Canadianized new members efficiently and drew them to the centre of a general evangelical culture.⁹⁸ The nineteenth-century in Upper Canada demonstrates the magnitude of the evangelical cultural achievement. In 1842, 16.7% of people in Upper Canada identified as having “no religion.” After the waves of evangelical revival and piety, even after intense immigration and population growth, that number had plummeted to 1.2% in 1871.⁹⁹ The evangelical churches had been instrumental in taking Canada from frontier missions to national churches.¹⁰⁰ In that process it had gained cultural ascendancy:

The evangelical movement remained the single strongest religious force in the province’s religious life. Powerful and well established before 1840, it would continue to gather momentum as evangelical consensus began to blossom into a full scale coalition later in the century. It would become powerful enough to define standards for the whole community.¹⁰¹

After Confederation,¹⁰² Leonard Tilley, a politician and Methodist from New Brunswick, applied Psalm 72:8 (see also Zec 9:10), “His dominion,” as the vision of a nation embodying Christian principles and striving towards Christian goals.¹⁰³ This vision expressed a determination to establish the Kingdom of God in the new country and became a way of articulating a mission for the nation, especially within the evangelical denominations.¹⁰⁴ As was mentioned, many denominations at this time were also post-millennial in their eschatology.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁸ Rawlyk, *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, 64–68.

⁹⁹ Rawlyk, *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, 58.

¹⁰⁰ Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*, 42–3.

¹⁰¹ Murphy, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, 173–5.

¹⁰² The confederation of Canada took place on July 1, 1867 when separate provinces that made up parts of British North America came together to form the Dominion of Canada.

¹⁰³ Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*, 281.

¹⁰⁴ Rawlyk, *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, 99.

¹⁰⁵ Rawlyk, *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, 125.

“His Dominion” provided an ideological and theological framework for a large number of voluntary associations that included temperance, the Lord’s Day and missions to bring about Jesus’ second coming.¹⁰⁶ “Because evangelical Christians enjoyed such prominence during the period in the province, they could exert a potent influence over the social and even the public life of their countries.”¹⁰⁷ Canadian evangelical Protestantism had sought to Christianize Canadian society, and compared to the United States where immigration did not enable this, in Canada, well into the twentieth-century, there were more forces for unity than dissent when it came to an evangelical vision.¹⁰⁸

The Upper Canadian Sabbath cannot be understood detached from its historic context. Though its presence in the press never waned and all of the Baptist editors adopted and promoted Sabbatarian beliefs, the occurrences of the subject did surge at times. These occurrences corresponded with the events of change and progress that were developing in Upper Canadian society. In Appendix Two one can see all of the major occurrences of the Lord’s Day in the Baptist press in the nineteenth-century. Some years it would spike to as high as eighteen and for a couple years it appeared to have vanished; and yet it would return as the ebb and flow of social issues demanded its attention again. During the pioneer era, Lord’s Day literature was primarily directed at religious indifference. This gave way to the highest spike in the press, which correlates with the end of the pioneer era and the advent of a modern Canada with the arrival of the railroads. As light industrialization followed the expansion of railways, new challenges to the Lord’s Day produced the second largest spike. However, after this period of change post-pioneer era, a period of relative calm came over Canada West as the province began to develop its identity. This culminated in the supremacy of the Sabbath by the 1880s. Yet, two new challenges

¹⁰⁶ Rawlyk, *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, 101.

¹⁰⁷ Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism*, 216.

¹⁰⁸ Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*, 281.

tested the Lord's Day in the 1890s: pleasure transit and heavy industrialization. Through all of the cultural shifts the Baptist belief in the Lord's Day remained constant throughout the nineteenth-century. The more challenges that faced Baptists Lord's Day theology the more ardent supporters of the Lord's Day they became.

What then were the specific issues facing Upper Canada during the nineteenth-century in regard to the Sabbath?¹⁰⁹ Westfall has noted that "during the middle of the nineteenth-century, religious institutions waged an unceasing struggle to create a spiritual refuge with a secular society undergoing rapid social and economic change. The great crusades for temperance and Sabbath observance were part of this larger struggle to provide Victorians with a moral pathway through the hazards of a materialistic world. This endeavour was not in vain."¹¹⁰ In 1800 Upper Canada numbered a mere 20,000 inhabitants with very few churches or clergy. By the turn of the next century it had a population 2.2 million with enough church buildings to seat the entire population at once.¹¹¹ Protestant energy would transfer Ontario from a frontier outpost in a remote area of the British Empire to one of the most advanced civilizations within the realm.¹¹²

Despite the triumph of nineteenth-century Evangelicalism in the province, it was a hard fought battle to achieve this supremacy. This was especially so when it came to Sabbath reform. Legal protection for the Sabbath did exist under British law. The "Sunday Observance Acts" of 1677 and 1780, which prohibited labour and pleasure on the Sabbath, were politely ignored in much of the frontier environment.¹¹³ Disrespect and indifference to the Sabbath characterized colonial life as frontier life shattered, or drastically altered, family traditions and the religious

¹⁰⁹ Caniff, *A History of Ontario* (1872) and more modern histories such as Baskerville, *Ontario: Image, Identity, and Power* (2002), serve to display the historic secular landscape in which the Sabbatarian cause developed. Histories of Canada such as the *Origins and Destinies* (both 2004) series by Francis for pre and post Confederation also pay particular attention to Ontario and give helpful big picture interpretations of provincial affairs.

¹¹⁰ Westfall, *Two Worlds*, 6.

¹¹¹ Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*, 271.

¹¹² Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*, 267 and 272.

¹¹³ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 4.

reverence known in Europe.¹¹⁴ John Crichton, who proceeded from Montreal to York in 1820, was shocked at each city's indecency. He saw settlers "in the fields on the Sabbath day, or going out ashooting."¹¹⁵ In 1810, William Care, an evangelical preacher, declared the western settlements along the Thames River and Lake St. Clair to be "the most wicked and dissipated of any part of America," Sunday was but "a day of wicked amusements, visiting parties, often dancing, hunting, fishing."¹¹⁶ During this early period of the century there were low standards of religious observance on the frontier. That the Sabbath was not kept was a common complaint among clergy.¹¹⁷ It is said that one third to two fifths of the population were un-churched compared with the much higher figures from later in the century.¹¹⁸ Many half-grown children did not even know what the Sabbath was.¹¹⁹ Laws were enacted in older colonies but Upper Canada remained too new and wild, without an established church presence and few clergy. Many settlers, but not all, violated the Lord's Day in this wilderness with worldly and sinful pursuits such as labour, dancing, gambling, hunting and horse racing.¹²⁰ There were some devote Sabbatarians, but they were not the norm, and yet their personal example and the growth of organized Christianity would prevailed.¹²¹ As various denominations began to establish a greater presence with the erection of church buildings and chapels, complaints were heard less often as church-going and Sunday rest became the norm and not the exception.¹²²

¹¹⁴ Elgee, *The Social Teachings of the Canadian Churches*, 209.

¹¹⁵ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 3.

¹¹⁶ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 4.

¹¹⁷ Moir, *The Church in the British Era*, 188.

¹¹⁸ Murphy, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, 110.

¹¹⁹ Elgee, *The Social Teachings of the Canadian Churches*, 209.

¹²⁰ Moir, *The Church in the British Era*, 188.

¹²¹ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 7.

¹²² Moir, *The Church in the British Era*, 188.

Evangelicals, as convicted Sabbatharians, continued attempts to establish Sabbath holy living in the province.¹²³ Methodists pressed the government in 1844 to adopt a provincial law.¹²⁴ In 1845, the province finally crafted its own legislation to protect the Lord's Day. It was titled *An Act to prevent the profanation of the Lord's Day in Upper Canada*.¹²⁵ This new act was cited in the Baptist press of the day.¹²⁶ The free churches had little trouble cooperating with like-minded bodies on areas such as Lord's Day observance. As the century wore on the moral thrust of Evangelicalism united as revivalism gave way to church values and the established churches had more in common.¹²⁷ Opposition to the Lord's Day movement did exist. Church of England Bishop John Strachan believed Sunday should be holy but not "blue" and looked down upon the zeal of many Sabbatharians. Secular, and some religious, advocates of the separation of Church and State feared Sabbath legislation would interfere with this.¹²⁸ Early in the century Roman Catholics held a loose tradition of Sabbath observance but derided the Protestants' emotional and literal interpretation of the Fourth Commandment as a hobbyhorse inherited from the Scottish Reformation.¹²⁹ They would eventually become stricter in their Sabbatarian views¹³⁰ and even come to claim "no religion without worship, and no worship with the Sabbath."¹³¹ Non-Sabbatarian groups such as Jews, Seventh-Day Baptists and Seventh-Day Adventists were also

¹²³ Evangelicals would include Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and some Anglicans. Other smaller denominations also considered themselves evangelical.

¹²⁴ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 11.

¹²⁵ See Appendix III.

¹²⁶ *The Montreal Register*, 3 April 1845.

¹²⁷ Murphy, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, 173. An example of this would include the Evangelical Alliance protecting the desecration of the Lord's Day as one of its charter purposes (*The Montreal Register*, 15 June 1846.) "This object is specific, and of itself sufficiently important to merit all the effort. Love to the brethren is as much a duty as sobriety or the sanctification of the Sabbath." (*The Montreal Register*, 1 Oct 1846; "The Evangelical Alliance," *The Canadian Baptist*, 12 Dec 1889).

¹²⁸ Moir, *The Church in the British Era*, 189.

¹²⁹ Moir, *The Church in the British Era*, 189.

¹³⁰ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 38.

¹³¹ "Sundays Well Spent," *The Canadian Baptist*, 10 Mar 1898.

not in favour of the legalization of the Sunday Sabbath.¹³² Baptist approaches to Seventh-Day Baptist inquiries will show the rationale behind disregarding their views in chapter six.

The railway, and all it brought to Canada West, effectively ended the pioneer period in the province. By this point in time society had begun to have an air of civilization about it and the hard work from the pioneer period had produced a degree of establishment. Just when Sabbath observance was improving in the province the beginning of the railways provided new challenges to the Sabbath. Indeed, at least initially, trains, canals and post offices were all operated on Sundays.¹³³ To Evangelicals this was a double offense because they were carried out by “Christian” governments.¹³⁴ It was not just locomotives that brought desecration to the Sabbath but the many offshoot railroad industries associated with it. It was the train that would become a hot topic in later Sabbatarian leisure debates. Trains were viewed by Sabbatarians as “a mighty engine for the dishonor of the Lord, the demoralization of the land, and the spiritual ruin of those employed in connection with it.”¹³⁵ Numerous references from the Baptist press relating to the railway desecrating the Sabbath will surface throughout chapters four through six. Yet the ad from *The Christian Messenger* from the 1850s¹³⁶ does show the “Sundays excepted clause” and accurately portrays that the Sabbatarian movement was strong in limiting the rail industry, if at least in the infancy of the railroads.

Despite the advent of the railway and the various Sabbath desecrations it occasionally would bring, the pioneer era gave way to growth in church institutions and “Sabbath rest became

¹³² Moir, *The Church in the British Era*, 189.

¹³³ The Welland Canal, linking Lake Erie and Ontario, opened in 1829. The Rideau Canal opened in 1832. Before railroads these canals were the life line of the provincial hinterlands (Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 35).

¹³⁴ Moir, *The Church in the British Era*, 188.

¹³⁵ Mean, “The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912,” 35.

¹³⁶ See Appendix IV.

the rule and not the exception.”¹³⁷ In the 1850s and 1860s the province passed from frontier to relative affluence and population.¹³⁸ Canada West enjoyed a period of Sabbath quiet, serene enough to revival that of any other country. During this period no steam ship excursions, except in isolated areas occurred, major canals became closed on the Lord’s Day, railway building had declined and only mail trains ran on Sunday, and the weekly Sabbath had become a part of the factory routine. Abuses that remained were isolated to the lumber and mining industry, and also in the domestic service, but all of these were not highly visible and largely went unnoticed.¹³⁹ By this time period the evangelical voluntarist position of Sabbatarianism had triumphed.¹⁴⁰

Presbyterians and Methodists were the largest two Sabbatarian denominations in the province and were both voluntarist. The great voluntarist and politician George Brown, of the Free Church of Scotland, continued to champion the Lord’s Day cause. Baptists, including editors Winterbotham and Fyfe were supporters of Brown.¹⁴¹ Brown was commended in the Baptist press for his Sabbatarian stance in parliament to remove the “burning disgrace” from the land and protect the right of all men to rest on the Lord’s Day.¹⁴² He used his newspaper called the *Globe* and the provincial legislature to strengthen his position with evangelicals as a promoter of temperance and Sabbatarianism (on religious grounds alone). He said, “the strict observance of one day in seven is mercifully a necessity.”¹⁴³ In 1853, 20,000 Upper Canadians petitioned parliament for the Sunday closing of all public works and offices. George Brown presented this bill but was never able to gain a majority to pass it.¹⁴⁴ In the 1850s and 60s Sabbath issues centered around the post office and canals. Methodists and Presbyterians

¹³⁷ Mean, “The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912,” 25.

¹³⁸ Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era*, 2.

¹³⁹ Mean, “The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912,” 25.

¹⁴⁰ Zeman, *The Believers’ Church in Canada*, 213.

¹⁴¹ Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 190.

¹⁴² “Sabbath Observance,” *The Christian Messenger*, 13 May 1858.

¹⁴³ Mean, “The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912,” 17–18.

¹⁴⁴ Moir, *The Church in the British Era*, 189.

circulated petitions to evangelical churches to secure these ends. Their pressure never secured the closing of the post office but this evangelical force did pressure the government enough to close the canals. Yet because of this pressure by 1860 many post offices began to be closed on the Lord's Day on a voluntarily basis.¹⁴⁵ With such success Sabbatarian groups began to disband. Though there was Sabbath desecration and society was not completely pure, all major and noticeable Sabbath issues had been rectified by the 1860s. Clergy still promoted the Lord's Day but other social issues began to take its place, until "industrialization and urbanization of Canadian society provoked a stronger and more determined [Sabbatarian] response"¹⁴⁶

In the 1870s there was a renewed expansion of railroads as companies built new spur lines and rail attention began to move westward. Ontario remained the industrial centre for such projects. The late 1880s saw heavy industry and manufacturing locate in Montreal, Toronto and Hamilton and was associated with the railway and its expansion. Agricultural was expanding too, with mechanization and improved techniques increasing the size and productivity of orchards, cheese and dairy, herd size, all the while cutting the number of labourers needed. Between 1871–91 the number of Ontario industrial workers increased from 87,000–166,000.¹⁴⁷ Ontario, which had been 14% urban in 1851, became 20% urban in 1871, 23.1% in 1881 and by 1911 the urban communities of the province had swollen to become 45% urban.¹⁴⁸ The provinces economic growth had spurred urban development.¹⁴⁹

Thus the sanctity of the Sabbath that had been established in the 1860s and 70s was now exposed to the twin threats of industrialization and urbanization. Sabbath attention was also

¹⁴⁵ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 20–1.

¹⁴⁶ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 24.

¹⁴⁷ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 28.

¹⁴⁸ Rawlyk, *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, 110; and Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 30.

¹⁴⁹ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 28–9.

drawn by the shock that came from viewing the ravages of industrialization.¹⁵⁰ Industrialization and urbanization equaled new wealth and also new poverty. Poverty and other social ills associated with it, along with the monotony of industrialization that drove urban leisure,¹⁵¹ became significant issues that confronted Sabbatarians.¹⁵² Electricity, the telephone and other technological developments also enabled leisure and challenged the Lord's Day in their own right. The Sunday street car was perhaps the biggest social debate that demonstrated the growing complexity of society.¹⁵³ In the 1880s and 90s the Saturday half-holiday for leisure was introduced to help keep Sabbath quiet.¹⁵⁴ Post-1880 the churches of the province had also become significantly more urban and rose to the challenge of leading this new and increasingly urban province. By the late nineteenth-century there was a more robust Christian worldview influencing the province than ever before.¹⁵⁵ Despite the desecrations and challenges against the Lord's Day, it was by and large a Sabbath keeping land in the 1890s, thanks in part to those who promoted it like the evangelical churches and the Lord's Day Alliance. Most complaints of Lord's Day infractions were for hunting, visiting, pleasure driving, and sleeping in and missing church on Sunday.¹⁵⁶

The Lord's Day crusade, as an organized response to Sabbath desecration, was limited to sporadic and ephemeral groups during most of the nineteenth-century. Kingston, Toronto and Brantford are examples of cities that developed strong Sabbath societies.¹⁵⁷ The event that

¹⁵⁰ Rawlyk, *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, 123.

¹⁵¹ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath: The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 33.

¹⁵² Bebbington, *The Dominance of Evangelicalism*, 215.

¹⁵³ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath: The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 46–7. The argument is often incited that the Sabbath could only have been easily kept in a rural society. Though change, growth and complexity add to the challenges of Christian and Sabbatarian ethics, they never became an excuse to quit the cause.

¹⁵⁴ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath: The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 39.

¹⁵⁵ Gauvreau, *The Evangelical Century*, 56 and 62.

¹⁵⁶ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath: The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 46–7.

¹⁵⁷ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath: The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," Thesis Abstract.

sparked the organization of the Sabbatarian movement was the Sunday street car controversy.¹⁵⁸ To combat this an aggressive lobby was formed in Ontario in the form of the Ontario Lord's Day Alliance in 1888. When it lost the street car debate in a judicial decision later in the century, the Lord's Day Alliance of Canada was formed in 1898 to bring the Sabbatarian lobby, and to tidy up inter-provincial matters, to the federal level.¹⁵⁹ Mr. Charlton, MP from North Norfolk, Ontario, became the Ontario Alliance's first president.¹⁶⁰ The national Association became a sophisticated lobby from earlier experience gained in Ontario.¹⁶¹ Membership of the Association was largely British and was made of all likes from society (including upper classes) and was well balanced between lay and clergy involvement.¹⁶² Baptists were represented and engaged in this organization that submitted petitions to secure the passage of the 1906 Lord's Day Act secured under Prime Minister Laurier.¹⁶³

Though the Lord's Day Act of 1906 lies outside of the parametres of the nineteenth-century and hence this thesis, its roots lie deep in the events of the previous century, of which Baptists were a part. It has often been wondered as to whether the passage of this act of legislation was a victory for Evangelicalism and Sabbatarianism or a victory for secularism and the need to legislate morality because of the failing strength of the churches.¹⁶⁴ The modern trend is to see the Lord's Day Act of 1906 as a victory for secularism and to paint a picture of religious decline against secularism, modernization, and scientific advancement. On the contrary, that it was achieved shows that at least in Protestant Ontario the evangelical church was "culturally confident, numerically strong, architecturally ubiquitous, intellectually sophisticated,

¹⁵⁸ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath: The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," Thesis Abstract.

¹⁵⁹ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath: The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 3 and 38.

¹⁶⁰ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath: The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 46–7.

¹⁶¹ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath: The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 46–7. To learn more about this entire lobby process see Patricia Means entire thesis.

¹⁶² Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath: The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 335.

¹⁶³ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath: The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912," 319, and 335.

¹⁶⁴ Draper, Kenneth, "Finishing Badly," in Christie, *Christian Churches and their Peoples*.

and socially engaged.”¹⁶⁵ The victory of the Lord’s Day Alliance of Canada encouraged others who sought to bring further reforms by means of parliament.¹⁶⁶ It should also be noted that legislation does not necessarily mean Sabbatarianism was losing sway. No matter how strong or even how overwhelming any movement is, voluntarism could only go so far in securing societal standardization.

Baptists were strong supporters of the Lord’s Day movement throughout the nineteenth-century, both in print, action and sentiment.¹⁶⁷ Through this worthy cause, they helped to shape religious, cultural, economic and political realities of their day. Even before the Baptist press was launched in Upper Canada, it is known from Regular Baptist church minute books that the Lord’s Day was a commonly held belief. This thesis will examine these doctrines in chapter three, however, one can see from minute books that their Lord’s Day convictions were manifested in practice from a very early period. From the minutes of the First Regular Baptist Church of Oxford, now First Baptist Church Ingersoll, from 28 May 1813, the minute book reads that it was “voted that John ___ Tree is excluded for lifting with one of his knabours [neighbours] on the lords day.” In 1864, Baptists were still lamenting over the imperfect and lax Sabbath observance in their land.¹⁶⁸

As the denomination became more established as an institution the Lord’s Day continued to represent the official stance of the denomination, not unlike the year of 1813. The denominational stance from later in the century can be seen in this Home Missionary Convention statement:

That we greatly lament the desecration of the Sabbath in our Province by the Railroad and Steam Boat Companies, and express our entire disapprobation of Christian

¹⁶⁵ Draper, Kenneth, “Finishing Badly,” in Christie, *Christian Churches and their Peoples*.

¹⁶⁶ Handy, *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada*, 361–2.

¹⁶⁷ Handy, *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada*, 183.

¹⁶⁸ “The Change of Day,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 6 Feb 1862.

churches and ministers countenancing Sunday funerals and church parades of Volunteer Companies [militia].¹⁶⁹

The late nineteenth-century was a time of change that began to challenge some areas of the traditional Sabbatarian view of the Lord's Day. Baptists were quick to reestablish their stance towards the day. In 1884 there was an article in *The Canadian Baptist* the rose many modernist theological issues. Included in this article, which was titled "Whither are we drifting," were statements that challenged Baptist churches to consider whether they were drifting from historic beliefs and positions in relation to God's day. The paper stated that churches were allowing frivolous things at church on Sabbath nights in public worship, and perhaps even worse, the paper accused churches of not preaching the love of Jesus because the public was seeking entertainment in preaching.¹⁷⁰ Because the Puritan-Baptist tradition viewed the Lord's Day as a means of grace because God's word was preached, which will be seen in chapter two, such desecration challenged God's word and commands found in His word.

The occasional letter to the editor would also sometimes challenge, but more often ask for clarification on, the Baptist view of the Lord's Day. Sometimes such questions were simple requests to help a local church discern how to better observe the Lord's Day. In 1891 there was one such correspondence to the editor. It was a letter from a young pastor asking if church business meetings should take place on the Sabbath. The reply was a thoughtful but resolute, "no," after which the editor went on to state the Sabbatarian reasoning.¹⁷¹ Similarly, during the street car debates of the 80s and 90s, a pastor and Sabbatarian voice in *The Canadian Baptist*, Rev. A.W. Denovan, wrote that he believed that "No Baptist, at any rate, will believe any

¹⁶⁹ "The Lord's Day- Resolutions of the Home Missionary Convention," *The Canadian Baptist*, 23 Oct 1884.

¹⁷⁰ "Whither are we drifting," *The Canadian Baptist*, 23 Oct 1884.

¹⁷¹ "Sabbath Observance," *The Canadian Baptist*, 5 Feb 1891.

Sabbath observance which is of a merely sacramentarian character... On the other hand, there is undoubted _____ of using our liberty too freely, of letting it become a temptation.”¹⁷²

As this thesis plainly demonstrates, the Regular Baptist stance towards the Sabbath was central to their DNA and this flowed strongly from their evangelical and Puritan heritage. The Lord’s Day was a worthy cause that was part of the very heartbeat of these Baptists. Regular Baptist Sabbatarianism could be defined as:

The historic movement which seeks to honour the Christian Sabbath or Lord’s Day by observing God’s moral law and celebrating redemption in Christ. More broadly described it refers to a particular movement within the Puritan-Reformed-Evangelical movements from the late 1500–1900. Within this movement Regular or Reformed Baptist held Sabbatarian views that were consistent with their Puritan and wider Christian heritage and which were consistent with the Sabbatarian views of other evangelical Canadian denominations. However, two closely related notions inherent in the Baptist denomination, voluntarism and the separation of Church and State, meant that the Regular Baptist held a modified Sabbatarian view than their evangelical paedo-Baptist counterparts. This particular meant that, while Baptist emphatically supported the Lord’s Day on biblical grounds they [generally speaking] would not support its legislation on religious grounds because by so doing the State would be legislating religious observance. This would also curtail religious freedom. Regular Baptists, however, would promote the Scriptural element in pulpit, press and religious life and argue for legislation protection for this sacred day on social, moral and physiological grounds.

As this thesis will show in the next chapter on doctrine, the Lord’s Day was not just a mundane doctrine that was loosely held to and exhibited. It was a central part of their spirituality. They appreciated the mystery of this gift from God, this special day, which allowed rest from earthly toil, allowed for worship of the Almighty and signified many cherished Christian events. Baptists loved to capture this worthy day through poetry:

Thy morn, sweet Sabbath-day!
I love thy early, quiet, balmy morn,
For thee, fresh hopes and heavenly thoughts are born;

¹⁷² “The Sunday Street-Car Question,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 24 Dec 1891.

And many a ray
Of Love divine, pours in upon the soul
Which turns to God scorning the world's control.

Thy noon, sweet Sabbath day!
Oh! How I love thy high and solemn noon,
From thee, my God! And from this blessed book
No thoughts shall stray,
But adoration deep, and fervent praise
From the souls' inmost depths my lips shall raise.

Thy eve, sweet Sabbath-day!
Far more I love thy still calm, dewy eve.
At that blest hour my soul this state would leave,
And soar away
On angel's wings, beyond the stars to rise
And spend an endless Sabbath in the skies.¹⁷³

¹⁷³ *United States Gazette*, "The Sabbath Day," in *The Canadian Baptist and Missionary Register*, Jan 1838.

CHAPTER THREE

SCRIPTURAL, DOCTRINAL AND CONFESSIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Since they were biblicists, there is no other place to begin to understand how and why Regular Baptists upheld the Lord's Day than to examine their approach to Scripture. Like the Puritans and their evangelical counterparts, Canadian Regular Baptists held the Lord's Day as a critical component of the Christian worldview. Baptists even commonly held the Lord's Day as one of three ordinances (baptism and communion as Gospel ordinances and the Lord's Day as a creation ordinance).¹ Though Baptists are not generally a creedal denomination, there are a number of historic Baptist confessions that demonstrate the centrality of the Lord's Day in the doctrine of "particular" or "regular" Calvinistic Baptists. Examining the numerous Baptist confessions that influenced Regular Baptist churches reveals the historic context and biblical foundation for this important Baptist belief. Calvinistic Baptist confessions in North America originate from a progression of confessions that include the Westminster Confession (1644), the Second London Baptist Confession (1689) and the Philadelphia Baptist Confession (1742). The latter two are continuations and adaptations of the Westminster Confession. The widely used and influential New Hampshire Baptist Confession (1833), confessions from Upper Canadian Baptist congregations, and also non-regular Baptist denominations, all reveal how pervasive the doctrine of the Lord's Day was in Baptist belief and in shaping Regular Baptist life and thought.

In the late seventeenth-century, dissenting Christian sects in England faced persecution from the established Church of England. Dissenters from the Church of England (including Baptists) were all subject to such decrees as the Test Act of 1673 and the Conventicle Act of 1664 that sought to limit their activities and influence. The Church of Scotland adopted the

¹ "A Chapter on the Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist Magazine and Missionary Register*, March 1841.

Westminster Confession as its official church creed. This confession became an arch-typical Calvinistic confession within the English-speaking world. To show similarities with the Church of Scotland the Congregationalists adopted the Westminster Confession as the basis for their Savoy Confession in 1658.² The Baptist edition of the Westminster and Savoy Confessions, the Second London Baptist Confession of 1689, was more Calvinistic than the First London Baptist Confession. It was thought that by theologically aligning themselves more strongly with the other dissenters it would bolster their own position against the Church of England. Baptist identity was given to these confessions through minor alterations that included slight changes on points of Scripture, Sabbath and marriage. Ecclesiology and the gospel ordinances were also changed. The Baptists' Catechism, or Keach's Catechism, was used to instruct Baptists on the Second London Baptist Confession.³

By the mid eighteenth-century the first Calvinistic Baptists in America did not have their own confession of faith. It was important for them to do so because until later in the century, when during the first Great Awakening the Calvinistic Baptists would surge in population, they were at this point highly mixed with various General Baptists.⁴ There is evidence that Keach's Catechism was used as early as 1712 in a Baptist church in Middleton New Jersey. A council had referred to it, looking for doctrinal authority to settle a dispute.⁵ The first American Baptist association known to have referred to the Second London Baptist Confession was in 1724 when the Philadelphia Baptist Association referred to the English confession concerning a query towards the Sabbath. The Association mentioned, "the Confession of Faith, set forth by the

² Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 236.

³ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 236–7. Keach was the man who wrote the catechism for the confession.

⁴ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 347–8.

⁵ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 349.

elders and brethren met in London, 1689, and owned by us.”⁶ From these two eighteenth-century American Baptist occurrences it is evident that Calvinistic Baptists, though perhaps not formally adopting these confessions, did accept the London Confession as authoritative. However, to craft a statement to be formally their own, the Philadelphia Baptist Association commissioned a new version of the London Confession to be crafted and adopted. The final confession only had two changes. It added the singing of Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs as a divine institution and it considered the imposition of hands upon baptized believers as an ordinance of Christ. It kept the articles on the Lord’s Day.⁷

Differences between the Westminster Confession and the English and American Baptist variants, with regards to the Lord’s Day, can be viewed in chapter twelve of these confessions titled “Of Religious Worship, and the Sabbath Day” in articles seven and eight. Slight differences appear between the Westminster and Second London Baptist Confessions but none occur between the Second London and Philadelphia:

Westminster Confession (1644):⁸

7. As it is of the law of nature, that, in general, a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God; so, in his Word, by a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath, to be kept holy unto him: which, from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week; and, from the resurrection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week, which in Scripture is called the Lord's Day, and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath. (Exodus 20:8; 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2; Acts 20:7; Revelation 1:10)

Second London Baptist Confession (1689):⁹

7. As it is the law of nature, that in general a proportion of time, by God's appointment, be set apart for the worship of God, so by his Word, in a positive moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men, in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath to be kept holy unto him, which from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ was the last day of the week, and

⁶ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 349.

⁷ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 349.

⁸ Lumpkin. *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, Appendix.

⁹ Lumpkin. *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, Appendix.

from the resurrection of Christ was changed into the first day of the week, which is called the Lord's day: and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath, the observation of the last day of the week being abolished.

Philadelphia Baptist Confession (1742):¹⁰

7. As it is the law of nature, that in general a proportion of time, by God's appointment, be set apart for the worship of God, so by his Word, in a positive moral, and perpetual commandment, binding all men, in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven for a Sabbath to be kept holy unto him, which from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ was the last day of the week, and from the resurrection of Christ was changed into the first day of the week, which is called the Lord's day: and is to be continued to the end of the world as the Christian Sabbath, the observation of the last day of the week being abolished.

Westminster Confession:

8. This Sabbath is to be kept holy unto the Lord when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations; but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy. (Isaiah 58:13; Nehemiah 13:15–22; Matthew 12:1–13)

Second London Baptist Confession:

8. The Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering their common affairs aforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all day, from their own works, words and thoughts, about their worldly employment and recreations, but are also taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.

Philadelphia Baptist Confession:

8. The Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering their common affairs aforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all day, from their own works, words and thoughts, about their worldly employment and recreations, but are also taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.

The second most influential Baptist confession for Upper Canadian Baptists was the New Hampshire Baptist Confession that was adopted in full or in part by many congregations in Upper Canada. *The Canadian Baptist* even commended it to the denomination.¹¹ On 24 June, 1830 the Baptist Convention of New Hampshire appointed a committee to prepare “such a

¹⁰ Lumpkin. *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, Appendix.

¹¹ *The Canadian Baptist*, 30 July 1891.

Declaration of Faith and Practice, together with a Covenant, as may be thought agreeable and consistent with the views of all our churches in this State.”¹² The reason for propagating a new confession was so the new language would be “precisely the same language as it is desirable they should be.”¹³

Beginning around 1780 resonance with the stronger system of Calvinistic views present in the Philadelphia Confession began to give way. Free Will Baptist sentiments in the state, along with warmer tones of evangelism, began to soften the traditional rigid Calvinistic stance of the Convention. Instead a more moderately Calvinistic statement was desired, but it would be one in which the Lord’s Day would still find a place. Though a softer tone of Calvinism would be present in the new confession its brevity and simplicity allowed it to be disseminated more easily. The final editing of this confession was given over to Rev John Newton Brown and he presented this to the board of the Convention for approval on 15 January 1833. Brown’s confession may have remained to have little influence outside of his state, but in 1855 Brown became the editorial secretary of the American Baptist Publication Society. On his own authority he revised the earlier confession and published it in *The Baptist Church Manual*. In various church manuals and confessions “this confession became the most widely disseminated creedal declaration of American Baptists.”¹⁴ It would go on to “be revised or used by many including the Southern Baptist Convention.”¹⁵ In article fifteen, immediately after article fourteen dealing with the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, the confession states its Lord’s Day beliefs in the following manner:

Of the Christian Sabbath. We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath; and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from

¹² Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 360.

¹³ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 360.

¹⁴ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 360.

¹⁵ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 360.

all secular labor and sinful recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for that rest that remaineth for the people of God.¹⁶

A man who held considerable sway within Calvinistic Baptist denominations was Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon from England, pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle and Principal of Spurgeon's College. Throughout many of the years of *The Canadian Baptist* his sermons were featured in the weekly sermon columns. His various volumes and other works were also promoted in advertisements within the press. Despite Fyfe's attack on Spurgeon because he announced his open-communion stance, Spurgeon's popularity and biblical groundedness on other subjects continued to foster admiration towards him from Canadian Regular Baptists.¹⁷ Though it is uncertain whether his catechism, titled *Spurgeon's Catechism* (1855), was ever officially used by a congregation it can be certain that there were many in Upper Canada influenced by reading this work. Therefore, to add credence to the Lord's Day's presence in Baptist confessions, it is appropriate to capture what the "prince of preachers" taught regarding this special day. He wrote:

49 Q Which is the fourth commandment?

A The fourth commandment is, Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

50 Q What is required in the fourth commandment?

A The fourth commandment requires the keeping holy to God such set times as he has

¹⁶ Scripture references associated with this article include: Gen 2:3; Ex 20:8, 46:3; Lev 19:30; Ps 26:8, 87:3, 118:24, 119:15; Isa 56:2-8, 58:13-14; Mk 2:27; Lk 4:16; John 20:19; Acts 11:26, 13:44, 17:2, 20:7; 1 Cor 16:1-2; Col 2:16-17; Heb 4:3-11, 10:24-25; Rev 1:10.

¹⁷ *The Canadian Baptist*, 7 Nov 1861.

appointed in his Word, expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy Sabbath to himself (Le 19:30 De 5:12).

51 Q How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

A The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days (Le 23:3), and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship (Ps 92:1,2 Isa 58:13,14), except so much as is taken up in the works of necessity and mercy (Mt 12:11,12).¹⁸

It was not just prominent confessions in which the Lord's Day existed, but also smaller local confessions. This speaks to just how dear and pervasive the Lord's Day was to the Christian worldview of these Baptists. Consider article nine from the Bayham Regular Baptist *Articles of Practice*, a church located on the north shore of Lake Erie, written in 1819: "We believe the first day of the week ought to be devoted to public and private duties of religion by assembling for public worship, and by attending to divine things at home."¹⁹ One of the first Baptist congregations established in south western Upper Canada, the First Regular Oxford Baptist Church founded in 1809, included this article of faith in their confession:

8th- We believe that the first day of the weeks is the Lords day or the Christians Saboth and aught to be Spent in the publick and private exercise of religiousise worship and that it is duty of all Christians to assemble themselves to gether on that day to worship God in a publick and Social manner by reading preaching and hearin his word to gether with Solomn prayer and thanksgiving and Singing of Psalms and hymns and Spiritual Songs.²⁰

It was not just Regular Baptist churches, but the wider Baptist family too, who upheld a strong belief in the Lord's Day. Most other Baptist groups save for the Seventh-Day Baptists, who will be mentioned later, supported the Lord's Day in their confessions. One such group, a hyper-Calvinistic Baptist denomination from Upper Canada, called the Particular Covenanted

¹⁸ Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's Catechism*, # 49–51.

¹⁹ Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 166.

²⁰ *First Regular Baptist Church of Oxford*. "Minute book."

Baptist Church of Canada strongly supported the Lord's Day.²¹ Known even during the nineteenth-century as "primitive" or "old school" Baptists, they list the Lord's Day in *Sundry Articles* (1873) number twelve as the following: "We believe that the first day of the week ought to be observed as the Lord's day, for the worship of God, and that no work or worldly business ought to be transacted thereon, and that worldly conversation should be abstained from (Isaiah 58:13, 14)."²²

Even the Free Will and Free Communion Baptists, who at least in the atonement and communion debates were opposites of the Regular Baptists, strongly held to the belief in the Lord's Day. Free Communion Baptists developed in Upper Canada after 1820. On 6 Oct 1841 the Free Communion Baptists, to solidify their organizational structure, merged with the Free Will General Conference [of North America?].²³ In the confession adopted by the General Conference of the Free-Will Baptists of America in 1834, revised in 1848, 1865 and again in 1868, the Lord's Day section remained unchanged. Chapter fourteen titled "The Sabbath" stated:

This is one day in seven, which, from the creation of the world, God has set apart for sacred rest and holy service. Under the former dispensation, the seventh day of the week, as commemorative of the work of creation, was set apart for the Sabbath. Under the gospel, the first day of the week, in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, and by authority of the apostles, is observed as the Christian Sabbath. On this day all men are required to refrain from secular labor, and devote themselves to the worship and service of God.²⁴

By the 1870s this group within Ontario had dissolved into local Regular Baptist congregations, and being grafted in continued to support the Lord's Day through this pro-Lord's Day denomination.²⁵

²¹ For an historical overview of this denomination see Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 110–18.

²² Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 173.

²³ Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 107–9.

²⁴ "Confession of the General Conference of the Free-Will Baptists of America," *Christian Classics Ethereal Library*.

²⁵ Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 109.

From the wide breadth of Lord's Day usage and appearance in Baptist Confessions it is clear that not only was the Lord's Day a central aspect of what it meant to be a Regular Baptist, and indeed a Baptist in general in the nineteenth-century, but it ran so deep that you could identify it as part of the historical Baptist DNA. Common denominators within these Baptist confessions include that the day is perpetual and part of moral law; that it is a holy day for divine things; it is commemorative; and that its purpose of total rest is to prepare people's hearts to worship the Lord. It is interesting to note that as late as 1925 the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec held Lord's Day doctrines and sentiments in its official confessions of faith.²⁶

Though *The Canadian Baptist* is not a concise record of a doctrinal stance like a confession of faith, and certain articles on the Lord's Day were even known to contradict themselves at times,²⁷ the explicit doctrinal entries in the newspaper do help observe how Upper Canadian Regular Baptists articulated their stance on the Lord's Day. Despite numerous entries in *The Canadian Baptist* on this topic, all of which have explicit or implicit doctrinal projections, the articles mentioned in this chapter deal exclusively with matters of doctrine. Though issues that threatened the Lord's Day changed, and along with it Baptists responses (and even some Baptist views on the subject were in flux),²⁸ several doctrinal items appear to have remained constant throughout the century: the Lord's Day's universal obligation rooted in moral law; that it was made for humanity; the Sabbath was transferred to the Lord's Day; its observance showed

²⁶ Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 420.

²⁷ "The Christian Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 Dec 1894. The paper is discussing the denominations stance in regards to the Sabbath. The paper quotes a Dr. Francis Wayland who wrote "Principles and Practices of Baptists." Though it uses Wayland's work to support the general Sabbath claims, Wayland stated that Sabbath principles were not authoritative, but because modern churches had in the overwhelming majority come to observe it—that gave it force. *The Canadian Baptist* disagreed. Another disagreement came in the form of citing a Bavarian professor named Zahn. He believed in the Sabbath but not in the authoritative lines of the Sabbatarians. Thus *The Canadian Baptist* provided its readership with diverse opinions but also builds an argument against such views ("How Primitive Christians Observed Sunday," *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 April 1895).

²⁸ For example, in "Rest a While," *The Canadian Baptist*, 17 Jan 1878, it was advised as unchristian for Christians to work at night.

reverence to God; its desecration would result in judgment; and that it pointed towards a future Sabbath in heaven.

Regular Baptists believed in the universal obligation of the Sabbath command; that it was binding on all people because it was written by the finger of God and was no mere human institution.²⁹ Baptists were keen to point out that the Sabbath was instituted at creation and not after the fall in the giving of the Ten Commandments. As a result of being instituted in paradise before the fall it had universal obligation.³⁰ Its presence at creation, in the Ten Commandments, the prophets, and Jesus only ever rejecting the un-commanded austerities placed upon the Jewish Sabbath by Jewish leaders, gave added weight to this point.³¹ Because of the Baptist belief in the universal duty and obligation to reverence God through the Lord' Day they frequently declared that it was "strange that nations of men, who profess to be Christians, and acknowledge their duty to obey the commands of God, should be found openly violating the Divine law of the Sabbath."³² Though it was an obligatory command to be revered and obeyed, it was not viewed to be as austere as many might think. Baptists saw the day as an exceptional blessing and a great gift— it was made for all humanity.³³ God in His mercy gave the Sabbath.³⁴ It ought to be more precious to a fallen humanity who needed rest from sin and toil.³⁵

²⁹ "A Chapter on the Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, Mar 1841.

³⁰ "The Day of Rest," *The Canadian Baptist*, 6 Nov 1856; "The Sabbath is from God," *The Canadian Baptist*, 25 Dec 1856; "The Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Sept 1884.

³¹ "The Day of Rest," *The Canadian Baptist*, 6 Nov 1856.

³² "Observance of the Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 26 Mar 1857.

³³ "The Sabbath is from God," *The Canadian Baptist*, 25 Dec 1856; "The Day of Rest," *The Canadian Baptist*, 8 Feb 1883; "Rest a While," *The Canadian Baptist*, 17 Jan 1878.

³⁴ "The Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Sept 1884.

³⁵ "The Sabbath Made for Man," *The Canadian Baptist*, 26 Aug 1875.

Regular Baptists held that there was no abrogation of the divine appointment in the change of days from Sabbath to Lord's Day.³⁶ Though the conscience recognized the fourth commandment as binding, the Jewish ceremonial laws that follow the Decalogue were not.³⁷ There were numerous reasons that Baptists gave to support the Sabbatarian claim of the change in day. One was that redemption was more significant than creation and to fulfill the prophecy of Eze 43— "this is the day that the Lord hath made" which referred to the Gospel age—it required a different day to mark a more excellent and superior new creation. The practice of the apostles (Acts 20:6–7; 1 Cor 16:1–2) along with the modern practice of assembling on the Lord's Day were given as central reasons. One of the stronger arguments given for the change in day between the Old Testament and the New Testament was the use of the term "Lord's Day" used in Rev 1:10, which Baptists viewed as referring to the Christian Sabbath. The use of "Lord" marks the day as His similar to the Lord's Supper or the Lord's house.³⁸ The significant number of New Testament events that occurred on this day also strengthened their claim by demonstrating a transfer in divine blessing: the Resurrection of Christ (Jn 20:1), Jesus appearance to His disciples (John 20:16) and to Thomas (Jn 20:26), Pentecost (Lev 23:15, 16), Paul in Troas (Acts 20:6–7), as a worship day (1 Cor 16:1–2) and the day on which John received his revelation from Christ (Rev 1:10).³⁹ All in all the transfer of the day was not viewed in changing the thrust of the day being rest and worship.⁴⁰ However, most Baptists made it clear that the Lord's Day was not the Jewish Sabbath, though it was similar. Col 2:16 states that the Jewish Sabbath is void. It is a new day with a new purpose that has taken its place to

³⁶ "A Chapter on the Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, Mar 1841; "Seventh Day Sanctified," *The Canadian Baptist*, 9 May 1878; "Sunday Retirement," *The Canadian Baptist*, 17 Dec 1874; "The Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Sept 1884; "The Lord's Day," *The Canadian Baptist*, 25 Feb 1897.

³⁷ "A Chapter on the Sabbath" *The Canadian Baptist*, Mar 1841; "Sabbath Observance," *The Canadian Baptist*, 1 Aug 1878.

³⁸ "The Change of Day," *The Canadian Baptist*, 6 Feb 1862.

³⁹ "The First Day of the Week," *The Canadian Baptist*, 20 Oct 1886.

⁴⁰ "The Change of Day," *The Canadian Baptist*, 6 Feb 1862.

commemorate the work of redemption (1 Cor 12:24–26).⁴¹ There was no abrogation only alteration.⁴² The day was changed to the eighth day to commemorate Christ's resurrection and to worship Him.⁴³

Citing Isaiah 58:13–14,⁴⁴ among other Old Testament passages, Baptists also demonstrated how Sabbath desecration would lead to divine judgment because Sabbath profanation is directed at God as a slight towards Him. Judgment is not immediately given in every case of desecration because that would end human liberty. It is, however, dealt enough times to keep God's people fearing judgment (Eze 20:12–16). With judgment and Sabbath profanation in mind, it was warned to take care that Sabbath desecration was not written on ones epitaph for being a "hapless victim of Sabbath profanation."⁴⁵ Baptists viewed crises such as the Sunday street car debate as a test before the Lord's judgment and wrath was dealt.⁴⁶ The present fear of personal judgment for Sabbath desecration, along with a fear of national punishment will be explored more later.

Lastly, Baptists enjoyed the Sabbath because it gave a foretaste to God's promise of a future Sabbath.⁴⁷ This eschatological element will become evident as this section closes by viewing certain Lord's Day hymns. Yet in all of these Lord's Day doctrinal views, there was some room made for dissenting voices. Gaining momentum in the paper in the 1880s and 90s

⁴¹ "The First Day of the Week," *The Canadian Baptist*, 20 Oct 1886; "A Chapter on the Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, Mar 1841.

⁴² "The Observance of the Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 24 Jan 1878.

⁴³ "The Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Sept 1884; "The Sabbath Made for Man," *The Canadian Baptist*, 26 Aug 1875.

⁴⁴ *The Canadian Baptist*, 30 April 1857; "The Sunday Car Question," *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 May 1897.

⁴⁵ "Sabbath Desecration," *The Canadian Baptist*, 21 May, 1857.

⁴⁶ "The Sunday Car Question," *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 May 1897.

⁴⁷ Some other examples would include: "The Day of Rest," *The Canadian Baptist*, 6 Nov 1856; "There Remaineth a Rest Forever," *The Canadian Baptist*, 6 Mar 1879; "Two Recipes for Church Members," *The Canadian Baptist*, 2 Jan 1879.

many subscribers began to challenge the newspapers stance on the Sabbath, or at the very least began to ask questions. Writing in 1895 a Robert Watt wrote to the editor saying:

Now, Mr. Editor, I am young in Seventh-day keeping. Not yet even a year old. It is because I have been studying my Bible that I work six days and rest on the seventh. I have as carefully as I know how searched that book through and through, and find no authority for keeping Sunday as a sacred day. If any of your readers know of a thus saith the Lord for it, please tell me where it may be found.⁴⁸

Seventh Day Baptist sentiments were the only noteworthy objection to Baptist Sabbatarianism present in the Baptist press in the nineteenth-century.⁴⁹ Such questions for the editor do show that Sabbatarianism was not universal and also that the editors were willing to accept criticisms. However, the language in editorial responses indicates that the editors seem to be unappreciative of such requests. Responding to a different inquirer in 1894 the editor stated, “The question [the Sabbath] is one of those which are constantly coming up. . . . It is a perfectly legitimate question [denominations stance]” even though it has already been answered at length in recent and previous articles.⁵⁰ Seventh-day dissent did exist, with Seventh-Day Baptists, Adventists and Jews all standing to lose from national legislation; however, such objections did not form the norm. Writing in 1895 the editor writes that:

The position which has uniformly been taken in these columns, and which is, so far as we are aware, that of the Denomination generally. . . We observe the Lord’s Day as a day of consecration to joyous worship and Christian service, because on this day Christ arose from the dead. We believe, on other grounds, physical, sociological, and moral, as well as Scriptural, that the observance of one day in seven as a day of universal rest for man and beast. . .⁵¹

⁴⁸ “Farmers May Work on Sunday,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 8 Aug 1895.

⁴⁹ “The Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Sept 1884. As evangelical biblicists, Sabbatarianism or the Seventh-Day stance were the only true options for Baptists to take.

⁵⁰ “The Christian Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 Dec 1884.

⁵¹ “How Primitive Christians Observed Sunday,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 April 1895.

The Lord's Day was for the glory of God, the honour of the Redeemer and of untold good to humanity.⁵² To Baptists, humans as spiritual beings, were given a spiritual weekly day of rest from God to all humankind. However, when sin entered the world the Sabbath was lost. As God began the redemption of Israel He reminded them of the Sabbath command by reiterating it in Exodus 20. Yet this command was for the Jews and was only for rest and not worship. The Jewish Sabbath was thus imperfect and a preparatory Sabbath that looked forward to the free spiritual Sabbath that sin had destroyed. Christ came and gave full meaning to the Sabbath as well as renewed it. It was a Sabbath in His Kingdom and for the whole world, and a foretaste of the heavenly Sabbath.⁵³ To forget divine things centralized in the Sabbath command meant that you would instead devote your life to the god of Mammon.⁵⁴

Perhaps the greatest demonstration of the pervasive influence of the Lord's Day within Regular Baptist circles, and one that illustrates that it was not confined to the thoughts of the clergy alone, was its frequent use in hymnals. Songs, and whole sections, devoted to the Lord's Day were not limited to Baptists but were found within hymnals from most evangelical denominations. The songs churches sing powerfully demonstrate the conscious and unconscious beliefs of those that sing them.⁵⁵ Baptist hymnals demonstrated the preeminence given to the Lord's Day by the location of Lord's Day in their hymnals and the prolific number of songs allocated to the subject.

Three Canadian Baptist hymnals from the nineteenth-century had the second section in its roster allocated to the topic of the Lord's Day with pages ranging from seventeen to twenty nine

⁵² "The Sabbath Made for Man," *The Canadian Baptist*, 26 Aug 1875.

⁵³ "The Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 11 Aug 1864.

⁵⁴ "The Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Sept 1884.

⁵⁵ Hymnals, like newspapers, drew upon a wide base for their support and are thus an indicator of popular sentiments.

pages in length.⁵⁶ It is interesting to note that the Lord's Day still occupied space in twentieth-century hymnals, though its location did not have as central a position. *The Canadian Baptist Church Hymnal* (1900) allocates pages 576–586 towards the Lord's Day and the *Hymnary* (1936) also includes the Lord's Day. The *Methodist Hymn-Book* (1879) and *The Presbyterian Book of Praise: With Hymns* (1897) also contain significant handling of the Lord's Day through song, giving credence to the fact that this was a wider evangelical worship phenomenon. British and American Baptist counterparts also show a consistent trend with the Lord's Day featuring in their hymnals. In the British hymnal *Selection of Hymns for the use of Baptist Congregations* (1844), Lord's Day songs can be found from page 439–452. Likewise in *Chants, Anthems and Hymns* (1879), Lord's Day songs can be found on pages 666–675. The songs contained in these pages are similar to those used in Canada. In the 1844 hymnal the Lord's Day music is captured under the title “ordinance/ public worship.” The American Baptist hymnals share a similarity with their Canadian counterparts in that their Lord's Day section is second in both *The Psalmist* (1854), and also *The Baptist Hymnal for use in the Church and Home* (1883). In these two hymnals page counts on the topic range from fourteen to thirty-two.

Some Lord's Day hymns that transcend the hymnals from Canada, the United States and Britain, and thus resonated with larger numbers of people would include, but not be limited to, the following three hymns. These lyrics of Christian music powerfully capture the essence of nineteenth-century belief when it comes to the Lord's Day much more than any text or formal doctrine. Examine how these examples of worshipful poetry set to song, captured the true spirit and meaning of the Lord's Day for Regular Baptists and wider Evangelicalism:

The Sabbath in the Sanctuary⁵⁷

⁵⁶ *The Baptist Hymn Book*, circa 1860s; *The Canadian Baptist Hymnal*, 1893; *The Canadian Baptist Hymn Book*, 1873.

⁵⁷ *The Hymnary*, 1836. #195 written by John Newton. Also present in the Canadian *Methodist Hymn-Book*, 1873.

Safely through another week
 God has brought us on our way;
 Let us now a blessing seek,
 Waiting in His courts to-day;
 Day of all the week the best,
 Emblem of eternal rest.

While we pray for pardoning grace,
 Through the dear Redeemer's Name,
 Show They reconciled face,
 Take away our sin and shame;
 From our worldly cares set free,
 May we rest this day in Thee.

Here we come Thy Name to praise,
 Let us feel Thy presence near;
 May Thy glory meet our eyes,
 While we in Thy house appear:
 Here afford us, Lord, a taste
 Of our everlasting feast.

May Thy gospel's joyful sound
 Conquer sinners, comfort saints;
 May the fruits of grace abound,
 Bring relief for all complaints;
 Thus may all our Sabbaths prove,
 Till we join the Church above.

The Sabbath Rest⁵⁸

Sweet is the sunlight after rain,
 And sweet the sleep which follows pain;
 And sweetly steals the Sabbath rest
 Upon the world's work-wearied breast.

Of heaven the sign, of earth the calm;
 The poor man's birthright and his balm;
 God's witness of celestial things;
 A sun with healing in its wings.

New rising in this gospel time,
 And in its sevenfold light sublime,
 Blest day of God! we hail its dawn,
 To gratitude and worship drawn.

⁵⁸ *The Hymnary*, 1836. Written by Morlet Punshon. Also present in the *Canadian Methodist Hymn-Book*, 1873.

O nought of gloom and nought of pride
For it is Thine.

No sound of jarring strife is heard,
As weekly labours cease;
No voice, but those that sing
Sweet songs of peace.

For those who sing with saints below
Glad songs of heavenly love,
Shall sing— when songs on earth have ceased—
With saints above.

Accept, O God, my hymn of praise,
That Thou this day hast given,—
Sweet foretaste of the endless day
Of rest in heaven.

The Lord's Day⁵⁹

Hail, sacred day of earthly rest,
From toil and trouble free!
Hail, quiet spirit bringing peace
And joy to me.

A holy stillness, breathing calm
On all the world around,
Uplifts my soul, O God, to Thee,
Where rest is found.

On all I think, or say, or do,
A ray of light divine
Is shed, O God, this day by Thee

Should with the sacred hours abide;
At work for God, in loved employ,
We lose the duty in the joy.

Breathe on us, Lord! our sins forgive,
And make us strong in faith to live'
Our utmost, sorest need supply,
And make us strong in faith to die.

Such hymns help the modern reader to capture the emotion and worshipful heartbeat that was so deeply associated with the worshipper's deepest convictions. Hymns such as these help to

⁵⁹ *The Hymnary*, 1936. Written by Godfrey Thring.

give an impression of popular songs that drew people's attention to the doctrines of the Lord's Day, but also helped them appreciate this day in God's scheme, and to worship Him. Other notable imagery and doctrines that appear in many hymns not quoted above bring to light the wider theological underpinnings of Lord's Day belief.

Lord's Day hymns focus our theological attention to a number of doctrinal points of significance associated with the day. If one surveyed as many of these hymns as possible it would soon become evident as to how prevalent many of these notions were. Obedience to the Lord's Sabbath command and adoration for His greatness associated with the day and His character were key themes. In the hymn *Sweet Sabbath Rest* we read "Blest day of God! we hail its dawn, To gratitude and worship drawn." Indeed the Lord's goodness and His gift of this day of rest and worship were often described by referring to the Lord's Day as "sweet." That they "lose the duty in the joy" point the reader to the fact that the Lord's Day, though a command and a duty to be observed, was not something the humble believer should view with disdain. The hymn titled *The Lord's Day* portrays other aspects of the day for which God was praised. His gift of earthly rest features prominently in hymns and Lord's Day thought. "Hail, sacred day of earthly rest, From toil and trouble free," and lines such as "a holy stillness, breathing calm on all the world around, uplifts my soul, O God, to Thee" speak of the physical and spiritual tranquility brought by God's special day.

In John Newton's Lord's Day hymn, *The Sabbath in the Sanctuary*, another central thought associated with the day was as a conduit of God's grace. Newton writes, "May Thy gospel's joyful sound conquer sinners, comfort saints; may the fruits of grace abound...thus may all our Sabbaths prove." The Sabbath ordinance, or institution, was a means for the community to be renewed by physical rest and participate in grace through Scripture and other forms of

worship. “New graces ever gaining from this our day of rest” is stated in another hymn.⁶⁰ Thus proper Lord’s Day observance and celebration is connected with an individual’s sanctification, as we will see in the next chapter.

Yet two important features of Lord’s Day songs remain that are commented on perhaps more than any other. The close association of the first day of the week with the resurrection of Jesus was highly celebrated. It was seen as a weekly reenactment and remembrance of Easter, the central event in the Christian life for the believer. Lines like “On this auspicious morn the Lord of life arose; He burst the bars of death, and vanquished all our foes”⁶¹ and “This is the day our rising Lord hath made and called his own”⁶² remind the worshipper of yet another blessing associated with this day. The future hope of the eternal Sabbath was also a great hope present in Lord’s Day hymns. “Sweet foretaste of the endless day of rest in heaven;”⁶³ “emblem of eternal rest;” and “till we join the church above”⁶⁴ all capture the eschatological element in Lord’s Day beliefs.

In the stream of the English Protestant Reformation, Baptists sought to anchor themselves in Scripture as the absolute authority in faith and practice. This brief examination of their beliefs about the Lord’s Day expressed in confessions, articles and song are foundational to understand as other important facets of their interaction with this sacred day are examined throughout the remainder of this thesis. In fact, the study of doctrine has only truly begun in this chapter but will continue to form the major theme as this thesis turns to the praxis of this nineteenth-century Regular Baptist ordinance and institution. This study will begin as we apply the Baptist belief of

⁶⁰ *The Hymnary* 1936, #188 by Christopher Wordsworth.

⁶¹ *Canadian Methodist Hymn-Book*, 1873 # 647

⁶² *Canadian Methodist Hymn-Book*, 1873 #648.

⁶³ *The Hymnary*, 1936, #192 by Godfrey Thring.

⁶⁴ *The Hymnary*, 1836. #195 written by John Newton.

the importance of the Lord's Day to the two smallest units in society: the individual and the family.

CHAPTER FOUR

PERSONAL HOLINESS AND THE FAMILY UNIT

The Lord's Day was central to the Regular Baptist way of life and worldview.¹ Though legalism is always at risk of developing within the hearts of Christians, that was not supposed to be the focus of Baptist Sabbatarianism. We have already seen through poetry and hymns the heartfelt place that the Lord's Day occupied in these Baptists, and wider Evangelism's, spirituality. One Regular Baptist wrote at the end of the Lord's Day of just how meaningful it was to him: "My Saviour drew near, and such a sweetness I have not enjoyed for a long time. I am still looking unto Jesus, and hope through him to enjoy a Sabbath of eternal rest, where I shall learn and forever adore the wonders of redeeming love."² As this thesis has shown, Regular Baptists came from a long tradition of honouring and placing value upon the Lord's Day. Yet this value did not just remain an abstract concept but rather had a very practical side to it (Rom 12:1). It has been said that if you want to know what someone or some group truly believes, you need to view the way in which they act—that will tell you what they truly believe. Baptists believed that God did not randomly give humankind the Lord's Day, but that the "Sabbath was made for man" (Mark 2:27).³ It was a gift to be treasured and all its blessings used. This chapter demonstrates that the Lord's Day was a highly practical and fundamental element of their Christian worldview in shaping them as followers of Jesus. Baptists believed in the value of the Lord's Day not just because it was commanded but because of the practical elements it had in developing one's personal holiness. Baptists viewed responding to God's command as a sign of obedience and as one of the chief means in the process of sanctification. It also served a valuable

¹ Tilden, "The Christian Sabbath." See Introduction footnote 36.

² "Sabbath Evening Remarks," *The Canadian Baptist*, 19 Sept 1844.

³ "The Sabbath Made for Man," *The Canadian Baptist*, 28 April 1864.

role in the life of the family. Preparation for the day was stressed, as was the importance of corporate worship and church attendance. Likewise the punishment for breaking the command was duly noted as well! As part of God's design there were not just spiritual benefits but physiological benefits to the day as well. The Lord's Day was also central to the comprehensive notion of the Christian work ethic. The Baptist press also aided in offering practical suggestions for spending a well-kept Lord's Day.

As the Lord's Day was viewed by Regular Baptists to be an ordinance, or at the very least a significant institution, responding to God's command was a test of obedience. Faithful observance would equal spiritual and material blessings. But this obligation was not a chore. It was argued that Sabbath keeping was often placed on too low of moral ground. It was to be viewed as a privilege and gift rather than just a duty; celebration as much as a command; and granted more than imposed.⁴ No matter that it was deemed as a gift and a blessing it was still a command and one that needed to be obeyed. *The Canadian Baptist* asked of Christian obedience: "Can one be a Christian who lives in deliberate neglect of known duty? If we consult only the Bible, the answer can hardly fail to be, 'No!'" Obedience is the test of discipleship.⁵ Though Baptists viewed the Lord's Day as a divine gift, which existed for multiple mysterious blessings, in the end it was meant to be obeyed.⁶

In an article titled "From a now happy Christian" the author highlights how many people from the nineteenth-century were proud of desecrating the Lord's Day before they became a Christian. They were filled with anti-Sabbath prejudices and insisted against the day. Even to spite God such people would intentionally violate what they knew to be true about the day. One such man, the now happy Christian, stated that "the longer I persisted in my foolish course, the

⁴ "The Sabbath a Boon," *The Canadian Baptist*, 8 Sept, 1864.

⁵ *The Canadian Baptist*, 1 Oct 1863.

⁶ "From a Now Happy Christian," *The Canadian Baptist and Missionary Register*, Mar 1841.

greater my unhappiness became.” He noted that Christian piety is tied up with one’s observance of the Sabbath, something for which non-Christians would mock and sneer at Christians for believing. Of obedience the man did note that, “if any man is willing to do God’s will he shall know of the doctrine or duty, whether it be of God. The meek will he guide in judgment; the meek will he teach his way.”⁷ Humility before the Sabbath and God were seen as key traits of an obedient believer.

The desire to honour this day above all else was not just limited to ordinary pious folk but transcended societal and class barriers. There was a story in the Baptist press of Prince Alfred of Great Britain who had entered into a horse race. It was not just any horse race but a race in the Olympics in Greece. To honour him the organizing committee moved the date of the race to a Sunday. Prince Alfred replied to the committee with a “deserved rebuke” that he would not attend and instead spent the day worshipping in an English Protestant church in Athens. The articles author states that he “hopes that this example of decision in honouring the Lord’s Day in a royal youth of fifteen, will have a salutatory effect in those parts where few ‘remember the Sabbath and keep it holy.’”⁸ On the point of Lord’s Day obedience the press would even go so far as to challenge one’s kingdom allegiances and salvation based on the topic. It noted that “if you do not keep God’s Sabbath on earth as he directs, can you expect him to give you a Sabbath in heaven as you desire (Isa 58:13)? The Sabbath was a test of one’s loyalty to God. Refusal to ‘keep it holy,’ is rebellion against him; and he that neglects it shows that he is not under *his* government. He belongs to another.”⁹

Obedience to God’s command brought with it a great spiritual blessing and practical rewards. One man noted of the spiritual ecstasy of the Sabbath by recounting that “yesterday I

⁷ “From a Now Happy Christian,” *The Canadian Baptist and Missionary Register*, Mar 1841.

⁸ “A Deserved Rebuke,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 2 Feb 1860.

⁹ “Do you keep the Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 30 Nov 1865.

was rejoicing that the day of rest had come. I felt the compassion of God, and his attention to the spiritual necessities of his Church, in the appointment of the Christian Sabbath—welcome sweet day of rest.”¹⁰ Numerous entries encouraged people to observe the Lord’s Day even if that meant forfeiting possible monetary or social gain. One such story focused around a young boy from the Midlands of England. He was fired for going to hear a sermon on the Lord’s Day instead of going to the factory to work. The termination of his employment may have been seen as a horrible thing, but because of the boy’s obedience the Lord’s providence sought to reward him. A merchant heard this story from the boy soon after he was let go, immediately hired him and increased the boy’s wages stating, “godliness has the promise of life that now is as well as of that which is to come.”¹¹ Another such story centred around an African servant who refused to work on the Lord’s Day when asked by his Brazilian master. The master, considering it an affront, dismissed him. The servant’s friend assured him that because he desired to respect the Lord he would not lose by it for God honours those who honour him. In the end both he and his brother got a job with an English merchant making twice the wage. The servant acknowledged this providential act of God in that “he would have grievously offended God if he had yielded to the temptation from love of money and the fear of man.”¹²

Business blessings for employers who honoured the Lord in this regard were also recounted.¹³ In general, “the more faithfully he applied himself to the duties of the Lord’s Day, the more happy and successful was his business during the week.”¹⁴ A Rev. Benson stated that it seemed to his eyes that “the sun did shine more brightly; the works of God appeared more beautiful; and the fields more fresh, the flowers more sweet and the face of nature to wear an

¹⁰ “The Sabbath Day Poem,” *The Canadian Baptist and Missionary Register*, April 1838.

¹¹ “A Boy that Obeyed God Rather than Man,” *The Christian Messenger*, 5 May 1859.

¹² “The Sabbath Day in Africa,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 22 May 1862.

¹³ “Business Blessing for Sabbath Keeping,” *The Christian Messenger*, 11 Oct 1855.

¹⁴ “Sunday,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 20 May 1869.

unusual and a fitting stillness.” It was not that these things actually happened but they appeared so because of one’s dispositions of turning towards God.¹⁵ As the day was a “manifestation of divine benevolence” the Lord’s Day, because of its duty to observe and celebrate, was not to be promoted as “less strict, but to a more elevated, spiritual, and Christ-like observance of the Lord’s Day, that we would lead.”¹⁶

Observing or not observing the Lord’s Day was viewed as an item of obedience: “Can one be a Christian who lives in deliberate neglect of known duty? If we consult only the Bible, the answer can hardly fail to be, ‘No!’” Obedience is the test of discipleship.¹⁷ However, because Baptists were so convicted of the centrality of the Lord’s Day within Christianity, at times Lord’s Day articles moved beyond simply challenging someone’s obedience to challenging their salvation: “Rest assured that the Christian, having the love of God in his heart, and denying the Sabbath a place in his affections, is an anomaly nowhere to be found.”¹⁸ This was an anomaly not to be found because Christians should desire to keep God’s commands (John 14:15). Curtailing disobedience was not the only reason for this command but also the notion that gathering in worship and hearing the word of Christ in worship was invaluable.¹⁹ Hearing God’s word through worship was one of the chief means of grace and to miss out was to lose a significant opportunity for the grace of God to transform one’s life. *The Christian Messenger* noted that “Once give over caring for the Sabbath, and in the end you will give over caring for your soul.”²⁰ If you give up the Sabbath you will soon give up God’s book and then the very existence of God Himself. To be an active and consistent Christian was to “be careful to improve

¹⁵ “The Lord’s Day,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 16 Aug 1866.

¹⁶ “On the due improvement of the Lord’s Day,” *The Montreal Register*, 19 Mar 1846.

¹⁷ “Be Obedient,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 1 Oct 1863.

¹⁸ “Observance of the Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 15 Feb 1866.

¹⁹ “Sabbath Cure,” *The Montreal Register*, 24 June 1847.

²⁰ “Keep Your Sabbath Holy,” *The Christian Messenger*, 27 Mar 1856.

the Holy Sabbath and all its attendant means of grace, in such a way as to honour God and promote the life and power of godliness in your own heart.”²¹

In an article titled “Family Religion,” which was an aspect of piety central to Evangelicalism and Baptists alike, the article called for families to bolster family worship, preparation for the Lord’s Day and Lord’s Day attendance. It stated to “let no trifling matter keep you from the house of God. Be an example.” This “strict religious observance” was to be instilled in children and kept so that the affairs of your week would prosper.²² One article focused on a little boy who wrote that the Lord’s Day was a loving day because his parents had time to love him and tell him of God’s love.²³ Adults and children alike, indeed the whole family, were encouraged to observe the Lord’s Day to the fullest possible extent. As a family the Lord’s Day was to be spent taking advantage of the following: corporate worship, music, the sermon, Sunday school, the family meal, prayer and Bible readings.²⁴

Since spending the Lord’s Day well and making it as spiritually profitable as possible was a must, proper preparation for the day was also seen as crucial to a well spent Sabbath. Throughout the nineteenth-century the notion of preparing oneself to spend a Lord’s Day was built into the Regular Baptists’ weekly schedule. Related to this was the Baptist covenant meeting that was usually held the Saturday night before the Lord’s Supper was observed in worship on the Lord’s Day. The meetings would include singing and prayer and formed the backbone of accountability within the congregation. The members would renew their covenant with each other and ensure each other were not erring in the faith.²⁵ The evening of preparation for the holy day was important “to be spent in a profitable manner” too, as Joshua said, “sanctify

²¹ “To be an active consistent Christian,” *The Christian Messenger*, 27 Mar 1856.

²² “Family Religion,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 23 Aug 1860.

²³ “The Sabbath a Loving Day,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 21 April 1884.

²⁴ “The Children’s Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 6 May 1880.

²⁵ Crocker, *Rediscovering Our Roots*, 70.

yourselves against tomorrow.”²⁶ Much work on Saturday would destroy ones Lord’s Day as they would be too tired for Church. One should spend Saturday’s last hours preparing for the Lord’s Day: “already on Saturday, with the fading light, there seems to come a kind of prophetic stillness, which seems to say, ‘tomorrow is not as this day.’ The labourer gathers himself and his thoughts home from toil, and the anxious spirit grows devote, and seeks its rest in God.”²⁷

As a means of grace, the Lord’s Day was not just about observing the day but participating in the corporate worship of one’s church, thus regular attendance was important. Even in areas with no Regular Baptists churches, or few other churches, Baptists were still told that abstaining from religious services because your denomination was present was not a valid excuse. In the absence of a Baptist church, any evangelical denomination would suffice in extreme settings, and thus one ought to go to worship.²⁸ Since the Sabbath was deemed as central to Christian piety and the life of the Church, if absence from worship proliferated “the existence of every Christian community would be in jeopardy, and its destruction inevitable.”²⁹ If one abolished church services it would be tantamount to abolishing Christianity: “he who stays regularly away from church is doing what little he can to introduce heathenism” and is “contributing towards secularizing his community.”³⁰ Impressing this point upon young children was often encouraged and many adults gave thanks to their parents for this. One adult stated: “I owe it to my mother that I was saved from infidelity by the respect for the Christian religion instilled into my heart when she sent me constantly to church.”³¹

²⁶ “A Sunset Thought for Saturday Evening,” *The Montreal Register*, 22 June 1843.

²⁷ “The Day of Holy Rest,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 2 Nov 1865; “Saturday Night,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 16 Aug 1866.

²⁸ “Sunday in the Wilderness,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 19 Oct 1871.

²⁹ “Circular letter of the Ottawa Association,” *The Canadian Baptist and Missionary Register*, 9 May 1842.

³⁰ “Staying from Church to Read,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 20 August 1868.

³¹ “Do Your Children Go to Church,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 19 May 1870.

As the nineteenth-century was still one in which many people either walked to church or took the horse and carriage, bad weather could make for an easy excuse not to attend public worship. The inconvenience of getting ready for such a journey, and the thought of sitting through worship in your wet or cold clothes, led the press often to encourage its readership to go to church on “Rainy Sundays” or “inclement Sabbaths.”³² Trivial hindrances should not keep one away from attending public worship.³³ Such days were a church goers “holiday.” The person may have been tempted to sleep in, discouraged by the thought of getting their boots muddy or spoiling their hat. At the end of the Lord’s Day though, that person would know that they had spent their day wretchedly. It was the duty of all, rain or snow, to go to church.³⁴

Humour was often injected into this topic to help people see the folly in such thinking because “somehow” people were sensitive to cloudy skies when they never thought of being troubled by them during the week.³⁵ Why did inclement wind and nursing a cold or a fever on the Lord’s Day occur when they never thought of being troubled by them during the other days of the week?³⁶ One column writer inquired by asking:

I wish to be informed of the reason why the rain that falls on the first day of the week is so much more injurious to the health of both man and beast, who are exposed to its influence, than that which falls on the other days of the week. A conviction that Sunday’s rain, cold or storm is especially deleterious could induce them to put such restraints upon their governing inclination as to cause them to forgo the pleasure of assembling themselves together in God’s house.³⁷

It was noted that such inclement days were not just injurious to the would-be worshipper but also the pastor:

It is too, exceedingly depressing to him to see a small audience. When the congregation dwindles to small dimensions for a trifling reason, he is forced to believe

³² “Fifteen Reasons for Attending Church on Rainy Sabbaths,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 3 Aug 1899.

³³ “Inclement Sabbaths,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 9 April 1868.

³⁴ “Rainy Sundays,” *The Christian Messenger*, 10 May 1855.

³⁵ “Sunday Sickness,” *The Christian Messenger*, 27 Sept 1855.

³⁶ “Sunday Sickness,” *The Christian Messenger*, 27 Sept 1855.

³⁷ “Sunday Rain,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 25 June 1863.

that either his ministry of the Gospel is unacceptable, or that the ordinance of the sanctuary are themselves unattractive...either is painful and cripples his usefulness...ministers must face weather as much as you!³⁸

“Many persons were seen as being sick on a Sunday than any other day”³⁹ – why was it that people would often fall ill on the Lord’s Day? One writer observed that that the only logical conclusion was that it must be a very unhealthy day of the week.⁴⁰ This most dangerous disease was noted to manifest itself outwardly but its process was internal.⁴¹ “Doctors “even noted that one could develop Sabbath hypochondria that is caused by late Saturday nights, great worldly cares, hard times, appeals for pastors support and plain preaching—it is very contagious.”⁴²

In every season people would find reasons to neglect to offer to Him the worship which is His due.⁴³ Such spiritual laziness was manifested by different excuses in different seasons:

Spring. This is the season which promises brightening suns and opening blossoms.	Too muddy!
Summer. This is the season of balmy breezes and delicious fruit.	Too hot!
Fall. This is the season of the teaming harvest which is the reward of faithful toil.	Too rainy!
Winter. This is the season of social pleasure.	Too cold!

In a satirical attempt to demonstrate this illness one article from 1875 may be succinctly paraphrased. A Dr. Christian, among other recent findings, had discovered a remarkable disease:

³⁸ “Rainy Sundays,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 23 Nov 1876.

³⁹ “Sunday Sickness,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 21 Dec 1871.

⁴⁰ “Rainy Sundays,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 23 Nov 1876.

⁴¹ “Sunday Sickness,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 21 Dec 1871.

⁴² “Sabbath Hypochondria,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Jan 1877.

⁴³ “Absence from Church,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 14 April 1864.

1. This disease is of the intermitting kind, attacking the patient by violent spasms which return every seventh day. They only return on the Lord's Day, and hence it is called Sunday Sickness.
2. It is like a fever. This coldness is first apparent early in the morning of the Lord's Day in many cases seizing the patient before they have left bed. But it begins in the region of the heart.
3. The patient is sometimes deprived of the use of his limbs, especially legs and feet, so that they are indisposed to go to worship.
4. Persons affected with this disease become prone to favour ungodly priorities over godly ones, and go to great lengths to find excuses for their disease.
5. Persons affected with this disease never mourn on account of their confinement from worship, as many afflicted with other diseases often do.
6. These persons often surprise their neighbours with their great activity on Monday morning and quick recovery.
7. Most of the researchers agree that there is a low feverish heat (fever of the world), which may be detected in these patients during the days of the week.
8. There also seems to be a loss of appetite for savory food and are not interested the bread of life, which in this case is the indispensable remedy for the disease.
9. Persons affected with the disease generally have a disinterest in personal religious exercise and reading the Bible.
10. This disease is also highly contagious; neighbours catch it from neighbours, and children from parents.⁴⁴

Such acedia found in the form of "Sunday Sickness" was viewed as a continual struggle, at least for some, perhaps, nominal or weaker members of Baptist communities. The paper even stressed that "the members of our scripturally constituted Baptist churches have not constitutions strong enough to resist it. It is most prevalent among them."⁴⁵ It exhorted its readership, and by extension its readership to exhort others, to "go to church on the rainy Sabbath, and go with reverence, faith and hope, for it may be your last Lord's Day on earth."⁴⁶ Slackness in attendance in church was warned against that, "If his way was universal, irreligion would be dominant, and the nation would slowly sink back into atheistic barbarianism."⁴⁷

Though there were evident blessings for observing the Lord's Day there were also many tangible, and even divine, punishments for breaking it. Defiant Sabbath breakers in the

⁴⁴ "Sunday Sickness," *The Canadian Baptist*, 25 Mar 1869.

⁴⁵ "Sunday Sickness," *The Canadian Baptist*, 23 Jan 1896.

⁴⁶ "Rainy Sundays," *The Canadian Baptist*, 23 Nov 1876.

⁴⁷ "Staying from Church to Read," *The Canadian Baptist*, 20 Aug 1868.

community at large delighted in violating the sanctity of the Lord's Day.⁴⁸ Breaking the Sabbath may have been seen as a temporal gain, and this temptation could be tantalizing, but it was never portrayed as the best choice. On the contrary, it was portrayed as having disastrous effects. There was a story of a man who was going to take a Mississippi steamboat on a Lord's Day but at the last moment decided against it. The ship made the news the next day because of an accident on board. A boiler fire claimed 100 lives.⁴⁹

"He saved his sap but lost his sugar" was the title of one article warning against working on the Sabbath. There was a man who made maple syrup, which was morally acceptable, but he attempted to harvest his pails even though "it leaves our seat empty at church." He was greedy for sap and sought to dishonor God. Later that Sunday, after he had collected his sap, he went into the house for tea, and in so doing left his giant kettles unattended, which burnt the sap completely and made a full days' work on Monday cleaning the burnt sap from the side of the kettles. In extreme times we are tempted to break the Lord's commandments by lame excuses. The man who recounted this story was always keen to remember about his neighbour when he was tempted, because his neighbour may have "saved his sap but he lost his sugar."⁵⁰

Warnings of the consequences of Sabbath breaking were also given to parents. A story of a father who went gunning [hunting] on the Sabbath was given. When he came home he left the gun loaded and his two boys thought they should go and do as their father had. The oldest ended up accidentally shooting the younger. The moral of this story was certainly to remember to unload your gun but more importantly to keep the Sabbath, and that if the father had been at church with his family the tragic accident would not have happened.⁵¹

⁴⁸ "The Defiant Sabbath-Breaker and His End," *The Canadian Baptist*, 12 June 1862.

⁴⁹ "Nothing Lost By Keeping the Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist and Missionary Register*, Feb 1838.

⁵⁰ "He Saved His Sap but He Lost His Sugar," *The Christian Messenger*, 7 Aug 1856.

⁵¹ "Warning to Sabbath Breaking Parents," *The Christian Messenger*, 7 Aug 1856.

Warnings against seeking to gain a profit through business activities on the Lord's Day were also stressed. Two instances of business example were given that sought to demonstrate how unsafe and unprofitable it was to work on the Sabbath. The first was of a farmer who planted and harvested his crops on the Sabbath, unscathed by God's wrath until his barn burnt by a hunting accident, or in another case, was hit by lightning. The second was of a merchant's ships being lost in a storm because they set out on a Sabbath.⁵² Another story told of two men who skipped out on attending worship to go amuse themselves although they knew it was against their conscience. They helped themselves overcome their excuse by making another one—that certainly God wanted them to be happy. Upon going for a ride in their horse and cart (too fast of course), a hunter who was also breaking the Sabbath, shot a partridge near the road which scared the horse. The cart was overturned and the one man badly injured. He had to pay another to help him tend his herd for one week.⁵³ It was never seen as safe to offend God by pursuing business or personal pleasure on the Lord's Day.

Another story recounted a wealthy man of independent manners who lived on a lake and disrespected the Sabbath completely. He commenced building a pleasure boat on Sundays. He was visited by a minister one day, and to spite the minister and God, the man asked the minister what he should name the boat. The minister said, "Sabbath Breaker." The man liked this thought and named it so and even commissioned it on a Sunday. However, only four hours after it had departed on its maiden voyage a storm came up and sank the boat. The only remains of the boat to be recovered was the banner "Sabbath Breaker."⁵⁴ Such examples might seem farfetched to the modern reader but they were interpretations of events which Regular Baptists and other Evangelicals viewed as God's judgment. The Sabbath was seen to furnish moral energy that

⁵² "Warnings about Breaking the Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 26 March 1863.

⁵³ "Made to Be Happy," *The Christian Messenger*, 22 Jan 1857.

⁵⁴ "The Sabbath Breaker," *The Canadian Baptist*, 10 April 1862.

fought against temptation and vice. The press cited how many criminals on death row confessed to this.⁵⁵ One man in prison was asked by a visitor why he was there. His reply was that it was for breaking the Sabbath. Instead of going to Sabbath School he went fishing. He did not listen to his mother, teacher, minister, Bible or conscience. He recalled that he “hated instruction and despised reproof” by offering the excuse “what harm?” The harm was that he disobeyed God.⁵⁶

The Lord’s Day was also an intricate element in the Protestant Work Ethic. Puritanism and denominations like the Regular Baptists held to a strong work ethic that was viewed to have helped transform western society in the industrial revolution.⁵⁷ However, within the Protestant work ethic rest did not equal laziness, nor was rest despised. It was viewed as the great enabler, both physically and spiritually, that could drive such industriousness. The Sabbath equaled enhanced productivity. A story was relayed of a grist mill that operated seven days a week when its supervisor who was a Sabbatarian took over. As a result of taking the Lord’s Day rest the mill began to produce several thousand more bushels than any other year in the mill’s existence. The Sabbath meant that workers would be more healthy, moral, punctual, and diligent. They would lose less time drinking and quarreling and be clear headed and cheerful.⁵⁸ The Baptist press promoted such views on industry: “The gospel of Jesus Christ required that every man should have a lawful calling; and that he should be industrious in that calling...Idleness is dishonorable, criminal, contrary to our nature.”⁵⁹

Practical physiological arguments were also presented in favour of the Lord’s Day. In fact, Regular Baptists used such arguments as the basis of their secular argument for the Lord’s Day, which will be examined in the next two chapters. To reject the injunction of the Sabbath

⁵⁵ “A Well Spent Sabbath,” *The Christian Messenger*, 4 Sept 1856.

⁵⁶ “Don’t Break the Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 11 June 1863.

⁵⁷ See Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

⁵⁸ “Sunday Work,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 27 Sept 1866.

⁵⁹ “Industry to the Christian,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 24 Feb 1870.

was to die physically, mentally, and morally. Rest is essential for overall good health. The example of the former British Prime Minister William Pitt who gave a good service to Britain but who died exhausted at the age of 47 was cited as reason to take a Sabbath rest as was the case with Pitt's friend Wilberforce who accomplished much, because of his Lord's Day rest, despite his illnesses.⁶⁰ A Dr. Farre said that the Lord's Day prevents humanity from destroying itself.⁶¹ This day was, "the savings bank of human existence is the weekly Sabbath" as it prolongs life and makes one feel better.⁶² It too, had benefits for the mind. A benign influence of the Sabbath will diffuse itself along the week by sweetening the atmosphere of your home, creating domestic harmony and providing one with a clear calm head, a peaceful conscience and an unruffled temper.⁶³

To aid Baptists in taking full spiritual and physiological benefit of their Lord's Day, practical advice for observing the day was often issued in the paper. The readership was encouraged to plan their week well with the intention of keeping the Sabbath.⁶⁴ If you were away from home you should not continue your travels on the day but stop to rest and worship.⁶⁵ To keep a profitable Sabbath you were to maintain a respectful Saturday night, rise early for prayer before church and allow for no distractions.⁶⁶ Farming did not have to interfere with the Lord's Day either. Though cows needed to be fed, farmers could cut down on needless work. Farmers could retire from their fields by 4 p.m. on Saturday and prepare all their feed and milk equipment for the Sabbath. If they did not let their cows out on Saturday night after milking than they would not have to be retrieved from the pasture on the morning of the Sabbath. On Sunday milking and

⁶⁰ "Sabbath Physiology," *The Christian Messenger*, 4 Aug 1859.

⁶¹ "Physiological View of the Day of Rest," *The Christian Messenger*, 4 Oct 1855.

⁶² "Physical Benefit of the Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 27 Aug 1868.

⁶³ "A Hallowed Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 7 Feb 1884.

⁶⁴ "Next Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 29 Sept 1864.

⁶⁵ "Away from Home," *The Montreal Register*, 15 Aug 1844.

⁶⁶ "A Profitable Sabbath," *The Montreal Register*, 4 Mar 1844; "Ethics in Travelling," *The Christian Observer*, Aug 1852.

feeding are the only things to do and they are chores of necessity. Clean up from Sunday's milking and feeding could adequately be done on Monday.⁶⁷ Wives who were too busy with household work on the Sabbath were advised to work more on Fridays and Saturdays to prepare and create Sunday freedom. *The Canadian Baptist* even gave a list of cold foods that could be easily prepared.⁶⁸ To the spiritual mind the Lord's Day was "the loveliest, brightest day of the week" and because it fostered the most important thing in a Christian's life— their relationship with the Lord—anything should be done to secure that profit.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ "Have a Day of Rest," *The Canadian Baptist*, 19 April 1888.

⁶⁸ "Sunday Work," *The Canadian Baptist*, 5 April 1883.

⁶⁹ "The Sabbath," *The Canadian Baptist*, 12 July 1860.

CHAPTER FIVE

SOCIETY

In Baptist thought, the Lord's Day was never just about the individual and their relationship with God. Since the Lord's Day was bound deep within God's moral law everyone was called to observe it, whether a Christian or not. Not honouring God through the Lord's Day would bring about blessings or consequences for the community in which Sabbath keeping or breaking took place. The Lord's Day was what maintained society. Abuses towards the Lord's Day in the community could also hamper someone's devote observance of this day of grace. Interruptions that hampered this were seen as a serious offense. One article discussed the two great primeval institutions given by God, which were marriage and the Sabbath. If society took either away it would become "disintegrated and eventually polluted and corrupt."¹ The Lord's Day was seen as the "chief bulwark of the social as well as the religious constitution of this land."² Regular Baptist Sabbatarians sought to preserve the Sabbath at the wider civic level for the good of the community. Its observance would, if not spiritually, bless the moral and physical health of all, whether they were Christian or not. The Lord's Day was also seen to protect the inherent Sabbath right of the working class and renew society from a week of toil. Throughout the century several issues became areas that sought to challenge the Lord's Day. Thus Sabbatarian groups singled out issues such as leisure, business operations, civic transportation and communication, and the street car as the targets of the crusade to rid the community of such a great evil, which in their estimation caused many other evils within the community as well.

¹ "Marriage and Sabbath Observance," *The Canadian Baptist*, 21 Dec 1871.

² "The Working Man's Day," *The Montreal Register*, June 1851.

Preserving the Sabbath was not seen as just an individual, theological, or even political question, but an important civic question for “the mass of the community.”³ The observance of the Sabbath “presents itself as a most pertinent inquiry to every friend of his country and humanity.”⁴ At a Toronto Sabbath Meeting in 1852 [that is a meeting for the promotion of the universal obligation of the Sabbath] the group’s second resolution stated “that Sabbath observance is essentially connected with the physical and social wellbeing of man, and that its neglect is highly prejudicial to the best interests of every community.”⁵ It noted abuses such as the post offices, unnecessary steam vessels, railways and public houses [taverns]. It suggested the government be petitioned for stricter Sabbath observance. When public opinion sways towards Sabbath observance, “the words themselves are a public and pleasing tribute to the powerful influence of the Christian religion.”⁶ Other cities would often be examined either to show how good Upper Canada was at keeping the Sabbath or to motivate the province to higher standards of Sabbath observance. One such article looked to St. Louis and lamented that Toronto did not observe the Lord’s Day in a like manner. The article noted that “the honour of our fair city demands it” and cited Catholicism in Toronto as part of the reason for Toronto’s lack of purity in this regard.⁷

Preserving the Sabbath was vitally important in evangelical thought to stemming the religious and social anarchy that had swept France in the French Revolution. Godlessness was viewed as beginning with Sabbathlessness. Atheism and agnosticism had their root in no Sabbath and no Bible. The language used to conjure up strong sentiments for the Sabbath was intense. In

³ “Sabbath and Health,” *The Montreal Register*, 15 April 1847.

⁴ “Sabbath and Health,” *The Montreal Register*, 15 April 1847.

⁵ “Toronto Sabbath Meeting,” *The Christian Observer*, Oct 1852.

⁶ “Except Sunday!” *The Canadian Baptist*, 27 Dec 1860.

⁷ “Sunday in St. Louis,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 18 Mar 1869.

one such article one can see a plethora of phrases that highlight various aspects of protecting the Lord's Day from profanation:

It is not mans day— it never ways; it never will be. Man did not institute it. Man does not own it. When man seeks to take it away from God, and use it for his own ends of selfish pleasure or profit, he is a thief. The only right given to us was to 'keep it holy...' Many in our land who are seeking to break down all the barriers that hedge about God's day—who omit no opportunity to weaken its claim and sap its authority... Can they live with God, or rather in spite of God?... When we no longer need his watchful Providence may we abolish the observance of His Sabbath.⁸

The death of loyalty to God equaled death to the Sabbath. The god of mammon was viewed as robbing society of their souls and of robbing God of His day. When society is turned "loose into ignorance, profanity, and vice; when a moral night shall have come down upon us, rayless, starless, hopeless, Sabbathless, Godless—what power in heaven or on earth can save us from rushing to a mad and universal wreck?"⁹

As noted above, one of the great concerns of Sabbath desecration for the wider community was that it would break down the moral fabric of their society and culture: "The proper observance of the Lord's Day by the community at large is a matter of very great and grave importance, and one to which it is hardly possible to attach too great an importance—especially in these degenerate times."¹⁰ Sabbath breaking was seen as the mark of nominal Christianity. The wicked manner in which God's laws were trampled underfoot in this "scripturally enlightened land" was shameful. Livery stables, mechanics, apprentices, journeymen, and clerks all profaned the Lord's Day. These acts set a "pernicious" example for the younger "portion of this community, who are eager to copy whatever is evil in those that are older." There was a fearful amount of Sabbath desecration from the shrill of railways disturbing worship, post offices, canal locks, hotels, taverns, saloons, and liquor shops. It was viewed that

⁸ "God's Day," *The Canadian Baptist*, 6 April 1882.

⁹ "God's Day," *The Canadian Baptist*, 6 April 1882.

¹⁰ "The Sanctification of the Sabbath," *The Christian Messenger*, 13 Nov 1856.

desecration of the Lord's Day in such ways would lead to a catastrophic moral breakdown. The Sabbath, as well as temperance, was seen as a key area of moral reform that if not guarded would lead to further vice.¹¹ The press stated that society needed to "roll back this vice which is washing its waves over the length and breadth of this land" by correcting public opinion, holding public meetings, enacting legislation, and having ministers preach upon it.¹²

Arguments for preserving the Lord's Day for the wider benefit of society were stated and restated.¹³ And yet, because the Sabbath was part of natural and moral law, its application affected every facet of society and so the argument for it did not just remain moral. Physiological arguments were employed as well. The increase of Sabbath offenses was seen as hardening and demoralizing "the hearts of thousands of our dying fellow countrymen." The Lord's Day was tied closely to a right relationship with the Lord, which if not intact, meant spiritual and physical death.¹⁴

Physicians, sometimes named and sometimes anonymous (or with reference to a medical college), would be referenced to bolster physiological arguments or what may have seemed to be common sense. One such unnamed physician attested to the necessity of the Sabbath. He stated that it was part of the law of our physical nature that was written by the finger of God on humanity's mental and bodily construction.¹⁵ One day of rest in seven produced health of body and vigor of mind. It also lent to increased longevity of life. Men who worked six days were far healthier than ordinary working men, and could accomplish more work in a shorter time frame, and because of this they could provide better for their households. If society wanted to avoid

¹¹ "Sunday Observance," *The Canadian Baptist*, 29 May 29 1879.

¹² "The Sanctification of the Sabbath," *The Christian Messenger*, 13 Nov 1856.

¹³ "Shall We Give Up Our Quiet Sunday," *The Canadian Baptist*, 22 April 1898. Many of these reasons were utilitarian in nature.

¹⁴ "Observance of the Sabbath," *The Christian Messenger*, 26 March 1857.

¹⁵ "Sabbath and Health," *The Montreal Register*, 15 April 1847.

needless death, injury, and suicides, then protection and promotion of the Sabbath was what was needed.¹⁶ “Man was not made for unceasing labour;” some might get away with a few extra days or years of work with some periods of relaxation, but “the tone of the constitution of both body and mind, will be far better kept up in the way provided for by the God of nature, by taking regular sleep every night, and regular rest every Sabbath.”¹⁷

Moral, and especially physical arguments, became closely associated with protecting workers rights and renewing society from the toil of labour.¹⁸ This came in an age when the average work week was six days long with most workers labouring for more than eight hours a day— often closer to twelve or more. The Sabbath protected the inherent rights of workers, created a harmonious moral order and protected society from the tyranny of capitalism.¹⁹ The Lord’s Day was seen as “God’s special present to the working man.”²⁰ Lord Shaftesbury, a notable Sabbatarian from Britain, wrote: “Believing, as I do, with all my mind and soul, that a pious and trained family in humble life is one of the greatest ornaments, blessings and safeguards of society— the very salt of the earth— I covet for the working classes at large every opportunity and encouragement for a peaceful, well-spent Sabbath.”²¹

“The Sabbath [because of hard labour] is especially the working man’s day....Blessed is he who seeks to enlarge the privileges of the working classes in this hallowed day.”²² Sabbatarians viewed themselves as champions for the working class against the excesses of capitalism in much the same way that latter union/labour movements would. The example of the French Revolution, which abolished the Sabbath and made a one in ten rest day, was cited as

¹⁶ “Sabbath and Health,” *The Montreal Register*, 15 April 1847.

¹⁷ “The Working Man’s Day,” *The Christian Observer*, June 1851.

¹⁸ “The Working Man’s Interest in the Day of Rest,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Sept 1884.

¹⁹ Semple, *The Lord’s Dominion*, 358.

²⁰ “The Sabbath,” *The Christian Messenger*, 3 Jan 1856.

²¹ “Sunday Amusements,” *The Christian Messenger*, 27 Sept 1855.

²² “The Working Man’s Day,” *The Christian Observer*, June 1851.

oppressive to the worker. That the French experiment failed, and the Sabbath was soon reinstated, was seen as giving validity to physiological arguments. The Sabbath wiped the grime of toil and sweat away as it reinvigorated society. It was even argued that capital, which workers “serve,” needs the Sabbath as it helps society find value in material capital by remembering the things that are greater than silver and gold. It also shields capital by securing the power and triumph of law and order in society.²³ The Sabbath was truly promoted as the working man’s day. Industry, left unchecked, would exert its destructive nature against national progress that was rooted in the advance of Christian virtues including the Lord’s Day.²⁴

One social invention that Sabbatarians began to support later in the century to bolster the Lord’s Day was what was called the Saturday half-holiday. This was the precursor to the modern “weekend.” The modern weekend finds its root in the Sabbatarian movement of the nineteenth-century. If someone was too busy on Saturday then they would tend to neglect the Lord’s Day. If someone only had the Lord’s Day off of work they had no other time for leisure and could abuse the Lord’s Day in seeking out forms of leisure. The Baptist press encouraged this new holiday for leisure purposes and to better prepare people for the Lord’s Day. It was noted that the Jews had lots of time off that demanded great sacrifices of time and money, but nevertheless they prospered spiritually. When they tried to rob God (e.g. the book of Malachi) they grew poor and miserable.²⁵

For the sake of the working people, the Church, and the Sabbath, society was encouraged to push for a Saturday Half-Holiday. This would be most advantageous on a number of fronts in that it would give workers the needed leisure time for self-improvement, protect the Sabbath by diminishing the leisure-Sabbath excuse, and would thus allow the Church to gain greater moral

²³ “Civil Worth of Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 July 1865.

²⁴ “Religion A Principle of Growth,” *The Christian Messenger*, 28 July 1859.

²⁵ “Crowding Business into the Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 17 Dec 1863.

sway over society. An article from 1883 noted that saving the Sabbath was one of the great problems of the age that pressed for a solution. It noted that the Church's confidence in society must be restored against socialist and infidel writers who challenged the Church and its Sabbath. By taking action for the working classes workers in this regard they would see that the Church was on their side. The editor wrote in the promotion of this new social invention that "nothing contributes so much towards the preparation of this characteristic [Sabbath observance] as the generally observed half-holiday on Saturday. Those who would preserve the quiet of Sunday should be jealous of any encroachment on the half-holiday."²⁶

The Lord's Day was given as a blessing to not only individuals but society as a whole. Approaches to the Sabbath, which presented holistic arguments for its preservation, proliferated as the century progressed. Anything that challenged God's gift was vehemently attacked by the Regular Baptist press, who viewed themselves as the great vanguard against Sabbath profanation for the Baptist community. There were a number of items that sought to debase the traditional Sabbath. Some key disturbances included leisure on the Lord's Day, business activity, transportation and communication. The issue that became the hottest topic of the century was the issue of the Sunday street car. This issue culminated in the renewed Sabbatarian lobby, which would help to usher in the Lord's Day Act of 1906.

Though some Sabbatarians like Wilberforce were known to enjoy personal acts of leisure such as playing with his children or going for a hike,²⁷ most nineteenth-century Sabbatarians viewed public leisure and amusements on the Lord's Day as a desecration of the intent for the Lord's Day. Regular Baptists tended to view any form of leisure on the Lord's Day as wrong,

²⁶ "A Saturday Half-Holiday," *The Canadian Baptist*, 2 Aug 1883.

²⁷ See Tomkins, *William Wilberforce*.

since the day was to be devoted entirely to God and rest.²⁸ On the item of public leisure *The Canadian Baptist* stated that “it cannot be a day of rest and pleasure for it forces others to work (e.g. consider English lands vs. continental Europe).²⁹

Extravagant events like Corpus Christi were often cited as profaning the Lord’s Day. *The Montreal Register* ran an article that stated: “the Romanists may walk the streets if they please; yet we doubt whether they have any right, as citizens, to disturb the sacred rest of the Sabbath, by such a piece of tom-foolery as the procession presents.” The concerned citizens were against the festivities not so much because of their inherent wrong and anti-Catholic tendencies, but because they happened on the Lord’s Day and stopped many Christians from reaching worship.³⁰ Other distracting leisure events like militia and Salvation Army street parades, pleasure driving, games, fishing, skating and Sunday Street cars were also seen as unnecessary by the Canadian Lord’s Day Alliance.³¹ One article in the Baptist press mentioned that some would say that amusements on the Lord’s Day were good for the poor, however, what was argued as best was a well-kept Sabbath. It was argued that allowing amusements on the day would only be to their harm as it would entice people away from Church and their family and less money would be saved.³² Apparently there was a trend to Sunday pleasure seeking in the name of religion too. Even to go to a Christian camp meeting to hear a preacher at a resort was frowned upon because of the ulterior motifs of desiring to go for a walk in the woods or to hear extravagant preaching.³³ Regular Baptists, and other Sabbatarians, viewed the Lord’s Day with having three general and yet specific purposes: rest, worship, and time spent with family.

²⁸ “The Lord’s Day,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 2 June 1864.

²⁹ “The Sabbath Question,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 17 Aug 1882.

³⁰ “Romanists-Corpus Christi,” *The Montreal Register*, 8 June 1843.

³¹ Lavendure, *Sunday in Canada*, 7–8.

³² “Sunday Amusements,” *The Christian Messenger*, 25 June 1857.

³³ “How Shall We Preserve the Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 17 Feb 1876.

Although one could create a list of numerous items that were viewed as desecrating the Lord's Day, there was one particular area that was noticed as a great and particular evil which drove many of the lesser items, and that was worshipping mammon instead of God.³⁴ Ungodly-business practices and ethics were seen to be the culprit in many Sabbath breaking cases, and yet Regular Baptists were convinced of the value of the Lord's Day in business. *The Christian Observer* wrote that one can "depend on it, men do not gain anything, in the end, by working on the Sabbath." In the end work will tire workers, make them less productive, and they will not receive God's blessing.³⁵ One profanation that was noted was for Sunday shaving where twenty-seven barbers were called before the local magistrate and charged with exercising their worldly calling on the Sabbath. Two were acquitted but the rest were fined one shilling, this being their first offense.³⁶ As companies, such as the railroads, became more powerful the government became more hesitant to enforce their own laws. Twenty-seven barbers were nothing for the State to tackle, but the rail tycoons that drove Canadian progress seemed to get away with breaking the existing Lord's Day legislation. Baptists were convinced that the seemingly attractive thought of enhanced productivity by dishonouring the Lord's Day was a lie and that strict observance of God's command would be best for society. The great enemy of the Sabbath was seen as commercial enterprise, "whom the world worshippeth."³⁷

The railroad, which came upon the provincial scene in the 1850s, was a challenge to the Lord's Day movement. The fierce Sabbatarian reaction to trains made it certain that well into the 1860s all but the mail trains would not run on Sunday.³⁸ Of course rail companies, desiring a greater profit, always sought to push to see how far their "profanation" could go, but even these

³⁴ "The Sabbath!" *The Canadian Baptist*, 10 Aug 1871.

³⁵ "The Working Man's Day," *The Christian Observer*, Jan 1851.

³⁶ "Desecration Harmful to Communities," *The Canadian Baptist and Missionary Register*, Aug 1839.

³⁷ "Sabbath Desecration," *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 Sept 1888.

³⁸ Mean, "The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890-1912," 25.

attempts were met with Sabbatarian resistance.³⁹ This was in part due to a clause in the 1845 Act that exempted “conveying travelers” and was interpreted different ways.⁴⁰ In one article from 1854 a concerned reader called attention to the frequent running of the passenger train on the Brantford and Buffalo Railroad on the Sabbath to the great grief of the Christian public. These acts were seen as demoralizing and injurious to the crowds that watch the trains leave. The editor asked, “have we no God-fearing men on the Board of Directors [railroad]? And what have they done to arrest the evil?— The Christian public expect a reply.”⁴¹ Likewise, in the same issue the editor mentioned that he too had observed this and that he had twice spoken with the board of directors who assured him that the events were “accidental.” The editor blazed that it was a constant practice. He had even seen “young men get up on the hand-cars and ran them at top speed, and at all hours on the Lord’s Day. Cannot the directors put a stop to such wickedness?”⁴²

The renewal of rail expansion in the mid to late 1870s saw a new threat began to rise from this industry. Rail companies were subject to the provincial legislation but the enforcement was haphazard and the fines so minimal that the lucrative income from the rail lines could cover any charge. The rail companies would pay the fines for workers fined for working on the Lord’s Day and dismiss workers who refused to work. This practice entailed even greater profanation and disruption because of the spin off labour associated with it.⁴³ Sabbatarians sought to curb such abuses.

The Regular Baptist press viewed the mismanagement of the railway as an adversary to their civilization, public virtue, and family religion. “Every week, more and more, [we see] a

³⁹ “Railway Travel on the Lord’s Day,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 10 Nov 1881.

⁴⁰ “The Ontario Lord’s Day Alliance,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 14 Oct 1897.

⁴¹ “Railroad Sabbath Desecration on the BB&G Railroad,” *The Christian Messenger*, 16 Nov 1854.

⁴² “Editor’s Note,” *The Christian Messenger*, 16 Nov 1854.

⁴³ Mean, “The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912,” 33.

system of flagrant Sabbath desecration” decried one article.⁴⁴ Sabbath trains were believed to be undermining the Bible, and it asked “Shall we sit quietly still until the ulcer on the body of our young country becomes chronic, and we resolve to bear, what we cannot cure?” Rail companies paid engineers more to work on the Sabbath, and it concluded “to tempt a man by paying him extra wages for the Sabbath day work, and thus prompting him to insult God, and inflict evil both on himself and his family is simply wicked.” Railways were breaking current laws and demoralizing Canada, and all the while their owners and directors worshipped in church each Sabbath morning. The expansion of Sunday railroad traffic was seen as an affront to the Sabbath and the community on a number of different fronts. It was a great invasion on the people’s right to enjoy a quiet Sabbath and was injurious to the rail workers, their character, moral awareness and families. It demoralized the public because it weakened the law, endangered the purity of the institution and God’s gift to humanity. The press was quick to note that property gained by open violation of divine law would not escape God’s wrath.⁴⁵ As strong as most sentiments were there did exist a great temptation to use this new luxury among some, even if it meant keeping a double standard. The Ottawa Association adopted a resolution against railway and steamboat uses on the Sabbath in 1889, and yet the correspondent noted that many of the prominent ministers who voted for this resolution had travelled to the meeting by rail on the Sabbath. As one might expect, the correspondent severely lashed out at them!⁴⁶ In St. Thomas, the railway capital of Canada, the St. Thomas Ministerial Association was noted in *The Canadian Baptist* as feeling the full effects from rail desecration, and eliciting the House of Commons and the Senate to issue a proclamation prohibiting all Sunday railway traffic throughout the entire dominion.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ “Our Railways and our Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 27 Mar 1873.

⁴⁵ “Sabbath and Railroads,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 Sept 1888.

⁴⁶ “Sabbath Observance,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 14 Nov 1889.

⁴⁷ “Sunday Railway Traffic,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 9 June 1887.

Transportation abuses were not just limited to the new form of transport found in the railroad. The older provincial transportation artery of canals and locks was also an area for concern. Yet by the latter half of the nineteenth-century in Ontario canals were closed on the Lord's Day because of Sabbatarian pressure, and even renewed attempts to reopen them met with stark criticism from the Regular Baptist press. In 1896 the government wanted to allow the locks on the Welland Canal to be open for one Sabbath day, October 4, to allow some of the last lake freighters to get off the great lakes and into suitable harbors before winter. By allowing such a request from the navigation companies the press felt the country, on the question of the Sabbath, would once again be subjected to the companies' beck and call. The law of God and the State would be manipulated even further to suit their capitalistic desires. "By so doing," the press wrote, "is it not evident that the Dominion—our great ship of state— is drifting to the rugged shore of legalized wholesale Sabbath profanation?"⁴⁸

The issue that did the most to raise outcries against Sabbath desecration and also to rally the Sabbatarian cause across the denominational spectrum into a formidable national lobby was the Sunday street car debate. Regular Baptists were not without a voice in this debacle. Street cars, whether driven by horses or run on rails, were a new form of public transportation in cities such as Toronto, Hamilton and even in smaller centres like St. Thomas. No one doubted their place in society, except when it came to the Lord's Day. If they were allowed to run on that day it was viewed as a concession based on a weak excuse that would cause the street car drivers to work, entice others to work, and entice many into Sabbath pursuits of leisure because of this new found convenience. In the early 1880s, when the question arose, the press stated, "The only right given to us was to 'keep it holy,' and not whipping poor overworked brutes along before cars

⁴⁸ "Sunday Traffic on the Canal," *The Canadian Baptist*, 15 Oct 1896.

overloaded with idlers, excursionists, and Sabbath breakers.”⁴⁹ In 1883, Sabbatarians secured the Street Railway Act that forbade Sunday operation for those street car companies formed after the charter. However, the trouble and focus of their lobby arose from the companies already in existence.⁵⁰

The modern convenience of travel was seen as a temptation that would lead towards Sabbath desecration. Some argued that it would improve church-going and even help the poor, and yet those notions were challenged as naive in that the poor could not afford such luxuries anyway and it would disrupt the peace of Ontario cities.⁵¹ One writer to the editor noted that his visits to Toronto had always been a delight because of the city’s observance of the Lord’s Day. However, he was disturbed at the thought of street cars writing that “if citizens can be cajoled into ‘corporate benevolence’ than they need some enlightenment.” He argued that Sabbath desecration would not stop with the street car. It will be the thin wedge that would set into motion a process, where the wedge will be driven in “too far in to be drawn back again.” He drew the editor’s attention to the United States, “a great nation of corporations and monopolies rushing madly on it the pursuit and accumulation of wealth, where the Sabbath has given way to the necessities of commerce.” He noted that because of this complacency the desecration of God’s day became the norm and not the exception, and that Sabbatarian effort to fight the uphill battle to restore what they once had fought against huge capitalistic lobbies.⁵² On numerous occasions the street car debate was settled in favour of the Lord’s Day, and yet the opposition lobbies to the Lord’s Day movement never dropped their case but vigourously renewed them

⁴⁹ “God’s Day,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 6 April 1882.

⁵⁰ Mean, “The Battle for the Sabbath; The Sabbatarian Lobby in Canada, 1890–1912,” 37.

⁵¹ “Sunday Street Cars,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 1 Aug 1889; many other typical Sabbatarian arguments were also offered in “The Sunday Car Question,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 10 Aug 1893.

⁵² “Sunday Street Cars,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 11 Dec 1884.

after each loss. Such constant opposition was viewed as a form of attack by jubilant enemies of the Lord's Day.⁵³

The Canadian Baptist did acknowledge that there was a small minority of Regular Baptists who agreed with street cars by signing secular petitions for their allowance, but the editors went so far as to disown these sympathizers. A. W. Denovan writing from London, ON said that "but as they have publically expressed their opinion, I take this opportunity of expressing mine, and protesting against the proposed innovation, which would disturb the restfulness and quiet of our Toronto Sabbath." He drew the readerships attention to the unfairness of the working poor having to work while the wealthy went to church. It was seen as taking away their rights, and as it was reminded, retribution comes "to those who play with the rights of others." How would the Baptists who signed the petition feel, the paper continued, if it was their children who were forced to work on the street car on the Lord's Day? Every argument for this profanation was viewed as a sugar coated lie to entice the public into agreeing with it. The article concluded with the hypocrisy of talking about perishing sinners in church when the street car drivers were working on the Sabbath.⁵⁴

On 13 May 1897, just prior to another vote to be taken on the street car, *The Canadian Baptists* sought to help the wider Sabbatarian cause by offering yet another article on the subject. Toronto was the great battle ground for the debate because Hamilton had already begun to run their street cars on the Lord's Day.⁵⁵ This particular article cut past all physiological arguments and straight to the centre of Sabbatarian theology. The article noted that how people voted would depend on their high or low views of God and what is due Him. They were reminded of a

⁵³ "The Sunday Street Car Question," *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 Aug 1896; "The Sunday Car Question," *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 July 1893; "The Sunday Cars," *The Canadian Baptist*, 5 July 1894.

⁵⁴ "Sunday Street Cars," *The Canadian Baptist*, 10 Dec 1891.

⁵⁵ "The Sunday Cars," *The Canadian Baptist*, 5 July 1894.

national motto: *Dieu, et mon adroit* (God first). A vote against the street car would show the city's reverence to God by honouring Him with their acts of self-denial (Isa 58:13–14). The readership was reminded that the Sabbath was a test (Eze 20:12–16) with only two options: the fear of God or Godlessness. The paper urged “these thoughts be on all voters on the 15th.”⁵⁶ On 15 May 1897 the Sabbatarian lobby against the street car in Toronto was defeated by only 321 votes. It was decried that “a small number to decide so momentous a question for all time.” The irony was noted that if the vote had gone the other way there would have been another appeal after the mandatory minimum of three years.⁵⁷ For more than a decade the Sabbatarians had won those victories.⁵⁸ It was felt the whole situation was convoluted with capitalistic and anti-God schemes, and that the true Sabbatarian stance was poorly misapprehended. The paper called the Church to rise to the social challenges that this allowance would bring.⁵⁹ Later that same fall the paper noted the appeal action in favour of the Lord's Day was beginning again and would not be silenced.⁶⁰

The operation of street cars on Sunday was a hotly contested debate that embroiled the Regular Baptist press in the 1880s and 90s. It provides a good case example in which all angles of the Baptist stance on the Lord's Day were exhibited. As this thesis has already shown it was the impetus for, and climax of, renewed Sabbatarian lobby and the event that lead to the formation of the Lord's Day Alliance of both Ontario, and later, Canada. The Regular Baptist position showed the intense concern for local communities that was associated with the Lord's Day.

⁵⁶ “The Sunday Car Question,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 May 1897.

⁵⁷ “The Sunday Car Vote,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 20 May 1897.

⁵⁸ “The Sunday Street Car Question,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 Aug 1896.

⁵⁹ “The Sunday Car Vote,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 20 May 1897.

⁶⁰ “The Sunday Observance Convention,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 9 Sept 1897.

CHAPTER SIX

A BLESSING FOR THE NATION¹

When Leonard Tilley popularized the words from Psalm 72:8 he gave new strength to the evangelical majority rising up to fashion the new nation into an explicitly Christian nation. In a similar vein, Proverbs 14:34 states that, “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.” Regular Baptists looked to verses such as this and saw that if the Sabbath was not kept it would bring national disgrace. As the national Christian ideal crafted by Tilley gained support in Canadian churches the Baptist press desired to promote the Sabbath. They promoted this aim in their country so it would prosper commercially, intellectually, and religiously; and prayed for the prosperity and peace of the Sabbath.² Baptists thought that they, and the wider evangelical movement, may yet be the salvation of Canada if they honoured the Sabbath.³ Under the headship of Christ, they saw it as the obligation of nations to acknowledge their duty before God.⁴ There were strict penalties and national blessing for countries that obeyed or disobey God’s commands.⁵ Baptists believed that if the Sabbath was destroyed it would “shake the moral foundations of our national power and prosperity.”⁶ Though Upper Canada grew in its Lord’s Day observance over the century, any remaining challenges were viewed as “a foul blot upon the banner of our fair Province and a reproach to our neighbours.”⁷ Since the Lord’s Day, in the vein

¹ It is interesting to note that Confederation was not mentioned in the 2 July 1867 issue of *The Canadian Baptist*. For many Canadians life simply went on as usual and yet a national identity did slowly evolve and Baptists and Evangelicals alike began to see Sabbath observance as a blessing for this new Dominion of Canada and not just their province (Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 201). See also: Jones, Preston, ““His Dominion”? Varieties of Protestant Commentary on the Confederation of Canada,” *Fides et Historia* 32, 2 (2000) 83-88.

² “Sabbath Observance,” *The Christian Messenger*, 13 May 1858.

³ “Sunday Travelling,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 5 Dec 1889.

⁴ Murphy, *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada*, 157.

⁵ “The Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Sept 1884.

⁶ Semple, *The Lord’s Dominion*, 357.

⁷ “Sunday Traffic on the Canal,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 15 Oct 1896.

of Puritanism, Evangelicalism, and Regular Baptists, was seen as so crucial for the blessing of the nation from God, legislation was sought out to enhance its observance. Here we find one key area where Baptists differentiated from their evangelical counterparts in that they wrestled between legislating the national observance of the Sabbath and the principle of national religious liberty.

Proper Lord's Day observance was a way in which to glorify God.⁸ God rewarded and protected his supporters while He admonished and punished those who deviated from His intended path. *The Canadian Baptist* reminded its readership in a Thanksgiving address of the blessings of the Lord's Day; that God had blessed Canada with religious favours which were unsurpassed in the world. It stated, "Our land is preeminently the land of Sabbaths, the land of churches, the land of liberty of conscience, and throughout the year no people have responded more heartily to the Sabbath bell."⁹ If you contrast that with the United States or Europe, Canadian morality, because of the Lord's Day, was viewed as superior. The people were to be reminded on Thanksgiving to give thanks for the Canadian Sabbath. Yet this was also a call to better observance and greater blessings for "not until God is honoured by us nationally, as well as individually, can we hope to enjoy fully the blessedness of that people whose God is the Lord."¹⁰ Those who respected the Sabbath were considered the bulwark of the nation in warding off God's wrath from those who defied it.

In his book Daniel Wilson reminded his readership that national sins will call down national calamities.¹¹ In that same vein the press stated that it should not be a surprise if the violations "of the whole Province are suffered to go on, if God should visit us with heavier

⁸ "Reasons Why Canadians Should Offer Praise," *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 Dec 1860.

⁹ "Thanksgiving Address," *The Canadian Baptist*, 17 Feb 1887.

¹⁰ "National Sabbath Breaking," *The Canadian Baptist*, 17 April 1862.

¹¹ See also "Sabbath Observance," *The Christian Messenger*, 13 May 1858.

chastisements than any we have yet seen.”¹² The press called for all to fear the Lord, and if they did not than he would demolish all the labour and wealth Canada had sought to build up through the desecration of the Lord’s Day. Statesmen who disregarded the Lord’s Day were also seen to produce a negative effect on the country, like David’s census had for Israel.¹³ It was felt that statesmen, the Church and the religious press were “to arouse the public conscience against the Sodomite indifference to religion, or to regard the threats of God’s vengeance on the violation of His commands.”¹⁴ “Any nation which disregarded and trampled underfoot a day, so dignified by the Father and the Son, need not expect to enjoy the favour of God which is life and his loving kindness which is better than life.”¹⁵

Other nations were referenced to bolster the argument for blessings and curses and to spur those in Upper Canada on to higher and loftier observances of the Lord’s Day. Compare England or Scotland, the press point out, versus the Romanist countries of Spain and Italy. The difference is “very striking indeed” where “millions not divinely changed or regenerated sink lower and lower in national dishonor and inefficiency.”¹⁶ France’s failure in repealing the Sabbath during the revolution in 1785 was often cited as a profound reason not to weaken Lord’s Day observances.¹⁷ These differences were noted in the press in 1860:

How significantly and beautifully do they mark the contrast between the piety of Protestant and that of Catholic countries! In Catholic France, such words never occur. Secular amusements, lectures, levees, theatrical shows, political and military displays, occur more frequently on the Sabbath, than any other day of the week. In Protestant England, and in Protestant America, however, the Sabbath, thanks to the influence of a pure and Scriptural faith—is respected and venerated by the popular mind.¹⁸

¹² “Observance of the Sabbath,” *The Christian Messenger*, 26 Mar 1857.

¹³ “National Sabbath Breaking,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 17 April 1862.

¹⁴ “Sabbath Desecration,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 14 Aug 1898.

¹⁵ “Sabbath Made for Man,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 26 Aug 1875.

¹⁶ “Direct and Indirect Influence of Bible Principles,” *The Christian Messenger*, Sept 18 1856.

¹⁷ “Value the Sabbath,” *The Christian Messenger*, 15 May 1856.

¹⁸ “Except Sunday!” *The Canadian Baptist*, 27 Dec 1860.

Though Canada was proud of its Lord's Day observance it was always warned that delinquency, ingratitude and forgetfulness towards the Sabbath would be counted in the list of national sins to bring about God's displeasure.¹⁹ Referring to a Roman Catholic nation, the Regular Baptist press said that "It is unquestionable that these sins [desecration of the Lord's Day] have been the source of the terrible scourge laid upon that country."²⁰ While the advance of the traditional Sabbath to the American Sunday was always viewed as a sign the Americans were regressing in Sabbath observance, their occasional success did challenge Upper Canada's observance. *The Canadian Baptist* wrote that "we are prone to cast stones at our American neighbours for their disregard for the Sabbath" but Detroit is as quiet as Toronto on the Sabbath.²¹

How was the observance of this strong Regular Baptist conviction to be enacted in public? Pitman writes that "Baptists represented the most uncompromising portion of the Christian Church in any matter that involved the connection of Church and State."²² But what was to happen when two closely held principles seemly conflicted with one another? This was the unique challenge that faced the Regular Baptist denomination in Upper Canada. Should the Lord's Day be protected through voluntarism, which had triumphed throughout the century in regards to other causes, or was the observance of the Lord's Day to be legislated? If it was to be legislated would this not breach religious liberty? There were inklings of support for voluntarism alone, but ultimately a combined voluntarist-legislative approach developed within the Baptists of the province.

Throughout the century—voluntarism—the belief that free choice was the most powerful way of advocating for and shaping society, was seen as the only acceptable option on religious

¹⁹ "God's Dealings with Nations," *The Christian Messenger*, 3 Mar 1859.

²⁰ "Marriage and Sabbath Observance," *The Canadian Baptist*, 20 July 1870.

²¹ "Editor's Note," *The Canadian Baptist*, 31 Aug 1899.

²² Pitman, *The Baptists and Public Affairs in the Province of Canada*, 201–2.

topics. One issue of *The Canadian Baptist* proclaimed that “a strict observance of the Sabbath by the church is the only vote of the church for a decent observance of the day by the world.”²³ No church law or civic motion would help the Lord’s Day cause unless “Christians generally... show a hearty love for the positive ends of the Lord’s Day. [They will] set the standard by which society will be conformed. Laxness among professed Christians, we fear, is partly responsible for the increasing popular demoralization.”²⁴

The Canadian Baptist lauded a group of Regular Baptist ministers for standing up for the Baptist voluntarist position in 1891. At a Ministerial Association meeting on the subject of street cars they “stood in opposition to the views of most of their brethren of others denominations.”²⁵ No “clear headed Baptist” could have done otherwise the paper reminded. The difference was that the Ministerial left the decision of determining what is stated in the Bible on this case and enforcing it in the hands of the Toronto City Council. The press raged that “no Baptist could for a moment submit to the usurpation of such authority in religious matters by any civil power.”²⁶ Some councilors advocated for it on purely religious grounds reminding everyone that they were a Christian State. The Baptist stance agreed with their fellow paedo-Baptist Sabbatarians against street cars but believed that the council had to pass any such legislation on purely social grounds.

One author argued it was a Christian’s duty to observe the Sabbath not only for yourself but also for others, for “if by your uniform absence you practically ignore it, you must expect others to do the same... our labours together are defeated from within.”²⁷ A Lord’s Day bill went before parliament in 1892 by MP Charlton but it had a vague religious aspect versus the purely secular tone that Baptists preferred. The press wrote:

²³ “Guardians of the Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 11 Sept 1879.

²⁴ “How Shall We Preserve the Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 17 Feb 1876.

²⁵ “The Sunday Car Question,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 24 Dec 1891.

²⁶ “The Sunday Car Question,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 24 Dec 1891.

²⁷ “Sabbath Observance,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 June 1876.

Baptists understand too well, taught by the bitter experiences of the past, as well as by the grand principles of soul-liberty laid down in the New Testament, what is involved in admitting the right of the State to legislate in the sphere of religion and to invade the sacred domain of the individual conscience, to give their sanction to such legislation.²⁸

In perhaps there its clearest articulation of its political stance, *The Canadian Baptist* went on to say:

Our own view, and what we understand to be the historic and well-nigh uniform view of Baptists, on the subject, is perfectly clear and, as we think, consistent. Yet it is one which is constantly liable to be misunderstood or misrepresented, and therefore requires full and frequent statement. We shall, of course, simply speak for ourselves, though we believe that in so doing we represent correctly the position of the great majority of Baptists who have thought patiently and carefully on the subject.²⁹

Unlike Presbyterians who favoured promoting legislation on religious grounds, Regular Baptists saw the Lord's Day as an expression of religion and not of the state, however, they did see the magistrate as having the responsibility to enforce God's law.³⁰

Though this combined stance would become the predominant view among Regular Baptists, *The Canadian Baptist* applauded the Baptist Convention for passing a resolution on the Sabbath question that encouraged the use of the denomination's influence to stop the many practices of Sabbath desecration by invoking the legislature to make enactments for its disallowance. It was argued that one cannot exclude the Divine from political action and one should select a statesman on the basis of "their maintenance of religious truth."³¹ The nation must be held accountable less it received the retributive providence of God. "To say that parliament is no place for religion, and politics no sphere for revealed truth, is either—and we

²⁸ "The Sunday Observance Bill," *The Canadian Baptist*, 19 May 1892.

²⁹ "The Sunday Observance Bill," *The Canadian Baptist*, 19 May 1892.

³⁰ Elgee, *The Social Teachings of the Canadian Churches*, 211.

³¹ "Sabbath Observance," *The Canadian Baptist*, 14 Nov 1885.

state the alternative deliberately—a practical infidelity, or it is the greatest folly ever seen in this strange world.”³²

Baptists were involved in presenting a petition to the Dominion Parliament in 1876, which was signed, “your petitioners humbly pray that Your Honourable House may be pleased to pass an Act for the more effectual suppression of all unnecessary Sabbath labour.”³³ The petition was republished in the paper to gain more support. The Ontario Lord’s Day Association had fought hard since its conception in 1888. Baptists were members and supporters of this organization. In 1897, the organization stated two main objectives that remained to be resolved in the Province: the reduction of unnecessary work and the prevention of street and local rail traffic. Its future lobby plans included the organization of further branches, education to rouse the public mind, cooperation with secular groups, the legislation against existing deficiencies in the law and clearer and stricter interpretations of existing laws. It was argued that the once proud American Sabbath was now a thing of the past and Christians there were now trying to restore it. It warned that what had happened there could easily happen in Canada if there was no remedy to the present situation. In joining together in this work “we shall surely hold fast the old fashioned Canadian Lord’s Day and hand it down unbroken to our children, and it will continue to be our boast that under the protection of Ontario’s laws every wage earner in the land enjoys the one universal Rest-Day.”³⁴

As the hybrid Baptist stance on the Lord’s Day was formed, which sought to balance religious liberty and Sabbath observance, many came to view the legislation of the Lord’s Day as a positive thing. However, half a century earlier in 1846 *The Montreal Register* was quick to remind its Baptist readership that some, because of religious liberty, disagreed. In fact, in this

³² “The Religion of Politics,” *The Christian Messenger*, 25 June 1857.

³³ “Sabbath Observance,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 13 June 1876.

³⁴ “The Ontario Lord’s Day Alliance,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 14 Oct 1897.

article the argument was for the removal of all government sanctioning of the Sabbath. Yet it carefully remained Sabbatarian, and differentiated between giving up on the Sabbath and desiring the repeal of legislation. Four compelling voluntarist arguments were listed in this article including: questioning the efficiency of coercive measures; that there must exist a better motive for its protection than the fear of the law; that it would produce nominal believers; and that it would violate individual rights.³⁵ But a decade later in 1857, though still basing arguments in voluntarism, Baptists were commending a bill to parliament, so long as it was based on the grounds of good order and to protect society's inherent right not to labour on Sunday. This bill was focused towards public employees who worked in post offices and canals. The paper stated how it could "not see how any government can expect to sustain a proper position of authority and respect before the people who actually compel their dependents in the public service to violate the Sabbath in a systematic and regular way."³⁶

By 1864, it was still the "subject of deep regret to many Christians in Canada that the Sabbath is profaned in many ways in our Province."³⁷ A call was thus given, remembering the work of George Brown, to send a petition to the Governor General, Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly: "Baptists in every age have been ready to take the lead in whatever would promote the temporal or eternal welfare of mankind; and believing that a better observance of the Sabbath would have this tendency, let us all take right hold."³⁸

The paper went on to illustrate on what grounds Baptists believed the cessation of labour was to be advocated. The Lord's Day was to give rest to the body and brain and thus was essential to the well-being of the State. Its second purpose was the religious obligation to

³⁵ "On Legislation for the Sabbath," *The Montreal Register*, 28 May 1846.

³⁶ "Sabbath Observance," *The Christian Messenger*, 30 April 1857.

³⁷ "The Sabbath was Made for Man," *The Canadian Baptist*, 28 April 1864.

³⁸ "The Sabbath was Made for Man," *The Canadian Baptist*, 28 April 1864.

worship. However, in maintaining soul liberty, the State could only legislate based upon the first; that it was an inalienable right of humanity as proven by science and experience.

“Herein, and herein alone,” the press stated, “we hold, consists the warrant of the State to interfere in the matter of Sunday observance.”³⁹ Which day was simply a question of expediency. Though Baptists believed it to be the Lord’s Day they could not argue if the State made it any other day in seven, however, because the vast majority of the nation was Christian, the Lord’s day was more than convenient for this purpose. “Baptists, yield to none in their profound conviction of the Divine sanction and the blessed results of Sabbath keeping,” but in regard to legislation vs. voluntarism the State has no right. *The Canadian Baptist* noted that “in this they [the Baptists] differ from many of their brethren in other evangelical denominations.”⁴⁰

This was the combined voluntarist-legislative Baptist stance that won the day by the end of the century.⁴¹ It was also the same stance argued by Phillip Schaff. Baptists commonly noted two main purposes for the Lord’s Day: to abstain from secular pursuits and labour; and to engage in religious uses. However, the second was the one which the State cannot aid with nor should interfere in. Because of natural law and the blessing associated with it the day should be protected as a civil institution on which, if by choice, individuals may choose to worship God. Readers were reminded that “national prosperity and virtue are directly dependent... upon the cultivation of the love of this.”⁴² To deprive the nation of the Sabbath is to take away happy families, which were the heart of the nation’s peace and prosperity.

³⁹ “The Sunday Observance Bill,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 19 May 1892.

⁴⁰ “The Sunday Observance Bill,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 19 May 1892.

⁴¹ “The Fight for Sunday,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 21 July 1898.

⁴² “The Sabbath,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 28 Aug 1879.

The Canadian Baptist did acknowledge and publish dissenting views. It was also quick to discredit them by clarifying and highlighting the biblical strength of Sabbatarianism. One such dissenting inquirer stated his biblical case against the Lord's Day and then said, "I cannot see how we can accept Sunday as a sacred day in this dispensation unless we have a plain 'thus saith the Lord' for so doing. Have you any better evidence that you have given upon this subject? If not, it seems to be that all Christians should obey the fourth commandment as it reads."⁴³ This dissent found its form, not in the rejection of the Sabbath but in rejection of the Lord's Day within the Seventh-Day Baptist movement.

Seventh-Day Baptists, with regards to the Sabbath and Lord's Day, believed that there was no warrant under the Gospel for revoking the requirement to observe the seventh day, and not the first of the week, as the legitimate Sabbath. The first known Seventh-Day Baptist writing was written in 1650 by James Ockford. These Baptists were either Calvinistic or Arminian in their theology. They never amounted to any sizable group, only ever having sixteen congregations in Britain. The first such congregation to be formed in America was in 1671 in Rhode Island.⁴⁴ In 1900, there were 9,000 Seventh-Day Baptists in the United States with 106 churches.⁴⁵ Other than some seventh day questions to the editor it is unknown as to the number of Seventh-Day Baptists that existed in Upper Canada.

The Religious Association of Canada decried any act for Lord's Day observance as religious persecution. Jews and Seventh Day Baptists were opposed to it, but because such legislation was not based on religious grounds Regular Baptists continued to support it and give no sympathy to this group. Creating a week day of rest becomes "one of those minor hardships

⁴³ "The Sabbath and the Lord's Day," *The Canadian Baptist*, 10 Oct 1889.

⁴⁴ Bebbington, *Baptists Through the Centuries*, 51.

⁴⁵ Torbet, *A History of Baptists*, 264. For more info on this group read McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 706–711; Brackney, *The A to Z of the Baptists*, 32–3.

which are inseparable from the enforcement of much human legislation, which must necessarily regard the greatest good of the greatest number.”⁴⁶

In another article two Seventh-Day Baptists from New Brunswick wrote to *The Canadian Baptist* and asked if this bill would not infringe on their “despised” minority. The paper again responded that because the law they favoured was not based upon laws or obligations from the “spiritual kingdom” but upon physiological, sociological, scientific, and experiential examples, their fate was “an incidental result of their religious convictions, and a result which there seems to means of avoiding save at the cost of the physical and social, and we may safely add, moral well-being of the whole commonwealth.”⁴⁷ The press indicated that a Robert Watt’s correspondence, which echoed the above arguments, was lauded as correct in stating that the Sabbath should not be enforced on religious grounds. On civil grounds, however, “Mr. Watts’ argument would lead to the utter abolition of a day of rest for the nation, and would thus inflict disaster of the very worst kind which would befall any people... A few Seventh-Day worshippers cannot be spared the inconvenience for the sake of the nation’s loss.”⁴⁸

The combined Baptist stance gave the impression to other Evangelicals that the denomination did not support the Lord’s Day because it did not support legislation on all grounds. This was evident in the street car debate where it was presumed by some Evangelicals that Regular Baptists were in favour of street cars. *The Canadian Baptist* corrected such false thinking by restating that Baptist sentiment would be “quite unanimous in maintaining intact the quiet of our present peaceful Sabbath.” In fact the paper wrote, “we have yet to meet the first Baptist who favours the running of our street cars on Sunday.”⁴⁹ The misapprehension came

⁴⁶ “The Sunday Observance Bill,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 19 May 1892.

⁴⁷ “Sunday Laws and Religious Liberty,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 9 Feb 1893.

⁴⁸ “Editor’s Note on Seventh-Day Baptists,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 15 Aug 1895.

⁴⁹ “The Sunday Street Car Question,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 15 Jan 1891.

from the Baptist view of the union of Church and State. Baptists, the paper stated, could not ask or expect the State to enforce Sabbath observance on religious grounds. They would, however, adopt views being purported by men like Schaff, and indeed fight for the Sabbath on political grounds, but it would be a nuanced argument from other contemporary evangelical denominations.⁵⁰ Such enforcement was seen as a necessity because “the practical abolition of the legal day of rest would be one of the worst evils that could befall the citizens of Canada, and that, on the principle of opposing the beginning of evil, whatever tends in this direction should be vigourously combatted by all patriotic citizens.”⁵¹

Regular Baptists saw the great irony of so-called “Christians” who in an open and fearless manner did not keep the Sabbath. The hope was that if so many of their legislators were Christian they would put a stop to railway traffic, steamboat work, and post office business.⁵² Sabbath observance was seen as “of great importance to the whole country.” The Baptist press stated that it was glad that parliament was beginning to take up the topic in a “decided manner.” They also stated that governments have no right in legislating the religious manner in which the day must be observed but did, based on Romans 13, have the responsibility of prohibiting secular labour and punishing the evildoers. The government should prohibit work “on this ground, of the evils to which they uniformly lend, the corruption of morals they engender, and the actual crimes or breaches of law, peace and order that ensue.”⁵³

At the end of the struggle between their convictions between Sabbath and religious liberty, Regular Baptists recognized that the State needed the Sabbath to illumine the public

⁵⁰ “The Sunday Street Car Question,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 15 Jan 1891; see also “The Sunday Street Car Question,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 27 Aug 1896.

⁵¹ “The Sunday Street Car Question,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 15 Jan 1891.

⁵² “Observance of the Sabbath,” *The Christian Messenger*, 26 March 1857.

⁵³ “Sabbath Observance,” *The Christian Messenger*, 30 April 1857.

conscience, guard public safety, cause humanity to recognize the Eternal Lawgiver, and to secure the moral atmosphere of society. Justice McLean reminded Canadians that “where there is no Christian Sabbath, there is no Christian morality: and without this free institutions cannot long be sustained.”⁵⁴ Other civic leaders, such as Attorney General Bates were quick to remind the populace that “if Sunday laws be neglected or despised, the laws of person and property will soon share their fate, and be equally disregarded.”⁵⁵ Religious grounds aside, it was the Regular Baptist stance “that the observance of one day in seven as a day of universal rest for man and beast should be enforced as a necessity to the health and highest well-being of the nation and the race of mankind.”⁵⁶ Because of the Baptists’ unique heritage the Lord’s Day and religious liberty would be purported in tandem within Regular Baptist Sabbatarianism to help secure Lord’s Day legislation that upheld religious liberty.

⁵⁴ “Sunday,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Feb 1869.

⁵⁵ “Sunday,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 Feb 1869.

⁵⁶ “How Primitive Christians Observed Sunday,” *The Canadian Baptist*, 4 April 1895.

CONCLUSION

The thesis provides an original contribution to the social and intellectual history of Regular Baptists and the province at large by addressing an ever present and important nineteenth-century topic within Canadian Regular Baptist history that has never before been collectively examined. The thesis accomplished this primarily by looking at the Regular Baptist press from 1838–1899. The religious press was one of the largest and most powerful influences in shaping attitudes in nineteenth-century Upper Canada. The press did not just report on a plethora of events and subjects of interest to their readership, but also had the “awesome power” to shape the attitudes and opinions, and the way Regular Baptists thought about the world in which they lived.⁵⁷ Throughout this century the Baptist press fostered a deep appreciation towards the Lord’s Day. Many secondary sources focus on the Lord’s Day as it developed through Church history, or in a particular era (e.g. the Puritan Sabbath). Nothing specific to Regular Baptists, let alone Upper Canadian Regular Baptists, however, has ever been attempted. This lack of attention to such an enormous pillar of nineteenth-century Evangelicalism is a significant void in the intellectual and social history of Evangelicalism and Canadian Regular Baptists. This thesis fills this void.

Why was the Lord’s Day so important to these Baptists? The wide-ranging primary sources, especially the Regular Baptist press, it becomes clear just how important the Lord’s Day was to Regular Baptists in Ontario. That their views held firm throughout the century demonstrates the importance of the doctrines and practices of the Lord’s Day to the nineteenth-century Canadian Regular Baptists in Upper Canada. Observing and celebrating the Lord’s Day was vital to them. It was of paramount significance in the quest for social reform and religious

⁵⁷ Robertson, “His Dominion vs New Ireland,” 93.

piety. The thesis contends that Regular Baptist support for the Lord's Day was rooted in a number of interrelated convictions: its scriptural, doctrinal and confessional significance, its observance strengthened personal holiness and the family unit, its desecration was harmful to society, and lastly, its observance would bring a blessing to the nation.

Throughout the pages of this thesis a number of important conclusions have been made. In the introduction, aside from being introduced to the topic at hand, important methodological and source observations were noted. Of these the two most significant were of the value in using religious newspapers to undertake historical research and also the void in contemporary historical research on the Lord's Day. In chapter one the Regular Baptist denomination was introduced by giving a brief historical sketch that included its early beginnings, provincial issues and the Baptist press. This historical background helped to situate Regular Baptist Sabbatarianism within the wider denominational context. Chapter two provided the wider Puritan and Evangelical heritage in which Regular Baptist Sabbatarianism is located. The observance and celebration of the Lord's Day was not just a Baptist phenomenon but was deeply rooted in their wider heritage. In these chapters the Sabbatarian cause was also situated with the secular context of a century experiencing great change.

In chapter three it was observed how all Baptist confessions, except those of Seventh-Day Baptists, held the Lord's Day to be an important component to the Christian worldview. By examining the Lord's Day doctrines present in the Baptist press, along with these confessions, standard Lord's Day beliefs that were viewed throughout the span of the century were identified. Examining Lord's Day hymns also shed light on many of these convictions and gave witness to its importance within Regular Baptist and evangelical spirituality. In chapter four this thesis demonstrated that the Lord's Day was not just one of many doctrines. For Regular Baptists the

Lord's Day was central to Christian obedience and sanctification. At an individual level it was one of the premiere means by which God delivered His grace. Participating in this grace as an individual, family and church family would create spiritual as well as physiological blessings. Divine reprimands were duly noted for those who sought to profane the Sabbath. The Lord's Day also had a central location within the Protestant work ethic. In chapter five it was shown that Regular Baptists saw the societal importance of the day as a bulwark against physical decay, worker rights, and encroaching evils from abuses like leisure and the railroad. Lastly, this thesis contended that the Lord's Day was considered to be a most worthy cause, by demonstrating how its observance could also prosper or bring judgment upon the nation. The Baptist press captured an unique element that Regular Baptists brought to the legislative quest to enforce the Lord's Day by helping to base such legislation on physiological arguments rather than religious, thus securing for Regular Baptists the protection of religious liberty.

The Regular Baptist approach towards observing the Lord's Day was especially unique in that Baptists, champions of the separation of Church and State and religious liberty, deviated from their evangelical counterparts when it came to the legal enforcement of the Lord's Day. While many evangelical denominations supported legislation on religious grounds alone because Canada was predominantly a Christian nation, Regular Baptists (who agreed with supporting the Lord's Day through legislation) felt that this compromised another dearly held value of religious liberty. To balance their commitments to both of these important and traditional denominational convictions they argued instead for legislation to be based on physiological and other social and moral arguments rather than explicitly on Christian values. This stance drew much criticism and misunderstandings from the other denominations that supported Lord's Day legislation.

However, such a stance did secure a non-religious basis and temper explicitly Christian language for much of the Lord's Day legislative discussions as the Sabbatarian lobby gained ground.

As this investigation concludes there is one last story worth telling. It is a story that captures the heart of how these Baptists viewed the Lord's Day and is a theme that has transcended all of the chapters in this thesis. Keeping the Lord's Day was not conditional of salvation; although it was deemed as so important that sometimes this distinction could be lost. As chapter four demonstrated, observing and celebrating the Lord's Day was ultimately about obedience to God.⁵⁸ All of the interrelated Regular Baptist convictions surrounding the Lord's Day coalesce under obedience. The following is a story about a pastor and his sentiments. It is worth recounting here because it adequately summarizes the transcendent and driving sentiment of obedience that was at the heart of Regular Baptist Sabbatarianism. It may be adequately paraphrased:

A Rev. Dr. Baker recounted the following ministerial event, which had happened some thirty years prior, to some of his friends. Rising out of bed to preach seven to eight miles away he awoke to "rain descending in torrents, and the wind blowing a perfect hurricane." It was a "rainy Sunday." He debated whether he ought to go and determined a resolute "yes." He got to his preaching point "with horse trembling and not a dry thread upon" him. He posed a question to his friends. How many folks journeyed out to hear him preach? His friends guessed from as high as forty-five to as low as twenty. He replied, "not one." Not even the congregant that lived next to the church. His friends asked, "and how did you feel, Doctor, on finding that your self-sacrificing labours had met with such a poor return?" He replied, "never happier and more contented in my life, for I felt that if all the world had neglected their duty, I had not neglected mine."⁵⁹

The Lord's Day was crucial to Christian obedience and an orthodox and robust Christian worldview that these Baptists sought to foster. George R. Roberts, business manager of the *Canadian Baptist* from 1884–1901, and managing editor from 1901–04, wrote these words at the

⁵⁸ See Chapter Four.

⁵⁹ "A Rainy Sunday," *The Canadian Baptist*, 9 April 1863.

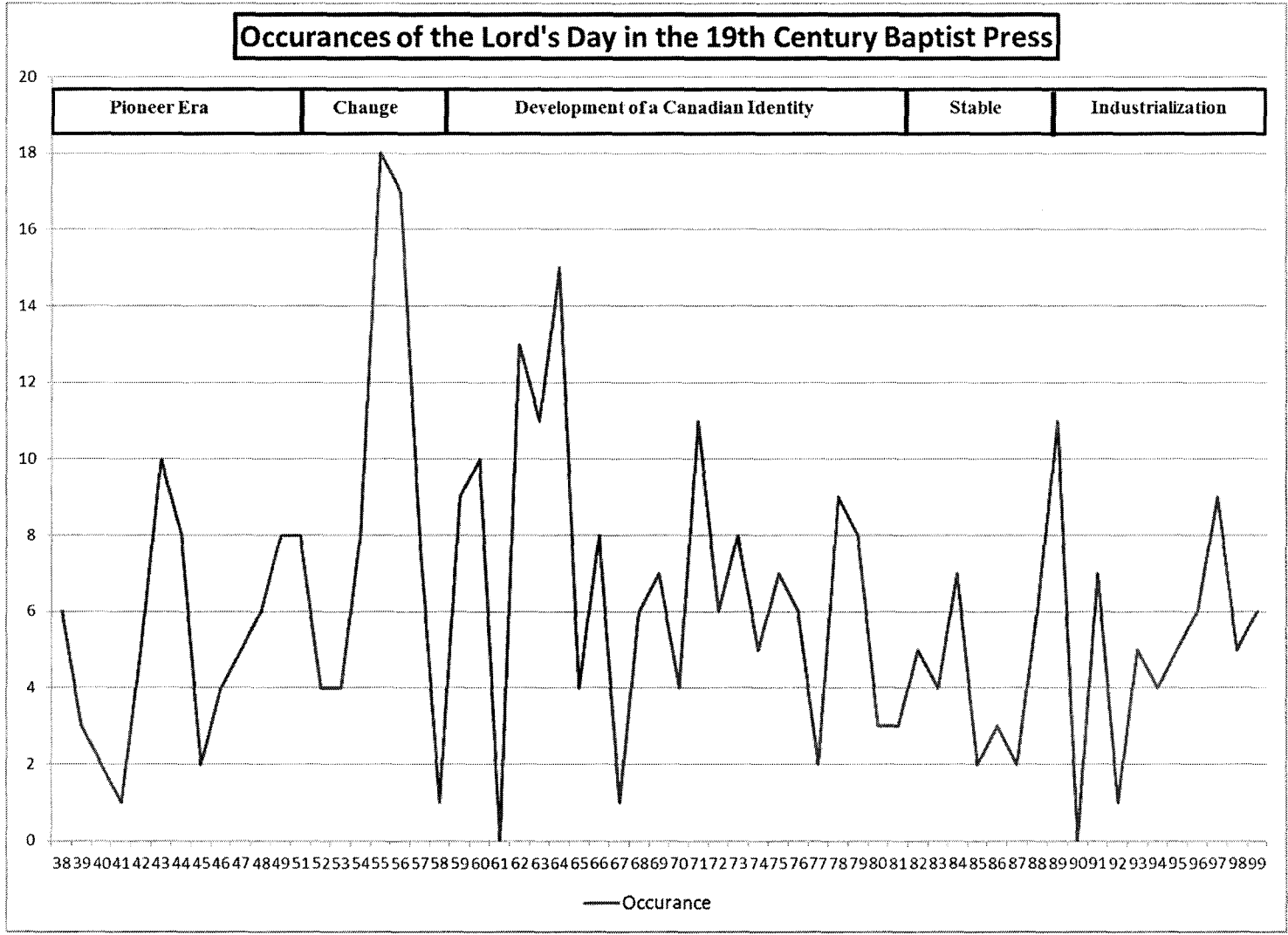
turn of the twentieth-century. Robert's farewell write-up in *The Canadian Baptist*, during the fundamentalist/modernist debate, sought to establish *The Canadian Baptist* as a bulwark of Regular Baptist orthodoxy of which the Lord's Day continued to feature prominently. He wrote:

I would say that my aim has been to make *The Baptist* a paper to be desired by Baptist families, to keep it to the old lines of Baptist doctrine and practice [of which the Lord's Day was evidently a part], to give scant space to new theories and new theologies, and none at all to the specious infidelity which prevails in some high places, and is calculated to disturb the humble believer who takes the Word as it is written and believes without reservation when the Divine Author speaks.⁶⁰

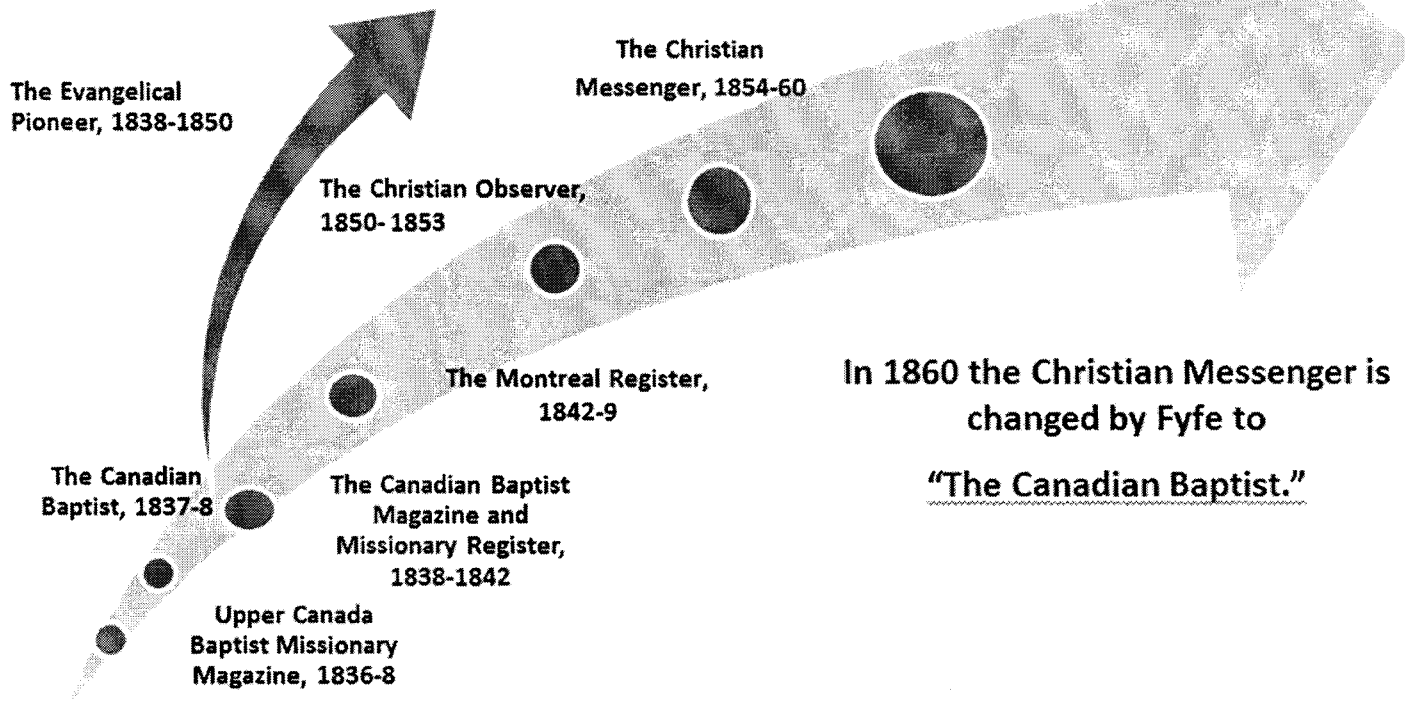
This thesis listens attentively to the Regular Baptists of the nineteenth-century on the question of the Lord's Day. Besides from the historical research my intent has been that this effort may serve in its own way to rekindle an appreciation (if not an intelligent debate) not just of the Sabbath in Baptist history but of the splendour of the Lord's Day as an ordinance in God's word. Faithful and joyful Lord's Day observance and celebration, we should not forget, is among the most concrete ways for the Church to witness to a world full of turmoil and unrest, that there does indeed "remain a rest for the people of God" (Heb 4:9).⁶¹ It too remains vital for the future health of Christ's Church. Voltaire's "prophetic" words, I believe, ring true in many cases in the Church today because of a failure of contemporary Christianity to uphold this biblical, traditional and elementary Christian practice. It is my prayer that this academic reflection and investigation into Regular Baptist history in Upper Canada from the nineteenth-century will not only add to the scholarly discussion surrounding Baptist social and intellectual history, but will also serve as a catalyst to encourage a sincere and heartfelt re-evaluation of our Baptist roots in this subject area.

⁶⁰ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 88.

⁶¹ There are certainly many blessed forms of rest that the Christian life and spiritual practices offer but the Lord's Day is of a weighty importance.



**The Development of the Regular Baptist Press in Central Canada
during the Nineteenth-Century.**



⁶³ Based upon "Canadian Baptist Publications" which was prepared by Gordon Heath, 2006.

Appendix III⁶⁴An Act to prevent the Profanation of the Lord's Day,
in Upper Canada.

WHEREAS it is expedient to enact a Law against the Profanation of the Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday, which day ought to be duly observed and kept holy: Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and Assembly of Canada, enacts as follows:

1. It is not lawful for any Merchant, Tradesman, Artificer, Mechanic, Workman, Labourer or other person whatsoever, on the Lord's Day to sell or publicly shew forth, or expose, or offer for sale, or to purchase, any goods, chattels, or other personal property, or any real estate whatsoever, or to do or exercise any worldly labour, business or work of his ordinary calling, (conveying Travellers or Her Majesty's Mail, by land or by water, selling Drugs and Medicines, and other works of necessity, and works of charity, only excepted). 8 V. c. 45, s. 1. No sale to take place on Sunday.
2. It is not lawful for any person on that day to hold, convene or to attend any public political meeting, or to tipple, or to allow or permit tippling in any Inn, Tavern, Grocery or House of Public Entertainment, or to revel, or publicly exhibit himself in a state of intoxication, or to brawl or use profane language in the public streets or open air, so as to create any riot or disturbance, or annoyance to Her Majesty's peaceable subjects. Political meetings, tippling, &c., prohibited on Sunday.
3. It is not lawful for any person on that day to play at skittles, ball, foot-ball, racket, or any other noisy game, or to gamble with dice or otherwise, or to run races on foot, or on horseback, or in carriages, or in vehicles of any sort. 8 V. c. 45, s. 1. Games and amusements, prohibited.
4. Except in defence of his property, from any wolf or other ravenous beast or a bird of prey, it is not lawful for any person on that day to go out hunting or shooting, or in quest of, or to take, kill or destroy, any deer or other game, or any wild animal, or any wild fowl or bird, or to use any dog, gun, rifle or other engine, net or trap, for the above mentioned purpose. 8 V. c. 45, s. 1. Exception. Hunting and shooting.

⁶⁴ Ontario. Consolidated Statutes of Upper Canada, 1859.

Fishing

5. It is not lawful for any person on that day to go out fishing or to take, kill or destroy any fish, or to use any gun, fishing rod, net or other engine for that purpose. 8 V. c. 45, s. 1.

Bathing

6. It is not lawful for any person on that day to bathe in any exposed situation in any water within the limits of any incorporated City or Town, or within view of any place of Public Worship, or private residence. 8 V. c. 45, s. 1.

Penalty.

7. Any person convicted before a Justice of the Peace of any act hereinbefore declared not to be lawful, upon the oath or affirmation of one or more than one credible witness, or upon view had of the offence by the said Justice himself, shall, for every such offence, be fined in a sum not exceeding forty dollars, nor less than one dollar, together with the costs and charges attending the proceedings and conviction. 8 V. c. 45, s. 3.

Sales and
agreements
made on Sun-
day to be void.

8. All sales and purchases, and all contracts and agreements for sale or purchase, of any real or personal property whatsoever, made by any person or persons on the Lord's Day, shall be utterly null and void. 8 V. c. 45, s. 2.

Justice to sum-
mon accused
party.

9. When any person has been charged upon oath or otherwise, in writing, before any Justice of the Peace, with any offence against this Act, the said Justice shall summon the person so charged to appear before him, at a time and place to be named in such Summons, and if such person fails or neglects to appear accordingly, then (upon proof of due service of the Summons upon such person, by delivering or leaving a copy thereof at his house, or usual or last place of abode, or by reading the same over to him personally,) the said Justice may either proceed to hear and determine the case *ex parte*, or issue his Warrant for apprehending such person, and bringing him before himself, or some other Justice of the Peace having jurisdiction within the same County or Municipality; and the Justice before whom the person charged appears or is brought, shall proceed to hear and determine the case, or the said Justice, on view of the offence, may verbally order, or if on the complaint of a third party, then may, in writing, order the offender to be at once committed (although it be on the Lord's Day) to the common gaol of the place, or into other safe custody, there to remain until the morrow, or some other day, according to circumstances, until the case be heard and disposed of. 8 V. c. 45, s. 4.

Commitment.

Form of con-
viction.

10. The Justice before whom any person is convicted of any offence against this Act, may cause the conviction to be drawn up in the following form, or in any other form of words to the same effect, as the case may require, that is to say: 8 V. c. 45, s. 5.

Be it remembered, that on the . . . day of . . . ,
 in the year of our Lord, eighteen . . . , at . . . ,
 in the County of . . . , (or at the City of . . .
as the case may be.) A. B., of . . . , is convicted
 before me, C. D., one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace
 for the said County, (or City, *as the case may be*.) for that he
 the said A. B. did (*specify the offence, and the time and place,
 when and where the same was committed, as the case may be*;) and I, the said C. D., adjudge the said A. B., for his offence
 to pay (immediately, or on or before the . . . day of . . .)
 the sum of . . . , and also the sum
 of . . . , for costs; and in default of payment of the
 said sums respectively, to be imprisoned in the common
 gaol of the said County (or City, *as the case may be*.) for the
 space of . . . months, unless the said sums be sooner
 paid; and I direct that the said sum of . . .
 (*the penalty*) shall be paid as follows, that is to say: one
 moiety thereof to the party charging the offence, and the
 other moiety to the Treasurer of the County, (*naming
 the one in which the offence was committed, or Chamberlain,
 of the said City, as the case may be*.) to be by him applied
 according to the provisions of the Act, (*insert the title of this
 Act*).

Given under my hand and seal, the day and year first
 above mentioned.

C. D., J. P. [L. S.]

11. A conviction under this Act shall not be quashed for
 want of form; nor shall any Warrant of Commitment be held
 void by reason of any defect therein, if it be therein alleged
 that the party has been convicted, and there be a good and
 valid conviction to sustain the commitment. 8 V. c. 45, s. 6.

Conviction and
 commitment
 not to be void
 for want of
 form.

12. In default of payment of any fine imposed under this
 Act, together with the costs attending the same, within the
 period by the Justice of the Peace before whom such conviction
 takes place, specified for the payment thereof at the time of
 conviction, such Justice of the Peace (if he deems it expedient
 so to do) may issue his Warrant directed to any Constable to
 levy the amount of such fine and costs within a certain time, to
 be in the said Warrant expressed; and in case no distress
 sufficient to satisfy the amount be found, he may commit the
 offender to the Common Gaol of the County wherein the
 offence was committed, for any term not exceeding three
 months, unless the fine and costs be sooner paid. 8 V. c.
 45, s. 7.

In default, may
 levy fine.

Commitment.

13. The prosecution for any offence punishable under this
 Act, must be commenced within one month after the com-
 mission of the offence, and not afterwards; and the evidence
 of any inhabitant of the County or Municipality in which the
 offence

Limitation of
 time for prose-
 cution.

Who may be witnesses. offence has been committed, shall be admitted and receivable notwithstanding the fine incurred by the offence may be payable for the benefit of such Municipality; but the party who makes the charge in writing before the Justice, shall not be admitted as a witness in the case. 8 V. c. 45, s. 8.

Appeal to the Quarter Sessions.

14. In case a person thinks himself aggrieved by any conviction or decision under this Act, then, in case such person, within six days after such conviction or decision, and ten days at least before the first Court of General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, or in Cities before the first Recorder's Court, (if there be a Recorder's Court) to be held not sooner than twelve days next after such conviction or decision, may appeal in the manner provided in and subject to the provisions of the Act respecting Appeals in cases of Summary Conviction. 8 V. c. 45, s. 9.

Justices to transmit the conviction to the Quarter Sessions.

15. Every Justice of the Peace before whom any person is convicted of any offence against this Act, shall transmit the conviction to the next Court of General Quarter Sessions, or Recorder's Court (as the case may be) to be holden for the County or City wherein the offence was committed, there to be kept by the proper officer among the records of the Court. 8 V. c. 45, s. 10.

Where actions, &c., are to be tried.

16. All actions and prosecutions to be commenced against any person for any thing done in pursuance of this Act, shall be laid and tried in the County where the fact was committed, and must be commenced within six months after the fact committed, and not afterwards; and notice in writing, of such action, and of the cause thereof, must be given to the Defendant one month at least before the action; and in any such action the Defendant may plead the general issue, and give this Act and the special matter in evidence at any trial to be had thereupon. 8 V. c. 45, s. 11.

Defendant may plead general issue.

Tender of amends, &c.

17. No Plaintiff shall recover in such action, if tender of sufficient amends be made before such action brought, or if a sufficient sum of money be paid into Court after such action brought, by or on behalf of the Defendant; and if a verdict passes for the Defendant, or the Plaintiff becomes non-suit, or discontinues any such action after issue joined, or if upon demurrer or otherwise judgment be given against the Plaintiff, the Defendant may recover his full costs, as between Attorney and Client, and have the like remedy for the same as any Defendant hath by law in other cases. 8 V. c. 45, s. 11.

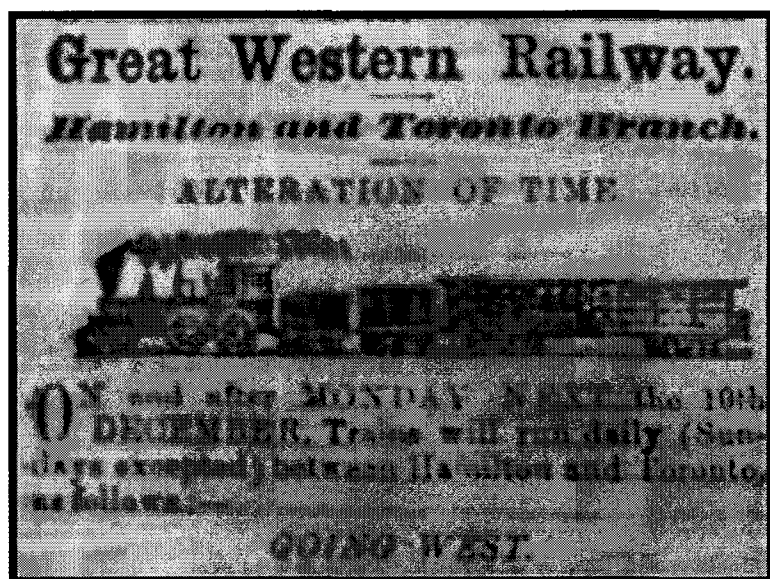
Defendant if successful to have full costs.

Distribution of penalties.

18. All sums of money awarded or imposed as fines or penalties, by virtue of this Act, shall be paid as follows, that is to say: one moiety thereof shall be paid to the party charging the offence in writing before the Justice, and the other moiety to the Treasurer of the County or City wherein

the offence was committed, to be by him accounted for in the same manner as for other moneys deposited with or paid over to him. 8 V. c. 45, s. 12.

19. This Act is not to extend to the people called Indians. Not to extend to Indians. 8 V. c. 45, s. 14.

Appendix IV⁶⁵

⁶⁵ *The Christian Messenger*, circa 1850s. Variants of this article appeared in numerous editions of the paper.

Appendix V

Population Increased for Ontario and Provincial Baptist Membership Statistics⁶⁶			
Year	Population of Ontario	Population of Baptists	Percentage of Population
1842	487,053	16,411	3.9
1861	1,396,091	61,559	5.2
1871	1,620,851	86,723	5.3
1881	1,923,228	106,680	5.5
1891	2,114,321	106,047	5.0
1901	2,182,947	117,819	5.3

Population Increases for Canada and National Baptist Membership Statistics⁶⁷			
Year	Population of Canada	Population of Baptists	Percentage of Population
1871	3,689,257	245,805	6.7
1881	4,324,810	296,525	6.9
1891	4,833,239	303,389	6.2
1901	5,371,315	318,005	5.9

⁶⁶ Rawlyk, *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, 96, 103 and 104.

⁶⁷ Rawlyk, *The Canadian Protestant Experience*, 96, 103 and 104.

Number of Regular Baptist Congregations ⁶⁸	
1854	117
1865	260
1871	300
1876	325
1895	451

Baptist Press Circulation ⁶⁹		
Year	Number	Rough Percentage of Baptists with a subscription.
1854	700	1.3%
1855	1500	
1865	1900	3.1%
1871	2800	3.3%
1875	4000	
1895	1895	1.8%
1900	5506	4.7%

Relative Membership of Denominations by Year (Ontario)⁷⁰

	<u>Methodist</u>		<u>Presbyterian</u>		<u>Anglican</u>		<u>Catholic</u>		<u>Baptist</u>	
ONTARIO										
1851	213,365	22.4	204,148	21.4	223,190	23.4	167,695	17.6	45,353	4.8
1861	350,373	25.0	303,374	21.7	311,559	22.3	258,151	18.5	61,559	4.4
1871	462,264	28.5	356,442	22.0	330,995	20.4	274,162	16.9	86,630	5.3
1881	591,503	30.7	417,749	21.7	366,539	19.0	320,839	16.7	106,680	5.5
1891	654,033	30.9	453,147	21.4	385,999	18.3	358,300	16.9	106,000	5.0
1901	666,388	30.5	477,386	21.9	367,937	16.9	390,304	17.9	117,700	5.4
1911	671,727	26.6	524,603	20.8	489,704	19.4	484,997	19.2	132,809	5.3
1921	685,463	23.4	613,532	20.9	648,883	22.1	576,178	19.6	148,634	5.1

⁶⁸ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 145.

⁶⁹ Trinier, *A Century of Service*, 145.

⁷⁰ Semple, *The Lord's Dominion*, 182.

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