

Sunday: First Day of the Week

S. R. (Matthew 28:1 - 6)

4 – 2 - 2023

Intro.

- Did you ever wonder why we meet on Sunday?
- Are you curious about why and when and what to do?
- Sometimes we take for granted why we do things and that everyone should understand and conform.

God established Memorial Days:

Sabbath

- (Exodus 31: 16; Duet 5:12 – 15)

Three National Holy Days (Feasts) [Deut. 16; Leviticus 16, 23]

- Passover, Feast of Weeks and Day of Atonement – Feast of Tabernacles

God's New Covenant People have been given a special day to Remember Christ.

On The First Day of the Week

- The first day of the week is mentioned at various places in the New Testament. What was the significance of this day for the first Christians?

Which day is the first day of the week?

- According to **Matthew 28:1**, the first day of the week is the day after the Sabbath. The Sabbath is what we call Saturday, Sunday is the first day of the week
- Some people refer to the first day of the week as the 'Christian Sabbath' but this is incorrect. The seventh day of the week (Saturday) is the Jewish Sabbath. The first day of the week is never called a sabbath in the New Testament. They are two separate days of the week.

Did the first day of the week have meaning for the first Christians?

- Is it purely incidental that the first day of the week is mentioned in the New Testament, or does it have some special meaning?
- The first day of the week had special meaning for the first Christians because Jesus rose from the dead on that day!
- The first Christians celebrated the resurrection of Jesus each week!

The first day of the week is Resurrection Day

- (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1-2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1,2, 19)

Christians assembled on the first day of the week

- It was on the first day of the week that Christians came together to remember Jesus, as He had asked them to do, by dividing unleavened bread among them and drinking from the cup. This was referred to as "breaking bread." (cf. Acts 2:42)
- **"Now on the first day of the week**, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight" **(Acts 20:7)**.
- The passive voice form "were gathered together," or "brought together" (Acts 20:7), reflects the fact that the assembly was initiated by an independent source beyond the disciples themselves—doubtless by divine authority. **(Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 4:17)**
- Notice that the purpose of their gathering was to break bread. They came together to remember the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. This was the central purpose of the assembly, as Paul also indicates in his letter to the Corinthians: "Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another" **(1 Corinthians 11:33)**.
- In verses **23-26**, we learn that the example of Jesus is **normative for Christians with regard to how the supper is to be observed** (cf. 1 Cor. 4:17).
- Paul explained: (1 Cor. 11:23 – 26)

Christians gave financially on the first day of the week

- "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have **given orders** to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: **On the first day of the week** let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come" **(1 Corinthians 16:1, 2)**.
- The expression 'on the first day of the week' here has the inherent meaning 'on the first day of every week'. This was not just a local arrangement. The same orders were given to other churches. **(1 Cor. 4:17). Remember the Sabbath.** Implication of every Sabbath.

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day

- In Revelation 1:10 John says: "I was in the spirit on the Lord's Day." The only other place in the New Testament where the **possessive** form of "Lord" is used is in **1 Corinthians 11:20** in connection with "the Lord's supper." This distinctive expression "The Lord's day" is found in early church history as a designation for the first day of the week.

The first day of the week is mentioned in early church history

- The teaching of Scripture that Christians assemble on the first day of the week to eat the Lord's supper is reflected in early church history *from the earliest times!*
- Evidence from Patristics – writings of believer in the 2nd – 4th centuries. Not Spirit guided
- We have learned that Sunday is the first day of the week. Jesus was raised on that day and disciples met to remember his death and resurrection on the first day of the week.