

# *THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK*

## ***Important questions about the “first day of the week”:***

- ***What day did Jesus resurrect?***
- ***What other important events occurred on this day?***
- ***How many appearances did Jesus make on this day?***
- ***Were disciples commanded to assemble on the first day of every week?***
- ***What is the only thing the disciples were commanded to eat when assembled?***
- ***Was the Lord’s supper ever called “breaking bread” in the scriptures?***
- ***In Acts 20:7, did the disciples gather together on their own authority or was a higher authority requiring this?***
- ***What bearing does Paul’s “hurrying” play in interpreting Acts 20:7?***
- ***If time and frequency for the communion were unimportant, what would not be mentioned?***
- ***How can we know for sure that the “Lord’s day” (Rev. 1:10) is the first day of the week?***

These and other questions are explored in this booklet.



## *Why debate?*

Do debates do any good? Don't debates "get out of hand" and just divide people?

Whether we want to admit it or not, the religious world is *already* divided and this division is sinful. Jesus prayed for unity among His followers (Jn. 17:20-21). The apostles of Jesus commanded Christians of the first century to have unity and to work out their differences (1 Cor. 1:10). The only way to work out those differences is to come together and discuss differences. Debates do not divide men, for men are already divided. Debates are designed to eliminate divisions. While there is no guarantee such discussions will bring about unity, it is certain that unity will never arrive by ignoring the divisions and pretending the divisions do not exist. The divisions are real and the divisions involve issues over which God has spoken.

Sometimes men try to excuse division by saying, "*Oh, it's just a little thing that divides us. It's not like some major doctrine is at stake.*" But when "little things" divide followers of Christ, it makes the division all the more ridiculous and sinful. The members of the Corinthian congregation were divided over who their favorite preacher was (1 Cor. 3:1-4). Had they been divided over some major point of doctrine, the division might have been more understandable, but when it was over a petty matter, the division was all the more shameful. So, whether great or small, points of division need to be addressed. This necessarily involves coming together for discussion and ... yes ... sometimes "disputing" (see Acts 15:1-7).

If the day of worship did not matter at all, then God would never have told His people when to assemble. If it did not matter what doctrine men believe, God would not have given doctrine for His people to believe and teach. If the worship of the church did not matter, God would never had told His people how to worship. However, inasmuch as heaven has spoken on all these issues, it behooves all of us to adhere to what the scriptures reveal and to "earnestly contend for the faith once and for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 1:3).

# THE 1ST DAY OF THE WEEK

The following notes were prepared by George Battey for use during a two debates.

*The first debate* occurred in Jonesboro, GA when Mr. Osmond Baptiste challenged the brethren of the Fielder Road Church of Christ to debate this issue. The dates for this first debate were August 1 and 3, 2002. The debate was conducted at the Performing Arts Center where approximately 300 people gathered each night to listen to the discussion.

*The second debate* occurred in Lexington, KY when Mr. Melvyn Hayden, III accepted the challenge of the brethren from the North Broadway Church of Christ. The dates for this second debate were October 18-19, 2002. The debate was conducted at the Mitchell Fine Arts Center on the campus of Transylvania University where approximately 225 people gathered each night to listen to the discussion.

The proposition discussed was as follows:

**Resolved:** *The "first day of the week" of Acts 20:7 is the day upon which Christians today must assemble for worship.*

George Battey (affirmed on both occasions)  
Osmond Baptiste (denied – August 3, 2002)  
Melvyn Hayden, III (denied – October 18, 2002)

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**"The first day of the week"** – the day commonly called Sunday. This is not a defense of the name "*Sunday*" or any idea that gave origin to that name.

All the days of the week have names by which they are commonly known: *Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday*. None of these names are in the Bible.

Christians are under no more obligation to defend the name "*Sunday*" than others are to defend the name "*Saturday*."

"of Acts 20:7" – that is, this passage of scripture forms a binding pattern that must be followed by God's people today. The assembling that occurred in this passage was not incidental or insignificant. It did not involve private or individual affairs.

"is the day upon which Christians today must assemble for worship" – that is, a certain worship has been ordained for that day. This proposition does not require me to prove:

- The first day of the week is a Sabbath or a "*Christian Sabbath*." The first day of the week was never called by God as "*the Sabbath*."
- The first day of the week was "*sanctified*" or "*blessed*."
- The first day of the week is a "*holy day*" which requires that men refrain from all labor.

The proposition merely states that Christians must assemble for worship sometime on the first day of the week. This is what we will show from the scriptures.

**Colossians 2:14-16**

14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

16 So **let no one judge you** in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or **Sabbaths**,

In the NT there are:

- No holy places (Jn. 4:21)
- No holy things – as in tabernacle worship (Heb. 9:1-4)
- No holy days (Col. 2:16)

Instead, God is calling for holy people:

**1 Peter 2:9**

9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, **a holy nation, His own special people**, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

"Christians" – that is, disciples of Christ as found in Acts 11:26, "*The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch*." Since only disciples were considered Christians, we must inquire what constitutes a "disciple." Jesus said:

**Matthew 28:19-20**

19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Disciples, who were called Christians, were baptized believers who were then instructed to obey all that Jesus commanded.

One of the commandments Jesus gave thru His apostles involved what day to worship on. This debate is about the command to assemble on the first day of the week. If Jesus had commanded worship on the Sabbath day, that passage could be read and the debate would be over. Likewise, if I can show divine commands to assemble on the first day of the week for worship, that should be sufficient and should end the debate.

**"today"** – that is, at this present time – in this era of history known as the "Christian Age" – which began with the reign of Christ on the first Pentecost after His resurrection.

This is not an affirmation that men in the Patriarchal Age or the Mosaic Age worshiped on the first day; but in the Christian Age, men do worship with God's approval on the first day.

**SUMMARY:** This proposition is affirming that God requires Christians to worship Him on the first day of the week. He has specified a worship service for that day and expects His people to honor Him in meeting His requirements.

Now, please consider the evidence offered in defense of this proposition.

## IMPORTANT EVENTS

There are some events which occurred on the first day of the week which make this an important day for Christians. These events do not of themselves make worship on the first day mandatory, but they serve as a background for the institution of such worship.

### 1) Jesus was resurrected on the first day of the week.

**Mark 16:9**

9 Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.

### Matthew 28:1-6

1 Now after the Sabbath, **as the first day of the week began to dawn**, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and **rolled back the stone** from the door, and sat on it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.

4 And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

5 But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.

6 **"He is not here; for He is risen**, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

### Luke 24

1 Now **on the first day of the week**, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

2 But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

3 Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

6 "He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee,

7 "saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and **the third day rise again.**'"

13 Now behold, two of them were traveling **that same day** to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem.

21 "But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, **today is the third day** since these things happened.

22 "Yes, and certain women of our company, who **arrived at the tomb early**, astonished us.

23 "When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive.

29 But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for **it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.**" And He went in to stay with them.

33 So **they rose up that very hour** and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together,

46 Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to **rise from the dead the third day**,

No greater event ever occurred in history and it occurred on the first day of the week.

2) [Salvation for man was completed on the first day of the week.](#)

**1 Peter 1:3**

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Since the resurrection occurred on the first day of the week, man's salvation was completed on that day.

3) [Jesus was acknowledged as the only begotten Son of God on the first day of the week.](#)

**Psalms 2:7**

7 "I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, 'You are My Son, **Today I have begotten You.**

This passage was quoted by the apostle Paul and applied to the resurrection of Christ:

**Acts 13:33**

33 "God has fulfilled this for us their children, **in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.'**

Later Paul would write to the Romans:

**Romans 1:4**

4 and **declared to be the Son of God** with power according to the Spirit of holiness, **by the resurrection from the dead.**

All this happened on the first day of the week.

4) [A number of other events occurred on the first day of the week according to Acts 2.](#)

The Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) always fell on the first day of the week (Lev. 23:11, 15).

- **Acts 2:1-17** – the Lord Himself **poured out the Holy Spirit** on His apostles in fulfillment of the prophecy given in Joel 2.
- **Acts 2:17, 47** – the Lord **established His church** on the first day of the week in fulfillment of the prophecy given in Isa. 2:2-3.
- **Acts 2:29-36** – Jesus was **crowned as King** and began to reign in the kingdom of God in fulfillment of Zech. 6:13.

- Acts 2:17, 47 – the **new law of Christ** (NT) came into force on this day and went forth from Jerusalem in fulfillment of Isa. 2:3.

All of these events show the significance of the first day of the week.

## FIRST DAY BECOMES PROMINENT

After the Lord's resurrection, the first day of the week became increasingly prominent. This is seen by all the times Jesus appeared to his disciples on this day.

### 1) He appeared first to Mary Magdalene on the first day of the week:

#### Mark 16:9

9 Now when He rose early **on the first day of the week**, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.

### 2) The first time the risen Savior was worshipped was on the first day of the week:

#### Matthew 28:9

9 And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and **worshipped Him**.

Mark this in your Bible! Here is worship on the first day of the week with God's approval.

### 3) Jesus appeared to two other disciples on their way to Emmaus on the first day of the week (Lk. 24:13-15).

### 4) When these disciples returned to Jerusalem to tell the others, Jesus appeared to the entire group (Lk. 24:33-36).

### 5) A week later the disciples were assembled on the first day of the week and Jesus appeared to them (Jn. 20:19, 26).

Mark this in your Bible! Here are disciples assembling on the first day of the week with God's approval.

Verse 26 says, "**After eight days.**" Yet this mean, "**On the eighth day.**" To illustrate this way of counting days, compare Mk. 8:31 with Mt. 16:21.

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b><u>Mark 8:31</u></b><br/>         31 And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and <b>after three days rise again.</b></p> | <p><b><u>Matthew 16:21</u></b><br/>         21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be <b>raised the third day.</b></p>   |
| <p><b><u>1 Kings 12:5</u></b><br/>         5 So [Rehoboam] said to them, "Depart <b>for three days</b>, then come back to me." And the people departed.</p>  | <p><b><u>1 Kings 12:12</u></b><br/>         12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam <b>the third day, as the king had directed</b>, saying, "Come back to me the third day."</p>   |
| <p><b><u>2 Chronicles 10:5</u></b><br/>         5 So [Rehoboam] said to them, "Come back to me <b>after three days.</b>" And the people departed.</p>  | <p><b><u>2 Chronicles 10:12</u></b><br/>         12 So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had directed, saying, "Come back to me <b>the third day.</b>"</p>   |
| <p><b><u>Esther 4:16</u></b><br/>         16 "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink <b>for three days, night or day.</b><br/>         ...</p>   | <p><b><u>Esther 5:1</u></b><br/>         1 Now it happened <b>on the third day</b> that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, across from the king's house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house, facing the entrance of the house.</p> |

So "*after three days*" is the Bible way of saying "*on the third day.*" Likewise, "*after eight days*" is the Bible way of saying "*the eighth day.*"

Hence, Jesus met with His disciples on the first day of the week (Jn. 20:19) and He met with them on the eighth day (Jn. 20:26) – meaning He met with them again on the first day of the week.

The first day of the week was becoming increasingly important after the resurrection.

## THE LORD'S SUPPER

Now consider the Lord's supper. There are a number of things to notice about the communion:

### 1) Jesus commanded His disciples to eat the Lord's supper.

#### Luke 22:19-20

19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; **do this in remembrance of Me.**"

20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

This is a command by Jesus for His people to eat the Lord's supper.

### 2) Jesus commanded His people to assemble.

#### Hebrews 10:25

25 not forsaking **the assembling of ourselves together**, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

This is a command.

*"the assembling"* (τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν) – a singular participle with the definite article – referring to one specific and particular assembly.

God gives His people liberty to assemble any time they wish and as often as they wish (Acts 2:46; 1 Cor. 14:26).

However, there is one time when Christians do not have a choice. There is one assembly which God ordained and to miss that assembly is a violation of the command in Heb. 10:25.

We do not know from this passage on which day this particular assembly was suppose to occur. We must learn this from other passages – **but some day is required and there must be an assembling together of God's people.**

### 3) Jesus commanded His people to assemble every first day of the week.

Jesus never commanded any Christian to keep the Sabbath, but He did command an assembly on the first day of the week.

### 1 Corinthians 16:1-2

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given **orders** to the churches of Galatia, so you **must do** also:

2 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.

The NIV is most accurate here

### 1 Corinthians 16:2 (NIV)

2 **On the first day of every week**, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

Notice that “**orders**” were given to the churches – this is a command. “**On the first day of every week**” the church was to have a collection.

We know this was done in an assembly of the church, and not at home for at least two reasons:

- This is an “order” to the church – not just to individual Christians.
- Paul wanted the money “collected” so that when he arrived, there would not have to be any “gatherings” or “collections.”

If people were storing this money up in their own private homes:

- Why specify the first day of the week as the day to set the money aside? Why wouldn't any other day work just as well?
- If disciples were storing the money up at their own private homes, there would have been a need to gather up the money after Paul arrived in town – the very thing he was wanting to avoid.

1 Cor. 16:1-2 necessarily implies an assembly of the church every week – on the first day of the week.

These instructions were meant for more than just Corinth:

### 1 Corinthians 1:1-2

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

2 **To the church of God which is at Corinth**, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, **with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord**, both theirs and ours:

### 1 Corinthians 4:17

17 For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, **as I teach everywhere in every church.**

These instructions were written by Paul when he was living at Ephesus (compare 1 Cor. 16:5 with Acts 19:21-22). In other words, **before going to Troas** (Acts 20:7), Paul was already giving "orders" to churches to have a collection on the first day of every week.

#### Review:

- The disciples were commanded to eat the Lord's supper.
- They were also commanded to assemble together.
- They were commanded to assemble together on the first day of every week.

Q: Is there any connection between eating the Lord's supper and assembling together?

That brings us to the next point:

#### 4) [The disciples ate the Lord's supper when they were assembled.](#)

##### 1 Corinthians 11:33-34

33 Therefore, my brethren, **when you come together to eat**, wait for one another.

34 But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest **you come together** for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

The context of this passage is the Lord's supper. They were required to eat the Lord's supper in their assembly (v33), but they were forbidden to eat a common meal in this assembly (v34).

#### 5) [The express purpose of their assembly was to eat the Lord's supper.](#)

What I mean by this is that they didn't just assemble and then later decide to eat the Lord's supper since they were together – as if it were an afterthought. Instead, the very purpose of their assembly was to eat the communion:

##### 1 Corinthians 11:33

33 Therefore, my brethren, **when you come together to eat**, wait for one another.

Q: What did they come together for?

R: To eat.

Q: What were they eating?

R: The Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:26)

6) The Lord's supper is the only thing God commanded Christians to eat in an assembly.

To put it another way: God never commanded Christians to assemble to eat anything else except the Lord's supper.

To disprove this, all one has to do is read one passage where God ever commanded Christians to eat anything else in an assembly. However, there is no such passage.

7) Eating the Lord's supper in an assembly was called, "breaking bread."

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The **bread which we break**, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

It's true that "*breaking bread*" can mean a common meal, but it is also true that it can refer to the communion.

Acts 2:42

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the **breaking of bread**, and in prayers.

Here "*breaking bread*" refers to the communion because it is listed in the middle of other spiritual activities – doctrine, fellowship, prayers. These are religious and spiritual duties.

Notice there is no mention of the "cup." This demonstrates conclusively that the expression "breaking bread," without mention of the cup, can indeed refer to the Lord's supper.

## SUMMARY & APPLICATION

Let's summarize what we have learned:

- 1) Jesus commanded His disciples to eat the Lord's supper.
- 2) Jesus commanded His people to assemble.
- 3) Jesus commanded His people to assemble on the first day of every week.
- 4) The disciples ate the Lord's supper when they were assembled.
- 5) The express purpose of their assembly was to eat the Lord's supper.
- 6) The Lord's supper is the only thing God commanded Christians to eat in their assembly.
- 7) Eating the Lord's supper in the assembly was called, "breaking bread."

Q: Do the scriptures show where disciples ever came together for the express purpose of eating and was the eating called "breaking bread"?

If we can find this, we will know they ate the Lord's supper.

### Acts 20:7

7 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.

Q: What did these disciples do?

R: **They assembled.** The Lord commanded an assembly (Heb. 10:25).

Q: What was the purpose of their assembly?

R: **To "break bread."** This was the express purpose of their assembling.

In other words, they didn't assemble to hear Paul preach. They didn't assemble to visit with Paul.

(It is true they did hear Paul preach and they did visit with Paul, but that was not the purpose of their assembly. They assembled for the express purpose of "breaking bread" – a Bible term for communion.)

Q: When was all this done?

R: **On the "first day of the week."**

**Q:** Did God approve of this assembly on the first day of the week?

**R:** Yes. We know this for at least two good reasons:

- **The Lord's apostle gave his approval by being present at the assembly.** He would not have participated in something wrong (Acts 20:7).
- **The Lord worked a miracle thru Paul during this assembly** – indicating divine approval (Acts 20:9-12).

*"on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread"* – the words *"came together"* (συνηγμένων) is passive voice in the Greek (see Analytical Greek NT, Friberg; Linguistic Key to the Greek NT, Rienecker; Parsing Guide to the Greek NT, Han; Analytical Greek Lexicon, Harper & Brothers; Refresh Your Greek, Perschbacher).

The passive voice indicates an action performed upon the disciples.

They were **gathered by an authority other than themselves**. That is, they were gathered together by divine command and the purpose for the gathering was to eat.

If Acts 20:7 is *not* the communion, then here is what we have:

- A command to have an assembly for the express purpose of eating the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:33-34)
- But no example of the church ever doing this!

## NO MENTION OF SABBATH

The common response of Sabbath-keepers is to say that the "breaking of bread" in Acts 20:7 was only a common meal with no religious significance. But we have seen this was not a common meal.

- Yes ... "break bread" can refer to a common meal.
- But it can also refer to the Lord's supper (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 10:16-17).

The only way to know for sure which one is under consideration is the context and the context of Acts 20:7 points to the Lord's supper – beyond all doubt.

**NOTE:** No mention is made of assembling with disciples on the Sabbath day. Why not? If Christians kept the Sabbath and if Christians had a worship assembly on the Sabbath, why is no mention made of that?

It seems strange that Luke would completely ignore a worship service on the Sabbath day, and then emphasize that on the first day of the week the disciples gathered to eat a common meal – if that’s what really happened. Doesn’t this seem strange?

If this passage had said: “**On the seventh day of the week the disciples came together to break bread,**” don’t you know Sabbath-keepers would seize upon that as proof that these early Christians met on the Sabbath to have communion.

They would certainly use it as proof of their position. But since scripture says, “first day of the week,” Sabbath-keepers have to argue (against all reason) that it was just a common meal with no religious significance whatsoever.

## PAUL WAS HURRYING

### Acts 20:16

16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for **he was hurrying** to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost.

Here is a man who is in a hurry. He would not stay anywhere very long unless it was necessary. He was in such a hurry, he would not even go to Ephesus:

### Acts 20:17

17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.

Here is a man in such a hurry that he wouldn’t take the time to travel over to Ephesus for a few miles to see his very dear friends. But, if you will remember, when Paul had arrived in Troas (v6), he and his companions waited seven days!

**Q:** If the meal of v7 is a common meal, why wait seven days to have it? Why not meet earlier so Paul could go on – since he was in a hurry?

He was in such a hurry that after being up all night, he left on foot to begin his journey – rather than resting and waiting another day (vv11-14).

All of this seems extremely odd if the meal of v7 were merely a common meal.

ACTS 20:7  
("STAYING SEVEN DAYS")

Look at this passage a little closer.

It was the custom of Paul and his companions to spend a week at places as they traveled along.

Acts 21:3-4

3 When we had sighted Cyprus, we passed it on the left, sailed to Syria, and landed at Tyre; for there the ship was to unload her cargo.

4 And finding disciples, **we stayed there seven days.** ...

Exactly why they stayed for seven days is not stated. All we know for sure is:

- The ship unloaded its cargo.
- Paul & company took the opportunity to find some disciples, and
- Having found them they stayed seven days.

If we had no other scriptures, we could at least say they took advantage of opportunities to spend time with disciples as they traveled and, most likely, worshipped with them.

But we have other similar events revealed:

Acts 28:13-14

13 From there we circled round and reached Rhegium. And after one day the south wind blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli,

14 where we found brethren, and were invited to stay with them **seven days.** And so we went toward Rome.

This occurred while Paul was going to Rome as a prisoner.

Why specify that they stayed "seven days"? Why not stay 5 days, or 6 days, or 8 days? Most likely because seven days would bring them to their regular worship and they wished Paul to be with them at that time.

Acts 20:6-7

6 But we sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them at Troas, where **we stayed seven days.**

7 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.

Here is the same wording again – “*we stayed seven days.*” However, in this passage there is additional information as to why they were staying seven days – because they were waiting to assemble with the brethren for worship.

When Sabbath-keepers are in the affirmative, they read passages about Paul preaching in Jewish synagogues on the Sabbath day. They argue that Paul preaching on the Sabbath proves Paul kept the Sabbath!

**Q:** Here is Paul preaching on the first day of the week. Does this prove Paul “kept the first day of the week”?

In fact, these men were in Troas for seven days and there is no mention of any Sabbath meeting.

**Q:** If the brethren in Troas had met together on the Sabbath day for anything, don't you think Luke would have mentioned it?

- Why would Luke completely skip over any mention of the Sabbath day if it were a sacred day observed by Christians?
- And then make specific mention of the “first day of the week” and a worship assembly.

**NOTE:** If Acts 20:7 is not a worship service, then we have Paul and his companions staying in a place with other disciples and no worship service ever occurred.

Would an apostle of Jesus Christ:

- Come to a town where there was a congregation of Christians
- Stay there seven full days, and
- Never worship a single time.

Yet, this is what Sabbath-keepers would have you to believe about Acts 20.

## WEEKLY COMMUNION (TIME & FREQUENCY)

We have learned that Christians were to assemble to eat the communion. Notice this passage:

### 1 Corinthians 11:26

26 For **as often as** you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

"as often as" (ὡσάκις) – this refers to a time element. It carries with it the idea of "frequently." This word is found only 7 times in the NT. Every time it means "often" or "frequently":

### 2 Corinthians 11:26-27

26 in journeys **often**, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness **often**, in hunger and thirst, in fastings **often**, in cold and nakedness;

### Philippians 3:18

18 For many walk, of whom I have told you **often**, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:

Christians are to eat the Lord's supper "*often*" or "*frequently*." But how frequently?

### 1) If it did not matter to God, no time element would be mentioned.

In this case, time and frequency would not matter. We could have communion whenever we felt like and as frequently or infrequently as we chose.

### 2) If God wanted communion to be a yearly event, a certain day of a certain month would have been specified.

For example, God wanted the Passover to be a yearly feast. He specifically said it was to be observed on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month (Lev. 23:5). This means every year, once a year. It mattered to God *when* and *how often* this was observed.

### 3) If God wanted communion to be a monthly event, a certain day of the month would be specified – but no certain month would be specified.

For example, Num. 28:14 and Num. 29:6 speak of the offerings which are to be offered on the "new moon" day of the month. This means every month, once a month. It mattered to God *when* and *how often* this was observed.

4) If God wanted communion to be a weekly event, a certain day of the week would be specified.

For example, Lev. 23:3 speaks of the Sabbath day. It was to be on the seventh day of the week. This meant every week, once a week. It mattered to God *when* and *how often* this was observed.

## APPLICATION

Let's apply this to the Lord's supper?

1) If it did not matter to God when or how frequently communion was observed, no time element would have been mentioned.

We would then be free to have communion:

- At weddings
- At funerals
- On any special occasion – whenever that occasion would arise
- Annually
- Quarterly
- Monthly
- Daily

2) If God wanted communion to be a yearly event, a certain day of a certain month have been specified.

3) If God wanted communion to be a monthly event, a certain day of the month would have been specified.

4) If God wanted communion to be a weekly event, a certain day of the week would have been specified.

What do we have in the scriptures?

**Acts 20:7**

7 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.

If time and frequency had not mattered, God would not have recorded this.

The scriptures teach weekly communion – this is what the Holy Spirit revealed as God’s divine will for His people.

Consider the following questions:

- a) Does your church partake of the Lord’s supper?
- b) When and how frequently?
- c) Upon what scripture does your church base its practice?

Communion in the scriptures is something that occurred frequently:

**Acts 2:42**

42 And they **continued** steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Since these early disciples “continued” in several things, those things recurred frequently.

- If the disciples had **prayed** one time and would pray no more until next year, the scripture would not say they “continued” in prayers.
- If they had **fellowship** one time and would have no more till next year, it could not be said they “continued” in fellowship.
- If they had **communion** one time that year and would have no more till next year it could not be said they “continued” in breaking of bread.

Hence, communion was something that occurred frequently. This agrees perfectly with weekly communion. It agrees perfectly with Acts 20:7.

## THE COLLECTION

We have mentioned the collection already, but let us return and pick up some things we missed:

### 1 Corinthians 16:1-2

1 Now concerning the **collection for the saints**, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also:

2 **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.

- This money collected was for the poor saints in Judea.
- This collection was a command of God.

These are instructions regarding a *religious matter*. Not only is this a religious service, but it is a religious service that is to take place on a particular day. (Giving our money to the Lord's service on any day would be a religious service, but when that service is commanded for a particular day, it becomes all the more significant.)

- Giving into the collection was a religious service, and
- The first day of the week was the day for that service.

Q: If this were a duty to perform at home, why specify the first day of the week? What makes the first day any more special for a "*home duty*" than any other day?

But if the church assembled for worship on the first day, it becomes understandable why the day was mentioned. (If the Sabbath had been the day the church gathered for worship, that would have been the logical time to specify having a collection.)

The Greek says, "***Every first day of the week***" (κατὰ μίαν σαββάτου ἕκαστος).

Q: Why specify the first day of every week unless that day was a day of worship and assembly?

If 1 Cor. 16:1-2 had said, "*Upon the Sabbath, let everyone of you lay by in store,*" Sabbath-keepers would certainly be quoting that to prove the need to keep the Sabbath.

Some religious duties were never limited to the first day of the week:

- Preaching was never limited to the first day.
- Praying ...
- Singing ...
- Charitable deeds, etc.

But collecting money for the saints and communion were restricted to the first day of the week. Why?

- Because the first day of the week was the time when disciples (with God's approval) met together for worship.
- Because the first day of the week was the day the Lord resurrected.

## THE "LORD'S DAY"

Finally, let us look at the expression, "*The Lord's day*."

### Revelation 1:10

10 I was in the Spirit on **the Lord's Day**, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

What day is "*the Lord's day*"?

**"Lord"** (κυριακός) – a unique word that is found only two times in the NT (1 Cor. 11:20 and Rev. 1:10).

### 1 Corinthians 11:20

20 Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat **the Lord's Supper**.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| The OT Passover was called, " <i>the Lord's Passover</i> " (Ex. 12:11).   | But " <i>the Lord's supper</i> " (1 Cor. 11:20) has no reference to the OT Passover. |
| the Sabbath day was called the " <i>Sabbath of the Lord</i> " (Ex. 20:10) | But " <i>the Lord's day</i> " (Rev. 1:10) has no reference to the OT Sabbath.        |

**Here is a question to ponder:** Would it be proper to eat the "*Lord's supper*" on the "*Lord's day*"? Does your church do this? If not, why not? Does your church eat the "*Lord's supper*" less frequently than each "*Lord's day*"? If so, why?

"Lord's" (κυριακός) is a word that is uniquely linked to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is referring to a day uniquely linked to Him.

**Psalms 118:22-24**

22 The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.

23 This was the Lord's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.

24 This is **the day the LORD has made**; We will rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the most quoted passage of the OT. It is quoted 5 times in the NT (Mt. 21:42; Mk. 12:10; Lk. 20:17; Acts 4:11; 1 Pet. 2:7).

- "the stone" – Jesus
- "the builders" – the Jewish leaders
- "rejected" – the crucifixion
- "has become the chief cornerstone" – the resurrection (Acts 4:10-11)
- "This is the day the Lord has made" – the same day the "rejected stone" became the "chief cornerstone."
- "We will rejoice and be glad in it" – the disciples would have their "sorrow turned to joy"

Q: When was the "stone" exalted to become the "chief cornerstone"?

**Acts 4:10-11**

10 "let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, **whom God raised from the dead**, by Him this man stands here before you whole.

11 **"This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'**

**Acts 2:30-31**

30 "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would **raise up the Christ to sit on his throne**,

31 "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning **the resurrection of the Christ**, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

Q: What day was the Lord raised? What day did God's people rejoice and become glad?

**Matthew 28:1-8**

1 Now **after the Sabbath**, as **the first day of the week began to dawn**, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb.

2 And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow.

4 And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.  
5 But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified.  
6 "He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.  
7 "And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you."  
8 So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and **great joy**, and ran to bring His disciples word.

#### John 20:19-20

19 Then, the same day at evening, being **the first day of the week**, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."  
20 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then **the disciples were glad** when they saw the Lord.

#### Luke 24:41

41 But while they still did not believe **for joy**, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?"

How can we reach any other conclusion: *The Lord's day is the first day of the week.*

#### Psalms 118:24

24 This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.

On this day the disciples:

- Broke the bread in a weekly assembly.
- Took up a collection.

## ARGUMENTS CONSIDERED

1) No passage says the first day of the week is "holy," "blessed," or "sanctified." Therefore, it is not necessary to worship on that day.

First, Passover was never specifically called "holy," "blessed," or "sanctified," and yet the people were still required to worship God on this day every year (Ex. 12:16).

**Second**, when God tells His people to assemble on a certain day, what are we suppose to do? Are we suppose to assemble like He said? Or shall we argue, "God, You never said this was a 'holy' day and so we're not going to assemble like You commanded."

In Lev. 8:3 God commanded that all the congregation "gather together" to anoint Aaron and his sons as priests.

Q: Were the people required to do this even though God did not "bless" this day or "sanctify" it or "hallow" it? Did they still have to do this ... just because God said so?

**Third**, the proposition we are debating does not say anything about proving the first day of the week is "holy," or "blessed," or "sanctified." The proposition under consideration simply reads: "*The "first day of the week" of Acts 20:7 is the day upon which Christians today must assemble for worship.*"

All this proposition requires is to demonstrate that on the first day of the week Christians must assemble for worship.

## 2) [Dan. 7:25 – Does this prophecy refer to the Pope or to Constantine changing the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday?](#)

**First**, the scriptures clearly teach that the Sabbath was "taken away" (2 Cor. 3:16) and "nailed to the cross" (Col. 2:14-16). It was not "changed" by anyone. The "Lord's day" is an entirely different day.

**Second**, the apostles of Christ authorized meeting together on the first day of every week (1 Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7; Heb. 10:25). This was before any Catholic Church or Pope or Constantine.

**Third**, Jesus is the One who authorized the "change" in the law that abolished the Sabbath and required worship on the first day of the week:

### Hebrews 7:12

12 For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also **a change of the law.**

**Fourth**, just because the Catholic Church makes a claim of "changing" the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day of the week does not make it so. The Catholic Church makes many claims which Sabbath-keepers do not accept as true, yet they believe the claim about "changing the Sabbath." For example, the Catholic Church claims:

- They are the only true church.
- Catholic Church goes back to the apostles.
- Everyone outside Catholic Church are heretics.
- Peter was the first Pope.
- The Pope is Peter's successor.
- Pope holds the keys to heaven.

- Pope is the vicar of Christ on earth.
- Christians should pray thru Mary.
- Mary was a perpetual virgin.
- Mary conceived immaculately.
- Priests have power to absolve sin.
- Infants should be sprinkled.
- They changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday.

Here are 13 things claimed by the Catholic Church. Sabbath-keepers believe the Catholic Church is lying about every one of these claims except the last one.

Q: If a witness lied 12 times, why would anyone believe what he said about anything else?

**Fifth**, consider the text:

**Daniel 7:25**

25 He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall **intend to change times and law**. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.

Here are some assumptions made by Sabbath-keepers about this passage:

- **It is assumed the Lord Himself would never give a new law which differed from the ten commandment law** (yet Jeremiah 31:31 said He would).
- **It is assumed the “times” (plural) under consideration in Dan. 7:25 is the weekly day (singular) of worship.** (Remember, Sabbath-keepers make the argument regarding Col. 2:14-16 that the word “Sabbath” is plural it cannot refer to the weekly Sabbath. Now they assume the plural word “times” means the weekly Sabbath)

In other words:

- “Times” (plural) cannot refer to annual feast days.
- It must refer only to the weekly sabbath.

- **It is assumed the change under consideration is moving the day of worship to another day of the week.** It cannot mean substituting, deleting, or adding.

In other words:

- It doesn't mean the “little horn” will substitute other events for the regular events of the day.
- It doesn't mean the “little horn” will delete the sacredness of the day altogether.
- It doesn't mean the “little horn” will add sacred days to the calendar.
- It can only mean he will move the sacredness of one day of the week to another day of the week.

- It is assumed even though 7:25 says he “intends” to change times it is assumed he actually accomplishes this feat. (There is a big difference between “intending” to do something and “actually” doing it.)
- It is assumed this “little horn” was Constantine – the 46<sup>th</sup> emperor of Rome (even though the “little horn” was suppose to come after the 10<sup>th</sup> king (7:24)).
- It is assumed this “little horn” was Constantine – even though the “little horn” was suppose to defeat three kings (7:24), yet Constantine fought only two kings: Maxentius (312 AD) to gain control of Western Empire and Licinius (324 AD) to gain control of Eastern Empire.

Just because a day which use to be considered sacred, is no longer considered sacred does not mean:

- a) We are following after a “beast”
- b) Or that the one who changed the day is the beast

EXAMPLE:

- The 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month use to be the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:27).
- That has been changed (Heb. 7:12).
- The change was by the method of deletion – not moving.
- Now the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month is only an ordinary day of the year.
- This was done by God, not a “beast.”

To prove anything, it must be first shown:

- That the Sabbath day was intended to be for all nations (cf. Dt. 5:1-3).
- It was not a special sign just between God & Israel (cf. Ex. 31:13).
- It was to last for all time (2 Cor. 3:3-14).

3) [Lk. 4:16 – Jesus kept the Sabbath. Aren’t we suppose to imitate Him?](#)

Jesus kept more than the Sabbath. He kept all of the Law of Moses – including circumcision (Lk. 2:21), animal sacrifice (Lk. 2:22-23), leprosy laws (Lk. 5:14), and the Passover (Mt. 26:18). The reason He kept all these laws is because He lived while the Law of Moses was in force:

Galatians 4:4

4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born **under the law**,

Hebrews 9:15-17

15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

16 For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

17 For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.

### Matthew 17

3 And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

4 Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

5 While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. **Hear Him!**"

9 Now as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead."

Men would be told to listen to Jesus rather than Moses and the prophets. When? After the "Son of Man is risen from the dead."

### Deuteronomy 18:18-19

18 'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.

19 'And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him.

### Matthew 28:18-20

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

"teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you" – where did Jesus or the apostles command anyone to keep the Sabbath after the resurrection – for this was the time men should begin to "hear Him"?

#### 4) [Acts 2:46 – The "cup" is not mentioned and this refers to a common meal – not the communion.](#)

"Breaking bread" in v46 refers to a common meal. The context is about what people were doing privately in their houses.

### 1 Corinthians 11

22 What! **Do you not have houses to eat and drink in?** Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.

34 But if **anyone is hungry, let him eat at home**, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

Compare the above verses with the following:

### Acts 2:46

46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread **from house to house, they ate their food** with gladness and simplicity of heart,

This passage is obviously speaking of things done privately in their homes. So “breaking bread” in this verse does not refer to the communion.

However, v42 does speak of the communion:

### Acts 2:42

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

The “breaking bread” of this verse is in the middle of spiritual duties – doctrine, fellowship, prayers. The context demonstrates that the “breaking of bread” in this verse is a spiritual meal – the communion.

### 5) [Rom. 6:3-4 – Wasn't baptism given to remember the resurrection of Christ – not the first day of the week?](#)

**First**, Rom. 6:3-4 does not teach baptism was given to remember the resurrection of Christ. Baptism was given by Christ as the occasion when a sinner has his sins washed away (Acts 22:16; 2:38).

**Second**, Only a part of baptism resembles the resurrection of Christ. Actually, Rom. 6:3-4 teaches that baptism resembles (a) the death, (b) the burial, and (c) the resurrection of Christ – all three, not just the resurrection.

**Third**, Rom. 6:3-4 does not remove the fact that disciples gathered every week (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2) to worship on the first day of the week. In other words, Rom. 6:3-4 does not remove the fact that the resurrection day was chosen by God for NT worship. “*This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it*” (Ps. 118:24) refers to the day of the resurrection (Ps. 118:22-23).

**Fourth**, If this present argument means anything, it means: Christians do not have to worship on the first day of every week like the apostles commanded (1 Cor. 16:1-2; Heb. 10:25) because part of the act of baptism reminds us of the resurrection of Christ." Does this argument make any rational sense?

6) [1 Cor. 16:1-2 – Christians fulfill this duty by putting aside money at home \(“lay by him”\). This does not teach a church assembly on the first day of the week.](#)

This passage is instructing the church how to have a treasury. Notice the following points:

**OT had a treasury:**

**Joshua 6:19**

19 "But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are consecrated to the LORD; they shall come into **the treasury** of the LORD."

**Luke 21:1-4**

1 And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into **the treasury**,  
2 and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites.  
3 So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all;  
4 "for all these out of their abundance have put in **offerings for God**, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

**Jesus had a treasury:**

**John 12:6**

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had **the money box**; and he used to take what was put in it.

**John 13:29**

29 For some thought, because Judas had **the money box**, that Jesus had said to him, "Buy those things we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor.

Jesus so often dipped into this treasury that the disciples automatically assumed Judas was being sent forth to (a) buy something for the feast, or (b) help the poor.

**The church had a treasury:**

**Acts 2:44-45**

44 Now all who believed were together, and had **all things in common**,  
45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

### Acts 4:34-37

34 Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold,

35 and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

36 And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus,

37 having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

### Acts 5:1-2

1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession.

2 And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet.

### 1 Corinthians 16:1-2

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also:

2 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.

Here the church is to have a "collection" or "fund" or "treasury."

"storing up" (θησαυρίζων) – lit. "treasuring up" – a treasury is necessarily implied

The corresponding noun (θησαυρός) is translated "treasure" in:

Mt. 2:11 – the rich men opened their *treasures*

Mt. 6:19 – don't lay up *treasures* on earth

Mt. 13:44 – a man found *treasure* hidden in a field

Lk. 12:34 – you will have *treasure* in heaven

Concerning 1 Cor. 16:1-2, note the following:

- This is an "order" that "must be done"
- Each Christian was to participate
- The giving was to be according to one's income
- "By him" – i.e. "by himself." Each individual is to decide for himself how much to give. The amount given is "not of compulsion" (see 2 Cor. 9 below)
- The giving was to be every first day of the week
- The money was not stored at home, for then it would not matter what day of the week it was stored up.

- The money was not stored at home, for Paul wanted no collections of money made when he arrived.

**1 Corinthians 16:3**

3 And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear **your gift** to Jerusalem.

“gift” (singular) – i.e. the money had been collected into one common fund and became a singular treasury.

If people were storing their money at home:

- Collections would have to be made when Paul arrived.
- The singular word “gift” could not describe the money – for it would be “gifts” given by individual Christians.
- The money could not be called a gift of the “church” – for it was never in the control of the church at all.

**2 Corinthians 9:5**

5 Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous **gift** beforehand, which you had previously promised, that **it** may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation.

“gift ... it” (singular) – if men were storing up at home “gifts” would have been used to describe the money.

**2 Corinthians 9:7**

7 So **let each one give** as he purposes **in his heart**, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

“in his heart” – this explains 1 Cor. 16:2 *“by himself”* – i.e. each person decides within himself how much to give into the collection. He is not to give grudgingly or of necessity. The worshipper decided by himself how much to give into the treasury.

A common treasury is necessarily implied in the following passages:

**Acts 6:1-6**

1 Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in **the daily distribution**.

2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and **serve tables**."

3 "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

4 "but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,

6 whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

### 2 Corinthians 11:8

8 I robbed other churches, taking **wages** from them to minister to you.

### Philippians 4:15-16

15 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, **no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only.**

16 For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities.

### 1 Timothy 5:16

16 If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and **do not let the church be burdened**, that it may relieve those who are really widows.

This treasury is to be collected and stored up each first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2) so that it will be ready to use when needs arise.

7) [Heb. 9:16-17 – A will \(testament\) is made while a person is alive. It cannot be changed after a person dies. Since Jesus did not teach the first day of the week before He died, it cannot be added to the will \(testament\) after He died.](#)

While the Lord made His will before He died (cf. Mt. 5-7), and while it did not come into force till after He died (cf. Mt. 17:9; Heb. 9:16-17), yet His will was not *revealed* fully till after He had died, resurrected and ascended into heaven.

Some argue that a "last will and testament" must be fully revealed and disclosed to the public before the death of the testator, and that is certainly not so. The Lord Himself said all the terms and conditions would not be fully divulged until after His death and resurrection:

### John 16:12-13

12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

13 "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

### Matthew 16:19

19 "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

To illustrate: When a man dies, though his will was made before death, it is read and revealed to the public after he dies. Many are surprised to learn of the details of the will.

Even so, the Lord promised that the Spirit would come and reveal all the terms and conditions of the NT to the apostles and they in turn would reveal these matters to the public.

Application: Though the Lord did not reveal that the first day of the week would be the day of worship during His earthly ministry, He did reveal this information later (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Heb. 10:25).

- Revealing the contents of a will is not “changing” a will.
- The apostle John revealed a new command (1 Jn. 2:8), but this did not mean the Lord’s New Testament (will) was changed.

Q: Who is going to argue with the Lord and say, *“I refuse to worship on the first day of the week as you revealed through the apostles, because you did not make this information known before You died”?*

#### 8) Rev. 13 – Is “Sunday-keeping” the “mark of the beast”?

First, Sabbath-keepers who make this argument assume several things about this chapter:

- That the “beast” of Rev. 13 is the Pope of the Catholic Church.
- That the “mark” of the beast is Sunday-keeping that has been enforced by the government.

Assumptions prove nothing.

Suppose one assumes (cf. Albertus Pieters, Studies in the Revelation of St. John) the “beast” is pagan-Rome which began to enforce “Emperor worship” upon people in the days of Emperor Domitian (81-96 AD). Not only were men required to give allegiance to the emperor, they were also required to worship him as deity.

As time grew on, this requirement to pay homage to the Emperor grew and grew. Eventually, statutes of the Emperor were erected in towns and villages across Rome and men must burn incense before his statute. Refusal to do so was evidence of disloyalty and was punishable by death.

Why could this not be the interpretation of the “mark of the beast”? Why does the “mark” **have to** refer to Sunday-keeping?

**Second**, neither Jesus nor any of His apostles commanded anyone to keep the Sabbath day in the NT era. If Sabbath-keeping is a mark of God’s true people today, where is the command for any Christian to keep the Sabbath?

**Third**, Christians met for worship on the first day of the week long before there was any Pope or Catholic Church.

**Acts 20:7**

7 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.

**1 Corinthians 16:1-2**

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also:

2 **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.

**Revelation 1:10**

10 I was in the Spirit **on the Lord's Day**, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,

**Fourth**, history records the fact that Christians were meeting on the first day of the week long before any Pope developed and long before the beginning of the Catholic church. Also, Christians were meeting on the first day of the week long before Constantine was Emperor of Rome. (See "History" in the next section.)

9) [Where is any command to worship on the first day of the week?](#)

First, OT:

**Leviticus 23:15-21**

15 'And you shall count for yourselves from **the day after the Sabbath**, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering: seven Sabbaths shall be completed.

16 'Count fifty days to **the day after the seventh Sabbath**; then you shall offer a new grain offering to the LORD.

17 'You shall bring from your dwellings two wave loaves of two-tenths of an ephah. They shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven. They are the firstfruits to the LORD.

18 'And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs of the first year, without blemish, one young bull, and two rams. They shall be as a burnt offering to the LORD, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma to the LORD.

19 'Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats as a sin offering, and two male lambs of the first year as a sacrifice of a peace offering.

20 'The priest shall wave them with the bread of the firstfruits as a wave offering before the LORD, with the two lambs. They shall be holy to the LORD for the priest.

21 'And you shall proclaim **on the same day that it is a holy convocation** to

you. You shall do no customary work on it. It shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations.

"holy convocation" – translated "sacred assembly" in the NIV.

Q: Was the Pope behind this command to have a sacred assembly on Sunday? Was Constantine? Was the Council of Laodicea?

Second, NT:

**1 Corinthians 16:1-2**

1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given **orders** to the churches of Galatia, so **you must do** also:

2 **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.

Q: Was the Pope behind this command to have a sacred assembly on Sunday? Was Constantine? Was the Council of Laodicea?

## HISTORY

### 1) What about Constantine's Sunday law (321 A.D.)?

**First**, let it be noted that if Constantine "changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday," then it cannot be argued later that the Pope and Catholic church changed the day. It cannot be both ways.

#### CONSTANTINE'S EDICT of March 7, 321:

"On the venerable Day of The Sun let the magistrates and people residing in cities rest, and let all workshops be closed. In the country, however, persons engaged in agriculture may freely and lawfully continue their pursuits." (Codex Justinianus, book 3, title 12,3, trans. in Schaff, History of the Christian Church 5th ed. (New York: Charles Scribner, 1902), vol. 3, p. 380, note 1.

Assumptions:

- All Christians were keeping the Sabbath before this.
- None were worshipping on Sunday.
- The Sabbath is now illegal because of this edict.
- Sabbath-keepers will now be persecuted.

- Sunday worship is now required by law.
- Those not worshipping on Sunday will now be persecuted.

Not one of these assumptions are true – not one.

- Christians were already meeting together on the first day of the week – with divine approval (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; Heb. 10:25; Rev. 1:10).
- Constantine's law did not make the Sabbath "illegal."
- Constantine's law did not begin a persecution against "Sabbath-keepers."
- Sunday worship was not required. It was allowed, but not required.
- Non-Sunday worshippers were not "persecuted" because of this law.

## 2) What about the Council of Laodicea (364 A.D.)?

The council of Laodicea is believed by Sabbath-keepers to be the occasion when the Roman Catholic Church changed the Sabbath from the Seventh day to the First day.

**First**, if the Council of Laodicea "changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday," then it cannot be argued that Constantine changed the day. It cannot be both ways.

**Second**, the Sabbath was not **changed** at this Council. The Sabbath was and continues to be the seventh day of the week.

**Third**, here is what the council decreed:

"Christians ought not to Judaize and to rest in the Sabbath, but to work in that day; but preferring **the Lord's Day**, should rest, if possible, as Christians. Wherefore if they shall be found to Judaize, let them be accursed from Christ."

Here are some facts to note:

- Laodicea was not Rome – it was 1000 miles east of Rome.
- The pope (bishop) of Rome did not attend this council (McClintock & Strong's Cyclopedia).
- The pope (bishop) of Rome did not send a legate or delegate or anyone to represent him.
- The Council of Laodicea was held without the knowledge or consent of the pope (bishop) of Rome.
- In 364 A.D. the bishop of Rome did not have authority over other bishops. It was 200 years later before he was invested with authority over all the churches.
- The authority of the Roman bishop was resisted in the East – where this council was held.

- Liberius was bishop of Rome at the time of the Council of Laodicea. He was degraded from his office, banished, and treated with the utmost contempt. Bower says, in order to end his exile, Liberius "wrote in a most submissive and cringing style to the eastern Bishops." (History of the Popes, vol. 1, p. 64).

This is supposedly the "pope" who changed the Sabbath at the Council of these same Eastern bishops, 1000 miles away, which he never attended???

- The Council of Laodicea was not a "general council," but a "local council." It is not even mentioned by Mosheim and other historians. McClintock & Strong's Cyclopaedia says: "*Thirty-two bishops were present from different provinces in Asia.*" These were all Eastern church bishops – not one from the Roman church.

Yet, this is suppose to be the place and the time when the "Pope of Rome" changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday!!!

Recognizing a practice already in existence is different than originating a new practice. For example:

- a) Council of Carthage (397 A.D.) stated the 27 books of the NT were inspired.

This did not make them inspired – they were already inspired – independent of any council.

This council merely recognized something that was already true.

- b) Council of Laodicea merely recognized something already being practiced – 1<sup>st</sup> day of the week worship. They did not originate the practice.

### 3) What does history say about the Sabbath and the first day of the week?

**IGNATIUS, the third bishop of Antioch, who died in 108 A.D., wrote:** "If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, **no longer observing the Sabbath**, but living in the observance of **the Lord's Day**, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him... Let us therefore **no longer keep the Sabbath** after the Jewish manner, and rejoice in days of idleness; for "he that does not work, let him not eat."...let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's day as a festival, the resurrection-day, the queen and chief of all the days [of the week]" "Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians," Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 1, pp. 62-63 (emphasis added).

**IN 120 A.D. THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS says in chapter 2:** "Incense is a vain abomination unto me, and your new moons and Sabbaths I cannot endure. He has, therefore, abolished these things." Again: "Wherefore, also, we keep **the eighth day** with joyfulness, the day, also, on which Jesus rose again from the dead" (Ch. 25).

**JUSTIN MARTYR - 140 A.D.** - In chapter 67 of his first Apology, entitled, "Weekly Worship of the Christians," writing to the pagan emperor, Justin states: "And on the day called **Sunday**, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought...But **Sunday** is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought the change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead." (Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 1, pp. 185-186 (emphasis added)).

**APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTIONS: Church life in the 2nd Century:** -- "On the day of the resurrection of the Lord--that is, **the Lord's Day**--assemble yourself together without fail, giving thanks to God and praising Him for those mercies God has bestowed upon you through Christ."

**IRENEAEUS: 155-202 A.D.** -- "The Mystery of the Lord's Resurrection may not be celebrated on any other day than **the Lord's Day**, and on this alone should we observe the breaking off of the Paschal Feast."

**TERTULLIAN of Africa, wrote around 200 A.D.:** In his Apology, Chapter 16, Tertullian says: "We solemnize **the day after Saturday** in contradistinction to those who call this day their Sabbath, and devote it to ease and eating, deviating from the old Jewish customs, which they are now very ignorant of."

"Others, with greater regard to good manners, it must be confessed, suppose that the sun is the god of the Christian, because it is a well-known fact that we pray towards the east, or because **we make Sunday a day of festivity**" (Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, p. 123 (emphasis added)).

**NOTE:** The early church explained why they prayed toward the east. It was because, "as the lightning which lighteneth from the east and is seen even to the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be:" that by this we might know and understand that He will appear from the east suddenly" Ancient Syriac Documents, Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 8, p. 668.

## QUESTIONS

- 1) Is the collection of 1 Cor. 16:1-2 a religious service?
- 2) If 1 Cor. 16:1-2 simply means setting money aside at home, why was the first day specified?
- 3) If each Christian at Corinth stored up his money at home, would there have to be a "*gathering*" when Paul arrived to pick the money up and take it to Judea?
- 4) Does the Seventh Day Adventist Church take up a collection of money? If so, what day do you take up the collection? What scripture do you cite for your practice?
- 5) Is there any connection between eating the Lord's supper and assembling together?
- 6) In 1 Cor. 11:33, what did the brethren "*come together*" for?
- 7) In Acts 20:7, what did the brethren "*come together*" for?
- 8) If the meal of Acts 20:7 is a common meal, why wait seven days to have it? Why not meet earlier so Paul could go on – since he was in a hurry?
- 9) In Acts 20:7 Paul preached on the first day of the week. It is commonly argued that Paul preaching in a synagogue on the sabbath proves he "*kept the sabbath.*" Does this prove Paul "*kept the first day of the week*"?
- 10) Why is there no mention of disciples meeting together on the sabbath day in Acts 20?
- 11) Is there any record of any apostle commanding any group of Christians to rest or do anything else (religious or non-religious) on the seventh day of the week?
- 12) Why do sabbath-keepers fight the idea that "*the Lord's day*" is the first day of the week? Would it mean that the first day of the week was the proper day for worship if it was indeed "*the Lord's day*"?

## GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

To be saved from past sins, God requires the following steps:

- 1) **Belief** in Christ as the only begotten Son of God (Jn. 3:16).
- 2) **Repentance** of sins ("turning away from") (Acts 17:30).
- 3) **Verbal Confession** of faith in Christ (Rom. 10:10).
- 4) **Baptism** (immersion) into Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

### Acts 2:38

38 Then Peter said to them, "**Repent**, and let every one of you **be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

### Acts 22:16

16 'And now why are you waiting? Arise and **be baptized**, and **wash away your sins**, calling on the name of the Lord.'

### Romans 6:3-4

3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were **baptized into Christ Jesus** were **baptized into His death**?

4 Therefore we were **buried with Him through baptism into death**, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Baptism is the "*point in time*" that God applies the blood of Christ to the sinner's life. The sinner is baptized into the death of Christ (Rom. 6:3-4). Sinners were never told to "*pray the sinner's prayer*" as is commonly believed today (see Jn. 9:31). Only Christians have the privilege of praying for forgiveness of sins (1 Jn. 1:9; 2:1 – notice these verses were written to Christians, not sinners). Those who have not been baptized correctly must be rebaptized (see Acts 19:1-5) in order to be saved (1 Pet. 3:20-21).

While it *may* be true that the "thief on the cross" was never baptized (perhaps he may have been—see Mt. 3:5), it must be remembered he was saved while the Old Testament law was still in force (Heb. 9:16-17). This is exactly what the controversy over the Sabbath day revolves around—which law applies today and what does the Lord require of men today. The Lord's requirement of baptism "*for the remission of sins*" came after His death and resurrection (Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16).

After baptism, we must continue in "*all things*" which the Lord "commanded" (Mt. 28:20). We must be careful "*lest we fall*" (1 Cor. 10:12). Even saved Christians can "*fall away*" (Gal. 5:4), have their name removed from the "*book of life*" (Rev. 22:19), and suffer a worse fate than "*death without mercy*" (Heb. 10:26-29). Christians must "*make their calling and election sure*" by "*giving all diligence*" (2 Pet. 1:5-11).