

The Observance of the Lord's Day

by Andrew Borland

The Lord's day is a day of celebration for the New Creation, commemorating Christ's resurrection, and should be observed from the heart with a yielded life.

Scripture: Matthew 28:1, Acts 2:1, Acts 20:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2, Revelation 1:10

Topics: "Lord's Day", "Resurrection Sunday"

Description

Andrew Borland preaches about the significance of observing the Lord's day, emphasizing that it celebrates the New Creation and Christ's resurrection. Believers are encouraged to keep the first day of the week, not as a mere duty, but from the heart, in remembrance of Christ's sacrifice and resurrection. The observance of the first day is supported by various events in the Bible, such as Christ's resurrection, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the disciples gathering to break bread. The focus is on the spiritual significance and unity of believers in commemorating the Lord's death and resurrection on the first day of the week.

Transcript

As the sabbath was instituted to celebrate the old creation, so the Lord's day celebrates the New Creation. Throughout this age the most Spirit-filled, devout believers to whom the will of God has been clearly revealed, have kept the Lord's day apart from any sense of responsibility to keep the seventh day. It is reasonable to suppose that had they been guilty of sabbath breaking, they would have been convicted of that sin.

Since it is all of grace, a written requirement for the keeping of the Lord's day is not imposed, nor is the manner of its observance prescribed. By this wise provision, none are encouraged to keep the day as a mere duty; it is to be kept from the heart. Israel stood before God as immature children under tutors and governors and needing the commandments which are given to a child (Gal. 4:1-11); while the Church stands before God as adult sons. Their life under grace is clearly defined, but it is presented only as the beseechings of God with the expectation that all shall be done willingly (Eph. 4:1-3; Rom. 12:1,2). There is little question as to how a well-instructed, Spirit-filled believer (and the Scripture presupposes a normal Christian to be such) will be occupied on the day which commemorates Christ's resurrection and the New Creation. If perchance the child of God is not yielded to God, no unwilling observance of a day will correct his carnal heart nor would such observance be pleasing to God. The issue between God and the carnal Christian is not one of outward actions, but of a yielded life.

The Observance of the First Day is Indicated by Various Events. In addition to the fact that the sabbath is nowhere imposed on the children of God under grace, there are reasons for their observance of the first day of the week.

1. On that day Christ arose from the dead (Matt. 28:1-7; Lk. 24:1-6).
2. On that day He first met His disciples in the new fellowship (John 20:19).
3. On that day the Spirit descended from Heaven (Acts 2:1-4).
4. On that day the Apostle Paul preached in Troas (Acts 20:6,7)
5. On that day the believers came together to break bread (Acts 20:6,7)
6. On that day they were to "lay by in store" as God had prospered them (1 Cor. 16:2).
7. On that day Christ appeared to John on Patmos (Rev. 1:10). (Lewis Sperry Chafer)

And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight (Acts 20:7).

This is evidently something to which the Holy Spirit desires to draw our attention in a special way; otherwise it would not be mentioned so definitely. They arrived in Troas, remained there seven days until the first day of the week rolled around. And what is the first day of the week? The day that we call Sunday. And on this day, not on the Jewish Sabbath, but on the first day of the week, already it had become customary apparently for the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ to gather together for a specific purpose, and that purpose is called here "to break bread". (Harry Ironside)

In 1825, J. G. Bellett, who had met Anthony Norris Groves in Dublin, wrote these memorable words of his friend: "It appeared to him from Scripture that believers, meeting together as disciples of Christ, were free to break bread as their Lord had admonished them, and that in so far as the practice of the apostles could be a guide, every Lord's Day should be set apart for thus remembering the Lord's death and obeying His parting command." To those who are accustomed now to meet in that simple, unpretentious way, such a discovery means nothing, but to men who were wedded to Church systems it was momentous, captivating. This reversion to the Scriptures has had repercussions in the furthest corners of the world. Gatherings for the breaking of bread are now an integral part of that witness which derives its virility from its simplicity. The oneness of the Body of Christ is recognized and opportunity to display that oneness is given in the weekly gathering to break bread. (Andrew Borland)

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