

In search of...



Volume 07 Issue 39

September 23, 2012

The Lord's Day

What is the Lord's Day? Some teach that the Lord's day is the Sabbath day, that is the seventh day of the week in which God commanded the Israelites to rest from work (Exodus 16:23-30). However, the Sabbath day is never called the Lord's day in the Old Testament. In fact, there is only one reference to the Lord's day in the entire Bible (Revelation 1:10) and there is no evidence whatsoever that it is a reference to the Sabbath. Instead, the abundance of evidence is that the

reference is to the first day of the week which, of course, is Sunday, not Saturday.

Why would Sunday be called the Lord's day? No doubt it was so called because it is the day in which the Lord was raised from the dead (Matthew 28:1-6; Mark 16:1-9). It was also the day in which the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the apostles and the Lord established His church in keeping with His promise

(Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:1). Pentecost always fell upon the first day of the week (Leviticus 23:15-16).

That the first day of the week was a special and specific time of worship by the early church is seen in passages like Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians 16:1). Notice it was the first day of the week that the disciples gathered upon to partake of the Lord's Supper, not the Sabbath day.

If the Sabbath was the designated day for disciples to come together and worship God, would not that be the day in which they came together to break bread? Why did Paul exhort the Corinthians to lay by in store upon the first day of the week rather than on the Sabbath day? The answer is clear. It was because the first day of the week was the day set aside by the first century church assemble and worship God. Where is the evidence that the church ever assembled on the Sabbath day? There is neither a command, an example or an inference of such in the New Testament.

What about passages that show Paul and others going into different synagogues on the Sabbath day? In Acts 13 we read of Paul going into a synagogue on the Sabbath day. In Acts 17 we read of it again. Is this proof that the church kept

the Sabbath? No, and only the one desperate to bind Sabbath keeping would ever so conclude. Paul and companions went into the various synagogues on the Sabbath, not to keep the Sabbath per se, but to preach the gospel of Christ to those who were lost. The passages referred to above do not show the church gathering together to worship God on the Sabbath, they show evangelists taking advantage of opportunities to preach. In Acts 17: 2-3 we are told the purpose of Paul going into the synagogue upon his arrival at Thessalonica.

"And Paul, a his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ."

Why did Paul go into the synagogue for three consecutive Sabbaths? To preach Christ to unbelieving Jews. The purpose was evangelical, not Sabbath keeping. But didn't some Jews in the church sometimes keep the Sabbath? Yes, but that was an individual right to do so. In Romans 14 Paul places the esteeming of one day above another in the category of a personal liberty that one may or

may not do (Romans 14:5-6). Since keeping the Sabbath is neither commanded or condemned by New Testament law, it becomes a matter of judgment based upon one's personal convictions. Quite naturally Jews who are converted to Christ and who have kept the Sabbath all their lives might wish to continue to do so after they obey the gospel. However, it is not something they have the right to bind on others. When the Sabbath is made a requisite for salvation it becomes wrong and those who teach such are guilty of perverting the gospel of Christ and have fallen from grace (Galatians 4:9-11; 5:1-4; Colossians 2:16-17).

Perhaps the greatest evidence proving that keeping the Sabbath is was not commanded in the first century church is the edict announced by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem and sanctioned by the Holy Spirit in Acts 15. Acts 15:28-29 reads as follows:

"For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well."

This letter was necessary because certain

Jews from Jerusalem were teaching Gentiles that they had to keep the law of Moses (Acts 15:5, 24). A part of the law of Moses was Sabbath day keeping, yet the letter which seemed good to the Holy Spirit said that such a burden was not placed upon Gentiles. This proves beyond all doubt that the church in the first century was not in the business of keeping the Sabbath day.

Why was the first day of the week called the Lord's day in Revelation 1:10? We can't be completely sure, but many believe that it was in contrast to the Emperor's Day which was celebrated the first day of every month. It was a direct challenge to Emperor worship. In the pagan world, the first day of every month belong to the emperor. In the world of Christianity, the first day of the week belonged to Christ, for on that day, the Son of God was raised from the dead and His church established.

Don Wright

This bulletin is published by the
WELLSBURG CHURCH OF CHRIST



92 Rose Cottage Ln.
Wellsburg, WV 26070
304-737-1422

<http://www.truthandright.org>

**LIKE US ON FACEBOOK under
Wellsburg church of Christ!**

Birds in the Bible

T H H X C I X U N A E M G S Y C B A L S
R R Z A X E G J E V S Z Y H J I H X E V
J H C B G D G U C Z B P Y C O G D P T U
D V J U K C U Q N M L B I H P Z T I Q B
O R H C N N B M P A X B D I A P W W E C
U A L M I M C P U C T O J C R Q C V K N
Q G D K Y Q U A I L I Y P K T V O T F T
F T Q Q E I N K C L H M I E R O W A Z U
P R W S G Z Z W J O G T L N I Y L H A W
K M N O A L Z F E B T U G Y D A Y N T Z
U C V A M E X V Y R S L T B G R A V E N
Q K L X W B C U C B K L O P E A C O C K
P V Y F I V M I H F T D G X A U T R Y O
I E R K G I J T J S T O R K G M O B L W
Z H E G H N D K L P D V J F L W T W O T
U K U C O I T V T A J E R R E U L A A X
A H P Y R J L Z I R J A C S A O N R U U
I Y E D S M R F T R A X M G H A C F B Z
X Y T S A V N T A O O E T G A X W Z N Z
Q P X I A X M N I W U M E K D C X R R I
K C M V G J D R I Z R Y I O S T R I C H

- At Jesus' baptism, the Spirit came down like this (Matt. 3:16)
- A Psalmist wrote about one of these "of the wilderness" (Psa. 102:6)
- God asked Job about this large flightless bird (Job 39:13-15)
- Solomon had these birds shipped with gold & silver (1 Kings 10:22)
- Noah sent out this first bird mentioned in the Bible (Gen. 8:6-7)
- Jesus once used this bird in describing Jerusalem (Luke 13:34)
- The Lord provided these as food for Israel (Num. 11:31-32)
- David compared himself to this, speaking to Saul (1 Sam. 26:20)
- Jesus said that the Father sees every one of these (Matt. 10:29)
- According to Psalms, this bird nests in the fir trees (Psa. 104:17)
- Isaiah said that some will mount up with wings like this (Isa. 40:31)