

Questions and Answers about the Lord's Day

The Lord's Day

The Sabbath is the oldest institution in the world. It is the weekly day of rest.

Q. -Who gave us the Sabbath?

A. -God. For we read in Genesis 2, verses 1-3 that He rested from the work of Creation, and ordained it ('blessed and sanctified').

Q. -For whose benefit was it given?

A. -For all mankind, for the Saviour tells us that the Sabbath was made for man -Mark 2:27.

Q. -How should it be used?

A. -We are told in the Fourth Commandment to keep it holy and to do no manner of work. (Exodus 20:8-11).

Q. -But is that not a command for the Jews only?

A. -Not so! It is part of God's moral law and applies to all people everywhere.

Q. -May not a part of the Sabbath Day be spent in worship, and then the remainder of the day left free for personal pleasure?

A. -No. God's command is that the day should be kept holy.

Q. -Are there any positive benefits in keeping the Sabbath in that way?

A. -Of course. Rest is gained for the body so that health is maintained. There is repose for the mind and relief from everyday cares. There is renewal for the spiritual life through private and public worship.

Q. -Is there any instruction to the disciples about the first day of the week?

A. -Yes. Paul directed the disciples to set aside their portions towards the collection for the poor on that day. (1 Cor. 16:2).

Q. -Is the term the 'Lord's Day' found in the Bible?

A. -Yes. In Revelation 1:10 John tells us that he was 'in the Spirit on the Lord's Day' and that special revelation was given to him.

Q. -How ought we to observe the Christian Sabbath Day?

A. -By regular attendance at the House of God; by joining with His people in praise and prayer; by reading and hearing God's Holy Word; and by partaking of the Lord's Supper.

Q. -Is there anything else that we can do on that day?

A. -We can attend, or teach in, Sunday School or Bible Class; or we may visit sick people and try to cheer them; and in many other ways we can make known the glad tidings of the Saviour's love.

Q. -What ought we to avoid doing on the Lord's Day -or Sunday as it is called?

A. -We should avoid doing work which can be done on a weekday, all shopping, needless travel, and amusements and pastimes which are not worthy of God's Holy Day.

Q. -Would obedience to God's Law bring blessing?

A. -Undoubtedly. In Isaiah 58: 13-14 we are told that those who obey will delight themselves in the Lord -which means that they shall be very happy; that they shall ride upon the high places of the earth -which means they will be held in great honour: and that He will feed them with the heritage of Jacob -which means that God will prosper and keep them.

Q. But what did Christ do and say about the restrictions of the Law and especially about the Sabbath?

A. -He kept the Law, but spoke against the petty regulations which had been added to it by the Pharisees. He said that He was Lord of the Sabbath and He regularly attended worship on that day. See Mark 2:28 and Luke 4: 16.

Q. -Did He do anything else on the Sabbath?

A. -Yes. He did many works of healing -see Mark 2:23 and 3:1-5 -and He walked quietly through the cornfields with His disciples.

Q. -How does that affect us?

A. -In several ways. It shows that works of mercy may be done on the Sabbath, and that the keeping of the Sabbath does not mean conforming to the petty rules of the Pharisees, but primarily involves our devotion to God and then our regard for the welfare of others.

O. -But is not the Sabbath a Saturday? Why do you term the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, a Sabbath?

A. -Sabbath means 'rest', and God requires that one-seventh of man's time belongs to Him; he has not labelled the days, because it is the rhythm that is so important -one day for God and six days for man. The Lord's Day maintains that rhythm.

Q. -How did the first day of the week come to be the Lord's Day?

A. -Because after His death for sinners and His burial, our Saviour rose from the dead on that day.

Q. -But why the FIRST day instead of the seventh day?

A. -Because the Jewish order of things came to an end with the death of Christ since He was the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy. He began the new order of things when He rose from the dead on that first Lord's Day.

Q. -How? Did He mark that day out in any special way?

A. -Definitely. We read in John 20 of many who had the privilege of meeting the Risen Saviour on that day. He conferred on them the gift of the Holy Spirit and commissioned them to preach the Gospel.

Q. -But may it not have been an accident that these things came to pass on that particular day?

A. -No, because exactly a week later He met many of the disciples again in very similar circumstances.

Q. -But what happened later?

A. -We read in Acts 2 that He sent the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost -and that was the first day of the week.

Q. -What place did the first day of the week have in the lives of the early Christians?

A. -In Acts 20:6-7, Luke tells us that the disciples at Troas met together to break bread on the first day of the week, and that Paul preached to them.

Q. -Will not Sunday then be a day of gloom?

A. -Not at all It can be, and should be and will be the happiest of all days of the week if we know the Lord Jesus as our Risen Saviour and Lord. We shall then spend the day with Him and with His people, and we shall echo the words of the Psalmist:

'THIS IS THE DAY THE LORD HATH MADE: WE WILL REJOICE AND BE GLAD IN IT.' (Psalm 118:24).

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