

The Church of Christ, the Lord's Supper, And the First Day of the Week

"On the first day of the week, . . . we were gathered together to break bread" (Acts 20:7a).

Members of the churches of Christ observe the Lord's Supper every Sunday because that is what the church of the first century did as they were led by the apostles. We have their approved example to follow. Acts 20:7 contains a clear reference to the *weekly* observance of the Lord's Supper: "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" (NKJV). They did not meet yearly, quarterly, or even monthly to observe the Lord's Supper. They met weekly. This is an authoritative example for the church to follow as long as time lasts.

The purpose of the weekly assembly of the church was to "break bread," meaning to observe the Lord's Supper—to remember Jesus in the manner He had instructed. Jesus had commanded this observance in Matthew 26:26–28 and Luke 22:19. Paul mentioned the same thing in 1 Corinthians 11:23–26, concluding, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."

Concerning the assembly, the church was given a direct command not to forsake it (Hebrews 10:25). The practice of first-century Christians was to meet for worship on the first day of each week, Sunday. When they did so, they ate the Lord's Supper (the designation used in 1 Corinthians 11:20). The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It was the day that Jesus arose

from the grave and the day the church was established.

Someone may suggest that Acts 20:7 gives no indication that the disciples came together every week. In the Old Testament the Jews received the Ten Commandments. The fourth commandment stated, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8). Please notice that this verse does not say *every* Sabbath day, but it could mean nothing else. The Jews understood it to be every week. Each week included a seventh day, or Sabbath, and every faithful Jew kept that day holy under the law of Moses.

Likewise, in the Christian dispensation, the cycle of every seven days includes a first day of the week. This is the "Lord's Day," and Christians are to come together and "break bread" on this day. The regularity of this observance should be no more a question for Christians than the observance of the Sabbath was for the Jews under the law of Moses.

In addition to internal proofs in the New Testament, respected historians have recorded that it was the practice of the Christians in the early centuries to meet and observe the Lord's Supper every Sunday. Let us gather weekly, rejoicing in the privilege of communing with our Lord.

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