

J.J.

THE LORD'S DAY

Luke 24: ¹ On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. ² They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, ³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. ⁵ In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ⁷ 'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.' "

INTRODUCTION :

There was a time my wife and I brought Mica to Yorkdale Mall in the afternoon because she has to attend a birthday party. Maybe this was our third time to go to Yorkdale Mall so we decided to check out the place. We then went upstairs to the third floor and we saw there was a food court. Everything was there, KFC, Shangri-la 360, New York Fries...the usual food court stuff. But then I saw, Chicken-Fil-A I got excited because their sauce is really good. And then I saw, it was closed. I asked myself, was it not earning money and then I remembered what day that was. It was a Sunday. And Chick-Fil-A is known to close their restaurants and business on Sundays because its owners were Christians.

That's the reason when Kanye West came out with the album "Jesus is King" one of the songs there is called "Closed on Sunday"

*Closed on Sunday, you're my Chick-fil-A
Closed on Sunday, you my Chick-fil-A
Hold the selfies, put the 'Gram away
Get your family, y'all hold hands and pray*

Have you ever wondered why we attend church on a Sunday? Why not a Monday? Why not a Thursday?

Early Christians call Sunday as the Lord's Day and we'll see that later.

Before we start, let's study what Sunday or the Lord's Day is "not".

SUNDAY IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE SABBATH.

*Colossians 2: 16 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by that you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷ **These are a shadow of the things** that were to come; **the reality, however, is found in Christ.***

Note : Paul was explaining to the Colossians, that everything in the Old Testament was a shadow of the real thing... Jesus Christ.

Explain : When you see a shadow, what does it mean, it's the shape of the real object because the rays of the sun are shining on it.

So the Sabbath gave us an idea of the real object and in this case our Lord. We know that Sabbath is all about rest from working.

Reason behind: It's because **people believed that they need to work for the atonement of their sins** in order for God to accept them **but Jesus Christ was already the one who atoned for our sins. HE GAVE US REST.**

Matthew 11: 28 Come to Me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

And Jesus calls Himself the Lord of the Sabbath, this means, He is the one who designed Sabbath and the One who gives true rest.

Matthew 12: 8 For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

That's why, we Christians call our Lord Jesus – our Sabbath (rest)

Quick note also: In the Bible, you will see these two terms "The Lord's Day" and "The Day of the Lord." (2 Peter 3:10; 1 Thess 5:2" Zeph 1:14; Joel 2:1). The Lord's Day refers to Sunday but the Day of the Lord refers to the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ where He will be judge (that's a dreadful day for unbelievers)

So now why do we attend church on Sundays or the Lord's Day

Pray

THREE REASONS WE CELEBRATE THE LORD'S DAY:
RESURRECTION; FOUNDATION; TRADITION

1. RESURRECTION : OUR LORD RESURRECTED ON A SUNDAY

Remember : The greatest Christian celebration is not Christmas, though it's nice to celebrate the birth of our Saviour when God became man. But the greatest Christian celebration is the Resurrection! It is that day! It is that day when God has accomplished His work of redemption after dying on the cross for our sins. It is that day that God has conquered sin and death! It is that day that we are justified! If Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead, then it doesn't prove that He is God.

1 Corinthians 15: ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith.

¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. ¹⁹ If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

Going back to the topic :

We go to church on a Sunday because our Lord rose from the dead on a Sunday.

Note : You don't see the word "Sunday" in the Bible. It was described as the first day of the week. We know that Sunday is the day our Lord rose from the dead because he rose on the "first day"

Let's look at the timeline after Jesus died on the cross.

We know Jesus died on "Good Friday" based on Luke Chapter 23. Joseph of Arimathea asked for Jesus' body.

Luke 23: 53 Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. ⁵⁴ That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.

Why was it called "The Preparation"? Preparation for the Sabbath – Friday. It was called "Preparation" because they are not allowed to work, cook, etc on a Sabbath. So they prepare everything on a Friday. Sabbath "Shabat" begins at sundown on a Friday and ends at sundown on Saturday.

⁵⁵ And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. ⁵⁶ Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

Note : Sabbath - seventh day of the week...

Exodus 20 ⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God.

Trivia : "Sabado" comes the Hebrew "Shabat" root word "sabat" which means rest. "Domingo" comes from Latin word Dominicus which means "of the Lord" (The Lord's Day)

Linggo (Tagalog) is the shortening of that word "Domingo"

So why is Sunday or Domingo which comes after Sabado is the Lord's Day? It's because Jesus resurrected on a Sunday, Domingo or Linggo...

Then look in Chapter 24 of Luke.

Luke 24: ¹ On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. ² They found the stone rolled away from

the tomb, ³ but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. ⁵ In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, “Why do you look for the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: ⁷ ‘The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.’ ”

By the way, some pundits will say, that Jesus did not rise after 3 days because, from the time He died at 3 p.m., it was only less than 48 hours. We know today 48 hours is only 2 days.

But during Biblical times, a day is not counted on a 24-hour period. A full day is counted from sunrise to sunset – Friday is 1st day, Saturday is 2nd day, Sun rises on Sunday, that’s the third day.

APPARENTLY THAT FIRST SUNDAY WHEN OUR LORD JESUS ROSE FROM THE DEAD was a very special day. Why?

a.) The Lord appeared in the morning.

John 20: ¹¹ Now Mary stood outside the tomb crying. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb ¹² and saw two angels in white, seated where Jesus’ body had been, one at the head and the other at the foot.

¹³ They asked her, “Woman, why are you crying?”

“They have taken my Lord away,” she said, “and I don’t know where they have put him.” ¹⁴ At this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not realize that it was Jesus.

¹⁵ He asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?”

Thinking he was the gardener, she said, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will get him.”

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Mary.”

She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means “Teacher”).

b.) The Lord appeared in the afternoon

The Road to Emmaus

*Luke 24: ¹³ Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ **but they were kept from recognizing him.***

Application: That’s what we should be expecting on a Sunday...it’s not a duty...it’s Jesus Christ walking along with us. The reason we go on a Sunday worship service is because our **Lord is HERE.**

Also notice, *they were kept from recognizing Him*. That's why our prayer every Lord's Day should be, "Lord, I want to see you and I want to hear from you today."

Then look at what Jesus did WHILE WALKING WITH THEM.

- **Jesus gave a sermon: Expository**

Luke 24: ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

- **Jesus had fellowship**

²⁸ As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

Note : "it is nearly evening"...so you know it's in the afternoon

- **Jesus broke bread.**

³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them.

HAVING SAID ALL OF THESE, NOTICE THAT THESE ARE ALL THE THINGS ALL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES DO ON THE LORD'S DAY.

By the way, this is what the first church devoted themselves too.

*Acts 2: 42 They **devoted** (continued steadfastly KJV) themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

That's why R.C. Sproul said :

Quote : We need the church as urgently as a starving baby needs his mother's milk - R.C. Sproul

Question : Why is this true? I'll share later

c.) The Lord appeared in the evening

(Remember that was already sundown as seen earlier)

Note : Emmaus was seven miles from Jerusalem

¹³ Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem.

This means Jerusalem is a 2 hours walk from Emmaus.

²⁸ As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their

sight. ³² They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

Luke 24: ³³ They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem.

Note : Remember in verse 29, it says, "It is nearly evening and the day is almost over."

And Jesus still stayed with them...until he disappeared.

So again when they went from Emmaus to Jerusalem, (a 2-hour walk), it's now evening.

Luke 24: ³³ They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together ³⁴ and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." ³⁵ Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

³⁶ While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

Special note : It is through the gathering of the disciples of Christ when our Lord opens our eyes to His Word.

When He appeared to the disciples

Luke 24: ⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.

From the two who were walking with Him in Emmaus

³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. ³² They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

Note : Isn't that what you feel when the Scriptures are opened to us, our hearts are burning and we know the Lord Himself is talking to us.

We go to church on a Sunday because we know that when the pastor faithfully preaches God's Word, we hear the Lord Himself talking to us.

This should be our attitude every Sunday, every time God's Word is preached.

1 Samuel 3: ⁸ A third time the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. ⁹ So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰ The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

I shared earlier that we need the church as a starving baby needs milk. Why?

1 Timothy 3:15 the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

Quote : “When you go to church you are really listening-in to the secret wireless from out friends: that is why the enemy is so anxious to prevent us from going. He does it by playing on our conceit and laziness and intellectual snobbery.” C.S. Lewis

Quick Note: One of the proofs of the resurrection because the first Christians who were Jews abandoned the Sabbath and started gathering on a Sunday.

2. FOUNDATION : THE CHURCH WAS BORN ON A SUNDAY.

Illustration: In our school in the Philippines, we celebrate what we call Foundation Day. That’s a special day commemorating the day the school was founded or formed. Foundation Day marked the establishment of a nation, state, school or an organization.

The church’s foundation day was on a Sunday.

Let me unfold this for you by God’s grace.

Acts 1: He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

Remember : A church is not a church without Spirit-empowered people. The disciples without the Holy Spirit were a bunch of people hiding from the authorities and afraid of persecution and suffering.

SO When is the “few days” that the Holy Spirit would appear?

Acts 2: ¹ When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Note : Today, to Christians, Pentecost is celebrated as like Holy Spirit Sunday but that’s not the meaning of Pentecost to the Jews. Remember, the first Christians were Jews.

The Pentecost means “penta” (five) (pentagon, pentathlon, and ice breaker..pentalon) **because it occurred fifty days** after the Sabbath.

Note : PENTECOST IS THE DAY ESTABLISHED BY GOD when the firstfruits of the harvest was dedicated to the Lord.

NOW I LOVE THIS CONNECTION! Look at this by God’s grace.

The connection of Pentecost (celebration of firstfruits with the foundation of the church) Remember, there is no such things as coincidence with God. Everything is done with a purpose. **Since Pentecost is the celebration of the firstfruits of the harvest and I love this, THE DISCIPLES who were formed as a church during Pentecost WAS THE FIRSTFRUITS OF OUR LORD. They were about 120. They were the first church.** (Acts 1:15)

Since the church was formed on the Pentecost festival,
NOW THE QUESTION: Is the Pentecost festival on a Sunday?

Leviticus 23: ¹⁶ Count off fifty days up to the day after the seventh Sabbath, and then present an offering of new grain to the LORD.

Calculations : $7 \times 7 = 49$ which is a Sabbath so the 50th day, the Pentecost is on a Sunday!!!

Illustration : Birthday celebrations, we celebrate. What more that we celebrate the birth of the church.

Note : If we celebrate the birthday of the people, **then we celebrate the birth of the church every Sunday.** That's why Sunday is a day of celebration...our Lord resurrected from the dead, making us right with God, then the church was born on a Sunday...

And look at what the first thing that the church did when the church was born :

Acts 2: ¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

IT PREACHED THE WORD OF GOD. Peter got passages from Scripture and exposed it.

3. TRADITION HAS ESTABLISHED IT AS A SUNDAY

Revelations 1: ¹⁰ On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,

This is the first and only time we see in the Bible, the term "The Lord's Day". John did not give an explanation on what the Lord's Day so it is assumed that his readers at that time would know what it is.

Etymology : Lord's Day "kyriakos hemera",

Historically : A number of Christian writings in the same era uses "kyriakos hemera" to refer to as Sunday such as the Didache and Ignatius of Antioch used the term, "The Lord's Day" to describe Sunday. Clement of Alexandria (AD 160) referred to Sunday as the Lord's Day.

IMPORTANT: During this time, John is the only disciple left and the church has been growing rapidly and persecutions were abounding and at the same time, traditions were being set. **And apparently, it was impossible for Christians to meet everyday as in Acts 2 that they started to meet every Lord's Day which is a Sunday.**

We see a glimpse of that on these two verses :

Acts 20: ⁷ On the first day of the week we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight.

1 Corinthians 16: ¹ Now about the collection for the Lord's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. ² On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

Note : So apparently, the Christians (in these case, we know the Galatian church and the Corinthian church gathers during Sunday) gather on the first day of the week in the New Covenant.

The Bible commands us not to neglect attending church.

Hebrews 10: ²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Although we are not required, the Word of God is also very clear in its command not to neglect MEETING TOGETHER We do not only attend church for our own feeding but we attend church, first and foremost to worship our Lord and secondly, to be an encouragement to our brothers and sisters. CHURCH NEEDS TO BE A PRIORITY.

Quote : The funny thing about people is that we always manage to find time for our priorities.

No matter how busy life gets, I find time for my wife because I make sure that's a priority. The question of church attendance is less about if we have to go and more about why we don't want to.

What is it that keeps people from seeing godly community as a priority that is worth sacrificing for? While church isn't perfect, it is the theater in which God chooses to display His awesome power. – Tyler Edwards

Illustration : I had a classmate in high school who was an alcoholic, his family left him and then he was born again and followed our Lord Jesus Christ. He went on a business trip here in Burlington from the Philippines. It was his first time here. He knows that I live here. One of the first messages of Tom to me when he was here is he was looking for a church. So even if he was only here for a few days. He longed to worship and be with God's people on a Sunday.

We have a term in Tagalog : “Kung gusto gagawan ng paraan. Kung ayaw, maraming dahilan.”

By the way, Tom went home to the Lord maybe 3 years after becoming a Christian but he was able to reunite with his wife and daughters and he was able to bring them to church and eventually became followers of Christ.

This shows that there are five gospels : Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and you. If the Gospel gives testimony about the life of Jesus, our very own life should give testimony that He lives in us and changed us. And when I say change...it's real change...that's why we are called “new creation”

CONCLUSION :

THE GREATEST MOTIVATION IN ATTENDING CHURCH.

Story : One time I was attending a party with my workmates. One of my workmates was there who brought his wife with him. We were talking how they met. And the conversation went to the part where she said, “I know that he really loves me because he lives in Pickering and I live in Mississauga and every weekend, he drives and travels just to see me.”

2 Corinthians 5: ¹⁴ For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

THE GREATEST MOTIVATION IN ATTENDING CHURCH IS LOVE

The Lord's love for us and our love for the Lord and others should be the main driving force we gather on the Lord's Day.

We are not required to remember birthdays of friends or our parents, or our children or anniversaries with our wife...but why do we do that? Because they are special to us.

We come on Sunday not because it is required...it is because we love the Lord who resurrected on a Sunday who made us right with God.

ISN'T THAT LIBERATING!!!

THAT'S WHY EVERY SUNDAY, I GREET EVERYONE HAPPY LORD'S DAY! Yes, the Lord's Day is every day of our lives but it is on the first day of the week that His people gather to worship Him together as their Lord and Saviour.

S.G.D.