

Why is Sunday the Lord's Day?

I doubt that there are many Christians who ask themselves or anyone else this question. The simple and adequate answer is because our Lord Christ Jesus rose from the dead on Sunday. That is an adequate answer unless you are persuaded to delve into the matter to see whether or not there is something more that our Lord would have us know.

The embracing of Sunday to be the day of rest and dedication to worship and prayer generated considerable controversy in the early church both among the Jews, and between them and the Apostles. Why? How could it be scripturally justified to suddenly set aside the sacredness of the Sabbath and instead make Sunday the special day of worship. God had ordained the Sabbath using His own finger with which He etched the 10 Commandments on stone tablets which He gave to Moses and to all of posterity. Well, it wasn't to all of posterity; it was only to the Jews. I never realized this until my Pastor pointed this out in one of his Holy Spirit-led Bible studies. While he didn't put it this way, it seems evident that at the resurrection of Christ Jesus, a new dispensation began. Jesus rose on Sunday. It was that first day of the week that He arose from the dead and appeared to Mary Magdalene and to His Apostles and Disciples as well as too many others. Thus it could be said that a new uniquely Christian observance began that favored Sunday, the day of the week as the day set aside for rest worship and prayer. Only twice in all of Scripture do we find Sunday actually identified as the Lord's Day. We see this only in John 20:19 and Acts 20:7. For the reasons mentioned, Sunday, became the Christian "holy day."

By the time Paul was teaching and preaching in various places, Sunday had become well established as the day set aside for special worship of our Lord. We find this implied by Paul when he spoke to the Corinthians as recorded in 1Corinthians 16:2, where it is written: "*Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.*" The "no gathering" seems to carry the same message as does the 8th commandment given to Moses. These gatherings of goods were to be always available so that there would be no need for gathering when Jesus will come. It's alluding to the day we meet the Lord either at the resurrection or at the Bema Seat. We are always to be ready

to be prepared at any moment by having gathered together all that He had assigned us to gather. We are not to wait until the last moment, a time which we know not, to do the gathering.

Finally Revelation 1:10, John called Sunday the Lord's Day. *"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet."* This is the only place in Scripture where the term "The Lord's Day" is to be found. This indicates that for 30 years after His resurrection, from the Christian perspective, the first day of the week, is most logically the day to pay special homage to our Lord. This establishment of Sunday as the "holy day" appears to be a logical human response by His followers to worship and honor Him in commemoration of His resurrection and what it accomplished for them. There doesn't appear to be a spiritual connotation even implied here. But there most certainly was for now we come to the whole purpose of this study.

As I listened to the sermon, it came to me suddenly that while all of that was true and important to know, it was, as already noted, a primarily man-made tradition with no evidence of spiritual involvement. This thought was immediately followed by what I'm certain was the true and complete godly basis for setting aside the first day of the week.

God's use of numbers to convey profound messages is well known. So what's the relevance here? Saturday is the God ordained 7th day of the week. Thus it is the day of completion. It is the completion of the of Old Testament dispensation. Sunday is then the 8th day. It is the day of new beginnings. It is our Lord Christ Jesus' day as decreed by God Himself. The risen Christ is the personification of that new beginning. Once this is recognized and understood, it is evident that all of this was not something that God simply permitted to take its course as a human prerogative. The hand of God was there working undercover glorifying Sunday as an eternal tribute to His Son who had died so that through His resurrection we might live.