

## **WHY DO WE PARTAKE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER EVERY SUNDAY? (Acts 20:7; Matthew 26:26-29)**

### **I. The event itself.**

- A. You may be saying this is not your topic, telling us why we partake every Sunday is.
  - 1. There may be some here that don't know about the Lord's Supper itself, let alone why we partake every Sunday.
  - 2. We want to make sure everyone has a clear picture about this subject.
- B. Our Lord, the night before His death instituted a memorial of His death, known as the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:20), communion (1 Corinthians 10:16) or breaking of bread (Acts 2:42).
- C. This memorial contains two emblems:
  - 1. The first is the unleavened bread that represents the body of Jesus (Matthew 26:26; Luke 22:19).
  - 2. The second is the fruit of the vine (Matthew 26:27-28; Luke 22:20).
- D. The congregation is to come together to partake of it as a group (1 Corinthians 11:20).
  - 1. The Corinthians were sinning in that they had turned it into a common meal.
  - 2. This is shown in 11:21.
- E. When partaking of this as a congregational group, we are to be examining ourselves and focusing on the death of Jesus (1 Corinthians 11:28-29).
- F. We are also proclaiming the importance of the Lord's death to the world (1 Corinthians 11:26).
- G. While we are partaking we are looking in certain directions:
  - 1. We are looking inward while we examine ourselves.
  - 2. We are looking backward to the cross.
  - 3. We are looking upward to Christ in thanks.
  - 4. We are looking outward to others letting them know of the death of Jesus.
  - 5. We are looking forward to the time of His return since we are showing His death til He comes (1 Corinthians 11:26).
- H. This is a basic look at the event of the Lord's Supper.

### **II. The example in the New Testament.**

- A. When discussing the frequency of the observance of the Lord's Supper and an example of such, we need to look at Acts 20:7.
  - 1. This verse shows us that the disciples in Troas met on the first day of the week to partake of the Lord's Supper.
  - 2. The Greek language gives the idea that it was their habit to meet every first day of the week.
- B. Notice verse 6.
  - 1. Paul was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem but he waited seven days in Troas to meet with the saints.
  - 2. Why would Paul do this accept to meet with the whole assembled

- group of Christians there in Troas?
  - 3. He knew they would meet on the first day of the week, Sunday, and wanted to be with them.
  - 4. But notice that their reason for coming together on the first day of the week was to break bread, or partake of the Lord's Supper.
- C. This verse is extremely important because we see that it was the disciples habit to meet every first day of the week for the purpose of partaking of the Lord's Supper.
- D. 1 Corinthians 11:20-21 also are important.
  - 1. Again, they were abusing the Lord's Supper in Corinth, turning it into a common meal.
  - 2. However, they were to come together to eat the Lord's Supper.
  - 3. When did they come together?
  - 4. The answer is in 1 Corinthians 16:2 - the first day of the week.
- E. Listen to the conclusion of Wayne Jackson derived from the tying together of these verses: "When one draws these points together, here is the irresistible conclusion:"
  - 1. The early church, under the oversight of inspired apostles, met regularly - upon the first day of the week.
  - 2. The primary purpose of their Sunday meeting was to observe the Lord's Supper.
  - 3. The communion supper, therefore, was observed each Lord's Day by the apostolic church.
- F. This line of reasoning is "ungetoverable" as one preacher put it.
- G. It also helps to add Acts 2:42 to this argument.
  - 1. These brethren continued steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles, in fellowship with one another, in partaking of the Lord's Supper, and in prayers.
  - 2. If you notice, these are four of the acts of worship that are to be engaged by Christians every Lord's day.
  - 3. It would be hard to be steadfast in something if you only do it quarterly or yearly.
- H. Have you heard of a group that doesn't take up the collection every first day of the week?
  - 1. I have not, but I have heard of them taking up more than that.
  - 2. Yet, the same language is used to teach the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper.
- I. The Bible authorizes by command, example and necessary inference.
  - 1. We have the command to partake of the Lord' Supper.
  - 2. We have the example of the first day of the week.
  - 3. From this, we can infer the necessity of partaking of the Lord's Supper every first day of the week.

### III. The evidence outside the Bible.

- A. Some think that this is some "church of Christ" doctrine.
- B. One thing that needs to be extremely clear is that there is no such thing as "church of Christ" doctrine, only Bible doctrine.

- C. If this were some man made command to observe the Lord's Supper every first day of the week then we would be sinning if we followed it.
- D. What I want us to consider now is non-biblical evidence for the observance of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week by the early church.
  - 1. You may ask why it matters what the early church does.
  - 2. The reason such an emphasis is placed on what the early church did is that those brethren were the closest to the apostles lifetimes.
  - 3. They were influenced by them directly in some cases and within in one or two degrees of separation in many more cases.
- E. Tertullian, who was a church historian, wrote in 204 AD that "the church of Christ composed of baptized believers, does meet each Lord's Day to partake of the Lord's Supper."
- F. Justin Martyr, in his 1<sup>st</sup> Apology and in Dialogue with Trypho, tells us that the Lord's Supper was celebrated on the Lord's Day.
- G. Irenaeus and Cyprian both wrote about the Lord's Supper being on the first day of the week.
- H. Not only do we have historical evidence, there are also several denominational commentators who have written that the first day of the week, every week, is when the Supper should be eaten.
  - 1. Adam Clarke wrote, The Lord's Day in which they commemorated the resurrection of our Lord to break bread intimating, by this, that they were accustomed to receive the holy sacrament on each Lord's day.
  - 2. The Pulpit Commentary: to break bread. This is also an important example of weekly communion as the practice of the first Christians.
  - 3. Albert Barnes - to break bread. Evidently to celebrate the Lord's supper. It is probably that the apostles and early Christians celebrated the Lord's Supper on every Lord's Day.
  - 4. Matthew Henry "they came together to break bread." That is, to celebrate the ordinance of the Lord's supper, that one instituted sign of breaking the bread being put for all the rest...in the primitive times it was the custom of many churches to receive the Lord's supper every Lord's day.
  - 5. George Beasley-Murray: My own views as a young preacher speedily led me to the conviction that the primitive New Testament pattern of the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper was there and that there was every reason to follow it.
- I. All of these quotes go to show that when one takes the evidence and weighs it, the example is there that the early church partook of the Lord's Supper every first day of the week.
- J. That is what the first Christians did and it is what all Christians are to do in order to please God.