

# **SHOULD WE WORSHIP ON SUNDAY OR SATURDAY?**

## **All New Testament References to “The first day of the week”**

**Questions to ponder when reading these: Is there a clear mandate that worship should only happen on the first day of the week? Does the passage suggest or even imply that the disciples were meeting on the first day of the week for worship?**

MT 28:1 After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

MK 16:1 When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. <sup>2</sup> Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb...

((The most reliable early manuscripts and other ancient witnesses do not have Mark 16:9-20.))

MK 16:9 When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons.

LK 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.

JN 20:1 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.

JN 20:19 On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"

<sup>20</sup> After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

AC 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. <sup>8</sup> There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were meeting. <sup>9</sup> Seated in a window was a young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. When he was sound asleep, he fell to the ground from the third story and was picked up dead. <sup>10</sup> Paul went down, threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him. "Don't be alarmed," he said. "He's alive!" <sup>11</sup> Then he went upstairs again and broke bread and ate. After talking until daylight, he left. <sup>12</sup> The people took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted.

I CO 16:1 Now about the collection for God's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. <sup>2</sup> On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. <sup>3</sup> Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup> If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me.

*As you can see by the evidence, there is no New Testament reference that Jesus' followers met on the first day of the week for worship. No passage even implies it. Therefore, it cannot be reasonably argued or assumed that the New Testament church must worship only on the first day of the week.*

## **Sabbath References in the New Testament**

**Questions to ponder with these passages: Is there a New Testament “habit” of preaching or gathering for preaching on a Sabbath? Is there an implication that disciples met for worship on these Sabbaths?**

Matthew 12:1-12 - Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath & it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath

Matthew 24:20 – Reference of the pending destruction of Judea

Matthew 28:1 – “After the Sabbath”

Mark 1:21 – Jesus began to teach in the synagogue on the Sabbath

Mark 2:23-3:4 – Matthew 12

Mark 6:2 – Jesus began to teach in the synagogue on the Sabbath, again

Mark 15:42-16:1 – Matthew 28:1

Luke 4:16 – Went into the synagogue on the Sabbath as was his custom

Luke 4:31 – Jesus began to teach people on the Sabbath

Luke 6:1-5 – Matthew 12:1-12

Luke 6:6 – Jesus was teaching on another Sabbath

Luke 6:7-9 – Mark 2:23-3:4

Luke 13:10-16 – Jesus was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath again

Luke 14:1-6 – Jesus questioned about healing on the Sabbath again

Luke 23:55-56 – Preparation Day, Friday before the Sabbath

John 5:9-18 – Jesus went to celebrate a Jewish feast, healed an ingrate on the Sabbath, Jews persecuted, and He claimed equality with God.

John 7 – Jews anticipate Jesus coming to the temple for the Feast of Tabernacles, He waits, and then goes and teaches there.

John 9 – Jesus heals a blind man on the Sabbath & is criticized for it

John 19:31 – Jews didn’t want the bodies of the crucified people left on crosses during the Sabbath

Acts 1:12 – Apostles returned to Jerusalem, during the Sabbath

Acts 13:1-42 – Paul and Barnabas taught in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch on the Sabbath and were invited back to preach more on the next Sabbath in that synagogue.

Acts 13:43 – Of the congregation in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch on the Sabbath, many devout Jews and converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, being taught and encouraged to continue in the Grace of God.

Acts 13:44-52 – Another Sabbath in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch nearly the whole city gathered to hear Paul's preaching about Jesus. The Jews persecuted Paul and Barnabas. This is where Paul and Barnabas "shook the dust off their feet," symbolizing the shift to minister to the Gentiles.

Acts 15:21 – Reference to Moses being read in the synagogues every Sabbath

Acts 16:11-15 – A "we passage (Luke was there)" where Paul preached on the Sabbath and converted Lydia and her whole household.

Acts 17:1-15 - Paul continued his custom and of preaching on the Sabbath in a synagogue He did so on three Sabbaths in the synagogue at Thessalonica. This is where he reasoned and proved Christ. Again, he gained many converts. The Jews incited a riot, and arrested Jason. At night Paul and Silas went to Berea and entered the synagogue. Paul preached there and he gained more converts.

Acts 18:1-17 - Every Sabbath Paul preached, as was his custom. This is where he worked with Priscilla and Aquilla. It was there in Corinth where Paul left the synagogue one day in frustration with the Jews, and went next door to the house of Titius Justus.

Colossians 2:16 – "Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day."

Hebrews 4:1-13 – Discussion on the Sabbath-rest for the people of God.

*As you can see by the evidence, the only customary particular day of the week that the New Testament records as a consistent day of preaching (implied worship), is the Sabbath, which is the sixth day of the week, a Saturday. So it is once again proven unreasonable to argue that Christians must meet only on a Sunday for worship.*

*Additionally, God's creation days are described as such "there was evening, and there was morning... day." This idea that the day begins at sunset carried over even into New Testament times. The Jewish day typically began around 6pm. This means that the Sabbath actually began on a Friday evening and ended Saturday at around 6pm. Sunday, the first day of the week, actually began at around 6pm (sunset) on what we would call Saturday. That would mean that even for one who argues against having worship on a Biblical Sabbath (Saturday), conducting worship services on a Saturday night, would be fine (since it is Biblically already Sunday at sunset). However, with this reasoning, conducting a Sunday evening service would actually be a Biblical Monday morning service.*

*It would be good to note 3 more things: 1) Paul preached on the first day of the week in Acts 20, and went on through the night all the way until daylight. It is unclear as to when the preaching began – whether it was Saturday after 6pm (Biblical Sunday) or sometime prior to 6pm on that actual Sunday. If he began speaking on Saturday night, then preaching on Saturday is okay. If he began preaching on the actual Sunday and went on through to daybreak on Monday morning, then preaching on Monday is okay, too. 2) Jesus instituted communion on Thursday evening, so it is completely unbiblical to argue that communion must only be observed on Sundays. 3) There is no mandate to worship only on a particular day of the week in the New Testament. Worship should be a daily thing, anyway. Corporate worship happened in the New Testament on various days, so the opinion that there is only one particular day of corporate worship is one that is unbiblical, unfounded, and has overtones of modern-day legalism.*

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