

Is Sunday the “Lord’s Day”? {continued}

by Kyle Pope

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morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus” (Luke 24:1-3; cf. Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2, 9; John 20:1). It was also on the first day of the week that Jesus met with His disciples after His resurrection. John wrote, *“Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, ‘Peace be with you’”* (John 20:19). In the early church, it was also on this day that Christians met to observe the Lord’s Supper and study God’s word. Luke records in Acts, *“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”* (Acts 20:7). It was on this day that churches were commanded to offer a *“collection for the saints”* (1 Cor. 16:1-2). All this shows that Sunday was a special day to Christians, as Saturday had been a special day for Jews.

2. Writings immediately after the New Testament use the term “Lord’s Day” and “First Day of the Week” synonymously. While the New Testament does not specifically identify what is meant by John’s reference to *“the Lord’s Day”* in Revelation 1:10, Christian writing immediately after the New Testament does. A work known as the Didache (describing what Christians were to do in worship), after describing the procedure for the Lord’s Supper claims it was observed on *“The Lord’s Day”* (14). Another text from the same period, written to the emperor in defense of Christian beliefs and practices describes the same thing as happening *“on Sunday, since it is the first day, on which God transforming darkness and matter made the universe, and Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead on the same day”* (Justin, First Apology 66). This shows that Christians as early as the second century equated the phrase *“the Lord’s Day”* with Sunday.

Conclusion

In light of this scriptural and historical evidence it is reasonable to conclude that John was calling *“the first day of the week”* the *“Lord’s Day,”* making his reference to it a further indication that Christians treated Sunday as a special day of worship unto God. Christians today should do the same.

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