

WHEN TO EAT THE LORD'S SUPPER

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Jesus instituted the Lord's supper as a memorial of His suffering and death [Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-30]. The "bread" is unleavened bread, representing the Lord's body. The "cup" is fruit of the vine (grape juice), representing His blood. Jesus instituted the "supper" with the apostles the night of his betrayal and said he would not eat it again with them until they were in the Father's kingdom (the church).

The Lord's supper has been observed on the first day of the week since the beginning of the church in 33 A.D. This was the precedent set by the apostles as they were guided into all truth (cf. John 16:13). Even secular history (from numerous sources) records that Christians met on the first day of the week.

The church began on Pentecost after the Lord's death (Acts 2). The common practice of the church/kingdom is summed up in Acts 2:42 where brethren "...continued stedfastly in the apostles' **doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.**" Notice these four items are spiritual in nature. This is different from what we read in Acts 2:46 where the items are physical in nature.

While there is no direct command regarding *when* to eat the Lord's supper, there is a divine example of the church observing it. While Paul "hasted" (speed, earnestly desiring) on his way to Jerusalem hoping to get there by Pentecost (Acts 20:16), he arrived in Troas and stayed there seven days (Acts 20:6). "**And upon the first [day] of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them...**" (Acts 20:7).

Since he was in a hurry, why did he stay in Troas a full week? The only logical explanation is because that was the day the church assembled to eat the Lord's supper and he wanted to be there. If the communion can be observed any day of the week as some contend, then wouldn't the presence of the apostle Paul authorize such an occasion? He was in such a hurry that when he left Troas he bypassed Ephesus, sending word to the elders of the church there to meet him at Miletus (Acts 20:15-17). So, why wait in Troas for seven days? It's because the first day of the week was the day churches everywhere assembled to *eat the Lord's supper* (Acts 20:7). Where did they learn that except from the apostles? There was no moving the day to another day of the week. It had been set by heaven as this divine example proves.

Though brethren have the option to assemble and worship God any day of the week as we do during Gospel meetings in singing, praying, and preaching; Sunday worship, first day of the week worship, is not an option. The tradition of the apostles (cf. 2 Thess. 3:6) was/is divine tradition. Every church has been given the same order/command regarding worship in both giving and the Lord's supper.

Heaven's order concerning "giving" is authorized by *command* in First Corinthians 16:1-2 — "**upon the first [day] of the week.**"

Heaven's order concerning "the Lord's supper" is authorized by *example* in Acts 20:7 — "**upon the first [day] of the week.**"

What God has joined together, let no man put asunder (cf. Matt. 19:6).