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**THE SURE WORD by Jonnie Hutchison**

**WHY THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK?**

The Old Testament Law given to God's chosen people Israel required them to "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8). The New Testament (God's universal spiritual law now) contains no such requirement regarding the Sabbath or seventh day. Instead, there is an emphasis upon the **first day** of the week.

Jesus Christ arose from the dead on the first day of the week. "Now when the **Sabbath was past**, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. Very early in the morning, **on the first day of the week**, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen" (Mark 16:1-2). Seeing that the large stone that covered the face of the tomb had been rolled away, the women entered the tomb and were addressed by one who said, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. **He is risen!** He is not here. See the place where they laid Him" (Mark 16:6). Yes, Jesus arose from the dead, not on the Sabbath, but on the first day of the week.

The church of Christ was established upon the first day of the week. Jesus promised to build His church (Matthew 16:18-19). He fulfilled that promise on the first Jewish Pentecost following His resurrection from the dead and His ascension into heaven (Acts 1:9-11; 2:37-47). The Jewish Pentecost fell on the first day of the week (Acts 2:1). Before Acts 2 the church is always spoken of in the future tense but in Acts 2:47 the Bible says, "And the Lord added to **the church** daily those who were being saved." The church was not established on the Sabbath but on the first day of the week.

The New Testament church met for worship on the first day of the week. Consider Acts 20:7, "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." The "breaking of bread" in this context is a clear reference to observing the Lord's Supper (See Matthew 26:26-28; Acts 2:42). The church was also commanded to "lay by in store: or give on the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:1-2). Neither of these acts of worship were done on the Sabbath by first century Christians but only on the first day of the week.

Unlike the Jewish Sabbath, the first day of the week (Sunday) has great significance for the Christian for it was the day that our Lord arose from the dead and established His spiritual kingdom, the church.