

A Look at Sunday Night Services, Part 2: The Lord's Supper

Last Sunday we dealt with having Sunday evening services in general, in this article we want to look specifically at offering the Lord's Supper in the PM service. This seems to be an issue with certain brethren. In fact, there is a convergence with those who see no need for having a Sunday evening service and those opposed to offering the Lord's Supper twice on Sunday.

There are areas of agreement among brethren on the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is to be offered on the first day of the week. "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). The term "break bread" refers to the Lord's Supper and not a common meal. Likewise, the "first day of the week" is Sunday, not Saturday or any other day of the week.

The Lord's Supper has two elements, unleavened bread and fruit of the vine. "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matthew 26:26-28). His body being sacrificed for our sins. Unleavened bread represents the Jesus' body which was nailed of the cross. Fruit of the vine represents the blood of Christ shed on the cross and being the blood of the New Covenant. It is through His blood we have the remission of sins. "And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission." (Hebrews 9:22) We agree this is to be done until the Lord returns; "and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes." (1 Corinthians 11:24-26). Finally, this is done when the church is assembled. "Therefore, when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper." (1 Corinthians 11:20)

As far as I know, there is agreement on the day of observance, the emblems, what

they represent, and the place of observance. The question concerns offering the Lord's Supper on Sunday evening. It appears that in order to get around this issue, some congregations are dispensing with the PM service on Sunday therefore, we need to see if there is authority to do so.

We can look at this with two questions in mind. The first being the authority to observe the Lord's death in the evening. The answer is yes as the church at Troas came together in the evening. "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). While the exact time is not given, Paul continued his preaching until midnight, which leads one to believe they met in the evening. What we can say for certain is they met on the first day (unspecified hour) of the week. One can make an argument it is more in line with the scriptures for the saints to assemble in the evening than on Sunday morning. But since an exact hour is not given, we have generic authority to meet any time on Sunday.

The second question is, do we have authority to offer the Lord's supper more than once on Sunday? This seems to be the crux of the issue as some say there is no authority for a "second offering." Granted we have no specific authority for offering the Supper twice on Sunday. We do have generic authority for gathering on Sunday and observing the Lord's death. One similar example deals with the Passover and its observance. The Passover was to be kept on the 14th day of the 2nd month. (Numbers 9.5). However, there were some unable to do so due to no fault of their own. The solution for this problem is given later on in Numbers 9. "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If anyone of you or your posterity is unclean because of a corpse, or is far away on a journey, he may still keep the LORD'S Passover. "On the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs." (Numbers 9:10-11). There are some today who might be unable to assemble in the morning but can do so in the evening therefore, out of consideration for them the Supper is offered.

Let me look at two other thoughts on this subject. First, what has changed with offering the Lord's Supper twice on Sunday? It is still the first day of the week, do the emblems remain the same, does its purpose remains the same? I fail to see how a second offering adds too or takes away from the word of God. Second, the abuse or non-abuse does not change scriptural authority for what is done. Whether a second offering can be abused is not germane to its authority or its command.

I hope this helps in further discussions on this topic. – Dennis Tucker