On The First Day Of The Week

Writing to the Hebrew Christians, the inspired writer instructs them by stating, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some..." (Hebrews 10:25). The expectation from God appears to be that they assemble themselves together, regularly. The inspired writer presents his statement as though these Hebrew Christians clearly already knew and understood his point. Additionally, the writer notes that his audience of Hebrew Christians was aware of those who were not assembling, as they should. Though not stated, we are likely safe at concluding that they also knew when they were expected to assemble - "On the first day of the week..." (Acts 20:7). Perhaps one of the battles the Hebrews were fighting was ceasing to honor the Sabbath Day (Exodus 20:8). Under the Old Law, the Sabbath Day was significant and important. However, the Sabbath was replaced by a day more superior, the first day, because of what occurred on the first day of the week - the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave.

The biblical fact is clear. Jesus was raised from the dead on the first day of the week. “Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb… and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb” (John 20:1). That which declared Jesus to be the Son of God with power, His resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:4), took place on Sunday, the first day of the week.

John records that the disciples of Jesus were gathering together on the first day of the week even from His resurrection day. “Being the first day of the week… the disciples were assembled…" (John 20:19). The Apostles understood the significance of the first day of the week because of the superior sacrifice that was made, thus setting the pattern for disciples/Christians to follow (Acts 20:7).

The church of Christ was established on the first day of the week. “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come… the Lord added to the church” (Acts 2:1, 47). Pentecost was always celebrated on Sunday, 50 days after Passover (Leviticus 23:15-16).

The church of Christ meeting in Troas assembled together on the first day of the week. “Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread…” (Acts 20:7). Breaking bread (the Lord’s Supper) was their purpose for gathering on that day. The Apostle Paul, ready to depart to Jerusalem, waited so that he could to assemble with the church.

The church was expected to assemble each first day of the week. Paul states, "And so I ordain in all the churches" (1 Corinthians 7:17). Consider Paul's words in connection to what he later writes in 1 Corinthians 16:1-2. "As I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week..." Paul knew that the Corinthian church understood that they were expected to assemble on the first day of the week, just as he had ordained in other churches. Thus, his statement of ordination is applicable to all of the first century local churches of Christ. The church of Christ in New Testament times assembled every first day of the week, which takes us back to the words of the Hebrew writer to "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." Let us each purpose to learn from the Hebrew writer's admonition and not forsake the assembly. God demands and most certainly deserves our faithfulness to the assembly.