

ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK

We are presently in the last week of our series, “The Power of Spiritual Alignment” examining the **7 kingdom firsts** given by Jesus in the Gospel... thus far we have looked at

- Seek first His kingdom
- First remove the beam in your own eye
- First bind the strong man
- The first and greatest commandment is to love the Lord and love others
- First be reconciled to your brother then come and offer your gift to Him
- First clean the inside of the cup then the outside may also be clean

Today we turn our attention to

Mark 16:9 – Now after He had risen early on the **first day of the week**, He first appeared to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons. (NASB)

- **Aligning with His Body**... The importance of the local church

The first century church **met on the first day** of the week based on the resurrection of Jesus Christ!!

- Message of the first day is ...**Jesus is risen** ... and still continues to be the message of the church today.
- Mary Magdalene was **set free by Jesus** and she had a supernatural encounter with Him. This is the message of the first day... from sinner to seeker to family.

Acts 20:7 – On the **first day of the week**, when **we were gathered together** to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

1 Corinthians 16:2 – On the **first day of every week** each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper...

This was a **staple** of their life... part of who they were... the fellowship actually became the center and everything else revolved around it

Acts 4:32 – All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. 33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the **resurrection of the Lord Jesus**.

- The early church became in a real sense a family... their common bond was coming together on the first day of the week
- Real message

In contrast sociologists have noted that America is in the first post-Christian era in American culture.

- Postmodernism has taken its hold with its anti-authority rhetoric... question/challenger everything. Even the church has diminished influence over Christians who will leave at the first hint of correction.
- Forecasts say... Only 4% of American youth will be committed Christians going forward next ten years.
- For the first time in America the church has been labeled as non-essential and out of the main stream of culture. In a word the church is obsolete.

Even Christians put church attendance in the category of convenience/preference

- Church attendance averages 1.7 times per month... for every **new person** joining the Church **three** are leaving.
- USA - 29 % never go to church ... only 50% belong to a church even if they do not attend.

Someone once said “Our great-grandparents called it the **Holy Sabbath**, our grandparents called it the **Lord’s day**, our parents called it **Sunday** and we call it the **weekend**.”

Q Why do people choose not to go to church?

- It’s boring... It’s irrelevant... The church asks for money all the time...I’m already too busy... I feel awkward in church.

Hebrews 10:25 – Do not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

- The disciples adopted the first day of the week to meet corporately.

Spirit of Humanism

Humanism is a satanic plot to put man in the place of God – which is idolatry. Satan said to Adam when tempting Him, “you will surely not die, you will become like God.”

Man can solve all His own problems- one news person on CNN recently said concerning the pandemic... we don't need God what we need is science... Humanism 101

Me first!!

In our present culture....Church has become one more consumer commodity (Serve me!!)

- Grade the **worship... message... length of time... air conditioning... bulletin... lighting... audio visual ... the band**
 - We are church shopping... seeing what we can get
 - Humanistic culture invading the church
 - Get the most bang for our buck

Church of Self

Meet my needs... coddle my emotions... Exceed my expectations... without encumbrance...

Culture has gone bonkers

Church has become the only place left in our society that truly stands against the tide of Humanism and progressive shift

- Absolutes govern right and wrong in the face of relativism Committed relationships where the world is convenience-driven.
- Loyalty without personal gain ... Money is related to true worth... Your word is your bond
- Gratefulness is cultivated... in a world that lives for the moment
- God is at the center...the Church is eternal.

TCC- The Spirit of the 21st century is the Spirit of anti-Christ... it is working against the Holy Spirit.. It is working against **your commitment to the first Day...** against your commitment **to honor God...** to receive **teaching...** to give **worship...**and working against **fellowship** with God's people.

Point: God wants us to recognize and see the evil that we are faced with in humanistic relativism and have **a real value shift in the direction of the kingdom** properly aligning ourselves with the body of Christ

One thing mentality

Psalm 27:4-6 – One thing I have desired of the Lord, that will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple. ⁵For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock. ⁶And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me; Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the Lord.

Q Do you see the church as essential in your life?

Q Do you see yourself as essential to your church?

Q Do you believe God has planted you in this house?

Q How are you cooperating with that planting?

This one thing desire... single focus... Heart focused... Seek after mentality... on the first day of the week... it is the first thing in my week to do

- I am purposefully setting my time and resource, strength and schedule... on Hold to honor Him with my first
- In this I am purposefully Setting a **designated time** to meet to fellowship with Gods people
- I am **stirring up anticipation to present my best to the lord....** My desire... my Joy... my thanksgiving

TCC – One Thing must be restored in our hearts

Why is this important?

It's different than every other day... no traffic to fight... no time card to punch

- Slows down the hurried lifestyle... Breaks hurried habit... Rest from the daily grind
- Resets the power of the resurrection the message of the first day take dominion over the onslaught of humanistic blather you will face all week

Fellowship

- Align yourself with people who are just like you... born again... seeking the Lord
- Part of His body... your spiritual family
- Only time in your week you will meet exclusively with corporate body

Stability

The Church **sets standard and boundaries of our value system**

Psalm 92:13 – Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

- When you're planted inside... you will flourish outside

About Value

Revelation 5:11-13 – Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" **(NIV)**

Rev 22:9 ...Worship God!"

It's about value

- Loving God... loving Gods people...**is a value**
- Loving Church and setting a day aside to worship... **is a value**
- When you esteem it to be worthy of your life... **that's a value**

TCC- When you **re-arrange the priorities of your life by** setting other things aside and make sure the you and your spouse and your children find your way to the house of the Lord... weekly... all the days of your life.... **That's a value**

In this decision you testify to Him this the center of my life... I will arrange my life around your house... and demonstrate my commitment to you before my children and grandchildren.

In-reach- Love for church community... **servicing each other** (TCC- over 100 volunteers in one ministry or another)

- **Sound doctrine and teaching**... literally every single day in person and or on line is available to spur us on
- **Fellowship-** this is why gathering is so important

Out-reach- Love for the world (TCC-Helps serve missions all over the world... locally through CCS... serving 290 children and their families, 70% of which come from outside the church (Souls for the kingdom)

Up-reach- Worship Him! Worship Him! Worship Him!!

- Simply we bring our lives in Joy and humility to celebrate His majesty