

# SUNDAY ARTICLE

ST DAVID'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ♦ 11 AUGUST 2019



## What the Lord's Day Is

*Tim Challies*

The longer I live – the longer I live out this life as a Christian – the more I see my desperate need of the Lord's Day.

Though it once seemed like the kind of day I could take or leave, I've since come to rely on it and to see God's goodness in giving it. It's a day we ignore at our peril.

As I stood to worship on Sunday, I found myself considering just some of what the Lord's Day is...

***The Lord's Day is water for the parched runner.*** This life is a race, and one that leaves us weary and dry as we constantly "lay aside every weight" and "run with endurance" the long race set before us

(Hebrews 12:1). Like the stations along the marathon route provide water that will hydrate the body until the next interval, the Lord's Day offers us spiritual refreshment to keep us going not for the whole race, but at least for the next week.

***It is a meal for the hungry pilgrim.*** As Christians we are pilgrims, people moving purposefully through this life toward the heavenly city that awaits us. Like a kind citizen may provide a meal to the needy pilgrim, the Lord's Day is God's kind provision for our spiritual sustenance. It provides what we need and what we cannot generate from within ourselves.

***It is a rest for the weary worker.***

God created us to work upon this earth. But as sin entered the world, so did weariness and frustration, for "the creation was subjected to futility" (Romans 8:20). The Lord's Day provides a period of rest from our day-to-day labours in which we trust that just as God in Christ has

provided for our every spiritual need, he will also provide for our every physical need.

***It is a celebration to the sorrowful.*** Life in a world like this is attended with many sorrows. Sorrows

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rise up from within as we struggle with our own weakness and sinfulness, and sorrows come upon us from without as we are sinned against, as we endure the suffering of loved ones, and as we witness the brutalities inflicted upon others. The Lord's Day invites us to a weekly celebration in which we celebrate Christ's victory on the cross and pre-celebrate his coming return.

***It is a reunion to the lonely.*** Jesus warned that many who follow him would do so at the expense of family relationships and at the cost of friendships. Yet he also offered the assurance that the bond we share in the Holy Spirit is stronger than any other, for it makes us sons and daughters of God himself. On the Lord's Day we enjoy a weekly reunion in which this diverse family comes together to worship, to encourage, to ensure each one is provided for, and simply to enjoy one another's company.

***It is an education for the ignorant.*** We enter the Christian life ignorant – we have little knowledge of God and little true knowledge of self. On the Lord's Day we open God's Word together and are taught from it. The Word teaches us, reproves us, corrects us, and trains us in righteousness so we are knowledgeable and equipped to live well in this world (2 Timothy 3:16).

***It is the training ground for the spiritually gifted.*** God dispenses gifts to each of his people, and the Lord's Day provides the most natural training ground to learn how to use them as well as the most natural context to actually exercise them. It is as we gather together that we have special opportunity to use those gifts for the good of others and the glory of God – the one with the gift of encouragement encourages, the one with the

gift of teaching teaches, the one with the gift of generosity gives, and so on.

***It is assurance for the guilty sinner.*** Though we are justified by God and are continually being sanctified, we remain sinners who transgress his law each and every day. We continue to feel the shame and guilt of our many sins. The Lord's Day offers us the opportunity to confess these sins and to be assured of God's kind and complete forgiveness. Though no man has the right or responsibility to forgive sins, it is the joy of the pastor to lead the church in confessing sins and in assuring those who have repented that they are forgiven.

***It is rescue to the unforgiven.*** While worship services are primarily a gathering by and for Christians, unbelievers are also invited and warmly encouraged to attend. Every sermon ought to include some explanation of the good news of the gospel so those who have never heard or embraced it can repent and be saved. In this way the Lord's Day acts as a time of rescue in which the lost can be saved.

As life progresses, I more and more find the Lord's Day not just as the starting point of a new week, but the centre point of my existence. I cannot, will not, could not make it through life without it. I'm eternally thankful to God for so kindly providing and prescribing it.

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*Tim Challies is an elder at Grace Fellowship Church in Toronto, Ontario. He is a prolific blogger (challies.com), an author, and a book reviewer.*

Source: <https://www.challies.com/articles/what-the-lords-day-is/>

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