

Westminster Larger Catechism

Question 116

The Institution of the First Day as the Christian Sabbath

Halifax, 14 November 2010

Introduction

Last week we began a study of the Fourth Commandment in our sermon series on the Larger Catechism.

- The Fourth Commandment is recorded for us in Exodus 20:8-11:
 - Exodus 20:8-11: Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

When God rested (or sabbathed) from His work of creation on the seventh day—that is, when He quit because He was finished—He blessed the day and hallowed or sanctified it.

- God instituted this day for us at creation, as we saw in Genesis 2.
 - At that time, He did not have to tell us not to work or do ordinary things on it.
 - It was a special day for us to commune with Him and to rejoice in Him as our creator and we would not have thought of doing anything else!
 - There was no need for the prohibition of work.

But of course things changed because of the fall of mankind into sin.

- Then God's day was profaned, abused and forgotten.
 - It was forgotten even by Israel so that when God gave the Ten Commandments He had to tell them to "*remember* the Sabbath Day to keep it holy!"
 - He had to tell them not to work on His holy day:
 - "In it, you shall not do any work."
 - Isn't it sad that God had to tell them that?
 - It is something like with marriage which God also instituted at Creation...
 - When He instituted marriage in which one man and one woman become one flesh, He did not have say,
 - "And don't break up what God has joined together!"
 - "You shall not commit adultery"
 - and things like that.

- Marriage and the Sabbath were God's holy institution and they respected them and would not have thought of profaning them.
 - The prohibitions only became necessary after the fall.
- And of course when God did tell them not to work on His day,
 - that was not the main point of the commandment.
 - The point was that they were to keep the day holy to the Lord and that ordinary work was not consistent with the day.
 - They were not to work but rather to worship and commune with Him.
 - We saw in Leviticus 23 that the weekly Sabbath was to be a holy convocation...
 - The people were to come together and remember what He had done with feasting and worship.
- Leviticus 23 also speaks of other Sabbaths.
 - All of them were days off work so that the people could assemble for worship because of what God had done.
 - We also saw that when God restated the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy 5, that He gave another reason for observing the weekly Sabbath...
 - Not the work of creation but the work of redemption out of Egypt is given as the reason to keep the Sabbath holy.

And when Jesus came into the world, He did a new work that was greater than any work that God had ever done before!

- He went to the cross to obtain eternal redemption for His people!
 - And when He sabbathed from His work... when His work was finished... He instituted a new day of worship to commemorate it called the Lord's Day.
 - Just as at creation God had instituted a weekly Sabbath for His people because He had sabbathed from the work of creation...
 - so Jesus instituted a Sabbath for His people because He had sabbathed from the work of redemption!
 - And this Sabbath was instituted by our Lord on the first day of the week.
- Next week, I want to show you how the Sabbath of redemption in a sense *took over* the Sabbath of creation—
 - not replacing it, but overwhelming in such a way that the Sabbath was dragged over from the seventh day of the week to the first day.
 - The new work that Jesus accomplished was so much greater that it determined which day of the week worship was to occur.

- We are given a clue about this change in Deuteronomy 5 where the reason for keeping the fourth commandment is said to be redemption and where creation is not even mentioned:
 - Deut 5:15: And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.
- But more about that next week...
 - First we need to see that Jesus did indeed institute a Sabbath on the first day of the week to commemorate His finished work of redemption.

Please turn to Psalm 22 for our scripture reading related to this.

- READ> Psalm 22

Psalm 22 is a wonderful prophetic Psalm.

- It was written 1000 years before Jesus was born.
 - It is very obvious that it reveals to us the very thoughts of our Lord Jesus when He suffered on the cross.
 - The desperate cry with which the Psalm opens...
 - “My God, My God, Why have you forsaken Me,”
 - is recorded for us in the gospels as the words our Lord spoke from the cross when He was bearing our sins!
 - The onlookers and their mocking are also perfectly described in Psalm 22.
 - Even the details of His thirst, His unbroken bones, and the dividing of and casting lots for His garments are all included...
 - And perhaps most striking of all,
 - we are told that His hands and feet were pierced!
 - Obviously this is talking about Jesus on the cross!
- But our focus today is not on this part of the Psalm that has to do with our Lord’s suffering.
 - We are going to look at what Jesus promises to do when He realises that the Father has accepted His sacrifice for sin!
 - Did you notice the great shift this Psalm takes at verse 21?
 - Up until then, Jesus is crying out in great anguish as one who is forsaken by the Father...
 - but then suddenly He declares,
 - “You have answered me!”

- And then the tone of the Psalm changes from Jesus crying out in anguish to Jesus promising to praise God with His brothers in the great assembly!
- What happened?
 - My brothers and sisters, He was forsaken by the Father because He was bearing our sins—He was paying the penalty for our sins—He was suffering for the iniquities of His people in all ages so that we could be forgiven!
 - He is crying out for deliverance in the first 21 verses!
 - He is yearning for the Father to accept His sacrifice and to say, “It is enough!”
 - You may remember in the gospels how we are told that Jesus was suddenly relieved, even while still on the cross, and declared,
 - “It is finished!”
 - He knew that He had finished bearing the curse for us!
 - The Father had heard Him!
 - The Father had accepted His sacrifice for our sins!
 - That corresponds with His joyful declaration to the Father in verse 21...
 - “You have answered Me!”
 - He knew that the Father had accepted His offering for the forgiveness of all His people in all ages!
 - It is a shout of joyful victory!

But for our purposes today, I want you to look carefully at what Jesus promises to do in verses 22-31 now that the Father has accepted His sacrifice!

I. Jesus promises to initiate worship in remembrance of the work He completed for us on the cross, worship that is ecclesiastical, catholic, and perpetual.

A. As soon as He realises that the Father has accepted His offering, He immediately tells the Father that He will tell His brethren and will lead them in praise!

1. You see that in verse 22.

- Right after He says, “You have answered Me!” (at the end of verse 21) He says:
 - Psalm 22:22 I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise you!
- He is filled with joy!
 - His work has been accepted!
 - There is forgiveness for His people and He goes to tell them so.

- It was His great desire to glorify the Father by going to the cross so that His people could be reconciled by His atoning sacrifice.
- Now He can declare to them the excellence of His Father and they can hear it!
 - He can tell them that the Father is so holy and just that nothing short of His blood (Jesus' blood) poured out could atone for their sins...
 - He can tell them of the Father's amazing love and grace that has sent Him to bear their sins and that has now accepted His sacrifice for them!
 - How they will marvel at the Father's love and wisdom and power!
 - How they will be comforted!
 - The work is done!
 - Redemption is complete!
 - There is a new Sabbath rest of work completed!
- 2. In verse 23 and 24, Jesus turns to address His brothers and to call them to worship God for hearing Him from the cross—
 - He says to them (verse 23):
 - Ps 22:23-24: You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel! For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He cried to Him, He heard.
 - Indeed, how His people ought to praise Him for this!
 - The Father did not despise His son's affliction—He accepted it—for us!
 - When Jesus cried out to Him from the cross, He heard!
 - Let the church erupt with praise!
 - We are the beneficiaries!
 - Jesus calls us to worship because we are the ones who are forgiven by the work that He has not rested from!

TRANS> And this is no one single worship service that Jesus has in view here!

- Not at all!

B. He is instituting worship that is ecclesiastical, catholic, and perpetual.

1. That it is ecclesiastical is seen in verse 25.
 - By ecclesiastical, I mean that it is worship that is done in the church—in the assembly of God's people who are officially called together to worship Him.
 - You know, the word translated *church* in our New Testaments is the word *ecclesia* which means the assembly of called out ones.
 - The church is made up of those who are officially called out from the world to worship God,

- and now that Jesus has accomplished redemption for them, this becomes the main subject of their praise!
- In verse 23, Jesus says:
 - Ps 22:25: My praise shall be of You in the great assembly (the church);
 - He goes on to say:
 - Ps 22:25-b: I will pay My vows before those who fear Him. The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD.
 - In the Old Testament, it was customary for those who prayed for deliverance to vow that they would gather an assembly together to give thanks and to feast if God answered them...
 - Jacob did that at Bethel, and when God brought him back safely years later, he kept his vow and gathered his family for worship.
 - That is exactly what Jesus is talking about,
 - except the assembly He gathers is the entire church—the *great assembly* as He calls it here!

TRANS> And this assembly not only includes Israel, but people from all over the world as we see in verse 27!

- Ps 22:27: All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You.
 - Jesus anticipates that the whole world will enter into this worship.
2. In other words, the worship is not only ecclesiastical, it is also catholic or universal.
- He is going to declare the good news to the whole world and people from every nation and tribe and tongue will join in the praise!
 - This is a very big deal!
 - God waited to gather the nations into the church until after Jesus had done this great work.
 - But now Jesus has sent His disciples into all the world to proclaim the gospel to everyone that they might join the praise.
 - Jesus mentions that even those who are prosperous (and self-sufficient) will see their need of salvation.
 - They will realise that they cannot even keep their own souls alive.
 - They will join in the praise!
 - They will keep a Sabbath of praise in the holy convocation of God's people!
 - The praise for Jesus' finished (sabbathed from) work will truly be catholic!

TRANS> But that it is still not all that will characterise this Sabbath worship...

- Not only will it be ecclesiastical and catholic,
- 3. This worship that Jesus institutes will also be perpetual!
 - In other words, it is not just for a generation or two!
 - Oh no!
 - The work that Jesus did on the cross was so great that it demands worship that continues from generation to generation!
 - His work will never be forgotten!
 - You see how Jesus anticipates this worship going on into the future in verses 30 and 31 when He says:
 - Ps 22:30-31: A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation, They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, That He has done this.
 - Each generation will tell the next what God has done—
 - How He has heard Christ from the cross and accepted His offering for our sins!

TRANS> It is a grand thing!

- Jesus has finished the work of our redemption.
 - He has entered into His Sabbath rest.
 - He has sat down at the right hand of God after purging us from our sins...
 - He has instituted a new Sabbath to commemorate His Sabbath from this work.
 - And now He is busy gathering His sheep from all over the world to tell them what He has done so that they will join in the praise.
 - Glory be to God!
- But now we must ask a question...
 - *When* is this Sabbath praise to be conducted?
 - *When* is the Holy convocation, the praise of the church, to be done?
 - Someone will say,
 - “Surely it is to be done all the time—we ought to praise Him without ceasing!”
 - And indeed that is true enough,
 - but Jesus is talking about praise in the assembly—
 - a holy convocation that involves setting aside our daily labour and coming together in assembly to worship.
 - Did He institute a time for such worship or did He just leave it up to us?

- Is this something we do once a year at Easter?
 - Or is it something we do on the seventh day Sabbath?
 - Or is it something we do whenever we feel like it—and if so, who calls us together for this assembly?
- Well I think you all know what the answer is...

II. Jesus calls us together on the first day of the week because He entered into His rest from the work of redemption on the first day of the week.

- He did not institute first day worship by a command from heaven...
 - A. He instituted first day worship by *doing* it on the first day...
 - by doing what He said He would do in Psalm 22—going to declare the gospel to His disciples and to call them to praise God!
 1. We looked at this last week, but I want to look at again in light of what we have seen in Psalm 22...
 - Remember, in Psalm 22 we saw that the worship that Jesus instituted in remembrance of His accomplished redemptive work was ecclesiastical, catholic, and perpetual.
 - In other words, it was something that was to be public, worldwide, and lasting.
 - His initial meeting with His brethren was not just a one time meeting.
 - It was the beginning of worldwide public worship.
 - He was setting a pattern when He met with them!
2. This pattern for first day worship is set forth for us in John 20.
 - Please turn to John 20.
 - a. This chapter opens with an account of the tomb that was found empty on the first day of the week.
 - Jesus had risen from the dead, proving that the Father had accepted His sacrifice for our sins...
 - And just as He said in Psalm 22:22,
 - He goes to declare the good news of His accomplished work to His disciples and to initiate praise in the great assembly.
 - This was the beginning of this new worship that is still going on today all over the world!
 - b. We are told about this in verse 19.

- John emphasises that it is still the first day of the week—the day Jesus rose from the dead.
 - John 20:19: Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you."
- Right from this first day, Jesus declares peace to them.
 - He says “Receive the Spirit” and tells them to preach the forgiveness of sins in the world...
 - I don’t have time to go into the details—but you see that He is meeting with His people on the first day to tell them the good news.

TRANS> But this is not necessarily a pattern yet.

- It is only natural that Jesus should meet with them on the day that He was risen.
 - But look what happens in verse 26.
- c. Jesus comes back a week later—on the first day of the week—and John points this out to us:
 - He says:
 - John 20:26: And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"
 - Last week, I explained to you that the Jews count in a way that is inclusive of the day they count from—
 - so that even though Jesus rose about 40 hours after He was crucified, they call it three days...
 - Friday, the day He was crucified is the first day, Saturday is the second day, and Sunday is the third day.
 - So it is that when John wants to tell us that Jesus came back the next Sunday, he says that he came back in eight days.
 - So Jesus comes to meet with them again on the first day of the week.
 - You might have expected that Jesus would have come to meet with them on the Saturday since that was the day of corporate worship...
 - But He doesn’t!
 - Thomas, who was not there the first time, was waiting to see Him, but he had to wait until the following Sunday.

- The fact that Jesus waited to meet with them until the day of the week that He had arisen would have made a strong statement to them that Jesus was setting a pattern.
3. And, as I also pointed out last week, the pattern did not end here...
- We are also told that Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit on His church on Pentecost.
 - Pentecost was a feast of the Jews that always took place the 50th day after the Sabbath of Passover week.
 - That means that it was always on the first day of the week!
 - Now it is very significant that Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit when His disciples were assembled together on the first day of the week!
 - He was showing them clearly that the first day of the week was His day!
 - The outpouring of the Spirit was the great promise of God to His church when Messiah came,
 - and the Messiah did this on the same day that He rose from the dead!
 - He meets with His people and gives them His Spirit on the Lord's Day!

TRANS> And so we have a pattern established for us of first day worship to commemorate the redemption that Jesus accomplished.

- In many ways this ought to be enough.
 - Christ was instituting worship that was to be ecclesiastical, catholic and perpetual and He instituted it on the first day of the week.
 - Therefore, Christians everywhere are to meet on the first day of the week.
 - This seems to be a good and necessary deduction...
 - But we don't have to rely on deduction alone.
- B. We are shown in the New Testament that the church continued this pattern of first day worship.

1. In the very early days just after Pentecost, the church met daily...
 - a. The new converts who had come up to Jerusalem for Pentecost were on holidays.
 - They wanted nothing more than to use this time to sit at the apostle's feet and learn as much as they could.
 - They made the most of the opportunity before returning to their various cities throughout the world.
 - So we can't use these early days to establish a pattern for our regular Christian meetings after we get into a normal pattern.

- b. In Acts, we see Paul going through the cities and meeting with the Jews in the synagogue to reason with them from the scriptures.
 - This was, of course, done on the seventh day since that was the day they met for worship as had been appointed by God from creation.
 - But this is not a pattern for us either—it was what Paul did to communicate the gospel to the Jew first in every place he went, but it is not a pattern for Christian worship—it is an example of evangelism.
 - But as soon as those in a community learned about Jesus' work and glorious resurrection,
 - their weekly assembly changed to incorporate the preaching of the gospel and the eating the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Him.
 - And I would submit to you that this new worship was done on the first day instead of the seventh day because of the pattern established by the Lord.
 - You can be sure that the apostles would have directed the new believers to Psalm 22 and Psalm 118 that speak about this new assembly to give thanks to God for accepting Jesus' sacrifice sin...
 - Now rather than waiting for the Messiah and anticipating Him,
 - The new worship was concerned largely with giving thanks for accomplished redemption.
 - Now the cross was the centre of everything.
 - Obviously, meeting on the first day would have been difficult for many of them because that was not what was done in the society at large.
 - Because many were slaves and could not get the day off, many of them met in the very early morning and in the evening after dark.
- But as far as any opposition to meeting on the first day of the week—there seems to be very little from the Jews or the Gentiles—
 - It was very natural for Jews who had come to believe the gospel to accept from the apostles a day to commemorate Christ's finished work!
 - They were very much accustomed to God appointing special days to commemorate His work,
 - and how could there not be a day to commemorate His resurrection from the dead?
 - They would have fully expected this.

- The very fact that even though first day worship was practised by Christians all over the world without controversy testifies that it was established by Christ from the beginning...
 - Compare this to the keeping of Easter which was begun very early but not by the apostles.
 - There was much controversy about which day to observe it—even as early as 100 AD...
 - Such that eventually there was a great schism in the church.
 - Unlike first day worship, Easter was not instituted by the apostles.

TRANS> But let me go on and now show you the testimony of scripture that the Apostles continued the pattern of first day worship that Jesus began.

2. First, there is the account given to us in Acts 20 of Paul’s visit to Troas.
 - a. Here was a settled New Testament church, settled into a regular pattern of worship...
 - When Paul stops here,
 - he wants to meet with the church but he arrives on a Tuesday.
 - Luke says that he stayed for seven days and verse 7 indicates that he left on Monday... So the seven days were Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sun, and Monday.
 - b. Whether there was an assembly on the other days, the text does not say, but what it does say is very helpful for us...
 - It says that the first day was the day the disciples gathered to break bread.
 - This is stated as a custom and that is why it is so instructive!
 - It was a regular stated day in which they gathered together to eat the Lord’s Supper.
 - 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 and continued his message until midnight.”
 - Paul was in a hurry to make his journey, but he waited until that appointed day when the disciples gathered together to break bread, and that was the first day of the week.
 - The pattern of first day worship is the regular pattern.

3. The pattern is also assumed in 1 Corinthians 16:1-2.

- a. Here the apostle, writing to the Corinthians, commands them to take up their collection on the first of day the week as a regular practice...
 - and he mentions that he has appointed this same pattern for the churches of Galatia.

- b. These are his words:
 - 1 Cor 16:1-2: Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first *day* of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.
 - Paul is talking about taking a collection on the stated day of worship so that all will be ready when he comes.
 - By having a weekly collection, all the money would be together in one place so that Paul would not be delayed.
 - He did not want to have to have a special collection when he arrived.
 - Since the churches already assembled on the first day, that was the day to take up these collections.
 - So once again, you see the pattern of first day worship.
- C. This same pattern of first day worship also (as might be expected) continues to appear in church history and is, of course, with us to this very day.
1. Let me begin with some of the earliest witnesses to this.
 - a. First, there is Ignatius who wrote these words in about 100 AD
 - If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord's Day, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him and by His death - whom some deny, by which mystery we have obtained faith, and therefore endure, that we may be found the disciples of Jesus Christ, our only Master - how shall we be able to live apart from Him, whose disciples the prophets themselves in the Spirit did wait for Him as their Teacher?
 - b. Then there is Barnabas with these words, again written in 100 AD
 - If, therefore, any one can now sanctify the day which God hath sanctified, except he is pure in heart in all things, we are deceived. Behold, therefore: certainly then one properly resting sanctifies it, when we ourselves, having received the promise, wickedness no longer existing, and all things having been made new by the Lord, shall be able to work righteousness. Then we shall be able to sanctify it, having been first sanctified ourselves. Further, He says to them, "Your new moons and your Sabbath I cannot endure." Ye perceive how He speaks: Your present Sabbaths are not acceptable to Me, but that is which I have made, [namely this,] when, giving rest to all things, I shall make a beginning of the eighth day, that is, a beginning of another world. Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead. And when He had manifested Himself, He ascended into the heavens.
 - By the *eighth day*, He speaks of the day after the Sabbath, the first day of the week.
 - You can see how he refers to it as a new beginning and as the day on which Jesus rose from the dead.

- c. Again, in 125, there is this found in a work called “The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles:
- “But every Lord’s Day do ye gather yourselves together, and break bread, and give thanksgiving.”
 - Here you see the same pattern we saw at Troas, the first day being the day the disciples gathered together to break bread.
- d. Then there is that very full account of regular worship given to us by Justin Martyr in his *Apology*—probably written in about 140 AD. He says:
- And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons. And they who are well to do, and willing, give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succours the orphans and widows and those who, through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds and the strangers sojourning among us, and in a word takes care of all who are in need. But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead. For He was crucified on the day before that of Saturn (Saturday); and on the day after that of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, having appeared to His apostles and disciples, He taught them these things, which we have submitted to you also for your consideration.
- e. Tertullian at the close of the second century says:
- “We celebrate Sunday as a joyful day. On the Lord’s day we think it wrong to fast, or to kneel in prayer.”
- f. Clement of Alexandria, a contemporary of Tertullian writes:
- “A true Christian, according to the commands of the Gospel, observes the Lord’s day by casting out all bad thoughts, and cherishing all goodness, honouring the resurrection of the Lord, which took place on that day.”
- g. And Eusebius, a very learned church historian who wrote in the early third century said this in his commentary on the 92nd Psalm:
- “The Word, (Christ), by the new covenant, translated and transferred the feast of the Sabbath to the morning light, and gave us the symbol of true rest, the saving Lord’s day, the first (day) of light, in which the Saviour gained the victory over death. On this day, which is the first of the Light and the true Sun, we assemble after the interval of six days, and celebrate holy and spiritual Sabbath; even all

nations redeemed by Him throughout the world assemble, and do those things according to the spiritual law, which were decreed for the priests to do on the Sabbath. All things which it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's day as more appropriately belonging to it, because it has the precedence, and is first in rank, and more honourable than the Jewish Sabbath. It is delivered to us *paradedotai* that we should meet together on this day, and it is evidence that we should do these things announced in the psalm."

TRANS> So you see that this apostolic pattern of first day worship prevailed in the early church with very little opposition.

- The pattern began by Jesus is testified to in history as well as in scripture.
 - There was an issue about whether the seventh day should also be kept and we will get to that next week—
- But this week, I want to move on to look lastly at the fact that...

D. The Old Testament also points to gospel worship on the first day of the week.

1. I want to begin with Psalm 118.

- In Psalm 118, the day of the resurrection is called "the day the LORD has made,"
- Let's take a look at Psalm 118.
 - This is a Psalm that Jesus would have traditionally sung with His disciples on the night of the Passover.
 - It is very moving to sing this Psalm and think about Christ singing it on the night of His betrayal!
 - v. 18: "The Lord has sorely chastened me, but not given me over to death!"
 - v. 20 "This is the gate of the LORD, by it the righteous will enter..."
 - Much like Psalm 22, in Ps 118:21, Jesus praises God for answering Him and saving Him...
 - v. 21: "I will praise you, for you have answered me and have become my salvation."
 - He speaks here as the covenant head of the church who went to the cross to save His whole body and was heard...
 - Verse 22 is very familiar because it is quoted in Acts 4:10-11 with reference to Christ's resurrection...
 - Psalm 118:22: The stone *which* the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.
 - When did this happen?
 - It was when God raised Him from the dead, declaring His acceptance of His offering and giving life to Him as the mediator and life-giver of all His people...

- It happened on the first day of the week.
- And so as is always the case when something as grand as this is accomplished,
 - There is a call for celebration and for the appointment of a new day to commemorate it!
 - This is what is spoken of in verse 23-24:
 - Psalm 118:23-24: This was the LORD'S doing; It *is* marvellous in our eyes. This *is* the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.
 - The day of Christ's resurrection becomes the new day of rejoicing.
 - The LORD's Day is the day that God has made for His church to give thanks for Jesus and His finished, accepted offering for our sins.

TRANS> I would love to say more about Psalm 118, but let's move on to our next OT passage...

2. Secondly, there is the Jubilee spoken of in Leviticus 25.

- In Leviticus 25, God commanded Israel to take a Sabbath rest every seven years.
- And after seven of those seven year periods (49 years) there was to be the Jubilee on the fiftieth year.
 - In that year, everyone's inheritance was to be restored, slaves were to be set free, and debts were to be forgiven.
 - It was a day of God's acceptance and blessing of His people.
 - It was a new start.
 - A beautiful picture of the new creation that Christ would bring!
- What is interesting about this with respect to the day of worship is the fact that the Jubilee occurred the year **after** the seven Sabbaths of years.
 - It was a new beginning, like the first day of the week.
- It is also fascinating to see that when Daniel was given a time table in chapter 9,
 - He is told that the work of redemption will be completed after seventy weeks (or seventy sevens) of years (490 years).
 - In this way, the scripture testifies that Christ is the one who is the Jubilee—

- He is the One who brings in the new day, the new beginning...
 - He is the One who makes us accepted.
 - The Jubilee testifies of a new day for God's people and it is the day after the Sabbath.
3. There is also much in the OT about the eighth day.
- a. For example, in Ezekiel the LORD speaks about a new temple (which of course is the New Testament church—there is no longer a temple made with hands after Jesus comes).
- In Ezekiel 43:27, He says:
 - Ez 43:27: 'When these days are over it shall be, on the eighth day and thereafter, that the priests shall offer your burnt offerings and your peace offerings on the altar; and I will accept you,' says the Lord GOD."
 - Here you see the eighth day as day of acceptance—all based on the sacrifice that Jesus had made...
 - It is a newer grander acceptance than that under the law.
- b. And in fact, the eighth day is spoken of throughout scripture as a day of acceptance, a day of new things.
- In Lev 12:3, the eighth day is appointed as the day of circumcision
 - In Lev 14:10-20, it is the day when lepers are cleansed—the day after the seven days of cleansing.
 - In Lev 15:14, 29, the eighth day is the day when a person was cleansed of bodily discharges.
 - In Lev 22:27, the eighth day is the day when sacrifices became acceptable.
 - In Lev 23:36-39, the eighth day is the day of acceptance after the feasts are completed.
 - In Leviticus 9:1, it is the day the priests became ready for service.
 - In Numbers 6:10, it is the day the Nazarite was cleansed following his purification rites.
- c. All this points to the eighth day as the day of acceptance.
- And the eighth day is the first day of the week, the day Jesus rose from the dead!
 - We enter into a new covenant, a new life, a new creation, a new worship, a new way, a new hope, a new priesthood, a new law...
 - Behold, all things have become new for those who are in Christ Jesus.
 - And each Lord's Day it is for you to set apart the day to give thanks to His name and celebrate this new creation.

- Psalm 118:24: This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.