

John 20: 1 & 2, the empty Tomb (NIV)

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance.² So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him!"

Ever wonder why such a controversy has arisen over whether we, as Christ followers, should continue to honor and worship our Lord on the traditional Old Testament *Hebrew Sabbath* by observing the old Law of Moses, or on Sunday, referred to as "*The Lord's Day*"? There is a Jewish ministry referred to as "*The Hebrew Roots Movement*" that teaches the need for followers of Christ to go back to their Jewish roots and follow the OT. Well what about Colossians 2:15-17 in the NT?

Remember, it was Sunday, the first day of the week, when it was discovered that our Lord had risen from His excruciating death three days earlier. After all too, this is the day from which all annual calendars are dated, both forward and back through history.

Think about this, if there had not been a resurrection after the crucifixion, Christianity would have absolutely no validity, no purpose to even exist. There would be no reason to celebrate anything. Satan was defeated once and for all when the fear of death was vanquished that Sunday morning, the first day of the week!!!

I believe one source of confusion arises from the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus said, "*Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the Prophets, I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them.*" To fulfill does not imply "keeping" tradition; it means to "complete" the planned vision.

Let's look at John 19:28-30 --- The Death of Jesus --- Jesus knew His mission was finished, and to fulfill an old Scripture He said, "*I am thirsty.*" A jar of sour wine was sitting there, so they soaked a sponge, put it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to His lips. Jesus tasted it and then He whispered, "*It is finished!*" He bowed His head and released His spirit. At that moment the law was fulfilled!!!

Now, let's define His mission one more time; what was finished? Sometimes we only really learn to apply something after we've known it for a long time. So, let's review again what was and still remains the "mission" accomplished when those special words "*It is finished*" were spoken during that excruciating time on the CROSS. This, remember, was three days prior to that glorious resurrection Sunday referred to in the Scripture above as the first day of the week.

The faith driven hope, prophesized several times in Old Testament Scripture, became a reality that Sunday, the first day of the week. Satan's fear driven death grip initiated in Genesis 3:6 (*The tree of knowledge of good and evil*) was finally defeated for all who elect to muster the faith to accept our Lord's forgiving grace, a position of worthiness that overcomes humanity's sin nature.

So, what was provided for us on that Sunday morning, the first day of the week, two thousand years ago? First, we have a new reinforcement for our faith (Hebrews 11:6) and then a new faith driven hope on which to base our visions and purposes. Perhaps just as significant and valuable is our potential to not let fear defeat us. (See "TEMPTATION & FEAR" article: www.skipelmore.com)

Satan's strategy, activated in the third chapter in Genesis, was disrupting humanity to avenge God by exchanging unconditional agape love, a purpose driven verb - not an emotion, with his selfishly driven destructive fear. There had been no fear in their garden world until Adam ran and hid!

Please know this though. Our Lord is not a legalist. No!!! We are not condemned for selecting one day over another on which to worship. Be led by your faith. Romans 14:23 reminds us, "*Whatever is not of faith is sin.*" 1 John 1:10 tells us, "*If we say we have not sinned we make Him (God) a liar and, His Word is not in us.*" Just worship God, our Lord, whenever and wherever your faith leads you. Remember; God's agape love is totally UNCONDITIONAL everyday!!!

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