

The Blessing of the Lord's Day

Acts 20:7-12

Halifax: 31 March 2013

Introduction:

As you know, it is my regular practice in our morning worship service to preach through various books in the Bible.

- I think it is very beneficial for us to get the flow of each book, just as the Holy Spirit has given them to us.
- As you also know, I sometimes break from our regular sermon series to preach an occasional message about something that is on people's minds...
 - I often have a special sermon for things that pertain to our church—when we have a baptism or a congregational meeting.
 - I do it when there is something that is on everyone's mind...
 - For example, I preached a special sermon on the Sunday following 9-11...
 - And I often preach a special message at Christmas or Easter because that is what people are thinking about.

And of course today it is Easter—the day in which Christ's resurrection is remembered.

- I am very glad that people have their minds on the resurrection.
- It is very good to have the resurrection of Jesus on your mind because the resurrection of Jesus was really the beginning of God's new creation.
 - God created the world six thousand years ago, and it was all very good.
 - But then Adam, the representative of the whole human race, rebelled and all of us who were yet to be born rebelled in him—
 - We are familiar with kind of thing where children are with their parents.
 - If a father were to rebel against his country and become a citizen of a nation that was at war with his homeland...
 - his children would be born as natural citizens of that new country and as rebels against their father's native country.
 - Now of course they could, as they grew up, come to rebel against their father and return to his native country, but they would start out with their father.
 - But what does this have to do with resurrection?
 - Don't worry—I'm getting to that...
 - Because of Adam's rebellion, God brought death upon Adam and his progeny.
 - Right away, Adam and his posterity became spiritually dead—dead in trespasses and sins—
 - You can see this by looking at the world and at how estranged we are from our Creator—many people do not know Him and we have very hard time obeying Him.
 - As soon as Adam fell, the LORD also put a curse on the earth, causing it to be less habitable for us with storms and all various troubles.
 - And instead of living forever, God also appointed physical death for every one of us...
 - And also appointed a day of judgement when we will stand before Him and be judged according to what we have done,

- And on the basis of this judgement, we will be brought under the power of the second death for all eternity—
 - which is God’s just punishment for our sins.
 - It is a most dreadful prospect, and most people and most religions deny the depths of our condition.
- But that is what happened to the world that God created... on account of the fall of Adam, we all died...
 - But God did not leave us all to perish in sin and misery—
 - No indeed!
 - He elected some to eternal life, and promised to them a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.
 - But this seemed rather hopeless because none of us are righteous—that is, none of us except Jesus Christ, the very Son of God!
 - Though He was fully God from all eternity, He took upon Him human flesh—not just in appearance—He actually became man—yet continued to be God the Son!
 - And in our flesh, He became the second Adam to all of God’s elect who were destined to be born again in Him and to obtain eternal life through Him.
 - But something had to be done about our sin, for the penalty of sin must be paid—there must be a recompense.
 - Therefore, in becoming Mediator, the Son of God agreed not only to become flesh, but also to suffer the pains of Hell for all of God’s elect!
 - In other words, He would take the punishment that we deserve upon Himself.
 - The Bible says this—
 - For example, in Isaiah 53:5-6, it says:
 - **Isa 53:5-6: He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**
 - Do you see what this is saying?
 - It is saying that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was punished in our place! In the place of all His elect people!
- You know what happened to Him, don’t you?
 - He went to the cross for us!
 - On the cross, He was before the Father as if He had committed all of our sins!
 - It was a dreadful thing for Him—because He is the One who would never do anything that was displeasing to His Father...
 - It is totally repugnant to Him—
 - But He took the shame and the guilt for all of **our** transgressions!
 - And on that cross, He died and went to His grave—dead for His people.
 - He suffered the pains of eternal death on the cross, but then He also was brought under physical death...
 - But only for three days!
 - You know the story—on the third day, He arose from the dead!

- Do you understand what the significance of that resurrection was?
 - It was God the Father's declaration that He had fully accepted the sacrifice of His Son for His people's sins!
 - It was the beginning of a new creation of righteousness!
 - Jesus is called the first fruits of the resurrection of the whole church because He started it—ignited the new life that will spread to all His people.
 - And right then and there, on the very day that He was raised up,
 - Jesus went to tell His apostles the good news of new life in Him.
 - And He sent them to go into all the world with the good news of eternal life for all who trust in Him.
 - That we can become the sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ and live forever under God's blessing and favour!
- In 1 Corinthians 15, the Apostle Paul summarizes the whole thing with these simple words:
 - **1 Cor 15:21-22: For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.**
 - Once we are in Christ, we are assured of resurrection from death.
 - We are given new life in the new creation that God has promised and that has already begun.
 - The prophets in the Old Testament as well as Jesus Himself made the remarkable prediction that after Jesus was crucified and raised again,
 - people from every nation would turn to Him!
 - It is a funny thing that some people see Christianity as a western religion because it all started in the east.
 - But the gospel is spreading into the whole world.
 - It is, in fact, declining in the West because of our ingratitude,
 - but it is still spreading in the world at large.
 - And you see, the resurrection of Jesus was the beginning of this marvellous new creation that we enter by trusting in what He did!
 - If you are elect, the Holy Spirit will open your eyes so that you will be able to see your sin and misery,
 - You won't be able to keep on denying it—
 - And then He will open your heart to receive and rest upon Jesus that you might be born into this new creation.
 - The Bible calls it a resurrection from the dead—that we are raised with Jesus Christ when we believe!
 - So as I said, it is a very good thing for us to think about the resurrection.
 - And of course a lot of people are thinking about the resurrection today...
 - And it is a very good thing that they are!
 - The only problem I have though is that the Lord appointed that we should celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ every week!!
 - It is not to be reduced to a mere annual commemoration.

- It is more important than the first creation—and the Lord appointed that we should celebrate it every week in the Garden of Eden when He instituted the Sabbath...
- But now this New Creation that began when Jesus rose from the dead has superseded the Sabbath!
- Yes, we still remember the creation every week—
 - but now the thing we remember most of all is the New Creation that began on the day that Jesus rose from the dead!

And so you see, today, I do not need to turn to a special passage to speak to you about observing a day to remember the resurrection of Jesus!

- I don't need to do that because it just so happens that we have come to a passage that speaks of that very thing in our regular sermon series from Acts.
- Today we come to Acts 20, verses 7-12,
 - and right here we have an example of the church in Troas meeting on the Lord's Day,
 - as an example of what every church is called to do.

I. First of all, I want you to see that the church at Troas gathered together to break bread on the Lord's Day.

- This is expressed in verse 7:
 - **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 to them and continued his message until midnight.**

A. This looks to be the customary weekly practice of the church at Troas.

A.1. The language that is used is suggestive of a regular practice...

- You see how it says, "on the first day of the week when the disciples came together..."
 - It is described as the custom of the disciples to come together to break bread on the first day of the week.
 - It doesn't say that they decided to come together on the first day of the week because Paul was there—
 - but it speaks of it as their normal practice to do this.
- Although this is in the majority of the manuscripts, there are some significant variants that simply say,
 - "on the first day of the week when we gathered to break bread."
 - That makes it less clear that it was a standing custom of the church to do this,
 - but still points in that direction when other facts are considered.

TRANS> Let's look at some of those facts...

A.2. That the first day of the week was the day for the church's regular meeting is also indicated by the fact that Paul, although in a hurry,

- stayed in Troas for seven days—
- He did this because he was waiting until the day when the church regularly met so that he could address them.
 - You can see that in verse 6.

- The implication here is that Paul wanted to preach not only to the leaders at Troas, but to the entire church in their regular assembly.
- He had rushed off from Troas before, so he wants to meet with the whole congregation.

A.3. Another factor that indicates that this was their regular meeting day is the fact that they are said to have gathered to break bread.

- The way we know what words mean is by looking at how they used and at their context...
- And it is a certain fact that “breaking bread” was used in the early church to refer to the eating of the Lord’s Supper.
- It was also used for common meals, but it was often used to refer to the Lord’s Supper.
- In Acts 2:42 when the regular things the church does are mentioned,
 - It speaks of “the breaking of the bread” along with preaching, prayer, and fellowship.
- And in his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul refers to “the bread which we break” as the communion of the body of Christ in 1 Cor 10,
 - And then in 1 Cor 11, he chides the church because when they came together, it was not to eat the Lord’s Supper,
 - but rather to fill their belly.
 - Although they were eating the Lord’s Supper,
 - he complains that that was not their focus in coming together as it ought to have been.
 - But you see here at Troas that they were coming together on the first day of the week to break bread—
 - that is, to eat the Lord’s Supper.
 - It appears that they did have a common meal as well, but their reason for coming together was to eat the Lord’s Supper.
 - The first day of the week was the appointed time to do this.

TRANS> So you see that this is one of the earliest witnesses we have to the practice of settled churches of having their meetings on the Lord’s Day.

A.4. The case that this is what they were doing becomes all the more compelling when we look at church history.

- From the earliest records, we find it to be the universal practice of the church to gather on the first day of the week.
- One of the reasons the practice is only mentioned in the New Testament rather than highlighted is because there was never a quarrel about this.
 - Whenever there was a quarrel about something—like there was about circumcision—there is a lot said about it...
 - but when there is something like eating the Lord’s Supper on the first day of week, we are simply told that it was done.
- There were indeed some Judaizers that insisted on keeping the Sabbath and the Jewish holy days,
 - But there was very little debate—and none in the New Testament—about gathering on the Lord’s Day for worship.
 - We have every reason to believe that the practice was instituted by Jesus Himself,

- And that from the very start, the church met with the apostles and broke bread in remembrance of Christ on the first day of the week.
- Very early, the day when the Lord's Supper was eaten became known as the Lord's Day, because on that day Jesus rose from the dead.

B. Let me show you that Jesus did indeed institute the first day of the week for our worship.

- I won't be able to go into a lot of detail—but take a look at Psalm 22...

B.1. This Psalm was written about 1000 years before Jesus came, but it is clearly a prophecy about His death on the cross...

- It opens with the words that He spoke on the cross: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me."
 - It goes on to speak about some very specific things that happened to Him on the cross...
 - How His enemies were gathered against Him...
 - How they mocked Him and taunted Him to let God deliver Him if He delighted in Him...
 - How His strength was dried up,
 - How His bones were out of joint,
 - How He was thirsty,
 - How His hands and feet were pierced,
 - How they divided His garments and cast lots for them...
 - It is a remarkable Psalm and it is the same Psalm that the Jews have in their scriptures to this day!
 - It was not written after the fact—it is verified prophecy.

B.2. But perhaps the most remarkable prophecy of all is the one that shows how that after His suffering is complete,

- He speaks in this Psalm of how the news of it will spread to His brethren and to the nations,
 - and how they will go on celebrating this good news from generation to generation!
 - How could an individual's suffering and deliverance possibly have such an impact—even on foreign nations?
- The good news was simply this—
 - The Father, who rejected Him, answered His cry for deliverance!
 - You can see that in verse 21—where all of the sudden—after describing His terrible sufferings, He says:
 - "You have answered Me!"
- In verse 22 He makes a promise to declare what God has done to His brothers in assembly and to sing praise for it among them...
 - And He calls those who fear the LORD to join Him in this praise...
 - In verse 24 He gives the reason...
 - It is because the Father has not despised nor abhorred His affliction, but that when He cried, the Father heard!
 - And then He goes on to talk about how the whole world will join in the praise—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."**

- How could the deliverance of one of many from suffering have such a huge impact on the world?
 - The only thing that could possibly bring about such a result is the fact that the Father heard Jesus from the cross...
 - He heard Him when He offered Himself for the sins of God's elect people from all over the world...
 - The good news is not just a man was delivered from a terrible ordeal...
 - The good news is that this man was suffering to pay for the sins of His elect people from all over the world...
 - And that the Father did not reject His offering but accepted it and raised Him from the dead to prove it...
 - And Jesus immediately went to tell the good news—first to His brethren and then to all the world.

B.3. And what is of interest to us in relation to Acts 20 is the fact that Jesus was raised and declared the good news on the first day of the week.

- According to John 20, it was on the first day of the week that Jesus rose from the dead (Jn 20:1),
 - And it was on the evening of that same day...
 - (John 20:19 says on “the same day at evening, being the first day of the week...”)
 - He went to His disciples when they were gathered together and told them the good news...
 - He told them that He was risen and that now through His sacrifice on the cross there was complete forgiveness of sin.
 - This was the beginning of the tradition of meeting together on the first day of the week to hear the gospel preached.
 - John tells us how Thomas had missed the meeting and doubted...
 - And in John 20:26, he tells how Jesus came to meet with his disciples exactly seven days later—or as it says, on the eighth day—
 - which counts the day that He declared it as the first day...
 - In other words, it was again on the first day of the week when the disciples were gathered that Jesus appeared to them.
 - Clearly, He was establishing the first day of the week for the preaching of the good news in the assembly.
 - There was a new creation so there was a new Sabbath.
 - God finished creation on the seventh day, but Jesus finished the new creation and was rested on the first day of the week.
 - Ever since then, the church has been worshipping on the first day of the week—remembering the resurrection of Jesus!
 - And just to make it all the more clear,
 - It should also be noted that Jesus also chose the first day of the week as the day that He poured out the Holy Spirit—
 - one of the great promises of the New Covenant along with the forgiveness of sin.
 - He did it on Pentecost which was always on a Sunday, and He did it when His disciples were assembled together!

TRANS> And so it should come as no great surprise to us to find the church at Troas meeting together on the first day of the week.

- This was a tradition begun by Jesus and carried on by the apostles.
- It is understandable why this has been the universal practice of the church with very little dissent from the first century.
 - Just as there was very little dispute about baptism—so there was very little dispute about worship on the first day.
 - Justin Martyr describes it as the regular practice of the churches.
 - Justin Martyr (who died in 165) describes the weekly meetings of the church in this way:
 - “And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together in 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 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 has been given.”
 - There are traditions of men, such as celebrating Easter and Christmas,
 - but celebrating the Lord’s Day each week and partaking of the Lord’s Supper was instituted by Christ.
 - This is a tradition that we ought to gladly and faithfully continue!
 - What was done at Troas was typical of what is to be done all over the world.
- And so, I want you to see secondly that like the church at Troas,

II. As God’s children, we should come gladly to commune with our Lord in the ordinances that He has appointed.

- A. We saw in Psalm 22 that Jesus declared the good news to His brethren and then to all nations—
- and how He called all those who feared the Lord to praise Him for accepting His suffering on the cross! It made them glad!
- A.1. You can see how this is exactly what the church at Troas is doing...
- They are gathered together to break bread, but before they do this, they listen to a sermon...on this Lord’s Day, a sermon from the Apostle Paul!
 - Look at Acts 20:7, starting in the middle of the verse:
 - **Acts 20:7: Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.**
 - This is the proper order...
 - The Lord’s Supper must always be associated with the preaching of the Word...
 - We do not just put bread in our mouths and drink wine...
 - First we listen to the Word—
 - We hear about what Christ has done for us!
 - We learn about the glory of God revealed in His life, suffering and resurrection!
 - We are instructed about how we are to live for Him in the church and in our daily lives.
- A.2. You see the enthusiasm of this church for the word!

- They meet in the evening, probably, as was the case in many churches, because many of them were slaves...
 - And though they would have been tired from working all day—you see that Paul keeps on preaching until midnight!
 - If they were not hungry disciples, he would have been forced to shorten his message—
 - but they were attentive and he continued into the night.
 - Long sermons are the norm in many parts of the world today and it used to be common in North America—
 - but as the church declines, preaching is more and more reduced and in some cases neglected.
 - The result is that God’s people starve and become ignorant about Christ and His call upon our lives.
 - Obviously, preaching until midnight (for 5 or 6 hours) was not the norm—Luke describes it as Paul “continuing his message” in v.9 —going on and on is the idea.
 - Brothers and sisters, we need to have such enthusiasm for the Word ourselves!
 - Understand that when Jesus said He would declare the good news to the nations,
 - He did not mean that He would do the preaching Himself...
 - He told the good news to His brethren, but then He commissioned them to go out and preach to the nations...
 - And He commissioned them to commission others to do the same—
 - They were to disciple men and lay hands on them and then send them out with prayer to preach the word.
 - In this way, God’s people have the privilege of hearing Jesus through His ambassadors.
 - That is why the ministry of the word is so important on the Lord’s Day.
 - Do you have enthusiasm for this?
 - Do you come eagerly, not because of the preacher, but because of the message of Jesus is being preached...
 - a message through which Christ Himself speaks to us by His Spirit?
 - Do you pray and prepare yourself?
 - Do you listen with a good attitude?
 - Do you neglect the Word by missing church?
 - Or do miss it by inattention?
 - Hearing the Word is a tradition that Jesus Himself began on the Lord’s Day.
 - For the Jews, it had been done on the seventh day,
 - but now that Jesus is risen, we gather on the first day.

B. And then there is another part of their worship that is mentioned—the breaking of the bread.

B.1. As we saw, this is even described as their reason for coming together on the first day of the week...

- As I have just said, celebrating the Lord’s Supper is always to be done in connection with preaching...
 - Because when we come to the table, we are remembering what Christ did for us...

- The story must be recounted to us or eating the bread and drinking the wine means nothing...
- It must be told how He died and rose again on the third day so that we could be forgiven—fully justified—through faith in Him...
- It must be told how His sacrifice that is represented by the bread and the wine was truly sufficient so that we can come with thankful remembrance.
- And not only that, but when we come to the table we are also to consider how Christ would have us to live...
 - We know that we come short of what He has called us to be.
 - None of us love the way He loved us—none of us serve as He served—none of us!
 - But when we hear what we are called to be in the sermon,
 - we are then to come to the table with hunger because here Christ feeds us with His body and blood.
 - Not the physical eating of the bread and wine, but feeding upon Christ’s body and blood that is represented by eating the bread and drinking the wine.
 - You come rightly when you come with hunger to be nourished into new life by the Lord Jesus!
 - We come, looking to Him to impart life to us in the Holy Spirit—more life—more likeness to Himself.

- B.2. You see in verse 11 how Paul is said to have broken bread (and here it is literally **the** bread—the definite article indicating that it was the special bread of the Lord’s Supper), he ate and talked with the congregation until daybreak!
- When it says that he ate after breaking the bread, this may mean simply that he ate the Lord’s Supper (which of course he did),
 - but it probably means that after he had the Lord’s Supper, he enjoyed a common meal...
 - The talking that occurred after this appears to be the kind that we do when we hang around at church after the service...
 - It was not formal preaching, but talking with the people.
 - Some of them may have departed at this time—including Eutychus to whose story we now turn...
 - who finally went home to get some sleep, but was brought back in the morning so that everyone could see that he truly was okay.

TRANS> But you see some of what it is that we are to do on the Lord’s Day from the example of Troas...

- It is the day for us to give ourselves to the ordinances that Christ has appointed for the day...
 - Acts 2:42 tells us that public prayer is also included in our regular worship,
 - And although Luke does not mention it here, preaching and the Lord’s Supper should not be done without it...
 - And, as we saw from Psalm 22, singing of praise is also a part of our corporate worship...
 - God has given us a special day each week for us to gather together in the name of our Lord.
 - It is called the Lord’s Day, and how we ought to make the most of it...
- Now what can we learn from Eutychus!

- Let us learn that the LORD delights in encouraging His people on the Lord's Day.

III. God blesses the day to us as His beloved children

A. Here, He encouraged His people in Troas with a resurrection on the Lord's Day!

A.1. There is this poor young man who is described as fighting sleep as Paul goes on preaching into the night.

- From the words that are used to describe him, he is probably not more than 14 years of age.
- He is described in verse 9 as fighting sleep until it overcomes him...
 - **Acts 20:9: And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep. He was overcome by sleep;**
 - In verse 8, the lamps are mentioned and may have contributed to his sleep.
 - Perhaps he had moved over to the window in an effort to stay awake—or possibly this even put him in the pathway of a draft of smoke...
 - but whatever the case, he is overcome by sleep.
 - He is not presented as indifferent to the gospel, but as one who simply could not keep himself awake.
 - If he had been up the night before playing video games, he would be culpable for not preparing himself properly...
 - but if he was working all day and was just exhausted, he is not to blame.

A.1.a. But whether to blame or not, his sleep had a fatal consequence.

- May we be reminded here that even when we cannot help it, sleeping when the word is preached causes us harm?
 - In any case, poor Eutychus (whose name means Lucky) falls three floors to his death.
 - The windows were often unglazed and had shutters that could be closed if necessary, so he did not fall through the glass...
 - But he fell from the third floor, and Luke the physician says that he was taken up dead.

A.1.b. But look at what happened!

- Paul is there!
 - He has not spent much time at Troas...and so has not done many miracles or done a whole lot of preaching there.
 - But the saints at Troas get a full dose of both on this Lord's Day evening.
- Paul goes down and stretches himself out on Eutychus in the same manner that Elijah and Elisha had done when each had raised up an only son, Elijah for the widow at Zarephath, and Elisha for the Shunammite woman.
 - Acts 20:10 says: **But Paul went down, fell on him, and embracing him said, "Do not trouble yourselves, for his life is in him."**
 - Though when they took him up, he was dead,
 - Paul now declares that his life is in him.
 - This is similar to Jesus' claim that Jairus' daughter was not dead, but sleeping which caused them to ridicule Him...

- until he raised the girl up!

A.2. When everyone at Troas saw that Paul had raised Eutychus from the dead, they were, of course greatly encouraged...

- or as Luke, the master of understatement, says, “they were not a little comforted!”
- The word ‘comforted’ is *parakaleo* which is that word we run into a lot in Acts that means comforted, encouraged, helped, exhorted, and so forth...
- It seems that wherever Paul, the Apostle of Jesus goes, this encouragement is the result.
 - Remember last week in Acts 20:2 how we saw that Paul went around in Macedonia and *encouraged* the people?
 - This is what the Lord does for His people—He encourages them so that they will go on in His grace.
- I think there were several ways that the saints at Troas were encouraged by the raising up of Eutychus...
 - First, and obviously, they were encouraged that this young man whom they loved was alive even though he had been dead.
 - That, in itself, was an encouragement.
 - The miracles of Christ and His apostles are like that—they yield happy outcomes...
 - it’s not just stuff like making rocks float or something—
 - It is miracles that are harbingers of heaven when death will be abolished every tear will be wiped away.
 - Second, it encouraged them because it showed God’s great love for them as well as His power.
 - That is one of the most excellent things about miracles—they show us how the Lord loves us, and that He is near...and that He is truly able to help us.
 - Third, it encouraged them by giving them confidence in Paul and the Word that he had spoken to them.
 - Sometimes, he said things that challenged them and that were hard to accept...
 - And then they might be inclined to question his authority—and say, “who says?”
 - But God gave the apostles, who spoke the original word to us, signs and wonders to confirm their ministry.
 - They are called the signs of an apostle.
 - That means that they were done to show the church in all ages that these men who claimed to speak for God really were speaking for God.
 - As Hebrews says, the Lord confirmed their words through signs and wonders...
 - **Heb 2:4: God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?**
 - This was so with the prophets as well.
 - If anyone is going to claim to truly speak for God prophetically,
 - God will make it sure by giving them verifying signs.
 - We have already seen how David, in writing Psalm 22, was not only able to predict the details about Christ on the cross 1000 years before it happened...

- but also, amazingly, to predict that the whole world would take notice and celebrate that God heard Him from the cross.
- How could he possibly have known that a thousand years before it happened?

TRANS> So there was great encouragement for the people at Troas by the raising up of Eutychus on this Lord's Day.

B. Isn't the raising up of Eutychus encouraging to you too? Just hearing about it?

B.1. It shows all of us God's love for us and that He is going to raise us up,

- And it confirms the Word to all of us.
- It shows us that God delights in encouraging His people!

B.2. And in this particular case, see that He encourages them on the Lord's Day!

- It is the day that Jesus rose from the dead!
 - It is the day that He poured out His Spirit on the church!
 - It is the day that He has given us to proclaim and celebrate these things.
- We are told that when God instituted the Sabbath on the seventh Day of creation week,
 - He blessed the day.
 - What does this mean?
 - I spoke to a man a couple of weeks ago who tries to deny that the Sabbath is a creation ordinance,
 - and he asserted that God blessed and sanctified the seventh day without the blessing and sanctifying having any relation to man!
 - I pointed out to him that when God sanctifies a day or anything else, it is always that we may treat it as special—it always relates to us...
 - And so does the blessing of something—
 - If God blesses something like a day, it means that He puts a blessing in it for us.
 - As Jesus said, the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath...
 - It is a day that was made for us!
 - And so it is with the Lord's Day all the more...
 - The Lord's Day encompasses and supersedes the Sabbath day, pointing to God's new creation in Jesus Christ.
 - It takes the creation Sabbath and elevates it to greater things!
 - If He blessed the Sabbath day of the first creation to His people,
 - how much more the Sabbath day of the New Creation which was begun in Christ!
 - The seventh day is the last day of the old creation...
 - The first day of the week is the beginning of the new creation—the new heavens and the new earth where righteousness dwells!

B.3. My brothers and sisters, the Lord puts a blessing in the Lord's Day for you!

- It is a day to look to Him for His encouragement!
 - Pray the day in with expectation that God will bless His people...
 - And give yourself diligently to His ordinances as one who is eager for His blessing.

- Don't cut the day short...
 - Don't be like those the Lord rebukes in Amos who say,
 - **Amos 8:5: "When will the New Moon be past, that we may sell grain? And the Sabbath, that we may trade wheat?"**
- The Lord's Day is not a day to tolerate and slog through...
 - It is a day to cherish!
 - It is a day when the Lord in particular says, "Seek my face," and his people respond, "Your face, LORD, I will seek."
 - It is the day that the Lord made the stone that the builders rejected the chief cornerstone...
 - It is the day that the LORD has made—we will rejoice and be glad in it—every week! (Psalm 118:22-24)