

Dear Listener,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You asked if it was “alright” to miss out on a church service if you were doing charity work.

We assume that the church service you speak of is held on Sunday and that is why missing it concerns you. Although we feel that Sunday, the first day of the week, is the preferred day to put aside temporal labors and “rest” in the Lord through worship, study, and fellowship with family and with those of like faith, we feel the Christian is under no Biblical obligation to attend a Sunday service. Working on Sunday is not a sin. If you hold a job which requires you to work on Sunday or if you are engaged in a charity function on that day, you can set aside another day where you can study and reflect on God’s word and, by doing so, you will be blessed as you draw closer to Him. In fact, your church may already offer a group Bible study on another day of the week.

When God adopted the nation of Israel as his peculiar people, he fixed for them a special day of the week, the seventh, to be their Sabbath, or day of rest. This Law specially was directed to the Jewish nation. But those of us who are Christian and not under that Law Covenant are not bound by its limitation. Instead we are free to follow the spirit of the Law rather than its letter. Following the spirit of the Law is true for the entire Ten Commandments, as well as for the Fourth. Thus to us the Seventh Day represents a rest of a higher character than that of the Law—a rest of faith, instead of a physical rest. “We who believe do enter into his rest.” (Hebrews 4:3) This rest of faith is based upon our acceptance of Jesus as our satisfaction before God.

The early Church began to meet on the First Day of the week because it was on that day that their Redeemer arose from the dead. On that day Jesus appeared to some in the upper room and to two on the way to Emmaus and to Mary, and subsequently to others of the disciples near the tomb. These four manifestations of the Lord's resurrection marked that day in a special sense as a holy day to the early Church. They waited during an entire week and then again Jesus appeared on the first day of the week. Indeed, so far as we may know, all of our Lord’s eight appearances to his followers after his resurrection were on the first day of the week. No wonder that early Christians knew it as the Lord's Day. No wonder that they specially associated that Day with all the blessings of God and a rest of faith that came to them through the Redeemer.

Although we believe that Sunday is obviously a good day for Christians to set aside the much needed time for spiritual “rest” in the Lord as described above, we see no scriptural mandate regarding that day of the week. More important than the day, is the action of entering into rest. “Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of us be found to have fallen short of it.” (Hebrews 4:1)

We hope we have answered your question.

Sincerely,
Christian Questions Radio