

Ideas for Lord's Day Worship: To Sanctify the Lord's Day

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The Lord's Day is not to be "Boring-Day" or "Do-Nothing-Day." It is a special day, the high day, the holy day, the celebration day when we cheerfully triumph because Christ our Champion has died for our sins and He has risen for us! He lives for us, intercedes for us, protects us, and shall come again for us! He is just as longing for and anticipating the meeting of the saints as we are. He walks among the lampstands and is eager to gather where two or three in His name assemble.

The Sunday heart of worship actually begins Saturday night. Get rest. Go to bed early. Fill your heart with Truth. Don't go to bed intoxicated with worldly music, movies, words and shows. Prepare yourself and your heart Saturday night and you'll rise Sunday morning with a heart ready and alert and eager to glorify Christ. Go to bed with a heart full of Christ and His Word and you will find yourself rising with an eager and anticipating heart for corporate worship.

SOME PASTORAL SUGGESTIONS TO CONSIDER AND ADAPT TO YOUR PARTICULAR CONTEXT:

1. Have high and lofty thoughts of the Lord's Day. Remember this is God's Gift-Day to you to prioritize Him and His worth. On this day, God's people worship with the Saints and affirm and confess and unify together with like-minded gospel-saints and an opportunity to serve others. Perhaps one of the greatest ways to elevate your thoughts of the Lord's Day is to believe what God says about it: it is to be a day of joy and celebration, a delight (Isa 58.12-14).
2. Do a study on the Attributes of God. You could watch the Ligonier videos on the Attributes of God, grab one of the Systematic Theologies and work through God's attributes. You would benefit greatly from reading the *Blessed and Boundless God* by George Swinnock, or JI Packer's *Knowing God*. Even if you selected one chapter to carefully read through on the Lord's Day morning, your heart will well up with wonder and praise for the God who chose you in salvation, redeemed you with His blood, and invites you to worship Him in the Spirit!
3. Pray through the Membership List Carefully, Specifically, Individually. Grab the membership list and pray through it. Or, perhaps you could pray through a portion of that membership list. Pray by name. Pray specifically. Pray for their children. Pray for their marriages, their places of ministry and their growth in grace.
4. Pray through area Churches that faithfully preach the gospel (and consider praying thru area false-churches that have left gospel preaching & pray for God to grant repentance to them, leadership teams and people). Spend time praying for the power of the Word to fill pulpits and bless hearers as Christ's honor and gospel thunders forth. Pray for divine power, the unction, the empowerment of the Spirit to assist and attend the reading and preaching of the Word.

5. Pray through the missionaries — a country, a people group. You may consider selecting a particular country or people group (JoshuaProject.net) and learn a bit of it, pray specifically for it, and let your heart be drawn to the people who live in desperate need of the gospel of grace. Pray for God to raise up missionaries. Pray for the Lord to raise up workers to go out to this harvest field.

6. Consider hospitality / a brunch, a lunch. Maybe you could plan and prepare to have someone over for a meal. It doesn't have to be flashy or expensive or super formal. Keep it simple, warm, inviting, and intentional! Focus on good conversations, share testimonies, speak of Christ and His Word, share your favorite hymn and doctrine. Then have a time of Scripture reading and prayer — and even preparation for worship together!

7. Consider the Sunday morning CARE GROUP. We have a CARE group that meets Sunday mornings to prepare for the worship in the afternoon. Consider jumping in and joining that group.

8. Come early for the 1:00PM Prayer meeting for the worship service & for divine power. All that we do, if God does not attend with spiritual power, is a mere human event and void of spiritual efficacy. Therefore, we pray, and we must pray. A group gathers in the church building to seek the Lord's face in prayer and beg for His power and working in our midst during the worship service. Come to this prayer meeting!

9. Weather and season permitting, go for a walk, enjoy an outdoor activity by yourself, with your family & kids, or with others. God has given endless opportunities to enjoy Him and bathe in His creation. He puts His power, attributes, glory and wisdom on display outdoors. Go for a walk. Go to a park. Take a hike. Take another along with you. Ponder, meditate, memorize, talk about, reflect on Christ and His Word together.

10. Have extended time of preparation for worship. Read the Scripture, think on it, do a brief study of the text. Grasp the outline, the meaning, the ideas, the application points. Sing the songs. Read the portion that'll be read during the pastoral reading & prayer. Pray through all the elements of the worship service.

11. Work through the catechism on your own that'll be taught in the 2pm classes for the Young People. Read it, memorize it (go over it repeatedly till you have it down word for word verbatim). Then study the footnote that gives the fuller, theological explanation and support for the catechism answer. If you do this carefully, systematically and deliberately, you will work through a full systematic theology through all the doctrines so as to sharpen your knowledge of God and His Truth.

12. Plan and pray for a way you can serve another in your church family on this day. Think of an adult *and* a child. Find them. Make a beeline for them. Encourage them. Pray with them. To do this well, plan early, pray for wisdom, be specific and thoughtful and engage with different people so as to encourage the Church family — younger and older — as you see them in the corporate assembly.