

# Why?

## Communion – Combined Service

1 Corinthians 11:23-25

April 2, 2016

### Today

Humans love traditions, but sometimes we participate in traditions not knowing why we do them. And sometimes we do things for the wrong reasons because we have never stopped to ask, “why do we do that”.

Today we are asking, “Why Communion?”

Generally, once a quarter we participate in a Communion Service.

I have, over the years, heard many complaints about the formality of Communion:

- Some don't like the idea of washing someone else's feet, or having someone wash their feet.
- Some say it's just a tradition and there that there is nothing special about the occasion.

In fact, I know quite a few people who conveniently skip church on Communion Sabbath in order to avoid it all together.

We know there is nothing magical about communion:

- We don't believe that we are consuming the actual body and blood of Jesus.
- We don't believe that a person is going to miss out on heaven if they don't partake in Communion.

So, why Communion?

### 1. Jesus started it – It is about Him

God knows that humans don't have the greatest of memories and we get easily distracted by the worries and cares of life. Throughout the Bible we see memorials to significant events in the history of God's people. Altars were built or names were given to places in order to remind the people of the event that had taken place.

Sabbath is a memorial:

- It reminds us of creation
- It reminds us of redemption

Passover was a memorial:

- It reminded the people of their deliverance from Egypt and was a significant yearly celebration for the Jews. Jews still celebrate Passover today.
- It was during this celebration that Jesus met with His disciples to share the Passover meal – the last meal He would consume before His crucifixion.

There were so many things that He wanted to share with His disciples – so much that He wanted them to know, but they were caught up in who would be greatest and they couldn't understand what He was trying to tell them – primarily that He was about to die. So, Jesus used the Passover meal as a time to share the truth about what was about to happen. He wanted them to see Passover, not as a reminder of deliverance from Egypt, but as a reminder of deliverance from Sin.

### 2. Communion levels the playing field.

We spend a lot of time comparing ourselves to one another:

- Sometimes, we feel really good about ourselves because we have a bigger house or a nicer car or a more advanced degree, etc., than the person next to us.
- Sometimes we don't feel as good about ourselves because we don't have what someone else has.

This problem is not exclusive to the secular world:

- We compare our Christian commitment and our “religious-ness” – which is most easily judged by the outward things we do.
- There is often a caste system in churches – with the more educated and well to do at the top of the ladder.

From Jesus perspective, we are all on the same level. Social, economic and spiritual distinctions do not exist at the foot of the cross. Jesus died for each one of us because we are sinners who are hopelessly lost except for the grace of God.

That’s what we remember at communion – A brand new believer and someone who has been a believer for 50 years are on the same level.

### **The ground is level ground at the foot of the cross.**

Communion requires self examination – who am I really when I stand before a holy and perfect God. It is only then that we come to realize that none of us is worthy to take Communion. We’re not perfect. We’re all sinners – BUT we are sinners saved by what Jesus did on the cross. Partaking of the bread and grape juice reminds us that we ALL need a savior.

Washing someone’s feet reminds us that we should be in service to those around us – beginning with those within the church walls, but extending beyond them as well. Remember that Jesus washed the feet of the disciples and as followers of Jesus it is our responsibility and honor to show the world that with God there is no hierarchy – Washing dirty feet is a great reminder of just how equal we are.

So, communion is more than tiny glasses of grape juice and little squares of bread:

- It is a time for serious personal reflection.
- It is a time to remember that God loves ME so much that He would rather give up His only son than ever live without ME (make it personal – Jesus didn’t just die for the faceless millions, HE DIED FOR YOU).
- It is a time for gratitude and thankfulness for the love of God extended to you personally.
- It is a time for service.

Finally, Communion is a time to remember that the hands that formed the oceans and built the mountains – are the same hands that were stretched out on a tree.

After all, He told us to do this “In remembrance of ME.”