

WHY CHRISTIANS TAKE COMMUNION!

1 Corinthians 11:23-32

INTRODUCTION: Sometimes the greatest way to remember events in history is a simple memorial. The Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C. is such an example. On its 747-foot - long, ten-foot-tall black granite wall are written the names of 58,000 fallen Vietnam soldiers who gave their lives in service to their country. A memorial is about remembering so that generations to come will not forget something that was very important. Remembering in a world of changing events is extremely important. Some things must never be forgotten and one of those things is the sacrifice our Lord Jesus gave for us on the cross!

I. THE TERMINOLOGY OF COMMUNION

There are a number of common terms for what we usually refer to as “communion.” The Bible refers to this practice as “the breaking of bread.” Acts 2:42. The Lord’s Supper or the Lord’s Table.” 1 Corinthians 10:21; 1 Corinthians 11:20. “Communion” means “participation or fellowship.” 1 Corinthians 10:16. In some churches they call it a “Eucharist” a term meaning a “blessing or thanksgiving.” 1 Corinthians 10:16. Some churches go so far as to call communion a “sacrament” a term derived from Latin which means “a practice of holiness that is inherently efficacious and is essential to salvation. We would say this is unbiblical in its use. Titus 3:4-7.

II. NEW TESTAMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Actually the New Testament information about the practice of communion is very limited. Acts 2:42. Jesus had told His disciples: Luke 22:19-20. Participation in communion was done probably weekly by all Christians for some 1,500 years. What changed that now we usually do it once a month? The Protestant Reformation! By the 14th century the church had become a strange mixture of Bible, tradition, pagan culture and politics. Communion instead of being a simple reminder of Christ sacrifice for our sins had become a highly ceremonial ritual governed by religious rules and regulations. Instead of being a remembrance of something done by Christ; it had become a re-sacrificing of Christ for sins committed in the past, a sacrifice offered and controlled by the clergy. The bread and the cup were said to actually and mysteriously become the very blood and body of Christ in the hands of the clergy and was a weekly atonement for sin. Hebrews 10:8-18. We must stand on the authority of the Scriptures as our source of truth and not the teachings of men.

III. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COMMUNION

“Why do most Protestant churches observe communion every month?” It is because we are a forgetful lot. We do it monthly so we will not forget what our Lord Jesus told us to remember. Communion is a remembrance that we are sinners saved by grace and as a reminder that our Lord Jesus is coming again to take us to the Father’s house! “Who may partake of communion?” Only for those who have personally received Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior and are walking in fellowship with Him. Communion gives us an opportunity to rethink, re-examine, and recommit ourselves to Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. “Who should preside or officiate the communion service?” Scripture does not say but normally it would be the local church pastor and deacons. “What does the Bible mean when it says: “unworthily?” 1 Corinthians 11:27. These Christians were going through the motions of a communion service without changing their behavior in life: 1 Corinthians 11:17-32.