

# Uncommon things commonly believed among us

On the first Sunday of each month we have been exploring some of the things we commonly believe in the Churches of Christ that many in the religious world around us do not commonly believe. When such differences exist, I believe we have a responsibility to offer a reasoned, biblical explanation for our different belief. This morning we will consider our belief that Christians should practice communion every Sunday.

*We believe communion should be taken every Sunday (I Corinthians 11:23-26)*

## ***Beginning Considerations***

- We do not believe that communion has any sacramental power by itself.
  - A sacramental view involves the communion having intrinsic power to impart a blessing apart from the heart of a participant.
  - But the Bible clearly ties communion's significance to the heart of the person taking it (*I Corinthians 11:17-31*).
- We also do not believe the communion literally becomes Jesus' body and blood.
  - Jesus used a metaphor in Matthew 26:26-28 when he described the bread and juice as his body and his blood.
  - Paul's comment in I Corinthians 10:16-17 makes this metaphor clear when he writes that it was "bread" the Corinthian Christians were eating.
  - The "sharing" or "communion" in the body and blood of Christ had to do with the symbolic relationship of the bread and the cup to Jesus' sacrifice.
- Although the Lord's Supper does not have intrinsic sacramental power and does not literally transform, it holds an essential and important place in our worship.

## ***The Lord's Supper on every Sunday***

- No verse in the New Testament says that the Communion should be taken every Sunday. In fact, it contains no commands to meet on Sunday for any thing.
- Nevertheless we believe that the New Testament contains clear inferences that demonstrate the need to observe the communion every Sunday.
  - Jesus commanded his followers to observe the Lord's Supper (*I Corinthians 11:23-26; Matthew 28:20*).
  - Christians meet together every first day of the week (*I Corinthians 16:1-2; 11:17-18, 20, 33; Hebrews 10:25*).
  - The first day of the week was known as the "Lord's Day", the day Jesus was resurrected (*Revelation 1:10; Matthew 28:1-6*).

- It was on the first day of the week that the church meet to observe the Lord's Supper (*1 Corinthians 11:17-34; Acts 20:7*).
- The importance of the Lord's Supper, or communion, on this day can be seen by Paul's seven-day delay in Troas (*Acts 20:6*) so he could observe the communion with them (*Acts 20:7, 11*) even though he was in a hurry to go to Jerusalem (*Acts 20:16*).
- Very appropriately, Christians meet on the day of Jesus' resurrection to remember his death, which is why until recent times Christians did not associate the communion with any other day of the week.

### ***But what about...?***

- Wouldn't Communion be more special if we only observed it occasionally?
  - We might ask ourselves, "What about worship in general – giving, praying, singing, reading the scriptures, preaching – should we only do them infrequently?"
  - The real issue does not reside in our perceived specialness of communion; the real question is what does God want us to do?
  - Additionally, the specialness of communion ties to our heart and not the frequency with which we observe it (*1 Corinthians 11:17-31*).
- If communion has such an important place in God's worship, then why not practice it on other days in addition to Sunday? Is it ever a wrong time to do a good thing?
  - It is wrong to do something at one time if God reveals another time.
  - For example, could the Jews have observed Passover at any time (*Leviticus 23:5*)?
  - Two passages give insight into this question.
    - Hebrews 7:14 tells us that the Bible's silence should not be taken as permissive, but prohibitive, especially when God has revealed something regarding the subject being considered.
    - 1 Corinthians 14:26-33 teaches that even miraculous contributions to a church service were not to be given at just any time.

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The communion, as a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice for our sins, holds an important place in our worship today. The New Testament testifies to its importance by teaching us that we should observe it every Sunday, the day that God raised Jesus from the dead. As a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection, the communion also serves as a reminder of who we consequently need to be.