

Why We Do What We Do

WHEN THE BIBLE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE:

TWO MORE PROBLEMS WITH THE CHURCH:

People weren't **dressed** the right way.

The services did more **harm than good**.

TWO FAMILIAR SOLUTIONS:

► Always put **others first**.

► Love trumps **freedom**.

ONE SUPPER THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING:

It's for **believers only**.

Its focus should be on **forgiveness**.

It's a time to remember the **price** that was **paid**.

It should **change** the way we **live**.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of November 8, 2009

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching on *Why We Do What We Do*, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. This weekend we talked about the significance of Communion. Depending on your religious background, there may be other religious ceremonies you were exposed to growing up. What importance did confirmation classes, first Communion, baby dedication, baptism or some other ceremony have in your family when you were a child?

How did your experience with these as a child influence your opinion of Christ or the church once you grew up?

2. What do you tend to do when you're reading the Bible and come to a passage that doesn't make sense to you?

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skip it and move on | <input type="checkbox"/> Ask a friend |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Look for the answer in a commentary or other resource | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check out the Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

What resources have you found that are helpful to you in understanding the Bible?

DIGGING DEEPER

This week's homework will focus on what Christ has done for us and the significance of Communion.

1. This weekend Chris talked about how we are often asked to do things as a Christian that we don't naturally want to do. The good news is that God never intended for us to do these things in our own strength. What do these passages say about what God has provided for us to live the Christian life?

Philippians 2:12-13

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed--not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence--continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, [13] for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. [NIV]

Galatians 5:16-26

So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. [17] For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. [18] But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

[19] The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; [20] idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions [21] and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

[22] But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. [24] Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. [25] Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. [26] Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. [NIV]

What are some reasons why a person wouldn't use the resources God has made available to us?

2. Jesus celebrated the first Lord's Supper knowing that Judas would betray Him, the disciples would desert Him, and Peter would deny Him. In John 13:1-17, we see how He acted even with this knowledge. What choices and actions do you see Jesus making in this passage?

John 13:1-17

It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

[2] The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. [3] Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and

was returning to God; [4] so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. [5] After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

[6] He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

[7] Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

[8] "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

[9] "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

[10] Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." [11] For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

[12] When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. [13] "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. [14] Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. [15] I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. [16] I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. [17] Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. [NIV]

If you had been sitting around the table with the disciples, what do you think your response would have been to what He did?

Does this passage give you any insight into what Jesus thinks about you even in light of your sin and disobedience?

3. As we heard this weekend, Communion is a celebration of the sacrifice Jesus made on our behalf. That sacrifice made it possible for Christians to experience a whole host of spiritual "benefits." Read the following verses and write down the spiritual benefit each one talks about.

Ephesians 1:7

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace [NIV]

Ephesians 2:18

For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. [NIV]

Colossians 1:13-14

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, [14] in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. [NIV]

Romans 5:1

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
[NIV]

Which one of these is most encouraging to you? Which one are you most likely to overlook?

As you think about what it cost Jesus to make these benefits available to you, take a moment to thank Him for paying the price.

TAKING IT HOME

Because of the topic of this week's sermon, we are encouraging Growth Groups to celebrate Communion this week. The Taking It Home question is designed to prepare you to celebrate Communion with your Growth Group.

1. Chris talked about what it means to examine yourself in preparation for taking Communion. He said it doesn't mean we're perfect, but it does mean we look to see if we're striving to live a life pleasing to the Lord. Take some time to examine your life in the following areas:

Any attitude or action you need to confess?

Any person you need to forgive or love?

Any blessing you need to thank God for?

PRAYER REQUESTS