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What Is the Church of Christ?

This week I talked with a sincere, devout Christian woman who asked me, “What is the Church of Christ? What do you all believe? What is the history of your church?” I want to share with you some of the things I discussed with her.

The Churches of Christ in America began about two hundred years ago as a reform movement among divided and warring Presbyterian factions. In response to the sectarian divisiveness that the leaders saw among Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist churches, they proposed that all believers be united in Christ through a return to the basic teachings of the Scriptures.

They recognized that the church of Christ on earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one and that the world would never be brought to believe in Jesus as long as believers fought among themselves and divided over into divisive groups, each with their own creedal statements. So the leaders called for a return to the New Testament Scriptures for all beliefs and practices. They soon recognized that the New Testament church practiced immersion baptism of believers, met weekly on the first day of the week to worship, including taking the Lord's Supper, and organized themselves into local churches without hierarchies and man-made organizations.

They rejected the Calvinistic teachings of total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and perseverance of the saints. They preached the simple gospel story to everyone, and emphasized that whosoever will can believe, repent, and be baptized, and thus form the church of Christ on earth.

The movement preached Christianity without denominationalism. To honor Jesus, they called themselves simply Christians or Disciples of Christ. They called their churches “Churches of Christ,” “Christian Churches” or “Disciples of Christ.” They believed, “The Bible only makes Christian only.” Their motto became, “We speak where the Bible speaks, and we are silent where the Bible is silent.” They emphasized, “No book but the Bible, no creed but the Christ, and no name but the divine.”

The movement in America is not unique. Throughout the two thousand years of Christianity there have been multiple reform movements, totally unrelated to us, that called for a restoration of biblical beliefs and practices. Because the members are human like everyone else, the movement has also had its problems with sectarianism and divisions. Because some favored instrumental music, missionary societies beyond the local church, German rationalism and liberalism, and supra-local church organization, the movement split into three segments: The Disciples of Christ or Christian Churches, the instrumental Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, and the a cappella Churches of Christ.

Today, the Churches of Christ meet in every state, but they are heavily concentrated in six southern states. The 1.2 million members in America meet in approximately thirteen thousand congregations. At least that many members meet outside

the United States in congregations that exist among two-thirds of the world's countries. Members of the Churches of Christ operate many colleges, childcare and geriatric homes, inner-city ministries, publishing houses, newspapers and journals, and mission ministries throughout the world.

The West University Church of Christ seeks to be true to the Scriptures in every regard. We seek to preach and teach the Bible and the Bible alone. We are committed to the ideals of the restoration movement. We recognize that only God knows where all his people are. We do not claim to be the only Christians, but Christians only. Anyone who has learned of Christ from the Scriptures and has obeyed Jesus Christ in believer's immersion is a member of the universal church of Christ and will be received into fellowship here. Anything that anyone has learned from anybody anywhere from the Scriptures is true and right and does not need to be unlearned. Unless God has plainly spoken, we dare not pronounce judgment on anyone's eternal salvation. We only ask people to follow the teachings of the Bible. This way all believers in Christ can be united into the church of Christ on earth that is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one. We invite you to join us in this noble quest.

What Does Your Church Believe?

This congregation is drawn together by our faith in Jesus Christ for worship and service. When one becomes a Christian, he/she becomes a member of Christ's church. He/she is encouraged to be in active fellowship with other believers.

We are a free, independent, self-governing congregation under Christ alone as Head. We have no denominational affiliation or earthly headquarters. Under the word of God, we are free to study, teach, and work as our consciences lead us.

We pray for the time when all professed Christians shall divest themselves of all humanly devised barriers and come into the unity of the faith that is in Christ. We believe that the church on earth is "essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one."

We carry on our work and worship, as we understand the Scriptures to teach. According to apostolic precedent, we celebrate the Lord's supper every Sunday. Our music is participative, joyous, and a cappella. Our prayers, largely spontaneous, are intended for power, and not just part of the program. The proclamation of the word of God is given a prominent place. Our giving is liberal and proportionate, symbolic of the dedication of all that we have and are.

Acceptance into the congregation is by baptism or by transfer of membership of a baptized believer. Those who are not Christians are taught to believe in Jesus Christ with the whole heart, to repent of their sins, confess their faith in the Lord, and be buried with Christ in baptism. This is what people were taught to do in New Testament times.

We do not exist for selfish purposes. We seek to follow Jesus who came to minister and to give his life a ransom for many. We are eager to do all we can to be available for prayer, counseling, or any other service we may be able to render in Christ's name and to his glory. Our marching orders are the Lord's worldwide commission. Our hope is His everlasting kingdom and the resurrection of the dead.

The orthodox faith found in the Scriptures is the faith we confess. We are a Bible-believing, Christ-centered church. To write all our beliefs would be to reproduce the Bible word for word.

We believe the Bible is the Word of God, supernaturally inspired, without error in the original manuscripts and preserved by God so that it is a divinely authoritative standard for every age and every life.

We believe in God and that he exists eternally in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - and that these three are one God.

We believe in Jesus Christ as the Lord of all life according to the Scriptures. This was the faith of the early church. The Scriptures say that Jesus was the Eternal Word of God who assumed our humanity. He "died for our sins," was "raised to put us right with God," ascended into glory, and will appear in judgment.

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person, is God and possesses all the divine attributes. He indwells all believers, seals all believers at the moment of their salvation, and fills them in response to confession of sin.

We believe that people are saved from the guilt of their sins, given God's Spirit and the hope of eternal life by the pure grace of God apart from any human righteousness or works. We are saved and put right with God on the simple and single ground of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. We are given new life by the power of his resurrection.

We believe that our response of faith in Christ, repentance of sins, and immersion into Christ appropriates for us personally the grace of God given us in the cross and in the resurrection of Jesus.

We believe that the church of Christ is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one. We believe that God's church exists on earth where people hear the message of Christ and obey it as in New Testament times.

We believe that it is the goal of every Christian to grow in spiritual maturity through obedience to the Word of God and the indwelling Spirit.

We believe that all who receive Christ become joint-heirs with Christ, and at death, their spirits depart to be with Christ in conscious blessedness. At the resurrection their bodies will be raised to the likeness of the body of his glory and dwell forever in divine presence.

What Is Distinctive about the Church of Christ?

Sometimes people ask, "What's the difference in the Church of Christ and all the other churches in town? Why should I consider the Church of Christ when I have so many other options?" Let me try to answer those good questions.

There is only one thing distinctive about the Church of Christ, and that is, there are no distinctions. Everything the Church of Christ believes and practices are things that the entire Christian world agrees is right. We do not have any "Church of Christ" doctrine, creed, or catechism that separates us from other believers in Jesus. Everything we believe and practice is admitted to be right by generally everyone in the whole world of Christendom. The only distinction we would have is that these universal, non-divisive truths and practices are all brought together in one congregation or local family of

believers.

Let me illustrate by calling attention to these items:

We seek to exalt Jesus as Lord, the Christ of God, and pattern our lives after him as the Holy Spirit produces his fruit in us. We want to emulate Jesus in every respect of our lives. His love, mercy, compassion, kindness, obedience, and faithfulness to God are the model for our lives. Some may want to add certain saints or respected leaders to their loyalty, prayers, or commitments, but no one would argue that to follow Jesus only is denominational, divisive, or wrong.

We follow the Scriptures in all matters of faith and doctrine. We seek the unity of all believers in Christ on the basis of a return to New Testament teachings and practices. The Christian world agrees that this is right. Other groups may want to add certain, special beliefs peculiar to their system that make them uniquely the brand name believers that they are. However, no one would say that to follow nothing but the Scriptures, without addition or subtraction, is wrong. The Scriptures are not divisive, but sectarian creeds and peculiar creeds are. Thus, we believe the ancient, orthodox Christian truths delivered by the apostles and prophets of Jesus Christ that have guided the church for over nineteen hundred years. Nobody would say that to follow these truths is denominational, divisive or wrong.

We baptize believers. Nobody would say that it is wrong to baptize believers. Some may want to baptize unbelievers, e.g. infants, but no one would argue that our practice of baptizing believers is denominational, divisive, or wrong.

We baptize by immersion. Nobody would say that it is wrong to immerse. Some may want to use sprinkling or pouring but no one would argue that our practice of immersing is denominational, divisive, or wrong.

We partake of the Lord's Supper weekly on Sunday. Nobody would say that it is wrong to commune weekly. Some may want to celebrate communion daily, monthly, or quarterly, but no one would say that our practice of partaking weekly is denominational, divisive, or wrong.

We sing a cappella. Nobody would say that it is wrong to sing. Some may want to add instruments but no one would argue that our practice of singing is denominational, divisive, or wrong.

We recognize the freedom and right of every believer to study the Scriptures for themselves and to be free under God to interpret and apply Gods word to their own lives. Some may want to add hierarchies that give official views and church doctrine but no one would argue that believers researching, applying, and interpreting Scriptures for themselves is denominational, divisive, or wrong.

We meet in local, autonomous congregations led by ministers, elders, and deacons selected and approved by the membership. Some may want to add extra-congregational rules and denominational frameworks and structure but no one would argue that believers who simply meet as Christians and follow simple biblical forms are denominational, divisive, or wrong.

We call ourselves by New Testament terms: Christians, disciples, saints, brothers and sisters, or believers. Our churches are designated as “Churches of Christ.” Of course, there are other New Testament designations and descriptions for the church that are just as scriptural. These include “Church of God, Body of Christ, Bride of Christ, Kingdom of God and Christ, the church, Church of the Firstborn Ones, and Family of God.” Some may want to call themselves after baptism, forms of church government, reformers, methods, certain Christian beliefs or lifestyles, or certain cities of prominence, but no one would argue that to simply call ourselves “Christians” or “Church of Christ” is denominational, divisive, or wrong. Any biblical terms could be misused in a denominational and divisive sense, but the use of them alone does not necessarily imply that.

There is not one thing that we believe and practice that is not universally agreed to be right. We believe that this is the way to answer the prayer of Jesus for the unity of all Christians. We can never agree on peculiar, sectarian teachings but we can agree to follow the Scriptures, and nothing but the Scriptures.

The only thing distinctive about the Church of Christ is that this fellowship of believers brings together in one church the practice of these biblical, non-divisive teachings. Anything anyone has ever learned from the Bible will never have to be unlearned. This is a positive, inclusive movement that seeks the unity of all believers in Christ by the practice of New Testament Christianity as revealed in the Scriptures. We have differing opinions among ourselves but none of these are allowed to be divisive in the body. We are committed to the truths expressed in the old motto: “In matters of faith, unity; in matters of opinion, liberty; and in all things, love.”

We invite you to join us in this noble quest of preaching and practicing simple New Testament Christianity.

Why Does the Church of Christ Sing A Cappella Only?

The 13,000 congregations of Churches of Christ of the Restoration Movement in America and the many thousands in the rest of the world are a fellowship begun about two hundred years ago as an effort to restore biblical teachings and practices in every area of our lives. One of the things that guests notice immediately is the absence of musical instruments in our praises to God. We sing a cappella which is an Italian word meaning “in chapel style.”

A Brief History of Instruments in Christian Worship

All Christian music was vocal only for the first five hundred years of the church. Even though instruments were widely used in Old Testament Jewish worship and in pagan worship, the church unanimously refused their usage in Christian worship. Christian worship was modeled after the Jewish synagogue with its devotional worship, not after the temple with its sacrifices, priesthood, incense, and horns and cymbals.

Musical instruments were first introduced into the church's worship about A. D. 600. For four hundred years previous to that the church fathers opposed the use of instruments in Christian worship because it imitated the Jewish temple worship, and was used in wild, pagan orgies and their temple worship. It took nearly a thousand years for instruments to be fully accepted into the Roman Catholic churches. The word "a cappella" described the type of music that was used in worship to God in the chapel (i.e. church worship) in contrast to instruments. The Orthodox Churches, which split from the Roman Church in A. D. 1054, do not now, and have never, used instruments in praise to God.

The Protestant reformers like John Calvin, John Knox, and Martin Luther rejected instruments in worship because they imitated Catholicism and Judaism. The Puritans strongly opposed instruments in Christian worship. American Protestant churches generally refused to use instruments until the middle of the 19th century.

In 1859, the first instrument was introduced into the Restoration Movement in Midway, KY because, as it was reported, "the singing was so poor it would drive the rats away." The instrument created controversy and divided churches for the next fifty years. In 1906, David Lipscomb of Nashville, TN, requested that the Federal Census list the a cappella Churches of Christ separate from those in the same movement known as Christian Churches/Disciples of Christ that had adopted instruments. Today, we continue that vocal music only tradition.

Why We Choose to Be A Cappella

Biblically, we choose to be a cappella because singing is the only kind of music used in New Testament worship in the church (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; James 5:16). The Scriptures are silent about the use of instruments. Musicologists and church historians are certain they were not used until hundreds of years after the death of the apostles. Even though instruments were widely available, there is nothing to indicate apostolic churches ever used instruments in worship to God.

Historically, we choose to be a cappella because vocal music only was the practice of the ancient church. For five hundred years the church fathers opposed instruments. Instruments have been divisive in Catholicism and Protestantism, and in our own Restoration Movement.

Doctrinally, we choose to be a cappella because God wants our hearts and our voices praising him. Instruments do not worship; only humans worship. God is glorified by what he has redeemed and filled with his Spirit. He is not glorified by the sounds of inanimate objects like sounding brass, clanging cymbals, banging pipes, or blowing reeds. We do

not need machinery to enhance the meaning or elevate the value of our praying, singing, communing, or preaching. We glorify God with a sacrifice of praise, the fruit of lips that praise his name (Hebrews 13:15).

Practically, we choose to be a cappella because we are edified by others praising God in intelligible words. Instruments often drown out the human voices and many do not sing when they are used. Worship benefits the worshipers as they are edified by others (I Corinthians 14:16-17, 19, 26).

Summary

The Churches of Christ stand on solid, non-divisive ground by calling for the biblical tradition of a cappella music in Christian worship. While we recognize that the practice of a cappella music only is not a salvation issue, it is an important tradition that is justified by biblical, historical, doctrinal, and practical reasons.

Why Do Churches of Christ

Baptize by Immersion Only?

The Churches of Christ baptize believers by immersing them fully in water. Why do we insist on immersion, especially since other forms are widely practiced and some English dictionaries define baptism as “a Christian rite administered by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion”? Baptism, a command and practice in the New Testament, must be defined by New Testament definitions, not by English language usages nineteen hundred years later. The English dictionary only gives the meaning of words as they are currently used in English. The New Testament was originally written in Greek in the first century A. D. To insure accuracy, biblical words and ideas should be defined by biblical usages and not by modern practices.

While it is true that some churches practice baptism by sprinkling or pouring, this does not mean that the options are biblical or approved by God. Throughout history, man has often been misinformed about God's word. Humans have been known to substitute their own preferences for what God has commanded. The fact that many people believe in something does not make it biblically acceptable.

If a person were to simply take the Bible and write out all the one hundred and twenty references to baptism, he would know all that God teaches on the subject. God's word is unified, consistent and without confusion. Here's some references this person would find relating to what baptism involved:

Matthew 3:6 “Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.”

Matthew 3:16 “As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water.”

Mark 1:9-10 “Jesus. . . was baptized by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water. . .”

Acts 8:38-39 “Both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water . . .”

Romans 6:4-5 “We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death . . .”

Colossians 2:12 “Having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him . . .”

Only immersion involves a going down into the water, a coming up out of the water, and a burial and a resurrection. In the New Testament, people to be baptized were brought to the water. The water was not brought to them.

All the Greek dictionaries define baptize and related words as dipping, immersing, submerging. For example, one might consult Joseph Thayer's, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, 1963 reprint, pp. 93-94; Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, I, 1968, pp. 529-546; The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, I, 1975, pp. 143-154; and William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich's, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature, 1957, pp. 131-132.

The English word “baptism” is a transliteration, not a translation, of the Greek word. This means that the Greek words, *baptidzo*, *baptiszein*, *baptisma*, and *baptismos*, were simply given English spellings and inserted into the English Bibles as English words. English readers tend to interpret these words according to their theological backgrounds and not according to their original meanings in the Greek language and early church practice. Some English translations do, in fact, translate the words as “immersed, dipped, submerged.” Over the years, the reason that the transliteration “baptism” has been retained in our versions is that it allows denominations to interpret the words as they choose. In the English dictionaries baptism can be seen to have originally meant “dipping or immersing.” For example, Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary says the origin of baptize is “Afr. GK baptizein to dip, baptize, fr. bapto dipped, fr. baptein to dip; akin to ON kafa to dive.”

The antecedent of baptism is Jewish washings which were immersions. In New Testament times, the Jews constructed immersion pools (*mikwaoth*) for these religious washings.

The earliest church buildings and their ruins offer corroborating evidence supporting immersion as the oldest and original form of baptism. The earliest known baptistry is in the house church at Dura-Europos ca. 240. The pool is five feet by three feet and three

feet in depth. Over four hundred baptisteries dating from the third to the seventh centuries offer plenty of early evidence for immersion. The largest existing baptismal pool is in the baptistery at St. John Lateran in Rome. The circular pool is twenty-eight feet in diameter.

Immersion has never been questioned as legitimate Christian baptism. Sprinkling and pouring were under suspicion beginning with their first practices for the sick in the third century. Those first receiving pouring for baptism on their sick beds, as a matter of convenience, were later required to be immersed when they recovered and wanted to be church leaders. It was not until A. D. 1215, over eleven hundred years after apostolic Christianity, that the Council of Trent accepted sprinkling equal to immersion in the Catholic church. Three hundred years later, the Protestant reformers, based on their past experiences, brought sprinkling and pouring into their newly-formed Protestant churches.

The Churches of Christ stand on the undivided ground of New Testament Christianity. We want to do Bible things in Bible ways. We want the same baptism Jesus experienced and authorized, the baptism the apostles received and practiced, and the baptism that all the early Christians received.

We encourage everyone to do just what the Bible says, nothing more, nothing less. In the New Testament, there are no discussions on the form of baptism. The biblical record consistently supports immersion.

On the basis of biblical teachings and practices, and because of God's grace in Jesus Christ and your own personal faith and repentance, we encourage you to be immersed in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38). This is the way that we know is accepted with God and cannot be mistaken. We will be pleased to discuss these matters with you at any time and to arrange for your baptism if you so desire.

Why Do We Teach That Every Believer Should Be Baptized?

Because Jesus said that we fully become his disciples by being baptized. “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. . . “ (Matthew 28:19).

Because Jesus said that belief in the gospel expressed in baptism is involved in our salvation from sin. “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:16).

Because Jesus said that we must be born again, i.e., experience a birth of water and Spirit. The Holy Spirit works when we are baptized. The only way that water is connected with the Christian faith is in baptism. “No one can see the kingdom of God

unless he is born again. . . . No one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit” (John 3:3, 5).

Because Jesus' apostles commanded believers to repent of sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and God promised forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

Because Jesus' apostles commanded baptism in the name of the Lord. “Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water?So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 10:47-48).

Because Jesus' apostles explained that in believers' baptism we are united with Jesus in the benefits of his death and resurrection. “Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life” (Romans 6:3-4).

Because Jesus' apostles declared that God clothes believers with Christ when they are baptized. “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” (Galatians 3:26, 27).

Because God washes away the sins of penitent believers when they are baptized. “And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name” (Acts 22:16).

Because apostolic men wrote that when penitent believers are baptized it is a culminating step in their accepting the message of Jesus. “At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God, he and his whole family” (Acts 16:33-34).

Because when penitent believers knew that they should be baptized, they always were baptized the same day, immediately and without delay (Acts 2:42). After understanding the gospel, some were baptized at midnight (Acts 16:25, 33) and another at the first water he saw (Acts 8:36-37).

We encourage you to do exactly what your Bible says, nothing more, nothing less.

Why Do We Celebrate

Communion Every Sunday and Only on Sunday?

Biblical /Doctrinal Reasons

On the eve of the cross at the Last Supper, Jesus took bread and fruit of the vine and commanded his disciples to partake of them in remembrance of him (I Corinthians 11:24-25). The disciples partook of this communion when they came together (11: 17, 18, 20, 33, 34). They were to remember Jesus whenever they did this (11:26). The time of these meetings together (and thus the time of the “whenever” of 11:26) is not named in this chapter but it evidently referred to the time of their weekly contribution for the poor in chapter 16, verse 2: “On the first day of every week.” Why would a contribution be tied to the first day of every week (Sunday)? The Greek word *kata* translated “every” is in all the Greek texts of this Scripture. Why is this day mentioned and not some other?

The first day of the week had no special significance to Jews, Greeks, or Romans. The only reason why Paul would specify this day is because the believers were already coming together on this day and/or the day had special significance to Christians. That significance is seen in the four gospels when the texts emphasize Jesus is resurrected on the first day of the week (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1-2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1). In contrast to the weekly Sabbath (Saturday) of the Old Testament, Jesus claims the first day of the week as the day of the new creation, even as the first day of the week was the first day of the old creation (Genesis 1:5). Specifically, the first day of the week is tied to the Lord's Supper in the account of the congregation at Troas when the apostle Paul met with them on the first day of the week when they came together “to break bread.” The term “breaking bread” is used both for an ordinary meal (as in Acts 27:35) and the specially signified communal meal (as in Acts 20:7). While the Jerusalem church met daily in their homes and fellowshiped in breaking bread there for the purpose of satisfying hunger (Acts 2:46), the only reference to the time of the breaking of bread for the communion in the assembly is the first day of the week.

In New Testament times, Pentecost was always celebrated fifty days after Passover Sabbath (Leviticus 23:15-16). This means that in Acts 2, the coming of the Holy Spirit, the first preaching of the gospel, the baptism of three thousand converts, and the beginnings of Christian worship were on the first day of the week. Some sixty years later, by the time of the writing of Revelation, “the Lord's day” was another name for the first day of the week (Rev. 1:10). This possessive adjective (Lord's) only occurs two times in Scripture, once in the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 11:20), and again here in the Lord's day. The word designates something that belongs uniquely to the Lord. Both the Lord's Supper and the Lord's day belong uniquely to the Lord, and they belong together: “No Lord's day without the Lord's supper, and no Lord's supper without the Lord's day.” Since every organization or association must have meetings if it is to exist, the church in the New Testament, too, had regular meetings that believers were not to forsake (Heb. 10:25). All the biblical evidence points to the first day of the week as the day of Christian assembly.

Historical Reasons

The unanimous record of the second century church is that the believers met weekly on the first day of the week to worship and partake of communion. This is confirmed by all the church fathers like Ignatius, Justin Martyr, the Epistle of Barnabas, The Didache (The

Teaching of the Twelve Apostles), and Papias who all wrote from A. D. 110 to 150. The churches did not meet normally on the Sabbath (Saturday) or any other day. It was not until approximately one hundred fifty years after the death of the last apostle that Cyprian of Carthage (ca. 200-258) began to advocate daily communion.

Summary

We want to be biblical in every aspect of our lives. We want to teach and practice only what the early Christians of the first century taught and practiced. Weekly communion is biblical, doctrinal, and historical. The Churches of Christ stand on the solid, non-divisive ground of New Testament Christianity when we teach and practice weekly communion on Sundays.

How May I Become a Member at West University?

If you have confessed faith in Jesus Christ and been immersed in his name in order to obey God, you have received forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and you are already added by God to his church (Acts 2:38, 42, 47). We welcome you to identify with our congregation as a member. Simply come to the front during the invitation time at any of our services or notify one of our elders, minister, staff, or deacons. We will introduce you to the congregation at a Sunday worship assembly and recognize you as one of us in the body of Christ.

If you have not yet surrendered to Christ in faith, repentance, and baptism, then we encourage you to let us assist you in doing so as soon as possible. When you are baptized, God adds you to his universal church, and we gladly welcome you here.

As a guest or member, you are always welcome to participate in the services and activities of the West University church.

How May I Become a Christian?

Receiving Jesus Christ as your Savior and confessing Him as the Lord of your life are the most important acts you or any one else will ever do.

First, the bad news. "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8). Sin separates us from God. "Your sins have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you" (Isaiah 59:2). "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

Now, the good news. God loves you. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

God did for you what you could never do for yourself. "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God - not because of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8, 9).

God sent Jesus to save you from your sins by his death and resurrection. "God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). "He died for our sins and rose again to make us right with God" (Romans 4:25).

You can accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior by believing in him, repenting of your sins, and being baptized in his name. "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9, 10). "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).