

# Why We Do What We Do?

## 1 Corinthians 14:40

In 1 Corinthians, the Apostle Paul spends the better part of 15 chapters instructing the Church at Corinth how to do church - Paul answers the questions: **WHAT are the components of a healthy church?** - And more importantly, **WHY they are important?**

In the discussion, Paul addresses their need to deal with sinful brother - Why and How they need to APPLY CHURCH DISCIPLINE - He will encourage their need to STRIVE FOR UNITY - He'll talk about HOW they are to deal with LEGAL DISPUTES among individuals in the church!

He gives them instruction on marriage and on being single, and the importance of both - He deals with arguments over eating certain foods - He even talks with them about the dangers of taking Communion in a way that OFFENDS GOD.

HE THEN STEPS into the deep waters of THE ROLES of men and women in the church - From there He dives into the DEEPER WATERS of Spiritual Gifts - and their place in the PUBLIC Worship service.

And in verse 40 of Chapter 14, the wise Apostle wraps up this thoughts with this important instruction, **“Let all things be done decently and in order!”**

Here Paul is laying down an IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE for church life: **Every church needs to conduct itself in a way that is decent (or appropriate) and in a way that maintains order (under control & avoids chaos).**

Church life can have many DIFFERENT STYLES - but whatever the style, it needs to be morally and Biblically correct - Churches will be very different in their PERSONALITY, but in all things there needs to be done with order and purpose.

It is imperative that all pastors and church leaders plan the public worship services in a way that PLEASES GOD AND ACCOMPLISHES HIS PURPOSES!

With this thought in mind, I want to spend our time together this morning ANSWERING THE QUESTION: **“Why We Do What We Do”** here at CC - If you are new to CCSM, or if you have been attending for 30 years, you see each week HOW WE DO THINGS - but you may have no idea WHY we do things the way we do them.

In conjunction with our Vision Sunday last week, Pastor Sandy thought it would be helpful if we took a week and talked about why we do church the way we do it.

This morning I am going to TRY & ANSWER SEVERAL QUESTIONS you might have - and I hope to give to you the reasons behind our decisions - Trust me, there is PURPOSE & THOUGHT behind how we do JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING when gather together for worship and Bible study.

Let's start with a question we have been asked many times: **Why don't we take up an offering here at CCSM as part of our morning worship?**

If you have been here for at least one Sunday, you realize we DON'T PASS THE PLATE - In the 42 and 1/2 years of our existence, we have only passed the plate one time TO MY KNOWLEDGE - It was for a special event on a Wednesday night - it was taken when we had the African's Children's Choir singing.

The reason we TOOK UP AN OFFERING that night was because it was part of their agreement in coming here - I don't think there was a correlation, but that was OUR LAST SERVICE before the pandemic shut everything down! - You are going to be hard pressed to get us to PASS THE PLATE again!!!

Seriously, there are reasons why we don't take up an offering by passing a plate during our worship services - First, through the years, the church has gotten a TERRIBLE REPUTATION of only wanting people's money!

GREEDY CHURCH LEADERS have always been present in the church - men and woman who have shared the Gospel FOR SELFISH GAIN - They were around IN PAUL'S DAY and unfortunately they are still around today!

At CC, we never want you TO FEEL PRESSURED to give a dime to our church - We only want people to give as a response to God's GRACE & GOODNESS - We want your tithes and offerings to be given from a heart of thanksgiving!

Yes, we believe strongly that a Christian should GIVE BACK to God - Your tithes should be given to your church to support the work of God here.

Yes, we believe that, if God does not have your wallet, He probably doesn't have your heart - but we also believe that your giving should NOT BE FORCED OR COERCED.

We place those boxes back there in the corners to allow you to PRIVATELY & DISCREETLY worship God through your giving - Jesus said in Matthew 6, that when it comes to our giving, **"the right hand should not let the left hand know what it's doing!"**

Obviously, that is impossible - Jesus is SPEAKING IN HYPERBOLAE to make point that our giving should be A PRIVATE THING between us and God!

God knows your heart to give - No one else needs to know - and by passing a plate we are forcing you to be public - we don't want to promote SHOWY SACRIFICES - Our goal is to AVOID COERCION and to avoid PUBLIC PRAISE - We don't want to steal your reward!

Lastly, this is a good practice for the Pastors - Why should we teach you the importance of TRUSTING GOD with you finances, if we are not going to DO THE SAME! - We don't need to manipulate you into giving - We need to trust the Lord just like WE ARE TEACHING you to do!

By the way, in our 42 years of doing things this way, we have never missed paying a bill on time - And as of today we DON'T HAVE ANY DEBT - And for that, we PRAISE THE LORD!

Second, let dive right in and deal with a TOUCHY SUBJECT that continues to be a point of contention with some folks - **Why we don't allow babies and preschool children in the Sanctuary?** - In answering

this question, I want to deal with the larger question of why we do OUR CHILDREN'S MINISTRY during our adult service?

Pastor Sandy and I both grew up in churches where young children sat through the morning worship service - You went to Sunday School from 9:45 - 10:45, then you went to BIG CHURCH from 11:00 - 12:00! - And for a young boy THIS WAS TORTURE!

A grew up HATING TO GO to church - Not only did I have to put on UNCOMFORTABLE CLOTHES that I wore nowhere else, we had to sit through a service TOTALLY GEARED to adults - for a young boy, it was EXCRUCIATING! - TOTAL BORDEM!

Many Sunday mornings ended with a SPANKING for me and my brother - Or we spent the morning being distracted by playing games like CONNECT THE DOTS and making squares!

One particular Sunday, I got in big trouble - That Sunday the Deacon's Choir had sung a song - After the song, our pastor got up and said, **"That was so good, I think we should just close the service and go home!"**

To which I responded louder than I planned, **"I'll say Amen to that!"** - Let's just say IF LOOKS COULD KILL, my dad would have ended my life in that moment!

We NEVER EVER want your child to be bored in coming to church - NO, we don't want a Children's Ministry that just ENTERTAIN THEM either - Our goal is to teach them the TRUTHS OF SCRIPTURE on a level where they can understand and enjoy learning - Yes, we want to make church about learning - but learning on THEIR LEVEL.

We have structured our nursery and our Children's ministry in a way that is fun, effective and hopefully enjoyable to your children - We want your children to growing up WANTING to attend church - Not hating it - or dreading it!

We also want our Adult service to be one that is FREE OF DISTRACTION - if you bring a baby or a toddler or even a kindergarten student into this service, chances are we will all know it - Not because we hate children, but because YOU HAVE BROUGHT A YOUNG CHILD into an environment that was not designed for them!

Everything about this service is DESIGNED FOR ADULTS!

We want you to be able to focus on what is being taught - We don't want you DISTRACTED BY A CUTE BABY who is cooing on the row in front of you - and we definitely don't want you distracted by a RAMBUNCTIOUS LITTLE TODLER who can't sit still - like me when I was that age!!!!

And most importantly, we don't want you to teach your children to come to church and SLEEP THRU THE SERVICE - or worse to teach them NOT TO PAY ATTENTION - We don't want young children sitting in here playing games on Mom's cell phone to keep them distracted while God's Word is being taught!

At CC, our goal is to have a service for adults, where they can grow - and a service for children, on their level - where they can have fun, and learn and grow!

This brings us to question #3 - **Why don't we have Adult Sunday School at CCSM?** - For many, many years most churches used the Sunday morning worship service as its primary opportunity FOR EVANGELISM - a time to PREACH THE GOSPEL.

In the church I grew up, most every Sunday the message given by OUR PASTOR was a call to REPENTANCE & TO RECEIVE CHRIST - this meant the whole morning message was aimed at the one or two UNSAVED PEOPLE in the audience that day.

The other 99% of folks there who were already saved, listened patiently while the pastor said little that would help them grow as believers - Thus, Adult SS became the place for weekly Bible teaching.

At CC, WE TEACH the Bible - verse by verse, often chapter by chapter - Unlike many lay SS teachers, who could at best spend a couple of hours preparing the message, OUR PASTOR spends hours in study and prayer for the message he brings!

Our GOAL is to make you the BEST FED sheep in God's flock - We want you to walk out those doors each Sunday morning MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE of your Bible - We want you to know all that it teaches - cover to cover - in its context.

Some weeks are very evangelical because THE TEXT IS EVANGELICAL! - other Sundays are about CHURCH LIFE - or your PERSONAL WALK with God - or even about END TIMES - When we just teach through the Scripture, we get the BIBLICAL BALANCE of the message the Bible presents - You get it AS GOD GAVE IT!

The other purpose that Adult SS serves in most churches is that it provides SMALL GROUP opportunities - TIME to get to know others in your church - We still want to provide this for the families of our church!

We do this through things like the Ladies Bible Study - the Thursday night Men's Discipleship groups - Ministries like Time Out, our study geared to young married adults with children.

There is also THE AFTER, our small group for twenty-somethings - Wednesday nights are all about our HS & MS groups - Free Indeed is a small group built around WINNING THE BATTLE against addiction - there's the OFC, a gather of retired men on Wednesday mornings.

Next month, we are starting up a group for OLDER SINGLES - In addition to these, we plan FELLOWSHIP TIMES that are geared to help you meet and grow with others.

Getting to know other believers here at CC is very important - I wish every person would make it a point to get involved in a small group study - It is vital to your growth as a Christian! - We just choose to have these groups at a time other than Sunday mornings.

That brings us to our next Question: **Why do we teach the Bible verse by verse, chapter by chapter through the Bible?**

In some ways I have just answered this question - **We want to let God set the agenda for what is important. Not the pastor** - We are all human - Do you think Pastor Sandy would teach some the DIFFICULT & CONTROVERSIAL PASSAGES in the Bible if he didn't have to????

OK - Yes, Pastor Sandy probably would! - But only because he knows you need the WHOLE COUNSEL of God's Word - When you just TEACH

THROUGH the Bible, you can't skip the passages and topics you don't want to deal with - it's there - You have to teach it!

For the first 22 years of my life, I attended church every Sunday - In addition, I was there most Sunday nights and every Wednesday night - This was the normal church experience back in the 1960 & 70's.

In that time, I learned a lot of Bible stories - But, I never once was taught verse by verse through a Book of the Bible - I knew a lot about the Bible - but I really didn't know what my Bible said in its PROPER CONTEXT - I couldn't tell you what the Book of Ephesians was about, though I could quote some of its verses.

Since attending CCSM for the past 42 years, I have studied through the Bible verse by verse 4 times - the very first service Donna and I attended, Pastor Sandy was teaching in 1 Corinthians 7 & 8 - It is amazing I can remember that - but I can, because it was so revolutionary for me to sit and listen to the Bible taught LINE UPON LINE, in its context.

Since Covid began, we moved our Thru the Bible study to Sunday morning - If you have been with us from that point, you have gone thru the WHOLE NEW TESTAMENT verse by verse, chapter by chapter - and that has only been about 3 years!

Two weeks ago, if you were with us, we covered the first 3 chapters of 1 Thessalonians - Some have asked, why go so fast? - Right now, Pastor Sandy feels it is important for you to learn the Scriptures - going at this pace helps you understand the context - You don't get lost in the minutia!

At this pace, you are studying the letters of Paul in a way where you understand the flow of the writing - the BIG IDEAS of Paul get strung together to the point where you begin to see the way he is thinking - You are beginning to SEE HOW GOD THINKS!

So often we study the Bible at a SNAIL'S PACE - **We dig so deep and so slowly, that we miss how God's thoughts and ideas flow together** - Yes, there are other ways to teach the Bible - And there are times when we slow down and dig deep.

But, as a CC, we always want to teach the Bible just as it is written - and for this to be accomplished, we need to go verse by verse - and at a pace where we understand the flow and context!

Next, let's tackle the question, **"Why don't we have a formal membership role at CCSM?"**

Many people confuse church membership with being a Christian - they are not necessarily synonymous - You can be a member of any church and have never been BORN AGAIN into the Body of Christ!

I KNOW LOTS OF FOLKS WHO THINK that because they went forward and joined a church when they were 10 year old, they are secure for Heaven - Others think that because they were baptized as an infant and went through Confirmation Classes, that they are saved!

In Matthew 7:21, Jesus said, **"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."**

My salvation is not tied to church membership - NO, it is tied to the Lordship of Jesus in my life - Am I daily doing the will of My Heavenly Father? - That is the evidence of my salvation - Not that my name is on a church role somewhere!

Here is what we believe about church membership - You are a member of CCSM if **(1) you have given your life to Christ** - You have been born again and Jesus is now the Lord (the ruler) of your life.

**(2) If you are active part of our church** - You come - You get involved - you're trying to take part in the LIFE & MINISTRY of the church - then you are a member!

You don't have to sign up to be a member - you simple have to become a part of the life of the church - You have to be here! - You have to support the work of Jesus here - Isn't this real membership???

Who cares if you name is on a list somewhere if you NEVER ATTEND? - Membership at CC is organic! - You love Jesus? - You come and join the life of the church? - then you are a member!

Sure, we have a record of those who financially support CCSM - we have to do that for a number of different reasons - but even just financially supporting CC doesn't make you a member! - Being a member means being a part!

Just so that you know - Our by-laws do say this: **"The membership of this church shall be open to any believing and confessing Christian, who acknowledges and accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who is willing to subscribe to the polices of this church, and who desires to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Persons desiring membership shall apply by contacting a pastor or elder and receiving confirmation of membership."**

And what confirmation are we going to give you? - Most likely a BIG HUG, followed by the words: **Welcome to the fellowship!**

You want to be a member of CCSM - Embrace Jesus as your Savior and get involved at this church - If you do those two things, You're a member!

The next question I want to answer is, **Why do we do 2 services on Sunday mornings?**

Right after Covid, we could have gotten away with one service strictly from the standpoint of space and seats - Starting about half way through LAST YEAR, it would be getting a little tight - and post Covid, people don't like to sit all that close to each other!

But, there are a few different reasons why we like to offer two services - First, **it give people options** - Our society no longer protects Sunday mornings - Today, Sunday mornings have been invaded by YOUTH SPORTS - by JOBS that are now 24 - 7 - by commitments at School - and even by family obligations.

We have a 9:15 service in hopes that those families who have baseball, OR soccer, OR basketball games today, can first attend a WORSHIP SERVICE

- There are OTHERS WHO have to go to work today - and if 11:15 were their only option, they would not be able to attend.

Others are late risers - they are hoping they can get to church by 11:15 - but they would never make it if they have to be here by 9:15 or even 10:00!

Two services give you options - but there is another reason - **Two services gives us room to grow** - it changes our morning seating capacity from about 400 to 800 - in essence, we can have 2 congregations supporting one facility!

There is wisdom in this approach - Our children's ministry gets more spread out - this allows us to give MORE PERSONAL ATTENTION to every single child - NO CHILD gets lost in the crowd - someone knows their name - and for a child, this is so important!

Is there a downside to two services? - SURE - it is harder for people to know when you are missing - The first assumption most people will have is that you are at the other service - when in reality, you have been missing and they don't realize it.

This is why the pastors, who are here both services, try to pay attention TO WHEN you are not here - and I wish we were better at this - sometimes you are out for some reason, and if you don't communicate with us, it unfortunately takes a while for us to miss you.

But, two services give you options - and it gives our church room to grow! - and for those reasons, we are happy to be able to offer both.

Let me quickly cover 2 more questions you might have: First, **Why do we have female deacons (deaconesses)?**

At CCSM, our church is led by a group of Pastors and Elders - These are men that God has raised up to LEAD & OVERSEE the direction of our Church - They are in positions of AUTHORITY - their role is FOLLOW JESUS AND TO GUIDE our church.

In our governing structure our DEACONS & DEACONESSES are what we call **designated doers** - They are a group of BOTH men & women

selected by the church to help take care of the physical needs of the church and ITS PEOPLE.

They help us take care of our facility and the lawn - they help us with the hard work of setting up, taring down, and cleaning up for the many events we do each year - They are a group of hard workers that serve JESUS BY SERVING HIS CHURCH - and we have a great group - Many of them were here yesterday LEADING OUR WORKDAY!

In the NT, there were both men and women who were identified in this IMPORTANT ROLE - In **Romans 16:1**, we read, **“I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea,”** - that word translated “servant” is the Greek word for “Deacon”.

In the NT Pastor and Elders are always identified and qualified as Men - but the role of the Deacon is given to both men and women - The ELDER is a role of authority - the DEACON is a role of service.

Our Deaconesses do a great job - they handle many situations and needs that are better handled by a woman - especially situation the arise from the needs of women in the fellowship.

These ladies can help with COUNSELING AND DISCIPLING a woman - this is really true if it is an ongoing need that might put a pastor in an UNHEALTHY SITUATION with a woman.

The deaconesses serve a vital role in the Church of Jesus Christ - I am so thankful for the ladies He has raised up to this position in our fellowship!

Our last question this morning is, **“Why we serve juice instead of wine during Communion?”**

There is no question that Jesus drank wine - and there is no question that He served wine at the Passover meal from which we get the Ordinance we now call communion.

In Old and NT times, HEALTHY, PURE DRINKING WATER was not readily available - thus, wine was a safe, healthy option - Yet, over and over the Bible warns God’s people of the dangers of wine and other types of alcohol.

Verses like, **Pro 20:1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.**

In Proverbs 31, the wise mother gives this advice to her son, the king - **4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes intoxicating drink; 5 Lest they drink and forget the law, and pervert the justice of all the afflicted.**

Both of these verse were warnings to the people, especially the leaders, of the dangers of alcohol - In our country Alcohol is A SNAKE that has bitten many, many people - Its VENOM HAS WRECKED countless lives - and a whole lot of you are right here this morning!

God has saved you - God has FREED YOU from the bondage of strong drink - And that is why we are so careful here at CC - The last thing we want to be is a CAUSE FOR ANYONE to backslide into the addiction of alcohol.

The point of the communion cup is NOT WHAT IS INSIDE - it is what the CUP REPRESENTS - it is the cup, whether filled with wine or welch's grape juice, that reminds us of the blood Jesus shed for us!

The experience is not going to be MORE SPIRITUAL by the taste of wine - **The beauty of Communion is the spiritual connection we make to Jesus as our minds are focused on the sacrifice he made for us on the Cross.**

If we can protect a brother or a sister by serving Grape Juice, then that is exactly what we are going to do!

So, there you have some explanations of why we do what we do each week - You may or may not agree with all of them, but at least now you know our reasons!

In any decision we make from a leadership standpoint, please know that our heart is to do what is best for every person that walks through those doors - We know we are not the place for everyone - but we hope to be a church where your family can grow and prosper in your walk with God -

and a place where you can worship of God in an atmosphere that is  
DECENT & IN ORDER.

Let's Pray!