

## Communion Meditation – Table Manners

Acts 20.7-12

“First Day of the Week”

Mar 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### How Often Do Churches Serve Communion?

- Beliefs and Practices Vary Widely
  - Daily / Weekly / Monthly / Every Other Month
  - Quarterly / Semi-Annually / Annually / Rarely or Never
- Some are by choice / Others are by necessity
- Many claim the Bible is silent / unclear on frequency
- How we view a specific biblical phrase is key to beliefs/practices

### Communion Since the Early Church

- Most accept early church practiced frequent communion
  - References in 2<sup>nd</sup> century church writings
  - One reference to annual communion in 4<sup>th</sup> century writing
- As Roman Catholic practices took root fear did also
  - By 13<sup>th</sup> century lay people didn't want to take communion / fearful
  - Grace was supposedly received by witnessing “*elevation of the host*”
- Reformers (Luther, Zwingli, Calvin) reformed practice
  - Luther and Calvin (at least once per week) ~ Zwingli (4 per year)

### Key Texts on Communion

- Christ at Passover ~ Mt 26.26-29, Lk 22.19-20, **Read Mk 14.22-25**
- Lord's Supper ~ **Read 1 Cor 11.17-20** ~ “Now in giving .. Lord's Supper.”
  - **v18** ~ “when you come together as a church”
- At the start I referred to a key biblical phrase ~ “**breaking bread**”
- Breaking of Bread ~ **Read Lk 24.28-31** ~ “Then they drew .. from their sight.”
  - This appeared to be a simple meal
- Breaking of Bread ~ **Read Acts 2.41-42, 46** ~ “Then those .. of heart”
  - But was the breaking of bread at this point a simple meal?
- **Acts 20.7** ~ “Now on the first .. together to break bread”

**The Bible does not appear to be silent on the matter of frequency**

**Jesus had said, “As often as you eat and drink”**

**Paul wrote, “when you come together as a church”**

**At Troas Paul participated in “first day of the week” communion**