

# Why We Do It - Word & Testimony

As Christians we say things and even do things sometimes without really reflecting on WHY we say or do them. Many of you know Christianese.....those Christian words that don't make sense to someone who is new to the faith or maybe they have even been around for a while but it's never been explained and they don't want to feel "stupid" and ask. (please ask!)

Many of you know what we do in a Sunday service. Most weeks you probably can even anticipate what will happen next, but do you ever reflect on WHY we do it?

We have to be very careful to remember why we do the things we do. If you don't know why you do something then how can you do it with your whole heart, really invested, genuinely involved. As you have heard me say over and over, we are here, in this church building, to glorify Jesus. To make HIM known, His goodness, His love, His mercy and grace, His miracles....because this is HIS church!

So today I'll be starting the series "Why We Do It" where each week I'll focus on something that we do in church. We'll look at the biblical basis for it, why and how we do it, and how it glorifies Jesus! First up.....Word & Testimony

Turn to Revelation 12:11

## **Revelation 12:11 (NKJV)**

11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

I know you've heard this verse, it's a powerful verse and I reference it often. We are talking about testimony today but I chose this verse to focus on because of what precedes the testimony.

The previous verses talk about satan and how he is our accuser..... he is the one who goes before God and tells on us..... he tries to get us in trouble.

Then in v11, speaking of the saints who apparently had been killed for their faith, it says "they overcame him (satan, the accuser) by the blood of the lamb". This is the key to our testimony....the blood of the lamb.

Jesus died on the cross so that we could be forgiven of our sin that separates us from God. Jesus lived a sinless life able to be the perfect spotless lamb to be sacrificed for all of mankind.

Remember in the OT, the people sacrificed animals for the forgiveness of sin.....

**Hebrews 9:22 (NLT)**

22 In fact, according to the law of Moses, nearly everything was purified with blood. For without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness.

The blood is important....we to remember the cross, a torture device, as a symbol of what Jesus did for us, but it's the blood of Christ that brought freedom!

**Hebrews 9:14 (NLT)**

14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

OK, here we go..... They overcame by the blood of the lamb, by the blood we can receive forgiveness of sin, and also the cleansing of the conscience, which brings us to....

**2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)**

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

Rebirth! (we are getting to the testimony, I promise....) Jesus died for you, by His blood you may be forgiven, no guilt or shame of the past, and you are made NEW. You are not who you were, that old sinner passed away and a new blood washed saint was born! Halleluiah!

Now the testimony...."they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony"

Something I do want to point out here is that you can read this verse and it seems like the saints really did a lot to overcome satan....don't let that word "they" fool you....the overcoming power is in the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony....not in their actions, I'll explain

Testimony - Greek word martyria (mär-tü-rē'-ä)

- what one testifies as before a judge
- in the NT you often see "witness" or "record" used for martyria (testimony)
- basically your testimony is your STORY....the TRUE story...

satan, remember, is the accuser....like the prosecutor in a court of law. You are the defendant, accused of a crime. Jesus is your defense attorney, He is says you are not guilty. But even more, He is the reason you are not guilty, He already paid your fines, He already served your time, you have been pardoned, set free from the past....

Your testimony is that redemptive story of your life.....as it is delivered it includes what you may have done, the crimes you committed, the sins of the past, (what the accuser said), but then it quickly shifts to the redemption and the rebirth....change! And the star of the story is Jesus, the one who saved you!

See you wouldn't have a testimony if not for the blood of the Lamb....you'd still be dead in sin, guilty as charged, sentenced to death.....but now you have been reclaimed as a son or daughter of God, given new life in Christ!

**1 John 3:8 (NLT)**

8 But when people keep on sinning, it shows that they belong to the devil, who has been sinning since the beginning. But the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil.

Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil.....

**John 16:33 (NLT)**

33 I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world.”

Jesus has overcome the world.....

**1 John 4:4 (NIV)**

4 You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. Jesus your defender is greater than satan your accuser!

This is why testimony is so important! You are testifying to what Jesus has done in your life! We see this established specifically in the book of Acts but really in all of the NT. They are constantly going around and witnessing, giving testimony of what Jesus did.

Testimony puts the focus on Jesus. Testimony brings Him glory, telling of all that HE has done.

Rev 12:11 specifically said the “word of their testimony”.....this means the statement of the testimony. It's not just the testimony that is powerful....it's the DECLARATION of the testimony.

You are declaring that by the blood of Christ, you are reborn, you are not who you were. You are declaring that “yes, I might have done those things in the past, but Jesus has freed me from my past and my past does not determine my future!”

Your testimony, your story tells of Him!

Your story gives hope to others who find themselves in the same situation that Jesus has brought you out of....

Your story must be told!

Today you are going to have an opportunity to do that.....

Remember a testimony tells of what you have done or what you were but then it quickly shifts to what Jesus has done in your life and who you are NOW!

A testimony is NOT what sins you are still struggling with, that's called confession.....

If you'd like to give a testimony today....come sit on the front row.

- We'll give 5 minutes per person.
- When there is one minute left, I'm going to hold up a one, be looking for that, I don't want to have to cut you off. If you haven't gotten to Jesus by then, do it quickly!

This might seem unspiritual, but God is a God of order and some of you are ramblers....I can be a rambler.....I understand! Keep it short and sweet. It's the WORD of your testimony...the statement that it makes, not the words that you use....you don't get more points for more words.

Obviously we don't have time for everyone to share but if you feel a prompting to share your story, we want to hear it. You will know if God is prompting you to share or not.