

The Sacrament of the Holy Communion (2)

Listed Scriptures

Ex 12:1-28; Mt 26:26-30; Mk 14:22-26; Lk 22:14-23; Lk 22:39-24:12; Jn 6:41-59; 1 Cor 5:6-8; 1 Cor 10:17-34

Lesson Aim

- 1) To learn about the significance of the Holy Communion as a sacrament
- 2) To review the requirements for holding a Holy Communion

Memory Verse

"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me and I in Him." (Jn 6:56)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

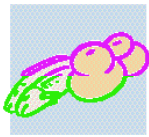
1 Corinthians 8-12

Note to teachers: This quarter's lessons do not contain the Bible Background section since they pertain more to the history of our church.

W A R M U P



What are the elements in a Holy Communion? Why is it so important? How can eating a piece of bread and tasting a sample of juice have anything to do with our salvation? Even though many of us have participated in numerous Holy Communion, we may not necessarily be familiar with all the details or teachings behind the sacrament. We hope that this lesson will give us a more complete picture of the Holy Communion and its spiritual significance.



The Sacrament of the Holy Communion

A. The Origin of the Holy Communion

- a. Established by the Lord Jesus Christ (Mt 26:26-28)
Before the Lord Jesus was crucified, He sat down and ate the Passover dinner with His disciples. During this "last supper," Jesus Christ blessed the bread and gave it to His disciples as His body. Then, He took the cup, gave thanks and gave it as His blood, or the "blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (v. 28).
- b. Commandment of the Lord Jesus (Lk 22:19)
At the Last Supper, Jesus Christ also commanded the disciples to remember Him through future communions. He told them, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."
- c. Example of Jesus Christ's disciples (1 Cor 11:17-26)
After Jesus' death, the apostles continued to observe and teach the Lord's Supper. From Paul's letter to the Corinthians, we can see how important these communions were and how carefully they were held in the apostolic churches.

B. Purposes of the Holy Communion

- a. To remember the death of Christ
The Old Testament Passover was created in order to remind the Israelites of God's grace and guidance out of Egypt (Ex 12:21-27). Similarly, the Holy Communion in the New Testament reminds us of God's grace and salvation. It helps us remember the suffering and death Jesus Christ endured for our sake. Paul describes, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes" (1 Cor 11:26).
- b. To take part with Christ
Even before the Last Supper, Jesus Christ predicted His death and claimed, "Most assuredly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and

drink His blood, you have no life in you" (Jn 6:53). Today, we must eat and drink the bread and juice that stand for His flesh and blood in order to take part in Christ (Mk 22:25).

C. Materials Used in the Holy Communion

- a. Unleavened Bread
Leaven, or yeast, is a fungus that causes dough to ferment and rise before being baked into bread. Unleavened bread first appeared in the Bible right before God led the Israelites out of Egypt. Predicting the chaos of the exodus, God commanded His people to eat unleavened bread in order to remember His salvation (Ex 12:17). Leaven came to represent sin, and eating unleavened bread was a sign of being separate and chosen. Consequently, whoever ate leaven during the seven days of the Passover was "cut off from the congregation of Israel" (Ex 12:19). Truly enough, the Israelites left Egypt in such a hurry that they "took their dough before it was leavened, having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders" (Ex 12:34). Following the Passover custom, our communion bread today is unleavened bread, made of flour and water. Because it stands for the pure and holy body of Christ, no other flavoring is added. Also, only one communion bread may be used because there is only one body of Christ. Just as Paul says, "For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread" (1 Cor 10:17).
- b. Grape Juice
During the Last Supper, Jesus Christ used the fruit of the vine to represent His blood (Mt 26:29). Following His example, we use grape juice, or the fruit of the vine, as our communion drink. We do not use wine, since it is fermented by yeast, and yeast represents sin in both the Old and the New Testament (1 Cor 5:6-8).

D. Holding the Holy Communion

- a. Begin in the name of Jesus Christ
The Bible records, "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Col 3:17). Jesus Christ also promises that "for where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (Mt 18:20). Therefore, we begin the Holy Communion in the name of Jesus Christ.

- b. Remember the death of Christ.
Since one of the purposes of the Holy Communion is to “proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes” (1 Cor 11:26), it should have the solemnity of a funeral. As we repeat the Last Supper, we should remember the grief, suffering and death Christ endured for our sake. We should remember His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane; His pain as He was mocked and whipped by the soldiers; and the intense physical and spiritual suffering as He hung on the cross, ready to bear the consequences of our sin.
- c. Give thanks and consume the bread and juice
Imitating the Lord Jesus’ example, we first give thanks and eat the bread before giving thanks and drinking the cup (Mt 26:26-27). We also thank the Lord for exchanging His life for our salvation as we partake the bread and cup.

E. Communion Restrictions

- a. Baptism required
In the Old Testament, no foreigners could participate in the Passover meal (Ex 12:43). Likewise, today, those who are not baptized into Jesus Christ’s name cannot partake the Holy Communion. Because the body of Christ is holy, a person must receive a proper baptism to wash away his sins before joining in the communion meal.
- b. Repentance of sins
Before we partake the bread and the cup, we must first examine ourselves. We repent of our sins so that we do not become one who “eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body” (1 Cor 11:29-31). If we have committed a sin that leads to death, we must also refrain from partaking the Holy Communion (1 Jn 5:16-17).
- c. One location
During the original Passover meal, each family gathered together and stayed inside their house for the night (Ex 22:26). In the apostolic times, the believers gathered together when they shared the communion bread (1 Cor 10:16-17). Likewise, we should keep the Holy Communion in one location. If the location is at church, no bread or juice should be taken outside the church premises.
- d. No leftover bread and juice
Following Passover regulations, none of the communion meal should remain until the next day (Ex 12:10). Also, to show respect for Christ, we must be

solemn even when finishing the leftover bread and juice after the communion ceremony.

F. The Mystery of the Holy Communion

- a. More than just symbolism
Obviously, the communion bread and juice do not physically transform into the human flesh and blood of Christ. Otherwise, we would all be cannibals. Nevertheless, the bread and juice are more than just symbols of Christ’s body and blood. Jesus Christ said, “Most assuredly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you” (Jn 6:53). He also said, “My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed” (Jn 6:55). From this, we can see that partaking the communion bread and juice has a direct relationship with our salvation.
- b. A spiritual transformation
How does the Holy Communion work? What causes the bread and juice to turn into the body of Christ? Our church believes that a spiritual transformation takes place when we give thanks for the bread and juice. Jesus Christ said, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever, and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world” (1 Jn 6:63). He also said, “It is the Spirit who gives life... The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life” (1 Jn 6:63). Although the bread and juice are physically the same, they are spiritually changed into the body and blood of Christ because of God’s promise and power.

G. Determinations After the Holy Communion

- a. Determine to live for Christ
Jesus Christ “died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again” (2 Cor 5:15). So when we hold the Holy Communion to remember the Lord’s death, we should renew our determination to do everything “to the glory of God” (1 Cor 10:31).
- b. Determine to live a holy life
After partaking the unblemished body and blood of Christ, we should try to live holy lives. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we should aim to be like Christ and keep away from “the lusts of men” (1 Pe 4:1-2).

c. Determine to love one another

When we partake the Holy Communion, we share one bread and act as one body (1 Cor 10:16-17). Because we are all members of the same body, we should love and help one another (1 Cor 12:20-27). As the Bible tells us, “the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love” (Eph 4:16).

d. Prepare for the second coming

Jesus Christ stated, “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day” (Jn 6:54). Hence, the Holy Communion is a reminder for us to store up treasures in heaven and prepare for the second coming of Christ.

C H E C K F O R U N D E R S T A N D I N G



1

Why was the Passover established and how is it related to today's Holy Communion?

2

Some churches use wine instead of grape juice. Why can't we use wine if it's also a drink made from the fruit of the vine?

3

If you are very angry toward someone, should you partake of the Holy Communion? Why?

4

What attitude should we have when we are partaking the Holy Communion? What kinds of determinations can we make afterwards?

**Case Study- “Stop Beating Him”**

Communion.)

Ask a volunteer to read the case out loud. (The following testimony describes a newly-baptized brother's first experience of Holy

“I received the Holy Spirit during the last prayer of the Spiritual Convocation, after partaking Communion for the first time. During the whole Holy Communion tears had flowed down my cheeks. At the beginning, I tried to hide it, since grown men aren't supposed to cry. But toward the end I couldn't help it. I asked myself, “Did the Lord Jesus go through so much pain just for me? Was it I who caused the Lord Jesus so much suffering? Was I important enough for Him to be tortured, disgraced, and crucified?”

When we knelt down and prayed, I saw a vision. I saw the impression of two men. One of the men was beating the other. He was hitting him and kicking him down to the floor, but the other man never fought back. Every time the man was beaten, he fell down to the floor. Then, he would get back up just to be beaten down again. In my vision, I took a closer look at the man that was doing the hitting, and I realized that that person was me! It wasn't long before I realized that the other person was Jesus Christ.

I saw His eyes, and in them I saw His pain and suffering. I asked myself, “Am I beating the Lord Jesus? Am I just like the Roman soldiers who whipped, beat and mocked the Lord Jesus?” In my vision I pleaded, “Stop beating Him!” and “Why don't You just stay down? Stop getting up!” But I saw myself beating Him relentlessly. I kept pleading and pleading. Eventually, I just fell to my knees, closed my eyes, and wept bitterly. I knew it was I who hurt Him; I who caused Him pain. Every time I pushed Him away or disobeyed Him, it was like a punch or a kick to Him.

While I was weeping, I felt two arms around me, holding me. I was filled with warmth, as though I had finally found my home. During this, I suddenly felt my tongue begin to roll. Like a dam bursting open, I felt the love and power of the Holy Spirit flow and rush to every part of my body.

All Jesus Christ wanted to do was to show me my home, to show me a place

where I belonged. I understand now that it was through Lord Jesus' love and mercy that I was chosen. I know that I never want to leave His side again, and that I never want to do anything to hurt Him. I don't think I will ever be worthy of the love and mercy God has given me. But I do know that His love and mercy has no boundaries. In life or death, Jesus Christ will be my Lord and Shepherd."

Pass out sheets of blank paper. Using 5 minutes, let students brainstorm ways in which they have intentionally or unintentionally hurt Jesus Christ. Ask students to share some of the things they have written while the teacher writes them on the poster/board. Discuss some things they can do to stop hurting Jesus Christ. As a conclusion, ask each student to write a short paragraph on how they can make their lives more worthy to partake the Holy Communion.

R E F L E C T I O N & P R A Y E R



Hebrews 6:6 tells us that Christians who do not repent and continue to sin "crucify again for themselves the Son of God." This means that every time we let a dirty word slip, every time we deliberately sin, every time we do something we know is wrong, we cause our Lord Jesus to suffer all over again. Once was enough for our Lord and Savior. Let us try to make the determination to keep ourselves pure and holy in order to repay His love.

Lesson 12

The Doctrine of Footwashing

Listed Scriptures

Jn 13

Lesson Aim

- 1) To emphasize the importance of footwashing as a sacrament
- 2) To review the teachings behind the sacrament of footwashing

Memory Verse

"If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." (Jn 13:14)

Bible Reading For This Week (for students and teachers)

1 Corinthians 13-16

Note to teachers: This quarter's lessons do not contain the Bible Background section since they pertain more to the history of our church.

W A R M U P



If footwashing is so important, why is it recorded in only one of the four gospels? Why does our church place such great emphasis on footwashing when other denominations merely see it as a symbolic act?