

*The
Lord's
Supper*

A Teaching Outline

*Sharing In The
Shed Blood and
Broken Body
Of Jesus Christ*

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Lord's Supper

Acts 2:42

They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

About 3,000 people became new believers when Peter preached the Good News about Christ. These new Christians were united with the other believers, taught by the apostles, and included in the prayer meetings and fellowship.

New believers in Christ need to be in groups, where they can learn God's Word, pray, and mature in the faith. If you have just begun a relationship with Christ, seek out other believers for fellowship, prayer, and teaching. This is the way to grow.

**By partaking, we share in the broken body
and shed blood of Jesus Christ.**

1 Corinthians 10:16

Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ?
Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ?

Paul wasn't saying we should adopt all the practices of our culture but that we should avoid appearances and behavior that detract from our ultimate goal of being witnesses for Jesus Christ.

We partake of the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:24

And when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

The early church remembered that Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper on the night of the Passover meal (Luke 22:13-20). Just as Passover celebrated deliverance from slavery in Egypt, so the Lord's Supper celebrates deliverance from sin by Christ's death.

They broke bread on the first day of the week.

Acts 20:7

On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

Jewish believers celebrated the Passover (which was immediately followed by the Festival of Unleavened Bread) according to Moses' instructions (see Exodus 12:43-51) even if they couldn't be at Jerusalem for the occasion.

Unworthy to partake of the Lord's Supper

1 Corinthians 11:17-34

Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

[18] For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.

[19] For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

[20] When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

[21] For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

[22] What? Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

[23] For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

[24] And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.

1 Corinthians 10:21

You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.

As followers of Christ we must give him our total allegiance. We cannot, as Paul explains, have a part in "the cup of the Lord and... the cup of demons." Eating at the Lord's Table means communing with Christ and identifying with his death. Drinking from the cup of demons means identifying with Satan by worshiping or promoting pagan (or evil) activities. Are you leading two lives, trying to follow both Christ and the crowd? The Bible says that you can't do both at the same time.

The Lord's Supper is not a feast or fellowship meal.

1 Corinthians 11:20

Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper,

When the Lord's Supper was celebrated in the early church, it included a feast or fellowship meal followed by the celebration of Communion. In the church in Corinth, the fellowship meal had become a time when some ate and drank excessively while others went hungry. There was little sharing and caring.

This certainly did not demonstrate the unity and love that should characterize the church, nor was it a preparation for Communion. Paul condemned these actions and reminded the church of the real purpose of the Lord's Supper.

Jesus and disciples partook of communion at the Last Supper.

1 Corinthians 11:23-25

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Jesus gave Communion to his disciples.

Matthew 26:26-28

While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins."

Each name we use for this sacrament brings out a different dimension to it. It is the *Lord's Supper* because it commemorates the Passover meal Jesus ate with his disciples; it is the *Eucharist* (thanksgiving) because in it we thank God for Christ's work for us; it is *Communion* because through it we commune with God and with other believers.

As we eat the bread and drink the wine, we should be quietly reflective as we recall Jesus' death and his promise to come again, grateful for God's wonderful gift to us, and joyful as we meet with Christ and the body of believers.

How does Jesus' blood relate to the new covenant? People under the old covenant (those who lived before Jesus) could approach God only through a priest and an animal sacrifice. Now all people can come directly to God through faith because Jesus' death has made us acceptable in God's eyes (Romans 3:21-24).

When he had taken a cup, he gave thanks.

Luke 22:17-20

And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes." And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump.

1 Corinthians 5:7-8

Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

As the Hebrews prepared for their exodus from slavery in Egypt, they were commanded to prepare bread without yeast because they didn't have time to wait for it to rise. And because yeast also was a symbol of sin, they were commanded to sweep all of it out of the house (Exodus 12:15; 13:7). Christ is our Passover lamb, the perfect sacrifice for our sin. Because he has delivered us from the slavery of sin, we should have nothing to do with the sins of the past ("old bread").

Mark 14:25

"Truly I say to you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Mark records the origin of the Last Supper, which is still celebrated in worship services today. Jesus and his disciples ate a meal, sang psalms, read Scripture, and prayed.

When Jesus took two traditional parts of the Passover meal, the passing of bread and the drinking of wine, and gave them new meaning as representations of his body and blood. He used the bread and wine to explain the significance of what he was about to do on the cross.

A person must examine himself before partaking of the Lord's Supper.

1 Corinthians 11:28

But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

Paul gives specific instructions on how the Lord's Supper should be observed.

- (1) We should take the Lord's Supper thoughtfully because we are proclaiming that Christ died for our sins (11:26).
- (2) We should take it worthily, with due reverence and respect (11:27).
- (3) We should examine ourselves for any unconfessed sin or resentful attitude and be properly prepared (11:28).

(4) We should be considerate of others, waiting until everyone is there and then eating in an orderly and unified manner (11:33).

When Paul said that no one should take the Lord's Supper unworthily, he was speaking to the church members who were participating in it without thinking of its meaning.

To not honor the "body of Christ" means not understanding what the Lord's Supper means and not distinguishing it from a normal meal. Those who did so were "guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord." Instead of honoring his sacrifice, they were sharing in the guilt of those who crucified Christ.

In reality, *no one* is worthy to take the Lord's Supper. We are all sinners saved by grace. This is why we should prepare ourselves for Communion through healthy introspection, confession of sin, and resolution of differences with others.

These actions remove the barriers that affect our relationship with Christ and with other believers. Awareness of your sin should not keep you away from Communion but drive you to participate in it.

An invitation is given to open your heart's door to Jesus

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

Holy Bible: King James Translation

New American Standard Bible

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print