

A Simple Communion Service

On the Sunday before the communion service, announce that every family should bring two cups. One for their family and one for someone who forgets to bring one. Place two cordial bottles and two plates full of cup-tea biscuits broken into small pieces on a table in front of the congregation.

Explain to the congregation the meaning of communion based on the above explanation and take the opportunity to share the gospel using his death on the cross and resurrection. Emphasize that we are taking the time to remember what Jesus has done for us and ask the question "Who can and should take communion?" and answer "All who admit they need Jesus to forgive their sins."

Have two deacons take the two plates of biscuits and pass them out to each one in the congregation. Also have two more deacons pore a little cordial into each cup with enough in the cup for each member of the family to drink. After they are finished passing out the bread and cordial. Pray for the bread thanking God for breaking Jesus body so we can be healed. Have everyone eat the bread together. Next pray for the cup and thank God for Christ's blood shed for us and then have everyone drink together. Close with a song about the blood of Jesus.

This is a simple communion service that can be used in any church meeting from Sunday morning to Sunday night or home group and should be performed at least once a month. Be creative and change the order of the service to emphasize different aspects of communion.



Foursquare New Guinea Islands Region



The LORD'S SUPPER



What is the significance of the Lord's Supper?

BIBLE READING: Matt 26:17-30

KEY BIBLE VERSE: *As they were eating, Jesus took a loaf of bread and asked God's blessing on it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take it and eat it, for this is my body." And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, "Each of you drink from it, for this is my blood, which seals the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out to forgive the sins of many." (Matt 26:26-28)*

The Lord's Supper has many important dimensions. 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.

BIBLE READING: 1 Cor 11:17-34

KEY BIBLE VERSE: *Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until he comes again. (1 Cor 11:26)*

The Lord's Supper reminds us that Christ died for us. The Lord's Supper (11:20) is a visible representation of the Good News of the death of Christ for our sins. It reminds us of Christ's death and the glorious hope of his return. Our participation in it strengthens our faith through fellowship with Christ and with other believers.

The Lord's Supper is a spiritual meal. 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.

The Lord's Supper has a variety of meanings within the church. 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.

Christians pose several different possibilities for what Christ meant when he said, "This is my body." (1) Some believe that the wine and bread actually become Christ's physical blood and body. (Catholics) (2) Others believe that the bread and wine remain unchanged, but Christ is spiritually present with the bread and wine. (3) The Foursquare Church and others believe that the bread and wine *symbolize* Christ's body and blood. Christians generally agree, however, that participating in the Lord's Supper is an important element in the Christian faith and that Christ's presence, however we understand it, strengthens us spiritually.

The Lord's Supper commemorates the New Covenant. What is this New Covenant? In the Old Covenant, people could approach God only through the priests and the sacrificial system. Jesus' death on the cross ushered in the New Covenant or agreement between God and us. Now all people can personally approach God and communicate with him. The people of Israel first entered into this agreement after their exodus from Egypt (Ex 24), and it was designed to point to the day when Jesus Christ would come. The New Covenant completes the Old Covenant, fulfilling everything the old covenant looked forward to (see Jer

31:31-34). Eating the bread and drinking the cup shows that we are remembering Christ's death for us and renewing our commitment to serve him.

The Lord's Supper is remembering. Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me." How do we remember Christ in the Lord's Supper? By thinking about what he did and why he did it. If the Lord's Supper becomes just a ritual or a pious habit, it no longer remembers Christ, and it loses its significance.

The Lord's Supper is a holy act. 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 (11:28). We are to be properly prepared, based on our belief in and love for Christ. (4) We should be considerate of others (11:33), waiting until everyone is there and then eating in an orderly and unified manner.

The Lord's Supper is not to be taken lightly. When Paul said that no one should take the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, he was speaking to the church members who were rushing into it without thinking of its meaning. Those who did so were "guilty of sinning against the body and the 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 should drive you to participate in it.