



## Communion, the Lord's Supper

The communion table is a mandated ritual in the Church Age which depicts our fellowship with Jesus Christ. This soul condition changes based on whether the old sin nature controls the soul (state of sin or carnality) or whether the Holy Spirit controls the soul following confession of sin (state of spirituality). This is done repeatedly in the believer's life.

### God's Provision of Communion

Communion is a provision designed by God in eternity past to bring glory to the Lord. Communion was designed for blessing, not cursing. Communion was designed for believers, not unbelievers. 1 Cor. 10:16; 1 Cor. 10:20.

*"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?" (1 Corinthians 10:16, NASB)*

Communion was designed for believers in fellowship, not believers out of fellowship. Communion was designed for glorifying God, not man. 1 Cor. 10:21-22; 1 Cor. 10:31.

*"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. Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? We are not stronger than He, are we?" (1 Corinthians 10:21-22, NASB)*

*"Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Corinthians 10:31, NASB)*

Communion was designed for honor, not dishonor. There is a clear concept of rank, command, and authority. Communion was designed for unity not divisions. In 1 Corinthians 11:18, "divisions" is σχίσμα (schisma) and means schisms, dissensions, divisions, a cleft, a rent, a split. This is a choice based on negative volition, leading to the willful embracing of false doctrine. 1 Cor. 11:1-16; 1 Cor. 10:17.

*"For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part I believe it." (1 Corinthians 11:18, NASB)*

*"Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread." (1 Corinthians 10:17, NASB)*

Communion was designed for praise, not censure. This was not a meal to get full. This was a ritual which symbolized the person and work of Christ on the Cross. Communion was designed for obedience, not disobedience. 1 Cor. 11:21-22; 1 Cor. 11:24.

*"for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you." (1 Corinthians 11:21-22, NASB)*

*"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.'" (1 Corinthians 11:24, NASB)*

Communion was designed for participation, not ostracism. It was designed for self-examination by the believer-priest not a church board. It was designed for examination based on honesty if a person is out of fellowship. Communion was designed for commendation, not condemnation. 1 Cor. 11:28; 1 Cor.



11:32-34.

*"But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup." (1 Corinthians 11:28, NASB)*

*"But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world. So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you will not come together for judgment. The remaining matters I will arrange when I come." (1 Corinthians 11:32-34, NASB)*

### **The Bread and the Cup in Communion**

In Matthew 26:26, When Jesus Christ took the bread, it represented Jesus Christ Himself, the bread of life. The breaking of the bread is a picture of Jesus Christ bearing our sins. In the Old Testament, a lamb was used in the Passover ritual that depicted the Savior to come – Jesus Christ. They also used unleavened bread placed on the Table of Showbread located in the tabernacle all depicting the Savior Jesus Christ.

*"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.'"* (Matthew 26:26, NASB)

Translation, "While they were eating, Jesus having taken bread and having blessed it in prayer, broke it and having given it to the disciples said, you take, you eat, this keeps on being my body." You take and you eat are both aorist active imperatives which are commands.

The blessing was done in the middle of a meal. It is a new meal, a new dispensation. He said to eat. The bread represents the person of Christ, the member of the Trinity, the God-Man with a destiny, the virgin born, the incarnated Savior of mankind, but the soul of His humanity had no old sin nature. Matt. 26:27.

*"And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you,'"* (Matthew 26:27, NASB)

In Psalms 116:13, "cup of salvation" is the Passover cup, a non - alcoholic wine (no leaven) and they drank from the cup to commemorate the work of Christ, yet future.

*"I shall lift up the cup of salvation And call upon the name of the LORD." (Psalms 116:13, NASB)*

In Matthew 20:22, the cup is filled with the sins of the world and Christ drinks it thus bearing our sins. Jesus Christ was bearing our sins! The Father judged those sins. Either accept Jesus Christ drinking for you on the Cross, or accept wrath from God on yourself. Isaiah 53:4-6.

*"But Jesus answered, 'You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?' They said to Him, 'We are able.'"* (Matthew 20:22, NASB)

*"Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him." (Isaiah 53:4-6, NASB)*

When He came in His First Advent, He drank the cup of the judgment of our sins. When He comes again at the Second Advent, unbelievers will drink the cup because they did not accept His drinking the cup for them. This ritual depicts the work of Christ on the Cross.



## The Lord's Supper and the New Covenant to Israel

In Matthew 26:28, “for this is My blood” means that the cup represents His blood (His substitutionary spiritual death on the Cross) and it will always represent the Blood of Christ. “The covenant” is διαθήκη (diathēkē) and means a compact, a covenant.

*"for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26:28, NASB)*

This word does not mean “testament.” The word actually means two people placing something in a repository. In the time of Christ, it was used for a will. He was in essence making out His will (the New Covenant) and we share that will by believing in Christ. Jesus Christ prophesied His Millennial Kingdom in Matthew 26:29. Note that He does not refer to the contents of the cup as wine, but “fruit of the vine” because it was not fermented, only boiled.

*""But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."" (Matthew 26:29, NASB)*

He will again have fellowship face to face with them in His Millennial reign. 1 Cor. 11:26.

*"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." (1 Corinthians 11:26, NASB)*

## God's Promises and Grace Resources

God has provided His so great salvation. John 14:1; John 14:6.

*""Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me." (John 14:1, NASB)*

*"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." (John 14:6, NASB)*

God's house is our house and we will spend eternity with the Lord Jesus Christ. John 14:2-3.

*""In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also." (John 14:2-3, NASB)*

Because all Church Age believers are priests, we represent ourselves directly to God the Father in prayer. John 14:13-14.

*""Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. "If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it." (John 14:13-14, NASB)*

All Church Age believers are indwelt by God the Holy Spirit who functions to empower our spiritual life and is our helper, teacher, mentor, and comforter. John 14:16-17; John 14:26.

*""I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you." (John 14:16-17, NASB)*

*""But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you." (John 14:26, NASB)*

In the spiritual life, each of us can have the peace of our Lord. John 14:27.

*""Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your*



*heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful." (John 14:27, NASB)*

The whole grace package is tied up in our keeping His commandments and reciprocating His love toward us.

### **The Five Fellowships of Communion**

The entire context of the communion or the Lord's Supper stretches from 1 Corinthians 10:16 to 1 Corinthians 11:34. It is a passage emphasizing at least five different fellowships that are important to the Lord's Supper.

Fellowship between the pastor and believers in his congregation is accomplished by imitating the faith of the pastor-teacher and following the Bible doctrine he teaches. In 1 Corinthians 11:1, "Be imitators" is the present active imperative of μιμητής (mimētēs) and means an imitation of mental attitude toward the pastor. Heb. 13:7; Heb. 13:17.

*"Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:1, NASB)*

*"Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith." (Hebrews 13:7, NASB)*

*"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you." (Hebrews 13:17, NASB)*

You are to imitate the pastor in the use of confession of sin and staying in fellowship. You imitate the pastor in the filling of the Holy Spirit. You imitate him in the function of the grace apparatus for perception. You imitate the pastor in staying out of emotional revolt, reversionism, etc. You imitate him in having no mental attitude sins.

Fellowship between husband and wife is based upon the relationship of the Father to the Jesus Christ, the relationship of Jesus Christ to the husband. These relationships emphasize rank, authority and subordination. 1 Cor. 11:2-16.

*"But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ." (1 Corinthians 11:3, NASB)*

*"For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man." (1 Corinthians 11:7, NASB)*

*"However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God." (1 Corinthians 11:11-12, NASB)*

Fellowship between believers in the local church is accomplished by the absence of divisions. This accomplished by following the teaching of Bible doctrine and therefore, being "like-minded" in the Word. In 1 Corinthians 1:10, "divisions" is σχίσμα (schisma) and means schisms, dissensions, divisions. 1 Cor. 1:11-19; 1 Cor. 4:1-17.

*"Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Corinthians 1:10, NASB)*

Fellowship between believers and Bible doctrine is accomplished by the removal of factious opinions



that are contrary to the Bible doctrine taught in the local church. These contrary or self-willed opinions are removed as the believer matures spiritually and such false doctrines or doctrinal opposition are replaced with *epignosis* Bible doctrine in the right lobe of the soul. In 1 Corinthians 11:19, “factions” is αἵρεσις (haireisis) and is a self-willed opinion. A faction in the local church is always connected to one person! If such a faction opposes what the pastor is teaching, then such a faction should be handled by the deacon board with corrective actions as appropriate.

*"For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you." (1 Corinthians 11:19, NASB)*

Fellowship between believers and the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ is accomplished by confession of known sins to God the Father and the resulting filling of the Holy Spirit. 1 Cor. 11:23.

*"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;" (1 Corinthians 11:23, NASB)*

### **Questions Regarding Communion**

Should we serve wine or grape juice? Grape juice should be served because fermentation was the same as leaven and leaven was removed from the Passover period.

Who is eligible to distribute the elements? Every Church Age believer is a priest. Therefore, any believer has a right to distribute the elements. However, in the framework of the local church, the administration is responsible for their distribution.

Who is eligible to partake of the elements? Any believer in fellowship with the Lord.

Biblically, who can take communion? Believers only and they are commanded to be in fellowship with the Lord when they participate in this Church Age ritual. 1 Cor. 11:2; 1 Cor. 11:27-28.

*"Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you." (1 Corinthians 11:2, NASB)*

*"Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup." (1 Corinthians 11:27-28, NASB)*

Can the Lord's Supper be taken at home? Yes. For the first 300 years, the believers in the Lord Jesus Christ did not meet in buildings as we do now, but in homes, etc. For example, one church in Jerusalem met in John Mark's home or his mother's home. They also meet in grottoes, caves, open fields, etc.

How often should one partake of communion? There is no stated time element in frequency of holding communion. The early church partook of the Lord's Supper every Lord's day. Their entire service was different and involved evening worship for three or four hours. In Acts 20:6-12, the service was held at night and lasted all night. 1 Cor. 11:25.

*"We sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and came to them at Troas within five days; and there we stayed seven days. 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. There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together. And there was a young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, "Do not be troubled, for his life is*



*in him.” When he had gone back up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak, and then left. They took away the boy alive, and were greatly comforted.” (Acts 20:6-12, NASB)*

*“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.”“ (1 Corinthians 11:25, NASB)*