



Communion Purpose

What is the purpose of the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist, Communion? The purpose is harmony, remembrance, restoration, and fellowship.

Harmony

You should come together habitually for church service. The love feast or church supper was eaten before Communion. Emphasis was not on eating but on sharing - harmony as the Body of Christ. 1 Cor. 11:20-22; Heb. 10:25.

"Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, 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 11:20-22, NASB)

"not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:25, NASB)

Remembrance

Believers are commanded to remember the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 11:24-25.

"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.'" (1 Corinthians 11:24-25, NASB)

Remembrance connotes thinking, thinking of the death of Jesus Christ in this case. Bona fide remembrance demands Bible doctrine regarding Jesus Christ and His work on the Cross resident in the right lobe of the soul.

Knowledge of such doctrine in the soul's frame of reference results in occupation with Christ, the maturing of the individual resulting in an edification complex of the soul. The more Bible doctrine one assimilates, the more the "fragrance of memories" comes into focus as far as our Lord's person and work is concerned.

Throughout eternity the Lord Jesus Christ will carry His scars from the Cross. We will never forget what the Savior did in dying spiritually for our sins. Also the doctrine of remembrance or fragrance of memories is a very powerful doctrine, very effective, and very necessary in the life of the mature believer.

The bread speaks of the Work of Christ with emphasis on the person of Christ in His incarnation. He was impeccable. 2 Cor. 5:21; John 6:35.

"He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Corinthians 5:21, NASB)

"Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.'" (John 6:35, NASB)

In 1 Corinthians 11:24, the phrase "which is for you" speaks of the physical suffering Jesus Christ endured before and while on the Cross. Eating of the bread is a picture of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.



“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)

Not one of His bones were broken. This fulfilled Old testament Scripture. John 19:33; John 19:36; Exodus 12:46, Num. 9:12.

“but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.” (John 19:33, NASB)

“For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, “NOT A BONE OF HIM SHALL BE BROKEN.”” (John 19:36, NASB)

““It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it.” (Exodus 12:46, NASB)

““They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break a bone of it; according to all the statute of the Passover they shall observe it.” (Numbers 9:12, NASB)

The cup speaks of the work of Christ with emphasis on His substitutionary spiritual death on the Cross for all of mankind's sins – the Blood of Christ. Our salvation is a new covenant through the death of Jesus Christ. We are to keep on doing this in remembrance of Him. Isaiah 53:5; 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

“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.” (Isaiah 53:5, NASB)

“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.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.” (1 Corinthians 11:23-26, NASB)

Restoration

We are not to partake of communion while out of fellowship. We are to examine our spiritual status to confirm we are in fellowship. To be sure, we are to use 1 John 1:9 and cite all known sins to God the Father. In doing so, we are assured of the filling of the Holy Spirit and fellowship with Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. 11:27-32.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9, 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. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.” (1 Corinthians 11:27-32, NASB)

One should never partake of communion as a believer while out of fellowship. Thus, the believer is to examine himself and then partake of the bread and cup after confession of sin. To partake of communion out of fellowship puts the believer under severe divine discipline and potentially the Sin Unto Death.



If you partake of communion while out of fellowship, you are subject to serious divine discipline. Because believers take communion while out of fellowship, many are “weak” (feeble, loss of energy) and are “sickly” (chronic invalids) and “many sleep” (Christian death). If we judge ourselves and confess our known sins to God the Father, we avoid divine discipline.

No church board or church government is to bar a believer from communion. It is a personal and individual matter. There is no biblical basis for a closed communion.

Fellowship

All believers are mandated by our Lord to be in fellowship before partaking of communion. When you come together for the Communion Table, wait for all and partake together. 1 Cor. 11:33-34.

“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 11:33-34, NASB)

While the Passover Feast of the Old Testament looked forward, the Eucharist of the New Testament looks back to the Cross. Both were commanded in their respective ages. The command for the Eucharist is found in 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.” (Matthew 26:26-28, NASB)

Whereas water baptism illustrates our relationship with Christ, communion illustrates our fellowship with Christ. Communion means fellowship. 1 Cor. 10:16-22.

“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? Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.” (1 Corinthians 10:16-17, NASB)

“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.” (1 Corinthians 10:21, NASB)

The bread element emphasizes the human body of Christ and the fruit of the vine element emphasizes the work of Christ on the Cross. The substitutionary spiritual death of Jesus Christ on the Cross is also called the Blood of Christ. 1 Cor. 11:24-26.

“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.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.” (1 Corinthians 11:24-26, NASB)

Unity in a local church is based on Bible doctrine taken in through the grace apparatus for perception, not love. 1 Cor. 11:33-34.

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From the standpoint of the believer eating the bread (the Bread of Life) is a picture of faith in the person



of Jesus Christ, and drinking of the wine or juice is a picture of faith in the work of Christ.

In Malachi 1:7-8, polluted bread represented an actual attack on the person and work of Christ. They in type, polluted the person of Christ (made Him a sinner) and therefore corrupted the work of Christ (made His work that of a sinner, sick, lame, blind). Therefore one is never to tamper with the person and work of Christ.

""You are presenting defiled food upon My altar. But you say, 'How have we defiled You?' In that you say, 'The table of the LORD is to be despised.' "But when you present the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you present the lame and sick, is it not evil? Why not offer it to your governor? Would he be pleased with you? Or would he receive you kindly?" says the LORD of hosts." (Malachi 1:7-8, NASB)

How often should communion be served? This is a hot issue in many local churches. In 1 Corinthians 11:24-25, "do this in remembrance of Me" is present linear Aktionsart in the Greek which would make quarterly not often enough and probably once a month being about right. The early church had communion once a week, but then they also met daily. The Passover of the Age of Israel gave way to communion in the Church Age. How often did they have the Passover in the Old Testament? Once a year.

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Communion is based on the "fragrance of memories." In 1 Corinthians 11:26, our Lord commanded Church Age believers to participate in the ritual of communion until He returns at the Rapture of the Church. This doctrine of fragrance of memories kept the Shulamite Woman true to her Shepherd Lover in Song of Solomon. The believer is never to forget the memory of the Cross and what our Lord did for all of us.

"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)

Any believer has the right to partake of communion. However, only those in fellowship should partake as they are filled with the Holy Spirit and realize its true significance. If they remain out of fellowship, they must understand the divine discipline consequences and be taught the proper biblical use of 1 John 1:9 and 1 Cor. 11:31-32.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9, NASB)

"But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world." (1 Corinthians 11:31-32, NASB)