

LESSON 34 - THE LORD'S SUPPER

What Is The Lord's Supper And How Should Christians Celebrate It?

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What is The Lord's Supper? How did this ritual first begin? How should Christians celebrate it? Who can initiate this ritual today? Who should participate and who shouldn't? What physical elements should be used and will they literally change? What is the proper code of conduct; are there consequences of doing it wrongly? The Lord's Supper is: 1) an important Christian sacrament, 2) a holy communion with Lord Jesus and His Church, 3) something all Christians should do.

1. Important Christian Sacrament. Sacraments are ritual activities, instituted by Jesus, set apart for sacred purpose, to become "the visible symbols of divine acts." The Lord's Supper is a distinctive rite of Christian worship instituted by Jesus, during the annual Jewish Passover meal. The Thursday night before His crucifixion, Jesus took the bread and wine elements of the meal and repurposed them, saying how He was their fulfillment in the new covenant. Luke 22:19-20 says, "*And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."* In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "*This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.*" See also Luke 22:14-23; Matthew 26:26-29; and Mark 14:22-25. By saying "do this in remembrance of me" Jesus gives a clear command for His followers to continue this thankful memorial of His sacrifice. Paul instructed the church at Corinth to properly observe this sacrament. In 1 Corinthians 11:26 he says, "*For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*" Calling it "The Lord's Supper" references the historical event that started this practice. But there are other names including: "Breaking of the Bread" which emphasizes the unity/meal sharing; "Eucharist," Greek for "thanksgiving" highlighting it as a group meal or "love feast;" and "Table of the Lord" which contrasts it from pagan celebrations.

2. Holy Communion with Lord Jesus and His Church. "Holy Communion" punctuates how it is a special spiritual participation between Christ and the Church. *Holy* means sacred or set apart for special use. *Communion* means sharing, participation, fellowship, and togetherness. This sacrament is a divine mystery and instrument, tied to the Word of God, and faith, to bless and nurture believers with God's grace. When believers partake, they are supernaturally united to Jesus and the global Church in a profound way that strengthens their spiritual condition. It's important. This connection with the Lord edifies, nourishes, heals, delivers, and protects us. 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 says, "*Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.*" We need holy communion with the living Christ, who is the Bread of Life. In John 6 Jesus said, "*I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died... I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever... unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in*

you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day... Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me." Some Christians believe the bread and wine elements mysteriously *change into* the real presence of Christ. Others believe He is *literally* present, not in, but *alongside* the elements. Still others believe He is really present but only *spiritually*. Yet still many others believe Jesus intended this to be an *external symbolic* ceremony, allowing believers to unite and express their internal faith and obedience by remembering and celebrating. Regardless of which view you take, remain humble and united with others, believe all things are possible with God, and eagerly desire to receive more of Jesus in every way possible.

3. How To Celebrate In It Today. You don't need to be an ordained clergy member or part of an official church organization, to enact the Lord's Supper. Every born again Christian is a priest in God's kingdom (1 Peter 2:5, 9). However, those who partake **MUST**: be baptized as the mark of union with Christ and His Church, trust Christ and publicly profess their faith, know what the bread and cup represent, and seek separation from evil and pursue unity among believers. We don't need to be 100% perfect, but participants *do* need to have godly lifestyles, assembling with pure motives and godly conduct before being permitted to participate. Paul warned not to have any form of selfish divisions or drunkenness in their assemblies in 1 Corinthians 11:18-22. We also cannot still be participants with evil and share the Lord's Table. 1 Corinthians 10:18-22 says, *"Consider the people of Israel: Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar? Do I mean then that food sacrificed to an idol is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons. Are we trying to arouse the Lord's jealousy?"* We must examine ourselves and repent of all known sin first. If we fail to do so we bring judgment on ourselves. 1 Corinthians 11:27-32 says, *"Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world."* Jesus

commanded it, so you should celebrate the Lord's Supper often. You can do it in large church gatherings, home churches, or small groups. This time can serve as a regular reminder to examine yourself on a regular basis - God expects His people to be godly and holy.

Let's pray. Jesus, thank You for laying down Your life for me and dying for my sins. Holy Spirit, reveal any sin in my life or heart so I can quickly repent. God, I believe You can do all things. I desire to be closer to You and I humbly receive You in every way possible.

(Participate in the Lord's Supper this week!)

The Lord's Supper

On the night He was betrayed, at the Passover meal, our Lord Jesus took break, gave thanks, broke it, and said: "Take and eat; this is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." After supper, in the same way, He took the cup, gave thanks and said, "Drink from it, all of you. This is My blood of the covenant; this cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you and many, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of Me."

This exact wording is an amalgamation of the texts in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25, Luke 22:19-20, Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24. [More Info.](#)