

Holy Communion

Remembrance of the Lord



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GOSPEL SERIES

 True Jesus Church

Holy Communion

Remembrance of the Lord



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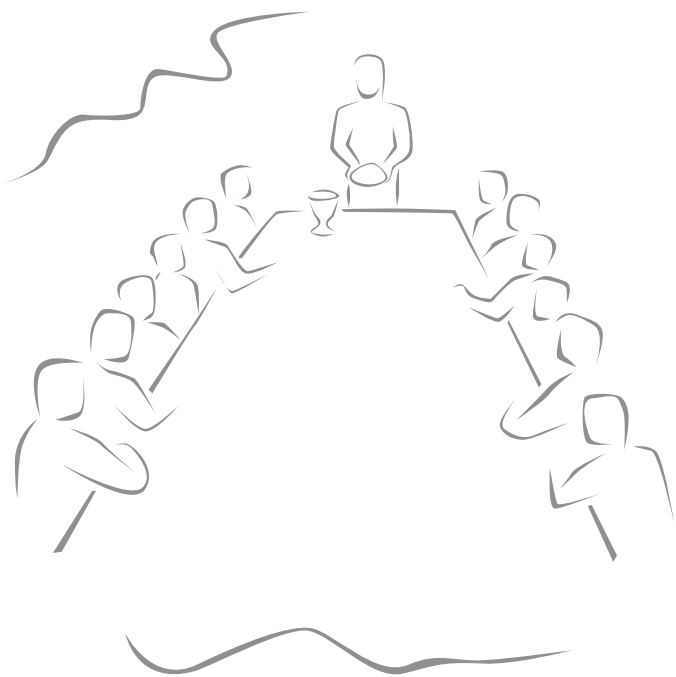
| | |
|---|----|
| Remembrance | 2 |
| Spiritual Life through the Communion..... | 4 |
| Elements of the Sacrament | 6 |
| Administration and Participation | 8 |
| Holy Communion and Christian Living | 11 |
| Participation in the Covenant..... | 11 |
| Getting Rid of Sin | 12 |
| Daily Communion with the Lord..... | 13 |
| Oneness of Christ's Body..... | 15 |
| Christ the Passover Lamb | 16 |

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REMEMBRANCE

“The Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes” (1 Corinthians 11:23–26).





The Lord Jesus Christ Himself established and commanded this observance, the Holy Communion (also called the Lord's Supper), so that His followers would remember Him after His departure. In particular, we are to proclaim the Lord's death, which demonstrates God's great love, during the Holy Communion. Such a proclamation also reminds us that we will one day be with the Lord in His Kingdom (SEE Matthew 26:29).

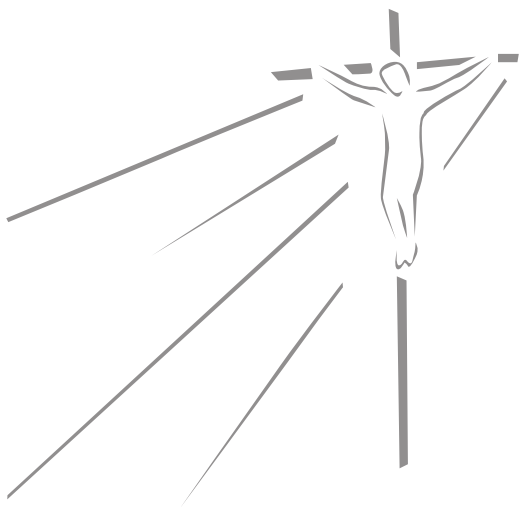
SPIRITUAL LIFE THROUGH THE COMMUNION

Why did our Lord call a loaf of bread His body and a cup of drink His blood? Why did He command us to eat His body and drink His blood, and say, “For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed” (John 6:55)?



What the Lord has established and commanded us to receive is called a sacrament. Sacraments—which include baptism, footwashing, and the Holy Communion—are actions by which God effects salvation on believers through the use of physical elements. When we partake of the Holy Communion, we actually eat of Christ’s body and drink of His blood (1 Corinthians 10:16).

However, the body and the blood that our Lord spoke of are not His physical body and blood; instead, He was referring to the spiritual life that comes to us when we partake of the Holy Communion.



The spiritual effect of the sacrament is based on the Lord's own words. "Most assuredly, I say to you, 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 him up at the last day... He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him" (John 6:53-56).

Through the Holy Communion, Christ lives in us and we in Him. With the life of Christ in us, we have eternal life and will resurrect on the last day. Therefore, all believers of Christ must partake of the Holy Communion.

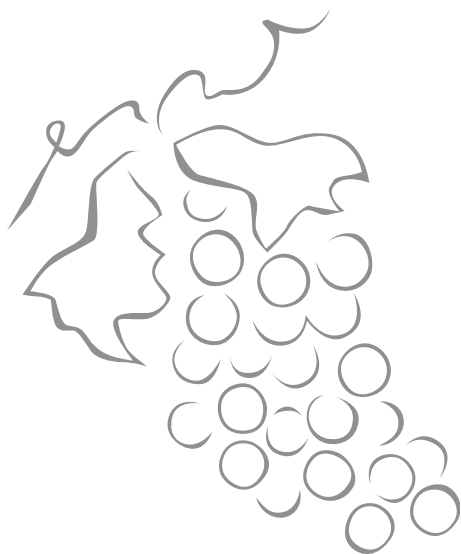
ELEMENTS OF THE SACRAMENT

Since the Lord commands us to partake of the Holy Communion according to His example, it is important to use the same elements that the Lord used—bread, and drink made from the fruit of the vine (grape juice; **SEE Matthew 26:29**).



The bread used should not contain any yeast. That is why the bread in the Passover meal was called the “unleavened bread.” Nor should the drink undergo any fermentation, because the Lord used grape juice, not wine, during the last supper. Yeast represents sin (1 Corinthians 5:8), false teachings (Matthew 16:6, 12), and hypocrisy (Luke 12:1); therefore it must not be found in the Communion.

There is to be only one bread and one cup regardless of the size of the congregation. “For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread” (1 Corinthians 10:17).



ADMINISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION

The Bible does not specify how often we need to partake of the Communion, but it does stress its effect and meaning. Thus, each congregation may decide to hold the Communion as often as it deems fit, so long as the participants take it with solemnity.

In the same manner as our Lord, we give thanks to God for Christ's sacrifice and salvation. We can then break the bread and give it to the congregation. The same goes with receiving the cup.



During the Communion, the participants should be together in one place. None of the elements should remain until the next day. These instructions are from God's commands to the Israelites concerning the Passover, a festival in remembrance of God's salvation of the Israelite households through the blood of lambs (see Exodus 12:10, 46).

Only those who are baptized may receive the Communion, for it is a spiritual fellowship between the Lord and His church. If someone has not been baptized, or has not done so in a way that is according to what the Bible teaches, he should not participate in the Communion because his sins have not been washed away, and he does not yet belong to Christ.



It is important that we take the Communion seriously and solemnly, knowing that we are partaking of Christ's body and blood.

"Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body" (1 Corinthians 11:27-29).

Before the Communion, we need to examine ourselves, remove our grudges against anyone, ask the Lord to forgive our sins, and determine to live by Christ's perfect example.

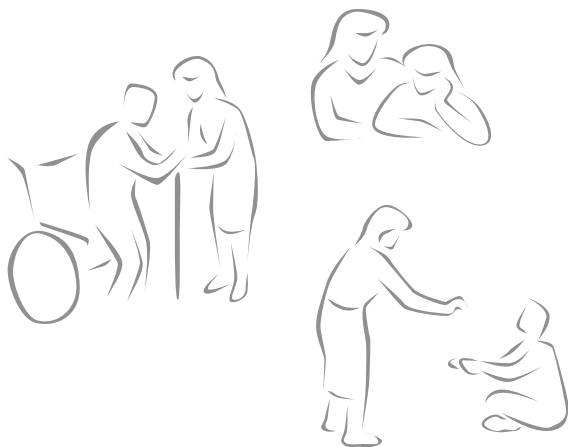


HOLY COMMUNION AND CHRISTIAN LIVING

Participation in the Covenant

The Lord Jesus referred to the blood in the Communion as the “blood of the new covenant.” A covenant is an agreement between two or more parties, and this is God’s covenant with us: by the blood of Christ, given to us on the cross, we are now God’s children.

With such a promise from God, we ought to live like God’s children, trusting Him and obeying His commands throughout our lives. Apostle Paul prayed that the believers would “walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:10). Living a holy life as Christ did is the way to participate in the divine covenant.

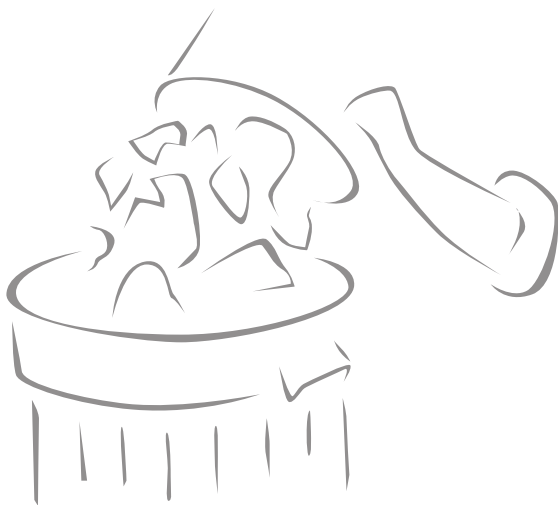


Getting Rid of Sin

Our Lord Jesus Christ offered Himself as a sinless sacrifice. His whole life was pure, and so is the Holy Communion. As we partake of the Lord's body and blood, we should also resolve to remove all sin from our thoughts, words, and actions.

"Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Corinthians 5:7-8).

Thus, true participation in the Communion means participation in God's holiness in daily life.

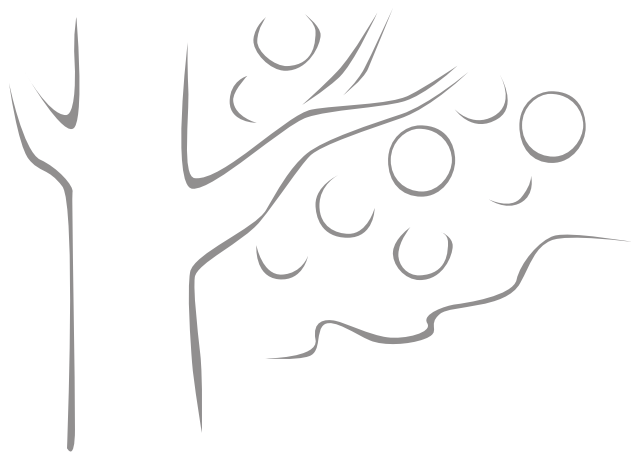


Daily Communion with the Lord

The Lord Jesus said, "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him" (John 6:56).

In addition to receiving the sacrament, we ought to live in Christ every day and let Him live in us. We need to partake of Christ Himself, who is the "bread of life" (John 6:35) by feeding on His word and His Spirit.

This means that we store God's word in our hearts and pray to be filled with the Spirit. We must also abide by and live according to His word, just as branches on a good vine constantly bear good fruit.



Through daily Bible reading and prayer, we learn to listen to God and talk with God. As we study and practice the Word, God also strengthens us with His Spirit. Thus we become more like Him each day, full of His holiness, compassion, and humility. We become more and more united with our Lord, just as a wife is united with her husband. "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him" (1 Corinthians 6:17).

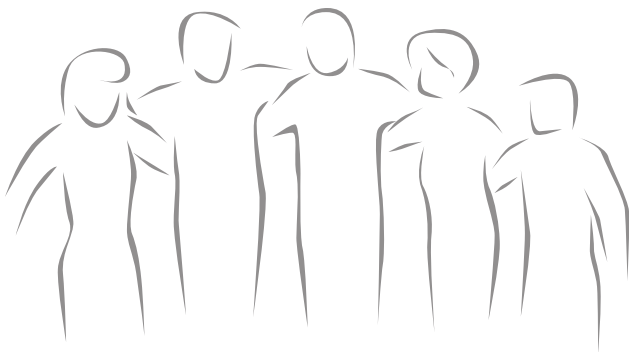


The communion that pleases God is our growing relationship with Him. We must love the Lord with all our hearts, making Him the center of our lives. Ultimately, it is no longer we who live, but Christ who lives in us (SEE Galatians 2:20). Then we will never hunger or thirst spiritually, but will have strength and joy in our lives.

Oneness of Christ's Body

The Holy Communion also brings the participants together as one body. "For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:17). Division or cliques among God's people are contrary to the spirit of the Communion.

So as we come together to remember the Lord's death, we must each learn to consider the good of others. The Lord gave us His body and blood through self-sacrifice and love; let us also deny our own interests and learn to love our fellow members in Christ.

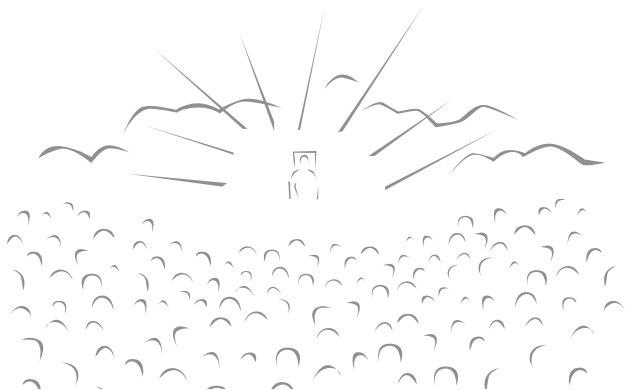


CHRIST THE PASSEOVER LAMB

The Passover centered around God's salvation through the blood of the sacrificial lamb. It is significant that the first Holy Communion took place during the Passover meal. When the Lord took the bread, saying, "this is My body" (Matthew 26:26) and the cup, saying, "this is My blood" (Matthew 26:28), He was telling us that He was that Passover Lamb.

Salvation is possible because "Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed" (1 Corinthians 5:7 NIV). Every Communion gives us another chance to behold "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Thus we keep proclaiming the Lord's death until He comes, when we will join the thousands of thousands to sing this song: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!" (Revelation 5:12).



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