

CAFÉ CHURCH SERMON SERIES

STUDY GUIDE



Theme: What is Communion?

Bible Readings: 1 Corinthians 11: 23-33

Reflection: Holy Communion.... The Lord's Supper, Eucharist, Agape Meal, is a reminder of what Jesus did in the past, a symbol of our present relationship with Him and a promise of what He will do in the future. His coming again...

We examine these three aspects:-

The Bread and Wine are 'memorials' of Jesus' death on the Cross (Luke 22:19 – 20; 1 Corinthians 11:26). In the Communion, we each eat a piece of bread in remembrance of Jesus. When we drink the wine we remember that Jesus' Blood was shed for us, and that it signifies the New Covenant. The Holy Communion looks back to the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross.

Jesus' death shows how much God loves us – so much that He sent His Son to die for us, so that our sins may be forgiven and we may live forever with Him. This is the Good News!

Although we may be saddened by the enormous price that had to be paid for us, we must be happy that it was paid. When we remember Jesus' death, we also remember that Jesus was dead only for a short time. We rejoice that Jesus has conquered death and has set free all who were enslaved by fear of death (Hebrews 2:14-15). '.....our mourning has turned to joy' (John 16:20). Look back to the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus as the defining moment in our history. This is how we escape death and the slavery of sin, and this is how we are freed to serve the Lord. Holy Communion is a memorial of this defining moment in history.

Holy Communion also pictures our present relationship with Jesus Christ. The crucifixion has a continuing significance to all who have taken up a cross to follow Jesus. We continue to 'participate in His death' (Romans 6:4; Galatians 2:20) because we 'participate in His life' (Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:6)

How can we 'participate in Christ' death and life? Paul wrote, "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! We participate with Him! We commune with Him! Become united in Him! The Holy Communion...The Lord's Supper... helps us look upward to Christ.

And then there is the sharing...the fellowship with other believers. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:17 "Because there is one bread, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of one bread."

The Holy Communion pictures the fact that we are One Body in Christ! One with each other...with responsibilities towards one another.

What responsibilities are these?

Thirdly, the Holy Communion also reminds us of the future...of Jesus' return. Jesus said He would not drink of the fruit of the vine again until the fullness of the Kingdom (Matthew 26:29; Luke 22:18)

Whenever we participate we are reminded of Jesus' promise. Paul wrote that "For whenever you eat his bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes (1 Corinthians 11:26) " Holy Communion helps us look forward!

How often do we really consider/think/pray about Jesus' second coming, bearing in mind that it is reflected every time we share in Communion?

Holy Communion is rich in meaning. The sacrificial system in the Old Testament is a 'pointer' to the 'One' who will not just 'cover' a sin but deal with it, through faith, once and for all. One 'sacrifice'... Holy Communion is an important part of the Christian tradition throughout the centuries. Sometimes, sadly, it has become a lifeless ritual, done more out of habit than with meaning. The Apostle Paul addressed this very point in his 1st Letter to the Corinthians (11:17-34).

Personal Application:

How can we better prepare ourselves for Communion?

What does it mean for me?

Jesus says that we are to 'do it' in remembrance of Him (Luke 22:19).

Note – there are some interesting 'pointers' to Holy Communion in the Old Testament but there is insufficient space/time to consider these for this study.