

UNDERSTANDING COMMUNION

The Lord's Supper, the New Covenant,
and Fellowship with Jesus Christ

FOUNDATIONAL SCRIPTURES

Matthew 26:26–29 • Luke 22:14–20
1 Corinthians 10:16–17 • 1 Corinthians 11:23–32



BIBLICAL TEACHING & DISCIPLESHIP SERIES

Contents

A structured study of the Lord's Supper, its biblical foundations, and its meaning for the Christian life.

01 WHAT IS COMMUNION?	11 COMMUNION AS A PROCLAMATION
02 THE ORIGIN OF COMMUNION – FROM PASSOVER TO CHRIST	12 THE PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNION
03 JESUS INSTITUTES THE LORD'S SUPPER	13 WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNION?
04 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BREAD	14 HOW OFTEN SHOULD COMMUNION BE OBSERVED?
05 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CUP	15 THE PROPER BIBLICAL OBSERVANCE OF COMMUNION
06 UNDERSTANDING THE NEW COVENANT	16 COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT COMMUNION
07 COMMUNION AS FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH	17 LIVING A COMMUNION-CENTERED LIFE
08 COMMUNION AND SELF-EXAMINATION	18 SPIRITUAL REFLECTION AND GROUP DISCUSSION
09 DISCERNING THE LORD'S BODY	19 CORE SCRIPTURES TO MEMORIZE
10 COMMUNION, HEALING, AND SPIRITUAL RESTORATION	20 FINAL TEACHING SUMMARY

Additional Resources

Conclusion • Closing Prayer • Scripture Reference Guide • Publication & Copyright Notice

Primary passages: Matthew 26:26–29; Luke 22:14–20; John 6:35–58; 1 Corinthians 10:16–17; 1 Corinthians 11:23–32.

FOUNDATIONAL SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (KJV)

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.”

TEACHING OBJECTIVE

This lesson will equip believers to understand the biblical foundation, spiritual significance, covenantal meaning, and proper observance of Holy Communion. It will establish that Communion is not merely a religious tradition, but a sacred expression of faith, remembrance, thanksgiving, fellowship, and covenant responsibility.

Upon completing this teaching, believers should understand:

1. The biblical definition and origin of Communion.
2. The relationship between Passover and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
3. The significance of the bread and the cup.
4. The meaning and benefits of the New Covenant.
5. The relationship between Communion, salvation, forgiveness, and fellowship with Christ.
6. The importance of spiritual examination and discernment.
7. The responsibility of believers toward the Body of Christ.
8. The proper biblical observance of the Lord's Supper.
9. The prophetic significance of Communion in anticipation of Christ's return.
10. How Communion should influence everyday Christian living.

SECTION I: WHAT IS COMMUNION?

1. Biblical Definition

Communion is a sacred Christian observance instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ on the night before His crucifixion.

It is also called:

- **The Lord's Supper** — 1 Corinthians 11:20.

- **The Lord's Table** — 1 Corinthians 10:21.
- **The Breaking of Bread** — Acts 2:42.
- **The Eucharist** — A term derived from the Greek language relating to thanksgiving.
- **Holy Communion** — A term emphasizing sacred fellowship and participation in Christ.

The English word *communion* conveys the meaning of fellowship, participation, sharing, and relationship. In 1 Corinthians 10:16, the Greek word translated as communion is **koinōnia**, meaning fellowship, sharing, participation, or common relationship.

1 Corinthians 10:16 (KJV)

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

Communion therefore communicates more than the act of eating bread and drinking from a cup. It represents the believer's participation in the fellowship established through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ.

Important Biblical Distinction

Communion is not the same as salvation. Salvation comes through God's grace and is received through faith in Jesus Christ. **Ephesians 2:8–9** establishes that salvation is by grace through faith, not human works.

Communion does not create salvation or replace personal faith in Jesus Christ. It is an ordinance through which believers remember and proclaim the saving work of the One in whom they have placed their faith.

Foundational Principle: Communion does not purchase redemption. Communion points us to the Redeemer who has already purchased our redemption.

SECTION II: THE ORIGIN OF COMMUNION — FROM PASSOVER TO CHRIST

2. The Institution of Passover

Primary Scripture: Exodus 12:1–14

Before God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage, He instructed each household to select a lamb without blemish. The lamb was to be sacrificed, and its blood was to be placed upon the doorposts and lintel of the house.

Exodus 12:13 (KJV)

"And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you..."

The blood served as the appointed sign associated with Israel's deliverance from judgment. The Passover meal became an enduring remembrance of God's deliverance.

Four Significant Elements of Passover

- 1. The Lamb.** The lamb was required to be without blemish (Exodus 12:5). This anticipated the sinless sacrifice of Jesus Christ. **1 Peter 1:18–19** teaches that believers were redeemed through the precious blood of Christ, described as a lamb without blemish and without spot.
- 2. The Blood.** The blood signified the protection and deliverance God had appointed for His people. In the New Testament, Christ's blood is central to redemption, forgiveness, and reconciliation with God. **Ephesians 1:7** teaches that redemption and forgiveness of sins come through His blood.
- 3. The Unleavened Bread.** Israel was instructed to eat unleavened bread during Passover. Leaven later became a biblical illustration of corruption and sinful influence in certain contexts. **1 Corinthians 5:7–8** connects Christ our Passover with the call to sincerity and truth.
- 4. The Remembrance.** Passover was instituted as a memorial of God's redemptive intervention. **Exodus 12:14** describes the day as a memorial to be observed throughout Israel's generations. The Lord's Supper similarly involves remembrance, but now focuses upon the completed sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

3. Jesus Christ: Our Passover Lamb

1 Corinthians 5:7 (KJV)

"For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."

John the Baptist identified Jesus as the Lamb of God.

John 1:29 (KJV)

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Under the Old Covenant, the Passover lamb was sacrificed as part of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. Under the New Covenant, Jesus Christ offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for sin.

Hebrews 9:12 teaches that Christ entered into the holy place by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. **Hebrews 10:10–14** emphasizes the sufficiency of Christ's once-for-all sacrifice.

Teaching Revelation

Passover pointed to divine deliverance. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ accomplishes redemption through His death and resurrection. Communion directs the Church back to that finished redemptive work.

The Passover remembered deliverance from Egypt. Communion remembers the Savior whose sacrifice delivers believers from the dominion of sin and reconciles them to God.

SECTION III: JESUS INSTITUTES THE LORD'S SUPPER

4. The Last Supper

Primary Scriptures: Matthew 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:14–20

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper during His final meal with His disciples before His arrest and crucifixion.

Matthew 26:26–28 (KJV)

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;

For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

There are several significant actions in this passage.

A. Jesus Took the Bread

The bread became central to His teaching about the sacrifice He was about to offer.

B. Jesus Gave Thanks

Thanksgiving preceded the distribution of the bread and cup. Communion should therefore be approached with gratitude rather than empty repetition.

C. Jesus Broke the Bread

Jesus connected the bread with His body given for His people. The breaking of bread directs attention to His voluntary self-giving in suffering and death.

D. Jesus Gave the Cup

Jesus identified the cup with His blood of the New Covenant. His approaching death would accomplish what the sacrifices of the Old Covenant could not accomplish permanently.

E. Jesus Commanded Remembrance

Luke 22:19 (KJV)

“...this do in remembrance of me.”

This command establishes Communion as an intentional act of remembrance. We do not come merely to remember historical suffering. We remember the identity, sacrifice, obedience, love, victory, and covenant faithfulness of Jesus Christ.

Key Principle: Communion was instituted by Christ, centered upon Christ, and is to be observed in obedience to Christ.

SECTION IV: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BREAD

5. The Bread Represents the Body of Christ

Luke 22:19 (KJV)

"This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me."

Jesus identifies the bread with His body, which He gave for humanity's redemption. Christian traditions differ in their explanations of how Christ is present in Communion, but they agree that His words direct believers to the significance of His body and saving sacrifice.

The bread calls our attention to several biblical truths.

A. The Reality of Christ's Incarnation

John 1:14. The eternal Word became flesh and dwelt among humanity. Jesus did not accomplish redemption from a distance. He entered human history and took on a genuine human nature.

B. The Voluntary Offering of His Body

Hebrews 10:10 (KJV)

"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

His sacrifice was voluntary and sufficient. Communion does not repeat Christ's sacrifice. It remembers and proclaims the sacrifice already accomplished.

C. His Suffering on Our Behalf

Isaiah 53:5 speaks prophetically of the suffering of the Servant of the Lord. **1 Peter 2:24** explains that Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree, so that believers might die to sins and live unto righteousness. The bread therefore points to a costly redemption.

D. His Obedience to the Father

Philippians 2:8 teaches that Christ humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on the cross. Every observance of Communion invites believers to remember His obedience and follow His example of surrender.

Teaching Application

As we receive the bread, we should remember:

- Jesus entered the world in human flesh.
- Jesus lived in perfect obedience to the Father.
- Jesus willingly gave Himself for us.
- Jesus bore our sins through His sacrificial death.
- Jesus has provided the basis for our reconciliation with God.

Spiritual Reflection: The bread reminds us that redemption was not without cost. Our freedom was purchased through the self-giving sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

SECTION V: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CUP

6. The Blood of Jesus and the New Covenant

Luke 22:20 (KJV)

"This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."

The word *testament* in this passage carries the meaning of covenant. A covenant establishes a binding relationship with defined promises and obligations. The New Covenant is established through the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ.

7. What Does the Blood of Jesus Accomplish?

A. Redemption

Ephesians 1:7 (KJV)

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

Redemption speaks of deliverance obtained through the payment of a price. The blood of Christ is foundational to our redemption.

B. Forgiveness of Sin

Matthew 26:28 connects the blood of Jesus with the remission of sins. **Hebrews 9:22** establishes the central place of blood in sacrificial atonement under the biblical covenant system. Through Christ's sacrifice, forgiveness is made available to those who place their faith in Him.

C. Cleansing

1 John 1:7 (KJV)

"...the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

The blood of Jesus addresses the problem of sin and guilt before God.

D. Reconciliation

Colossians 1:20 declares that peace has been made through the blood of Christ's cross. Reconciliation refers to the restoration of relationship between God and those who were alienated from Him through sin.

E. Access to God

Hebrews 10:19–22 teaches that believers now have boldness to enter the holiest through the blood of Jesus. Under the New Covenant, believers are invited to approach God through Christ with sincere hearts and confidence in His priestly work.

F. Victory Through Christ

Revelation 12:11 (KJV)

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony..."

The blood of the Lamb is central to the victory described in this passage. However, believers should not treat Communion as a magical ritual or the elements as possessing independent power. Our confidence rests in Jesus Christ and His completed victory.

Central Truth: The power of redemption is not contained in the physical cup itself. It rests in Jesus Christ, whose blood was shed for our salvation.

SECTION VI: UNDERSTANDING THE NEW COVENANT

8. What Is the New Covenant?

The New Covenant is God's gracious covenantal provision through Jesus Christ, in fulfillment of the promises announced by the prophets.

Jeremiah 31:31 (KJV)

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah."

Jeremiah 31:31–34 describes several features of this promised covenant.

A. God's Law Written Upon the Heart

The New Covenant involves inward transformation rather than merely external religious conformity. **Jeremiah 31:33** declares that God will place His law within His people and write it upon their hearts.

B. A Restored Covenant Relationship

God declares that He will be their God and they will be His people. This relationship calls for faithfulness, obedience, and belonging.

C. Personal Knowledge of God

Jeremiah 31:34 speaks of God's people knowing Him. The New Covenant brings believers into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

D. Forgiveness of Sin

God promises to forgive iniquity and remember sin no more. The New Testament identifies Jesus as the mediator of the New Covenant. **Hebrews 9:15** declares Him to be the mediator of the new testament. **Hebrews 8:6** speaks of Christ mediating a better covenant established upon better promises.

9. Communion as Covenant Remembrance

When Jesus said, "This cup is the new testament in my blood," He placed His sacrificial death at the center of the New Covenant.

Therefore, Communion reminds believers that:

1. We belong to God through Jesus Christ.
2. Forgiveness is grounded in Christ's sacrifice.
3. We have been called into a life of inward transformation.
4. Covenant relationship carries a responsibility to walk in obedience and faith.
5. Our standing before God is grounded in Christ's grace rather than our own merit.

Communion is not the establishment of a new covenant each time it is observed. It is a repeated remembrance of the covenant established through Christ.

Teaching Principle: We do not come to the Lord's Table to create covenant through our actions. We come because Christ has established the New Covenant through His blood.

SECTION VII: COMMUNION AS FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

10. The Meaning of Spiritual Participation

1 Corinthians 10:16–17 (KJV)

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

Paul presents Communion as an expression of participation in Christ and unity among believers. Communion is not merely an isolated personal experience. It has a corporate dimension.

A. Fellowship With Christ

Communion directs our faith toward the crucified and risen Lord. Through faith, believers share in the benefits of His saving work.

B. Fellowship With the Body of Christ

The Church is described throughout Scripture as the Body of Christ. **1 Corinthians 12:12–27** teaches that every believer belongs to one body, and each member has a responsibility toward the others.

C. Unity Among Believers

The one bread illustrates the shared identity of believers in Christ. The Table should not become a place of competition, pride, exclusion based on social standing, or division.

D. Covenant Responsibility Toward Others

John 13:34–35 establishes love among believers as a distinguishing mark of discipleship. **Ephesians 4:1–3** calls believers to humility, meekness, patience, and unity in the Spirit.

To acknowledge communion with Christ while deliberately mistreating His people contradicts the meaning of the ordinance.

Teaching Application

Before participating in Communion, believers should consider:

- Am I walking in love toward fellow believers?
- Am I fostering unnecessary division?
- Have I been prideful or dismissive toward others?
- Is there someone I need to forgive?
- Is God calling me to pursue reconciliation?

Key Revelation: Communion brings us before the Lord whose sacrifice reconciles us to God and establishes us as one people in Him.

SECTION VIII: COMMUNION AND SELF-EXAMINATION

11. The Biblical Responsibility to Examine Ourselves

1 Corinthians 11:28 (KJV)

“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.”

Paul instructs believers to examine themselves before participating. The Greek word translated *examine* is *dokimazō*, which carries the sense of testing or evaluating in order to determine what is genuine or approved.

Self-examination is not an invitation to spiritual condemnation. It is a call to honest evaluation and reverent participation.

12. Understanding the Corinthian Context

Read 1 Corinthians 11:17–34

The Corinthian church was observing the Lord's Supper in a disorderly and divisive manner. Problems included:

- Division among believers.
- Selfishness during their gatherings.
- Some eating excessively while others went hungry.
- Drunkenness.
- Humiliating those who had little.
- Failure to recognize the sacred and communal significance of the meal.

Paul rebuked these practices because the congregation's behavior contradicted the meaning of the Lord's Supper.

13. What Does It Mean to Partake Unworthily?

1 Corinthians 11:27 (KJV)

"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord."

The concern is not that an individual must become morally perfect before receiving Communion. The passage refers to participating in an **unworthy manner**. This includes treating the Lord's Supper irreverently or behaving in ways that contradict its meaning. The Christian comes to the Table dependent upon grace, not personal perfection.

Five Areas of Biblical Self-Examination

1. **Examine Your Faith** — 2 Corinthians 13:5. Are you trusting in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?
2. **Examine Your Heart** — Psalm 139:23–24. Invite God to search your heart and reveal anything requiring correction.
3. **Examine Your Relationships** — Matthew 5:23–24. Are you resisting a necessary act of reconciliation?
4. **Examine Your Conduct** — 1 John 1:9. Are there sins you need to confess and turn away from?
5. **Examine Your Reverence** — 1 Corinthians 11:29. Are you approaching the Lord's Supper with spiritual understanding and respect for Christ and His people?

Important Pastoral Clarification

Communion is not reserved for those who have never failed. The proper response to recognized sin is confession, repentance, and renewed trust in the grace of Jesus Christ.

Believers should not be taught that every personal struggle automatically disqualifies them from the Table. The biblical instruction is to examine oneself **and so eat**, approaching the ordinance reverently and sincerely.

SECTION IX: DISCERNING THE LORD'S BODY

14. What Does It Mean to Discern the Body?

1 Corinthians 11:29 (KJV)

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

The Greek word associated with discerning is **diakrinō**, which can communicate making a distinction, recognizing, or judging rightly. The biblical context requires believers to recognize the true significance of what they are doing.

There are two important dimensions in considering this passage.

A. Recognizing Christ's Sacrifice

Communion must never be treated as an ordinary meal without regard to the death of Jesus Christ. The bread and cup direct attention to His body and blood.

B. Recognizing the Community as Christ's Body

The broader passage also emphasizes the sinful treatment of other believers. Paul rebukes those who humiliate the poor and promote divisions. Because the Church is Christ's Body, believers must not separate reverence for Christ from love for His people.

Christian interpreters differ regarding which aspect Paul emphasizes most strongly, but both are significant biblical themes.

15. Why Does Paul Warn About Judgment?

1 Corinthians 11:30–32 describes weakness, sickness, and death among some Corinthians and discusses the Lord's disciplinary judgment.

These warnings must be understood within the particular context of the congregation's serious misuse of the Lord's Supper. They should not be used to declare that every sickness or death is punishment for improper Communion. Jesus Himself rejected simplistic assumptions that all suffering results from a specific personal sin (**John 9:1–3**).

Paul's warning teaches us that the Lord's Table is sacred and must not be treated carelessly.

Teaching Principle: Communion requires discernment because the sacrifice of Christ is holy, and His people must be treated with love and honor.

SECTION X: COMMUNION, HEALING, AND SPIRITUAL RESTORATION

16. Is Communion Connected to Healing?

The saving work of Jesus Christ is the foundation of the believer's hope for complete redemption and restoration. **Isaiah 53:4–5** speaks of the suffering of the Servant of the Lord. **1 Peter 2:24** connects the wounds of Christ with the healing and restoration associated with turning from sin and living in righteousness. **James 5:14–16** encourages prayer for the sick within the community of faith.

It is appropriate for believers to pray for healing, spiritual renewal, and restoration during Communion. However, Scripture does not establish that receiving Communion guarantees immediate physical healing. The bread and cup are not magical substances. Our faith must remain centered upon Jesus Christ rather than upon a ritual technique.

Areas for Prayer During Communion

Spiritual Restoration. Pray for renewed fellowship, repentance, and a strengthened walk with God. *Supporting Scriptures:* **1 John 1:7–9; Psalm 51:10–12.**

Emotional Restoration. Give burdens, grief, fear, and inward struggles to the Lord. *Supporting Scriptures:* Matthew 11:28–30; Philippians 4:6–7.

Physical Healing. Ask God for healing while trusting His wisdom and continuing to seek appropriate care. *Supporting Scriptures:* James 5:14–16; 2 Corinthians 12:7–10.

Relational Reconciliation. Pray for humility, forgiveness, and restored relationships wherever possible. *Supporting Scriptures:* Ephesians 4:31–32; Romans 12:18.

Spiritual Strength. Remember that the risen Christ sustains His people as they remain in Him. *Supporting Scriptures:* John 15:4–5; Philippians 4:13.

Foundational Truth

Communion does not independently release healing, forgiveness, or deliverance by the performance of a ritual. It calls us to remember and trust Jesus Christ, who is the source of our salvation and our hope.

SECTION XI: COMMUNION AS A PROCLAMATION

17. We Proclaim the Lord's Death

1 Corinthians 11:26 (KJV)

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come."

The expression *shew* means to proclaim or announce. Every observance of the Lord's Supper communicates the gospel.

Communion Proclaims Five Major Biblical Truths

- 1. Christ Came in the Flesh.** Jesus Christ entered human history. *John 1:14.*
- 2. Christ Died for Our Sins.** His death was an atoning sacrifice. *1 Corinthians 15:3; Romans 5:8.*
- 3. Christ's Sacrifice Was Sufficient.** His sacrifice accomplished what repeated animal sacrifices could not finally accomplish. *Hebrews 10:11–14.*
- 4. Christ Rose From the Dead.** Communion is observed by believers who worship the crucified and risen Lord. *1 Corinthians 15:4; Romans 6:9.*
- 5. Christ Will Return.** The Church continues to observe the Lord's Supper in anticipation of His coming. *1 Corinthians 11:26; Acts 1:11.*

Communion Looks in Three Directions

Backward — We Remember. We look back to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Inward and Around Us — We Examine and Discern. We examine ourselves and recognize our responsibility toward the Body of Christ.

Forward — We Anticipate. We look forward to the return of Jesus Christ and the fullness of His Kingdom.

Key Teaching Statement: Communion remembers the cross, calls the Church into faithful fellowship, and anticipates the return of the King.

SECTION XII: THE PROPHETIC SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNION

18. Communion and the Coming Kingdom

Communion does not only direct our attention to an event in the past. It also points toward the fulfillment of God's future promises.

Matthew 26:29 (KJV)

"But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Jesus connects the meal with a future Kingdom expectation. The Lord's Supper therefore carries a forward-looking dimension.

19. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Revelation 19:7–9 describes the marriage of the Lamb and the blessedness of those invited to the marriage supper.

The Lord's Supper and the marriage supper of the Lamb are distinct biblical scenes, but Christian teaching has long recognized a meaningful connection between the Church's present fellowship with Christ and its future hope.

Communion reminds the Church that its story does not end at the cross. Christ has risen, Christ reigns, and Christ will come again.

The Church's Responsibility While Awaiting Christ

According to Scripture, believers are called to:

- Remain watchful (Matthew 24:42).
- Pursue holiness (1 Peter 1:15–16).
- Walk in love (Ephesians 5:1–2).
- Continue in the faith (Colossians 1:23).
- Proclaim the gospel (Matthew 28:19–20).
- Live in expectation of Christ's appearing (Titus 2:11–13).

Prophetic Teaching Principle: Communion is a continuing witness that the crucified and resurrected Jesus Christ will return and bring His Kingdom purposes to their appointed fulfillment.

SECTION XIII: WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNION?

20. Communion and Personal Faith

The Lord's Supper was instituted by Jesus among His disciples and is presented in the New Testament as an observance of the believing community. **Acts 2:41–42** connects the reception of the apostolic message, baptism, continuing fellowship, teaching, prayers, and the breaking of bread. **1 Corinthians 11:23–34** addresses the Church and instructs its members concerning proper participation.

Therefore, Communion should be approached as an expression of faith in Jesus Christ.

Important Considerations

For Believers. Those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ should approach the Table with thanksgiving, understanding, reverence, and self-examination.

For Those Who Have Not Yet Received Christ. A person should first be taught the gospel and invited to respond in repentance and faith. Communion itself does not produce salvation.

For New Believers. New believers should receive instruction concerning the meaning of the bread, cup, and New Covenant.

For Children. Parents and ministry leaders should consider a child's understanding, personal faith, and the church's doctrinal practice.

Christian denominations differ in their requirements for participation, including whether baptism must precede Communion. Scripture does not provide a single detailed age requirement or universal participation procedure.

For Believers Who Have Fallen Into Sin. The biblical response is sincere repentance and renewed trust in Christ, not the assumption that grace is unavailable. Churches should also follow their established biblical policies for pastoral accountability and participation.

SECTION XIV: HOW OFTEN SHOULD COMMUNION BE OBSERVED?

21. Biblical Frequency

1 Corinthians 11:25 (KJV)

"...this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

The New Testament does not specify one universally binding frequency for all congregations. **Acts 2:42** records that the early believers continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers. **Acts 20:7** describes believers gathering on the first day of the week to break bread.

Churches observe Communion at different intervals, including weekly, monthly, or during designated worship gatherings. What matters biblically is that the ordinance is faithfully observed with understanding and reverence. Frequency alone does not establish spiritual maturity. Communion should be meaningful whether it is observed frequently or less often.

May Communion Be Observed in a Home?

Acts 2:46 records believers breaking bread from house to house, although not every New Testament reference to breaking bread necessarily describes the formal Lord's Supper. Home observance may be appropriate within a church's teaching and pastoral order. It should not become a casual substitute for Christian fellowship or accountable participation in the local church. **1 Corinthians 11:33** also emphasizes the gathered and communal nature of the Lord's Supper.

SECTION XV: THE PROPER BIBLICAL OBSERVANCE OF COMMUNION

22. Preparing for the Lord's Table

A Communion service should direct the attention of believers toward Jesus Christ and His finished work.

Step 1: Gather in Reverence

The congregation should prepare for a sacred time of worship and remembrance. *Scripture: Psalm 95:6; 1 Corinthians 11:20–22.*

Step 2: Read the Institution Scriptures

Read one or more of the following: Matthew 26:26–29; Luke 22:14–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26. Explain the meaning of Communion before distributing the elements.

Step 3: Allow for Personal Examination

Read 1 Corinthians 11:27–29. Provide time for quiet reflection, confession, repentance, and prayer. Encourage believers to approach the Table with faith rather than fear.

Step 4: Give Thanks for the Bread

The minister may pray:

Prayer Over the Bread

“Heavenly Father, we thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ, into the world for our redemption.

We remember His obedience, His suffering, and the offering of His body for our salvation.

As we receive this bread, help us to recognize the greatness of His sacrifice, to walk in righteousness, and to live in thanksgiving for the grace we have received.

In Jesus' name, Amen.”

The minister may then say:

“Jesus said, ‘This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.’” — Luke 22:19

The congregation partakes of the bread.

Step 5: Give Thanks for the Cup

The minister may pray:

Prayer Over the Cup

"Father, we thank You for the precious blood of Jesus Christ, shed for the forgiveness of our sins.

We thank You for the New Covenant established through His sacrifice.

We acknowledge that our redemption, forgiveness, reconciliation, and access to You are found in Jesus Christ alone.

As we receive this cup, strengthen our faith and help us to walk in covenant faithfulness, holiness, and love.

In Jesus' name, Amen."

The minister may then say:

"This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." — 1 Corinthians 11:25

The congregation partakes of the cup.

Step 6: Proclaim Christ's Death and Resurrection

Read 1 Corinthians 11:26. Remind the congregation that the Church continues to proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

Step 7: Close in Thanksgiving and Worship

Matthew 26:30 records that Jesus and His disciples sang a hymn after the meal. Communion may appropriately conclude with worship, prayer, thanksgiving, and renewed commitment to Christ.

A Note on the Elements

The New Testament describes bread and the cup associated with the fruit of the vine. Churches differ in their choice of unleavened or ordinary bread and wine or nonalcoholic grape juice. These practical matters should be handled consistently with the congregation's convictions and pastoral practices, without presenting an unsupported detail as a universal biblical command.

SECTION XVI: COMMON MISUNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT COMMUNION

23. Seven Misconceptions That Must Be Corrected

Misconception 1: Communion Saves a Person

Biblical Correction: Salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. *Ephesians 2:8–9; Romans 10:9–10.*

Misconception 2: Communion Repeats Christ's Sacrifice

Biblical Correction: Christ offered Himself once for all. *Hebrews 9:25–28; Hebrews 10:10–14*. Christian traditions differ in their understanding of sacramental participation, but Communion must never be presented as another crucifixion of Jesus.

Misconception 3: Communion Is Only a Religious Tradition

Biblical Correction: Jesus Himself instituted the observance and instructed His disciples to continue it. *Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26*.

Misconception 4: Only Perfect People Can Take Communion

Biblical Correction: Believers are commanded to examine themselves and participate in a worthy manner, not to claim personal sinlessness. *1 Corinthians 11:27–29; 1 John 1:8–9*.

Misconception 5: Communion Has No Connection to Other Believers

Biblical Correction: The Lord's Supper expresses the unity of the Body of Christ and carries responsibilities of love and mutual care. *1 Corinthians 10:16–17; 1 Corinthians 11:17–22*.

Misconception 6: Communion Automatically Guarantees Healing or Deliverance

Biblical Correction: Scripture points believers to the saving and restoring work of Christ but does not promise that the physical act of receiving the elements automatically produces a particular outcome. *James 5:14–16; 2 Corinthians 12:7–10*.

Misconception 7: Communion Only Looks Backward

Biblical Correction: Communion remembers Christ's sacrifice and anticipates His return. *1 Corinthians 11:26; Matthew 26:29*.

SECTION XVII: LIVING A COMMUNION-CENTERED LIFE

24. Communion Must Influence Our Daily Conduct

Receiving the Lord's Supper should not be disconnected from the way we live. The values expressed at the Table should continue beyond the worship service.

A. Live in Gratitude

1 Thessalonians 5:18. Give thanks to God in every circumstance.

B. Live in Holiness

Romans 12:1–2. Present your body as a living sacrifice and allow your mind to be transformed.

C. Live in Forgiveness

Colossians 3:13. Forgive others as Christ has forgiven you.

D. Live in Unity

Ephesians 4:3. Endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

E. Live in Obedience

John 14:15. Love for Christ should produce obedience to His commandments.

F. Live in Faith

Galatians 2:20. The believer's life is now defined by faith in the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us.

G. Live With Eternal Expectation

Titus 2:13. Continue in the blessed hope of Christ's appearing.

Key Principle: Communion should not be an isolated religious moment. It should reinforce a life of faith, gratitude, holiness, love, and obedience.

SECTION XVIII: SPIRITUAL REFLECTION AND GROUP DISCUSSION

25. Questions for Personal Study

Question 1: Why did Jesus institute Communion during His final meal with His disciples? *Scriptures: Luke 22:14–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26.*

Question 2: How does the Passover lamb help us understand the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ? *Scriptures: Exodus 12:1–14; John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7.*

Question 3: What does the bread teach us about the incarnation, obedience, and sacrifice of Jesus? *Scriptures: John 1:14; Hebrews 10:10; Philippians 2:8.*

Question 4: What does the blood of Jesus accomplish under the New Covenant? *Scriptures: Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:20; Hebrews 9:15.*

Question 5: What is the difference between personal unworthiness and participating in an unworthy manner? *Scripture: 1 Corinthians 11:27–29.*

Question 6: Why does Paul connect the Lord's Supper with the way believers treat one another? *Scriptures: 1 Corinthians 10:16–17; 1 Corinthians 11:17–22.*

Question 7: How should believers prepare their hearts before Communion? *Scriptures: Psalm 139:23–24; 1 John 1:9; 1 Corinthians 11:28.*

Question 8: In what ways does Communion proclaim the gospel? *Scriptures: Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 11:26; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4.*

Question 9: What should the promise of Christ's return change about our lives? *Scriptures: Matthew 26:29; Titus 2:11–13.*

Question 10: What practical changes should occur in our lives as a result of understanding Communion?

Scriptures: Romans 12:1–2; Ephesians 4:1–3; Colossians 3:12–17.

SECTION XIX: CORE SCRIPTURES TO MEMORIZE

1. Remembrance — Luke 22:19

“...this do in remembrance of me.”

2. The New Covenant — Luke 22:20

“This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.”

3. Redemption — Ephesians 1:7

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins...”

4. Fellowship — 1 Corinthians 10:16

“...is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?”

5. Examination — 1 Corinthians 11:28

“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.”

6. Proclamation — 1 Corinthians 11:26

“...ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.”

SECTION XX: FINAL TEACHING SUMMARY

26. Ten Foundational Truths About Communion

Truth 1: Communion was instituted by Jesus Christ.

Truth 2: Communion is grounded in His sacrificial death.

Truth 3: The bread directs our attention to His body given for us.

Truth 4: The cup directs our attention to His blood and the New Covenant.

Truth 5: Communion remembers the finished redemptive work of Christ.

Truth 6: Communion expresses fellowship with Christ and unity within His Church.

Truth 7: Communion requires reverence, discernment, and self-examination.

Truth 8: Communion does not replace salvation through faith.

Truth 9: Communion proclaims the Lord's death until He returns.

Truth 10: Communion should produce gratitude, holiness, love, obedience, and renewed commitment to Christ.

CONCLUSION: THE TABLE OF REMEMBRANCE, COVENANT, AND FELLOWSHIP

The Lord's Supper is one of the most significant sacred observances given to the Church. At the Table, believers remember the body of Jesus Christ given for them and His blood shed for the forgiveness of sins.

They acknowledge the New Covenant established through His sacrifice. They examine their own hearts and recognize their responsibility toward the Body of Christ. They celebrate the grace of God, proclaim the gospel, and look forward to the return of their Lord.

Communion calls every believer to recognize the immeasurable cost of redemption and the greatness of God's love.

The bread points to Christ's body. The cup points to His blood. The Table calls the Church into remembrance, thanksgiving, discernment, and fellowship. And the continuing observance announces that the crucified Savior is the risen Lord who will come again.

Final Foundational Principle: Communion is not merely about what we receive at the Table. It is about remembering Whom we belong to, understanding what Christ has accomplished, and living faithfully in response to His sacrifice.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

We come before You with grateful hearts, thanking You for the immeasurable gift of salvation through Your Son, Jesus Christ.

Thank You for the sacrifice that was made for our redemption, for the blood that was shed for the forgiveness of our sins, and for the New Covenant established through the death of our Lord and Savior.

Father, give us a deeper understanding of the sacred significance of Communion. Teach us never to approach the Lord's Table casually, irreverently, or without discernment.

Search our hearts and reveal anything that is inconsistent with Your Word. Lead us in repentance where repentance is necessary, reconciliation where relationships have been wounded, and obedience where we have resisted Your instruction.

Let the remembrance of Christ's body and blood strengthen our faith, deepen our gratitude, and renew our commitment to holy living. Teach us to discern and honor the Body of Christ, walking in love, humility, unity, and truth.

May we never forget the cost of our redemption. May we never take Your grace for granted. May we faithfully proclaim the death of Jesus Christ until He comes again.

We give You glory, honor, and thanksgiving for the finished work of the cross and the victory of the resurrection.

In the mighty name of Jesus Christ,

Amen.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE GUIDE

Old Testament Foundations

- Exodus 12:1–14 — The institution of Passover.
- Exodus 24:3–8 — Covenant ratification and blood.
- Psalm 51:10–12 — A prayer for inward renewal.
- Psalm 139:23–24 — Self-examination before God.
- Isaiah 53:4–7 — The suffering of the Servant.
- Jeremiah 31:31–34 — The promise of the New Covenant.

The Teaching of Jesus

- Matthew 26:26–30 — The institution of the Lord's Supper.
- Mark 14:22–26 — The bread, cup, and covenant.
- Luke 22:14–20 — The Last Supper and remembrance.
- John 1:29 — Jesus as the Lamb of God.
- John 6:35–58 — Jesus as the Bread of Life; an important passage concerning faith and life in Christ, interpreted in differing ways in relation to Communion.
- John 13:34–35 — Love among Christ's disciples.

The Early Church

- Acts 2:41–47 — The fellowship of the early believers.
- Acts 20:7 — Breaking bread in the gathered church.
- 1 Corinthians 5:7–8 — Christ our Passover.
- 1 Corinthians 10:16–21 — Communion and participation.
- 1 Corinthians 11:17–34 — Proper observance and self-examination.
- 1 Corinthians 12:12–27 — The unity of Christ's Body.

The New Covenant and Redemption

- Romans 5:8–11 — Christ's death and reconciliation.

- Ephesians 1:7 – Redemption through His blood.
- Colossians 1:19-22 – Peace through the cross.
- Hebrews 8:6-13 – Christ and the New Covenant.
- Hebrews 9:11-15 – Redemption through Christ's blood.
- Hebrews 10:10-22 – The sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice.
- 1 Peter 1:18-19 – The precious blood of Christ.
- 1 Peter 2:24 – Christ bearing our sins.
- 1 John 1:7-9 – Cleansing, confession, and forgiveness.

The Return of Christ

- Matthew 26:29 – The future Kingdom banquet.
- 1 Corinthians 11:26 – Proclaiming His death until He comes.
- Titus 2:11-13 – Living in expectation of His appearing.
- Revelation 19:7-9 – The marriage supper of the Lamb.

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