

DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY COMMUNION

April 6, 2022



Ordinances

Two ordinances obtained by Christ:

_____ & _____

The difference between:

Sacrament: tangible way of receiving grace

Ordinance: act ordained by God – acting out physically what’s true spiritually so we’re encouraged and strengthened to persevere with joy

Table Discussion:

Read Matthew 26:17-29

Share a time when you experienced Christ’s presence in a particularly meaningful way during Communion.

What made this experience so meaningful?

The Ordinance of The Lord's Supper

P.R.E.P.A.R.E

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when 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 also he took the cup, 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. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

1 Corinthians 11:23-29

P _____

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD; I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Jeremiah 31:31-34

The New Covenant promised...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

These promises are the sweetness of the new covenant that we are to savor when we come to the table.

R _____

Remembering all Christ has done to accomplish our salvation removes our eyes from ourselves and our own self-reliance and fixes them instead on the only One who has the power to save.

E _____

Self-Reflection:

Do I trust that Christ is Lord, and His atoning death saves me?

Does the way I live, and the attitude of my heart reflect this reality?

Is my soul longing for more of Christ in this meal?

We're sinners and we need to be aware of our sin so we're led to repentance BUT we come to the Communion meal recognizing and understanding that Christ's work fully atones for our sins. Christ invites us to the table, He prepares a seat for us, not because of what we've done, but because of who He is and what He's done for us.

P _____

In receiving the bread and the cup we announce the hope of Christ to both the unbeliever, to awaken faith, and our believing brothers and sisters along side us to sustain faith.

A _____

*"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied."
Matthew 5:6*

*"I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger,
and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."
John 6:35*

When our deepest longing and desire is to know God and be filled with Him, Christ offers Himself as the eternally satisfying nourishment for our souls.

R _____

*“Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples...Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them.”
Matthew 26:26-27*

As we’re fed by Him, as we receive Him into the depths of our souls, His grace is sufficient, and He alone provides all we need for life and godly living.

E _____

Communion is communal

*“They devoted themselves to the apostle’s teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayer.”
Acts 2:42*

The church is the bride of Christ:

do we see and savour Christ’s love for the church reflected in the bread and cup?

Are our own hearts and attitudes towards the church and our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ consistent with Christ’s?

Table Discussion:

Discuss together which word from our acronym has been the most formative for you in shaping how you prepare your heart to receive The Lord’s Supper and why?

When We Partake

What happens as we partake of the Lord's Supper:

Real Presence

- We believe there is a unique spiritual presence of Christ that accompanies the observance of both ordinances
- The fear of mysticism holds us back from leaning into this view

“Our tendency is to prioritize extraordinary methods and demands over the ordinary means that Christ instituted for sustainable mission.” – Michael Horton

Yes, we should be intentional about church programs and structures, missional strategy, formation, and discipleship, but we can't forget that Christ has also instituted means that are far outside of our control in His mercy and grace to shape and form His people. Part of Christ's tending and caring for His people is through the ordinances.

Table Discussion:

In what practical ways do you need Jesus to be nourishing you today?

The Lords Table

Friends, this is the joyful feast of the people of God! Many will come from east and west and from north and south and sit at the table in the kingdom of God. This is the Lord's table. Our Savior invites those who trust him to share the feast he has prepared. This is a table of humility and through it, Christ calls us to come to God honestly and truthfully. We are encouraged as C.S. Lewis says, to lay before God what IS in us...not what ought to be in us. And it is such a relief to know that God works with us, right where we are at today...in this moment.

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Holy and gracious God,
accept our praise,
through your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
who on the night he was handed over
to suffering and death,
took bread and gave you thanks,
saying, "Take, and eat:
this is my body which is broken for you."
In the same way he took the cup,
saying, "This is my blood which is shed for you."
When you do this, you do it in memory of me."

Remembering, therefore, his death and resurrection,
we offer you, God, this bread and this cup,
giving thanks that you have made us worthy
to stand in your presence and serve you.

We ask you to send your Holy Spirit
upon the offering of your holy church.
Gather into one
all who share in these sacred mysteries,
filling them with the Holy Spirit
and confirming their faith in the truth,
that together we may praise you
and give you glory
through your Servant Jesus Christ.

In the beginning of the service, we have been using a litany or repetition of a phrase after we read Scripture. The phrase is:

"The Word of God, for the People of God, Thanks be to God."

When we say that we are agreeing that what is read is the holy word of God and that we want to submit our lives to it, and we are grateful that God gives the gift of his word to shape our hearts and lives. By saying it, we are reminding ourselves and one another that we hold the word of God is an authoritative and life-giving word to us.

Another historical practice after communion is to say is:

“The gifts of God, for the people of God, Thanks be to God.”

In the same way, as with the word of God, we are affirming that the Lord’s Table is central to our lives as Christians. It is the place where we partake of a meal that fills us in a profoundly spiritual and sacred or sacramental way. If we are hungry for forgiveness, grace, presence of the Lord, empowering to face the stress and challenges of life, etc... We come to recognize that we need this meal and are grateful.

Leader: The gifts of God, for the people of God...

All: **Thanks be to God!**

Notes:

Reference Material

Journey to Jesus – Robert Webber

Sacramental Life – David DeSilva

A Holy Meal: The Lord's Supper in the Life of the Church – Gordon Smith

Evangelical, Sacramental and Pentecostal: Why the Church Should be All Three – Gordon Smith

Living the Christian Year: Time to Inhabit the Story of God – Bobby Gross



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