



COMMUNION

Use the following material in your on-going discipleship of your group in the value and importance of the communion experience. At the end of this section is a sample communion presentation you can use as a model in your group meeting.

WHAT IS THE LORD'S SUPPER?

Jesus never asked his disciples to remember His birth. He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. Jesus gave the church two visible symbols (called "ordinances") as reminders of His death. These two ordinances are: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is an object lesson that represents and reminds believers of God's great love and grace for us.

WHY CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

1. To understand what Jesus did for us

"For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he gave thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after supper, he took the cup saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.'" 1 Cor. 11:23-25

2. To renew our belief in what Jesus did for us

"For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." 1 Cor. 11:26

3. To renew our belief that Jesus is coming for us

"For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." 1 Cor. 11:26

4. To examine our relationship with Jesus

"Therefore, who ever 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. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup." 1 Cor. 11:27-28

The Bread and Cup are only symbols of Jesus' body and blood - they are a reminder, but the communion elements do not make us more holy or spiritual.

WHO SHOULD TAKE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

Anyone who is already a believer. (Mark 14:22-26)

"For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself." 2 Cor. 11:29

It is not necessary to be a member of Mission Community Church to participate in the Lord's Supper. You need only be a follower of Christ.

HOW DO I PREPARE MYSELF FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER?

1. Self Examination 1 Cor. 11:27
2. Confessing my sins 1 John 1:9
3. Recommitment Rom. 12:1
4. Restoring Relationships Matt. 5:23-24



WHEN SHOULD WE OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER?

Jesus never said how often believers should observe the Lord's Supper. It is implied it should be done on a regular basis. There are many different practices in serving communion and many differing beliefs. The scriptures call us to hold communion to remember Christ's work on our behalf. MISSION typically observes communion about every 4-6 weeks during our weekend services. Through a regular remembrance in our services and occasionally within our small groups, our goal is to fulfill this admonition on a regular basis as instructed, but not too often, so that it becomes a meaningless ritual.

SAMPLE COMMUNION SERVICE

When you have communion in your small group, always be sensitive to those who are in attendance. Is there someone new to the group since you last had communion? Are you sure that everyone in the group that evening is a believer? Completely familiarize yourself with the teaching on communion so that you can review, if necessary the purpose and meaning of communion for new people.

Begin by reading 1 Corinthians 11:23-31

After reading the passage, review with your group why we take communion together.

1. To remember what Jesus did for us. 1 Cor. 11:23-25
2. To proclaim our belief in what Jesus did for us. 1 Cor. 11:26
3. To proclaim our belief that Jesus is coming for us. 1 Cor. 11:26
4. To examine our relationship with Jesus. 1 Cor. 11:27-28

Communion is a time to examine our lives to ensure they are cleansed of the sin that Christ's death brought forgiveness from. Let's take a time of silent prayer to allow the Holy Spirit examine our hearts so that we can confess any sin that He brings to our attention.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:23, 24

Provide 5-10 minutes for people to move apart for prayer. One idea is to give each person an envelope and use that to enclose a note listing things that God is speaking to them about. This process can help people be more concrete in a commitment to respond to God's leading.

After this time call people back together and pass the bread around and have people take a piece and hold it until all are served. Invite a member of your group to pray, thanking Jesus for dying and sacrificing his body for our sins. After the prayer say "Jesus said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.'" Eat the bread.

Pass the cups around and have people take a cup and hold it until all are served. Invite a member of your group to pray, thanking Jesus for shedding his blood to cover our sins. After the prayer say, "Jesus said, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.'"

Close your communion time with a song or prayer.