

The Lord's Supper *Together*¹

Series: Our Life Together
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[23] 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, [24] 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." [25] 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." [26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
—1 Cor. 11:23–26

Introduction

What is the Lord's Supper?

Christ commanded all Christians to eat bread and to drink from the cup in thankful remembrance of him and his death. The Lord's Supper is a celebration of the presence of God in our midst; bringing us into communion with God and with one another; feeding and nourishing our souls. It also anticipates the day when we will eat and drink with Christ in his Father's kingdom.

—New City Catechism (NCC) Question 46

When we take the Lord's Supper...

I. We obey Christ

Christ commanded all Christians to eat bread and to drink from the cup... – NCC

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¹ This outline benefited from Ligon Duncan's article explaining Question 46 of the New City Catechism. <http://newcitycatechism.com/new-city-catechism/#46>

II. We remember Christ's death on the Cross

Christ commanded all Christians to eat bread and to drink from the cup in thankful remembrance of him and his death. – NCC

“This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.... This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”
– 1 Cor. 11:24, 25

[26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. – 1 Cor. 11:26

III. We celebrate God's presence

The Lord's Supper is a celebration of the presence of God in our midst...-- NCC

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them. – Matt. 18:20

IV. We enjoy communion with the Lord and with one another

A. We enjoy communion with the Lord

[16] The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? – 1 Cor. 10:16

- The word in the original language translated “participation” in the ESV is the word “koinonia” which can also be translated “fellowship.”

When we drink the cup and eat the bread, we participate in, and have fellowship with, the body and blood of Christ. We are joined to him and experience a deep, spiritual koinonia with him. – Kevin DeYoung

B. We enjoy communion with one another

Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. – 1 Cor. 10:17

When you come together as a church... – 1 Cor. 11:18
when you come together to eat, wait for one another – 1 Cor. 11:33

We do not forbid taking the Lord's Supper to someone in a nursing home or a hospital, but that kind of individual celebration is exceptional, not the Biblical norm. Five times in 1 Corinthians 11, Paul speaks of the church "coming together" when the Lord's Supper is eaten. Verse 17b: "When you *come together* it is not for the better but for the worse." Verse 18: "For, in the first place, when you *come together* as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you." Verse 20: "When you *come together*, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat." Verse 33: "When you *come together* to eat, wait for one another." Verse 34: "If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home—so that when you *come together* it will not be for judgment." – John Piper

V. Our souls are nourished

[53] So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. [54] Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. [55] For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. [56] Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. [57] As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me.
– John 6:53-57

So I take verse 16 and 17 [of 1 Cor. 10] to mean that when believers eat the bread and drink the cup physically we do another kind of eating and drinking spiritually. We eat and drink—that is, we take into our lives—what happened on the cross. By faith—by trusting in all that God is for us in Jesus—we nourish ourselves with the benefits that Jesus obtained for us when he bled and died on the cross. – John Piper

The Lord's Supper belongs to the weak Christian. No one comes to the Table in unblemished worthiness or undiminished strength. We come to the Table in need. We come to the Table fresh from battles with sin, discouragement, unbelief, and the world. We need to be fed again. We need to receive the sustenance that Christ affords. By faith we receive the nourishment we need as we imbibe the benefits of Jesus' atoning work for sinners and weaklings. – Ligon Duncan, Thabiti Anyabwile

VI. We anticipate heaven

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

I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.” – Matthew 26:26-29

[6] On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined. [8] He will swallow up death forever; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. – Isaiah 25:6, 8

Conclusion

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