

Do This in Remembrance of Me

1 Corinthians 11:23-28

In a few minutes we will observe what is commonly called the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion. The Lord's Supper is a form of worship; it's an expression of our love for the Lord. Each time we eat the bread and drink the cup we affirm that Jesus is our Savior and we declare our love for him.

Before we actually take part in this act of worship, I'd like to consider some basic questions. Hopefully this brief discourse will accomplish two things: 1) it will answer questions you might have about the Lord's Supper, and 2) it will prepare you to come to the table of the Lord in a way that brings honor and glory to him.

Let's begin by asking the most basic question: What is the Lord's Supper?

The Lord's Supper is a memorial meal to commemorate the sacrificial death of

Jesus. The Lord's Supper is not a big meal with many courses; it's a small meal, consisting of a piece of bread and a cup of grape juice. The bread symbolizes the body of Jesus. The juice symbolizes the blood of Jesus.

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper as he and his disciples were eating (finishing up) the traditional Jewish Passover meal.

The Passover Supper commemorated Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage (see Exodus 12). The Lord's

Supper commemorates the event that delivered us from the bondage of sin (see Rom. 8:2 and Gal. 4:3).

Matthew 26:26 tells us that Jesus took some of the bread that was used in the Passover meal, gave thanks, and broke it. And then he said to his disciples. “Take and eat; this is my body.” What did Jesus mean by this? He meant that the bread represented or symbolized his body.

The disciples would never have thought that the bread was really Christ’s

body and that he was commanding them to eat his flesh. This would have been cannibalism. In the ancient Near East those who practiced cannibalism were considered cursed by God (see Duet. 28:53-57).

When Jesus said, “Take and eat; this is my body,” his disciples realized that he was speaking figuratively, not literally. They understood that the bread represented or symbolized Christ’s body.

After this, we're told that Jesus took a cup that was used in the Passover meal, gave thanks, and offered it to his disciples. He said, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Matt. 26:27,28).

Four cups of wine (a mixture of three parts wine and two parts water) were used in the Passover meal. The wine was warm because it was heated. The heated wine represented the blood of the

Passover lamb. My personal belief is that Jesus used the third cup of wine, called the cup of redemption, to institute the Lord's Supper.

Jesus told his disciples that the wine in the cup was his blood. What did he mean by this? He meant that the wine represented or symbolized his blood – the blood he would shed to atone for (make amends for and take away) the sins of the world (see 1 John 2:2).

The disciples would never have thought that the wine was really Christ's blood and that he was commanding them to drink his blood. The ingestion of any kind of blood (eating or drinking) was strictly forbidden by God (see Lev. 17 and Acts 15:29).

When Jesus told his disciples that the wine in the cup was his blood, they realized that he was speaking figuratively, not literally. They understood that the

wine represented or symbolized Christ's blood.

When Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper he used unleavened bread (bread without yeast) and wine. Today, most evangelical churches use regular bread (or a wafer-like substance) and grape juice. [Since most evangelical churches do not promote the use of alcoholic beverages, grape juice is used instead of wine.]

According to 1 Cor. 11:26 when you eat the bread and drink the juice you “proclaim the Lord’s death.” When you take part in the Lord’s Supper you publicly declare that Jesus is your Savior – that his death paid for your salvation in full. This means that only followers of Jesus – those who have accepted Christ as Savior and Lord – should take part in the Lord’s Supper.

Do you have to be an official member of Salem Church to take part in our

communion service? No. But you need to be a member of THE Church – the Body of Christ. Every blood bought, born again believer is welcome at the table of the Lord here at Salem.

What about children? Should children take part in the Lord's Supper? If a child has accepted Jesus as Savior and Lord and has as basic understanding of what he/she is doing, that child is welcome at the table of the Lord here at Salem.

Parents should talk to their children

**about accepting Christ and the Lord's
Supper, and then decide whether or not
their children are ready to take part in
the memorial meal.**

**How often should you take part in the
Lord's Supper? Whenever the memorial
meal is served. Today local churches
serve the Lord's Supper at various times
– daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, etc.**

**The Bible does NOT specify how often the
memorial meal should be served. But**

whenever it IS served, followers of Jesus should take part.

I'd like to consider one more question before we take part in the Lord's Supper this morning. How should we take part?

In 1 Cor. 11:27, the Apostle Paul tells us that we should take part in the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner. What does this mean? How do you take you take part in a worthy manner?

First, you must have the right mindset. When you come to the table your mind

should be fixed on Christ and what he did for you on the cross. When you come to the table forget about everything except Jesus – think only about him. Have the right mindset.

When you come to the table of the Lord you must also have a clean heart. If there's sin in your life and you know it, you need to repent, confess it to God, and seek his forgiveness.

Finally, when you come to the table of the Lord you must also have a passionate

love – a passionate love for Jesus. You and I come to the table of the Lord to take part in the Supper of the Lord because we love the Lord. We love him because he first loved us. We love him because of who he is and what he’s done. We love him because he gave his all for us. We love him because in him we find peace and joy and hope. When we come to the table of the Lord, we need to come with a passionate love for the Lord.

In 1 Cor. 11:28, the Apostle Paul tells us to examine ourselves before we take part in the Lord's Supper – to make sure that we are taking part in a worthy manner. You and I need to do that this morning. You and I need to make sure that we approach the table of the Lord: with the right mindset (focused on Jesus), with a clean heart (all sin confessed and forsaken), and a passionate love for Jesus. Let's pray together.

**PRAY, ASKING EACH PERSON TO
GO THROUGH A TIME OF SELF-
EXAMINATION**

**INVITE ALL BELIEVERS TO THE
TABLE**

**REMINDE PEOPLE TO WAIT UNTIL
EVERYONE IS SERVED TO
PARTAKE OF THE ELEMENTS**