

The Power of Communion

Luke 22:14-20

Called the Last Supper, The Lord's Table, The Lord's Supper

What is communion in the New Testament?

- 1 Communion reminds us of the redemptive, substitutionary work of Christ,
- 2 Communion is a profession on our part that we have become partakers of Christ and draw our life from His death and resurrection. It reminds us of the covenant that was made with the blood of Jesus.

Joh 6:53-56 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, 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 eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

55 "For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.

56 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

1Co 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

Life is in the blood –Atonement for sins

Le 17:11 'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.'

Atonement kaphar - to cover (specifically with bitumen); figuratively, to expiate or condone, to placate or cancel:-- appease, make (an atonement, cleanse, disannul, forgive, be merciful, pacify, pardon, purge (away), put off, (make) reconcile(-liation).

**Also translated as "a ransom" in the OT. Job 33:24

- 3 Communion reminds us of the cleansing power of the blood of Christ.
1Jo 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.
- 4 This second purpose was the reason that Paul said eating and drinking of the Lord's Supper unworthily could bring damnation. A person who takes communion without being cleansed by the blood of Jesus is professing a lie.
- 5 Communion reminds of the cost of redemption
It is impossible to put a value on the blood of Jesus. It is the price that was paid for the redemption of the whole human race. The Apostle Peter, in his epistle, stated that silver and gold could never compare to the "precious blood of Christ").
1Pe 1:18-19 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed (ransomed) with corruptible (perishable, corruptible) things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation (aimless conduct) received by tradition (Law) from your fathers;
19 But with the precious (valuable, costly) blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:
- 6 Communion reminds us that God has guaranteed, by covenant, never to remember our sins after we have accepted by faith that the blood of Jesus has covered them.

Heb 8:12-13 "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

13 In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. (Referencing Isaiah 31:34)

Heb 9:26 He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; **but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.**

Heb 10:14 "For by one offering He has perfected (consummated and made perfect) forever those who are being sanctified."

Heb 10:16-18 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,"

17 then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

18 Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

- 7 The BREAD reminds us that Jesus' body was broken for our health; spiritual, physical and mental. There is healing in Communion

The bread of communion symbolizes the body of Jesus that was broken for us through His sufferings. Partaking of communion should remind us of the emotional and physical salvation that Jesus provided for us

He not only died for us on the cross, but He also bore thirty-nine stripes on His back by which we were healed.

Mt 8:16-17 When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick,

17 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He Himself took (remove or take away) our infirmities And bore our sicknesses."

Took - lambano, to take by grabbing hold of; to seize and remove

Bore – bastazo – to remove; to lift off of, carry away, to take up

Isa 53:5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

1Pe 2:24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness--by whose stripes you were healed.

- 8 The WINE of Communion reminds us of perpetual redemption. Christ not only brought life but in Him was "pure life". Pure Blood

Heb 9:12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

Eternal - aionios: perpetual which includes past and future as well:, for ever, everlasting, world

Heb 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

What did the Blood of Christ provide for the one who accepts the atonement of the cross?

- (1) It was the price that purchased us from the power of darkness.

Ac 20:28 "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Col 1:13-14 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.

- (2) It justified us before God.

Ro 5:9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

- (3) It sanctified us.

Heb 10:10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Heb 10:4 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

Heb 13:12 Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

- (4) It redeemed us.

Eph 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

Re 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

(5) It brought us near to God.

Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you (gentiles) who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

(6) It purged our consciences.

Heb 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse (purge) your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

(7) It provided remission and forgiveness of sins.

Heb 9:22 And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

Eph 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

(8) It gives us boldness to enter into the holiest (i.e., God's presence).

Heb 10:19 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus,

(9) It cleanses us from all sin.

1Jo 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Re 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,

(10) It overcomes the devil.

Re 12:11 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

***1 Corinthians 11 – Paul correcting issues communion to the Corinthian church

1Co 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim (shew) the Lord's death till He comes.

The Greek word that was translated "shew" here means "to preach, declare" (Vine's Expository Dictionary). This preaching is as much for us as it is for others.

KATAGGELLO, "making a solemn announcement by word of mouth."

So, as we take communion, we are solemnly proclaiming the Lord's death and our union with Him through that death. This is a profession of our faith, and therefore, there are serious consequences for those who profess something they don't possess.

Part of the Passover –but New Covenant

The Lord's Supper came from a part of the Passover meal

Old Covenant -celebrated once each year.

New Covenant - it is a "perpetual covenant" that breaches all time and conditions.

The early Christian church took communion weekly and sometimes daily. There is no frequency of the Lord's Supper prescribed in Scripture.

1 Corinthians 11:27

1Co 11:27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

The Lord's Supper is symbolic, and its real power is in the fact that it keeps us in remembrance of the most basic truths of our salvation. However, just because it is symbolic doesn't mean it is unimportant. Here, Paul described the severe effects of partaking of communion unworthily.

Many interpretations of just what qualifies as "unworthily."

- (1) **Un-confessed sin** - A severe interpretation would suggest that any deed or thought in a person's life that has not been confessed and repented of would make that individual unworthy. Since the Scripture says "whatsoever is not of faith is sin", very few people would ever qualify as worthy to partake of communion. Plus, this would make our relationship with the Lord in communion dependent on our performance, and this is contrary to the very act of atonement that the Lord's Supper reminds us of.
- (2) **Born Again Being born again produces worthiness.** This would also be totally consistent with the doctrine of grace that Paul constantly preached. There were unbelievers among the true Christians, just as Jesus prophesied, and this still exists today. It is a dangerous offense for an unbeliever to take the Lord's Supper.

People who profess salvation through partaking of communion yet do not possess it, because true faith is not present, become guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Those people will not be able to claim ignorance when they stand before God. The Lord's Supper clearly preaches the Gospel.

Therefore, when taking communion, the people should examine themselves to see whether or not they are in the faith. It is an individual evaluation that ministers are not authorized to make for others, but ministers should make Paul's warnings here in known to others when administering communion.

- (3) **Having a flippant, disesteeming, irreverent attitude (superficial, insincere, artificial)**
Not remembering the cost is consistent with what the Corinthians were doing during the Love feast. They were not placing value on the aspect of remembering what Christ did to purchase their lives back.

“Guilty of the Body and Blood”

1. **Caused fear** - This warning about being "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" has caused fear in the hearts of many believers. They fear that if they aren't just right when they partake of communion, they may be damned. This is inconsistent with all of Paul's other teachings about relationship with the Lord through grace.
2. **We worship in “spirit & truth”** - We Christians do not partake of the Lord's Supper unworthily, even if we have sin in our lives. If we truly worship the Lord through communion, we have to do that in spirit and in truth, and our born-again spirits are perfect, regardless of how our flesh is. The apparent problems with this verse are removed when "unworthily" is interpreted as referring to those who are not born again.
3. **Not esteeming what the price of redemption cost.** – Corinthians did not see communion as solemn not were they esteeming it. They were not remembering.

The result was that some were sick and dying

- If some were dying this means that the *remembrance* of Christ's unselfish act has the ability to bring physical healing and more importantly “to keep” a person in sound health
- They were not “remembering” the cost to God and the cost for Christ.
- Because of their carnality they were not perceiving the power of communion

Communion proclaims (preaches) the death of Christ.

The death of Christ provided two major things among other things:

- Provided payment for sin
- Provided an eternal covenant with God, a covenant which we can enter into with Christ and God

The Power of Communion is in “remembrance” of the Christ's death and it's provision for us