

COMMUNION

1 Cor 11:23-26 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which 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 He took the cup also 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.

Names and Titles Given to This Ordinance:

- A. The Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11:20)
It is referred to in this way because it was at Christ's last supper with the disciples, prior to His crucifixion, that Jesus established this ordinance (Matt 26:26-29) and it points to a future supper that all believers of all ages will once again eat with Christ (Rev 19:9, 17).
- B. The Lord's Table; or, the Table of the Lord (1 Cor 10:21)
A *table* speaks to us of a place of feasting, love and fellowship. The Lord has provided a place for us to sup with Him in an intimate way.
- C. Communion (1 Cor 10:16)
The word *communion* means an intimate sharing of one person to another. Communion is to be a time of intimacy with the Lord and His Body.
- D. Breaking bread (Acts 20:7; Matt 26:26)
This title refers to when Jesus initiated communion and He took the bread, broke it and blessed it (Matthew 26:26).
- E. Other non-biblical terms:
 - 1. *Eucharist* comes from the Greek word which means "giving thanks" (1 Cor 14:16). Certainly, as we remember the Lord, thanksgiving should fill our hearts.
 - 2. *Sacrament* comes from a Latin word meaning "holy" or "set apart." The Communion Table should certainly be hallowed and revered by all.

Biblical foundation for this ordinance in the Bible:

- A. From the first chapters (Genesis 3:8) to the last chapters (Rev 21:1-3) of the Bible, God has revealed Himself as one who delights in and desires to have intimate fellowship and relationship with His creation.
- B. Even though sin separated man from God, God has always provided a means whereby this intimate relationship could be experienced in His house (Exodus 25:8).
- C. In the Old Testament, at different times, God provided different avenues through which this desire could be manifest.
 - 1. The Altar of Sacrifice (Exodus 20:24)
 - 2. The Table of Shewbread (Lev 24:5-9)
- D. Under the New Covenant, the Table of the Lord's presence is the Communion Table.

COMMUNION

The symbols that Jesus used in establishing Communion:

- A. *Bread* (Luke 22:19)
 - 1. The bread speaks of the body of Christ broken for sinful man.
 - 2. The bread which Jesus provided is necessary for spiritual life (John 6:58).

- B. *Wine* (or grape juice) (Matthew 26:29)
 - 1. Wine speaks of the blood of Christ that was shed for sinful man for cleansing sin (Matthew 26:28).
 - 2. Only the blood of Christ has the power to cleanse from sin (1 Jn 1:7).

Spiritual realities that are demonstrated and experienced in the Lord's Table:

Everything that we experience in the Christian life we experience as we exercise faith in the Word of God. Going through a certain formality effects nothing. However, as we exercise faith in the Word of God we should expect communion to be a very meaningful time.

- A. It should be a time of remembrance (1 Cor 11:24-25).

As Christians, we should continually remember the death, burial and resurrection of Christ and what God provided for us.

- B. It should be time of Communion (1 Cor 10:16).

All believers need to renew and maintain a communion relationship with the Lord.

- C. It should be a time of unity (1 Cor 10:17).

At the Table believer should be united around the Lord and recognize their interdependence and need for the spiritual body of Christ.

- D. It should be time of love (Luke 22:15).

Christ's death was the highest expression of His love for us. The Table of the Lord is a feast of His love.

- E. It should be time of healing (1 Cor 11:29-30; 1 Pet. 2:24I; Isaiah 53:4-51; John 3:8; Matt. 8:17; Psalms 103:3).

The truths found at the Table the Lord should have healing effects on relationships among believers and bring healing to the physical body.

- F. It should be a time of examination and receiving forgiveness (1 Cor 11:28-32; Matt. 26:28; Luke 22:21; Heb. 9:22; 1 John 1:7-9; Rev. 1:5).

Every believer should examine his heart to make sure it is free from enmity toward God and enmity toward our fellow man.

- G. It should be a time of thanksgiving (Matt 26:27).

As we remember Christ's work, a new spirit of thanksgiving should be ours.

COMMUNION

H. It should be time of blessing (1 Cor 10:16).

God's desire is to bless His people through the blessed bread and blessed cup.

I. It should be a time of witness (1 Cor 11:26).

Up to the second coming of Christ the practice of Communion in the church is a visible sign and witness to the death of Christ.

J. It should be a time of faith proclamations (1 Cor 11:26).

When we partake of the Communion Table we should declare out loud what we are believing God to do in us through this ordinance.