

The Lord Jesus desires to meet with believers in the communion service. Here we experience a union of our spirit with the Holy Spirit as we reflect, with awe and reverence remembering what Jesus' sacrifice secured for the believer as He hung on the cross.

Scriptures

1 Corth. 11:23-31 amplified

For I received from the Lord Himself that which I passed on to you - it was given me personally; that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was treacherously delivered up and while His betrayal was in progress took bread.

And when He had given thanks, He broke [it] and said, Take, eat. This is My body which is broken for you. Do this to call Me [affectionately] to remembrance.

Similarly when supper was ended, He took the cup also, saying, This cup is the new covenant [ratified and established] in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink [it], to call Me [affectionately] to remembrance.

For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are representing and signifying and proclaiming the fact of the Lord's death until He comes [again].

So then whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in a way that is unworthy [of Him] will be guilty of [profaning and sinning against] the body and blood of the Lord.

Let a man [thoroughly] examine himself and [only] when he has done so should he eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

For anyone who eats and drinks without discriminating and recognizing with due appreciation that [it is Christ's] body, eats and drinks a sentence - a verdict of judgment - upon himself.

That [careless and unworthy participation] is the reason many of you are weak and sickly, and quite enough of you are fallen into the deep sleep of death.

For if we searchingly examined ourselves - detecting our shortcomings and recognizing our own condition - we should not be judged and penalty decreed [by the divine judgment].

Isaiah 53: 4,5 amplified

Surely He has borne our griefs, sickness, weakness and distress - and carried our sorrows and pain [of punishment]. Yet we ignorantly considered Him stricken, smitten and afflicted by God [as if with leprosy].

But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our guilt and iniquities; the chastisement needful to obtain peace and well-being for us was upon Him and with the stripes that wounded Him we are healed and made whole.

Matt. 8:17 amplified

And thus He fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, He Himself took [in order to carry away] our weaknesses and infirmities and bore away our diseases.

1 Peter 2:24 amplified

He personally bore our sins in His [own] body to the tree [as to an altar and offered Himself on it] that we might die [cease to exist] to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed.

Reflection

1. Self Examination

When we partake of communion we should first examine our life asking God to reveal to us any sins that need to be confessed, repented of, and renounced.

2. Remembering

We then focus on the cross and enter into a remembrance of Jesus on the cross. We think about Jesus shedding His blood as a payment for our sins. We remember the suffering He endured and the wounds He received. In the Old Testament, God told the Israelites to offer animal sacrifices as a payment for sins. In the New Testament, Jesus Himself, the Lamb

of God, (John 1:36) offered His blood as a sacrifice for our sins.

At Passover as the Israelites prepared to leave Egypt (Exodus 12:12), they ate of a sacrificial lamb without spot or blemish. They were commanded to put the blood of the lamb on their door posts so that God's Judgement would pass over their houses. Communion is a picture of this as we partake of the bread representing Jesus' body and drink the juice representing His blood. We are reminded it was at the Passover supper in the New Testament (Matt. 26:19-28) that Jesus established communion as He partook with His disciples.

3. Fellowshiping

It is God's desire that communion be a time of intimacy with Christ. We enter into His presence with great reverence and thankfulness with our heart focused on Christ and His ministry of total salvation.

4. Partaking

Not only do we remember the death of Jesus during communion but we also draw on His life. We exchange our weakness for His strength, our inadequacy for His total adequacy. We acknowledge that He is in the Father, we are in Him, and He is in us (John 14:20). Indeed He is our life (Col. 3:4). This is something we must consciously acknowledge and appropriate by faith. II Peter 1:3 tells us "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness."

We are cautioned in I Cor. 11:29 that we open ourselves up to weakness, sickness, and premature death if we do not discern the body of Jesus. We see that communion offers not only spiritual strength but physical strength as well. We are reminded in Psalms 105:37 that as the Israelites came out of Egypt, there was not one feeble person among their tribes. They had just partaken of the Passover meal.

Isaiah 53:5 clearly states "with the stripes that wounded Him, we are healed and made whole." His blood was shed for our sins. His body was bruised, beaten and pierced for our sickness/physical affliction.

The Hebrew word for pain is makob meaning physical pain. Physical healing is part of the redemptive work of Christ. Matt. 8:17 and again, I Peter 2:24 make it clear that He bore our diseases.

When we partake of the juice, we celebrate His taking our sins. When we partake of the bread, we draw on the healing listed in Psalms 103:3 as the second benefit of the Lord. We exchange weakness for strength. The divine exchange is there but we must recognize it and draw on it.

5. His life flows through the believer

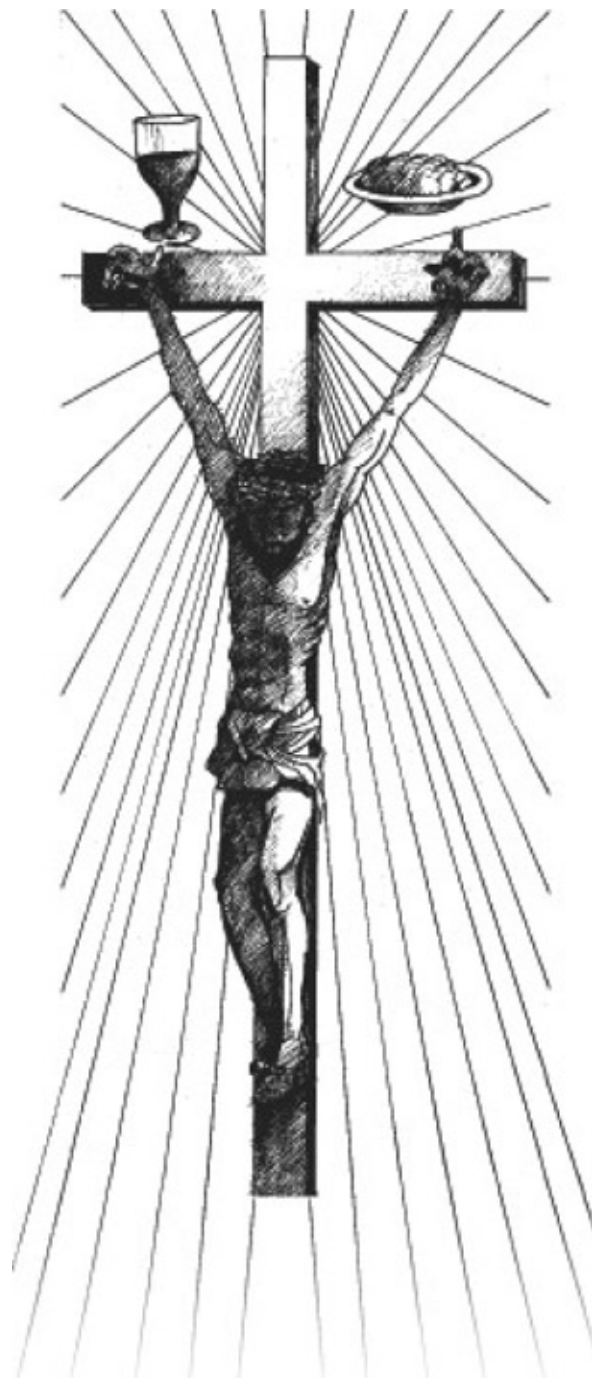
After we focus on the body and blood given for us we affirm our commitment to let the life of Jesus flow out of us to the world around us ministering His life and total salvation wherever we are.

6. Unity

The final focus should be on the unity of the believer. We share together in remembering that Christ is the head of the church and we are members dependent on Him and on one another. We have remembered Jesus' sacrifice and our own commitment to Him. We have taken His life anew into ourselves. We are in Him just as He is in us in the person of the Holy Spirit. He joins us together. "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus and we all are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26, 28). We are part of His body of believers and are to dwell in unity in the family of God. The Holy Spirit produces the unity; it is the responsibility of each believer to maintain it. Remembering this gets us past our unique differences and personality flaws.

Let us be grateful to God for each opportunity to commune with Jesus as we remember His sacrifice on the cross.

Communion



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