

New Member's Lessons 8 – Holy Communion



Introduction

There are two ordinance/celebration events in the life of the Church. They are Baptism and The Lord's Supper often referred to as Holy Communion. These are sacred observances that keep us mindful of the great sacrifices Jesus made for the Church. Believers are encouraged to participate frequently in remembrance of Jesus and in appreciation for the finished works of Jesus Christ in Salvation. *This lesson will discuss the historical origins of Holy Communion, the symbolism of the elements, and the necessity for continued participation in this observance.*

LESSON

Historical Origin of Holy Communion or The Lord's Supper: (Matthew 26:17-30)

On the same night that Jesus Christ was betrayed and arrested, He had a final meeting with his closest Disciples. Jesus and his disciples gathered together to celebrate the Jewish holiday called Passover. This was a week-long festival which the Jewish people celebrated to remember the time when God delivered them from slavery in Egypt. The urgency of the deliverance/move did not allow the people to bake bread that needed to rise so they made bread without yeast or leavening.

On the night that Jesus gathered with his disciples, He gave a new meaning to the customary Passover Celebration. As they ate the unleavened bread, Jesus told the disciples that this bread now represented His body which would be sacrificed. As they drank from the cup, Jesus told them that this fruit of the vine represented His blood, which would be shed to bring about a new covenant between God and human beings. Jesus told his disciples to do this in remembrance of Him.

The final words of a dying person have great impact for years to come. It was no different with Jesus' death. He actually takes the time to commune/fellowship to have intimate conversation with His closest friends. He reminded them that His assignment to the world is coming to a brutal end. Just in case anyone forgot the mission and the mandate, Jesus makes it clear that He would be sacrificed (die) for the sins of all humans once and for all. *This instituted what we call Holy Communion or The Lord's Supper.* It was and remains a very sacred observance (remembrance) for every believer.

The Symbolism of the Elements [Bread and Wine/Juice] (1 Corinthians 11:24-30)

Holy Communion is comprised of two elements; bread and wine/juice. The bread represents the broken body of Jesus in sacrificial death on the cross, which paid the penalty for wrong doings yesterday, today and tomorrow. The body of Jesus was broken bruised and battered that we would have freedom from eternal destruction.

The wine represents the blood Jesus shed to atone/pay for all wrongs doings for all people. The shedding of blood created a new covenant/agreement between God and humans. This plan for salvation instituted by God created a way back to God for all who choose to believe on the Name of Jesus. Believers are urged to participate in a manner which honors God and to avoid mishandling these elements. A simple prayer of forgiveness and repentance prior to participating is offered in honor to God and in reflection upon the works of Christ.

The early Church honored the command to “remember” by observing Holy Communion on the 1st day of the week as instructed by the Apostles (Acts 2:42; 20:7). The 1st Sunday of every month during both the 8a.m. and 11 a.m. Worship Service we honor the command to remember Christ in the distribution of Communion. Believers are urged to examine self for the right motives and to “remember” Jesus’ suffering and death as we eat and drink.

The Necessity of Continued Observance:

It is so easy to forget the good things that happen in our lives. Evil has a way temporarily overshadowing good. To prevent this from occurring, Jesus told us to always remember His broken body and His shed blood, which ushered in a new way to everyone who believes.

Every time we participate in Holy Communion, we proclaim/announce the importance of Jesus death and we advertise publically and officially our receiving the finished work of Jesus Christ in Salvation. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of Sin.

It is of utmost importance that we do not forget!!! It is the Cross that gives us hope in hopeless situations. It is the Cross that reminds us we are forgiven and free to live a life pleasing unto to God. It is in Communion with God and each other that we have an opportunity corporately share our faith and encourage others to openly declare Jesus is Lord.

Review:

1. Who gave us the Lord's Supper?
2. What two elements are necessary in the Lord's Supper?
3. What does the bread and fruit of the vine represent?
4. Why is it necessary to participate in the Holy Communion?
5. How often should we partake of the Lord's Supper?

Name

Date