

2016-02-06 Communion Liturgy

Explanation: It's a Community Thing

It is our practice at Cornerstone to share the Lord's Supper, or "Communion" on the first Saturday of each month. And because we are a new church, we've used this time to explain what the Lord's Supper is, why we are doing it, and how we are doing it.

What is the Lord's Supper?

One of the ways we are to think about the Lord's Supper **is as a remembrance**. We are to remember Jesus Christ during this time. Tonight, I'd like to reflect on **for whom** this remembrance has been given.

Jesus instituted this practice with his closest friends on the night before he was betrayed. He said to do it in remembrance of Him. Since that time, this remembrance has been passed on from Jesus' closest friends, to his other followers in Jerusalem, further out to Judea and Samaria, and eventually to the ends of the earth. Generation after generation, Christians have been re-enacting this meal, across the world, for almost 2000 years. Remembering Jesus, the perfect spotless Lamb of God, who lived a perfect obedient life, yet gave His body and blood over to God's judgment for our sin.

People generally take the time during communion to personally reflect on their relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and on their relationships with each other. And that is a very good and biblical thing to do. But let's not stop at just personal reflection. The Lord's Supper was given to the Church body, and we take this meal as a community. It is not just a personal thing you do in your chair by yourself.

You might have an issue with the person sitting next to you, or on the other side of the sanctuary. But Christ calls you to come, together to take the Lord's Supper, because communion is a community thing.

Most of us in this room are New Englanders, and so we tend to be a little stiff and impersonal. But it doesn't have to be that way. Maybe you feel God is calling you to get up and change seats so you can sit next to someone while you take together. Perhaps this is because you're concerned you offended them, or they offended you, and you want to make it right. Or maybe you feel like you love someone and you want to tell them so. Or maybe you just want to thank and encourage someone. If any of you feel that way, I want to give you permission to change your seat. Don't worry; we're not going to freak out, and it's not a disruption. Go ahead, do it right now if you want. Mix it up if you want. Don't let this moment pass you by. Christ calls us to come to the table to be reconciled together as one body, one church.

Who can take and who should not?

At Cornerstone, we practice open communion. Anyone who has put their faith in Christ is welcome to take the bread and the cup. But the Bible does warn the Church to be especially conscious of what the Lord's Supper means. It says that we should examine ourselves

before eating the bread and drinking the cup. Those who take it in an unworthy manner bring judgment upon themselves. So if you are not a believer in Christ, we'd ask that you let the bread and cup pass you by. Jesus is the only one that can make us worthy for anything, and if you have put your faith in Him, He makes you clean. Come to the table, and dine.

How will we share this meal?

Tonight, since we are a community, we asked people from our church body to serve the bread and juice. Our servers today are _____, _____, _____, and _____; please come up and stand on either side of the communion table, turn to face the congregation, and I'll give you instructions. When you receive the bread or the juice, wait so we can take together. If you want, and you're not afraid of germs, you can exchange the bread or the cup with your neighbor. Use that time to thank Jesus who gives us peace with God the Father and reconciles us one to another.

Breaking The Bread

- “For I received from the Lord
- what I also passed on to you:
 - The Lord Jesus,
 - on the night 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.””

Passing the Cup

- “In the same way,
- after supper
- He took the cup, saying,
 - “This cup is the new covenant
 - in my blood;
 - do this, whenever you drink it,
 - in remembrance of me.””