

## FOUNDATIONS COURSE

### HOME STUDY GUIDE

### **COMMUNION - THE LORD'S SUPPER**

#### **1. WHAT IS THE MEANING OF "COMMUNION"?**

Communion is the time wherein we share a fellowship with members of the Church (the body of Christ) and with the Head of the Church (the Lord Jesus Christ). The communion is a time of thanksgiving and praise as we remember God's mercy and goodness to us through the broken Body and the shed Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is symbolic and a time for remembrance of Christ's finished work.

"The cup of blessing (of wine at the Lord's Supper) upon which we ask (God's) blessing, does it not mean (that in drinking it) we participate in and share a fellowship (a communion) in the blood of Christ, the Messiah? The bread which we break, does it not mean (that in eating it) we participate in and share a fellowship (a communion) in the body of Christ? For we (no matter how) numerous we are, are one body, because we all partake of the one Bread (the one Whom the communion bread represents)."

**I Corinthians 10:16-17 Amplified.**

#### **2. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE TITLES GIVEN TO THIS ORDINANCE?**

##### **A. The Lord's Supper.**

"When ye come together therefore in one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper." **I Cor. 11:20**

##### **B. The Lord's Table.**

"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of the devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils." **I Cor. 10:21**

##### **C. The Communion**

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

**I Cor. 10:16**

##### **D. Breaking of Bread**

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

**Acts 2:42**

E. Other designations include **"the Eucharist"** and **"the Sacrament"**, but are not included in scripture.

### 3. WHO INSTITUTED THE COMMUNION?

A. The Lord Jesus instituted this service at the Feast of Passover.

"And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover. And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and give to them, and said, 'Take eat. This is my body.' And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them; and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, 'This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many'." **Mark 14:16,22-24**

B. The Lord Jesus also gave distinctive revelation to Paul concerning this ordinance.

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of Me'. After the same manner also He took the cup, and when He had supped, saying, 'This cup is the new testament in My blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me'." **I Cor. 11:23-25**

### 4. WHAT ARE THE "SYMBOLS" USED IN THE COMMUNION?

A. **The Bread**

"And He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them saying 'This is My body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me'." **Luke 22:19**

B. **The Fruit of the Vine**

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" **I Cor. 10:16**

### 5. WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BREAD?

A. The Bread represents His broken body as well as the church, the body of Christ.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body'." **Matthew 26:26**

B. The Bread represents communion.

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

**I Cor. 10:16**

**6. WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FRUIT OF THE VINE?**

A. The fruit of the vine represents His blood, which was significant of the Lord's shed blood for us.

"This cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." **I Cor. 11:25**

**7. WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMMUNION IN THE CHURCH?**

The Communion is of vital importance to the Church. When this Lord's Supper is observed in faith, we have both a Vertical and a Horizontal fellowship. The vertical fellowship is between the Lord Jesus Christ and the members of the Church. The horizontal fellowship is between the individual members of the Church.

**8. WHY IS THE COMMUNION IMPORTANT TO OUR VERTICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS?**

A. The Lord Jesus has promised to be "with us" as we remember His death with communion fellowship. NOW that the power of the Kingdom of God has been given through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD IS WITH US IN THIS HOLY COMMUNION. Read I Corinthians 11:24.

B. The drinking of the cup is the pledge of the Lord Jesus that we share in the full blessings of the New Covenant. Read I Corinthians 11:25.

**9. WHY IS THE COMMUNION IMPORTANT TO OUR HORIZONTAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH?**

Proper respect toward the breaking of bread and the drinking of the blessed cup will teach us proper respect for the individual members of the Church, the Body of Christ. WE CANNOT HAVE THE RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD UNLESS OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IS RIGHT.

"The bread which we break, does it not mean (that in eating it) we participate in and share a fellowship (a communion) in the body of Christ? For we (no matter how) numerous we are, are one body, because we all PARTAKE OF THE ONE BREAD (the One Whom the communion bread represents)."

**I Cor. 10:16-17 Amplified**

"If a man say, 'I love God', and hate his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." **I John 4:20-21**

**10. HOW OFTEN SHOULD THE CHURCH HAVE THE COMMUNION OF THE BREAKING OF BREAD?**

There are no commands nor clear instructions in the New Testament telling us how often to observe the Lord's Supper. Under the Old Covenant, the Lord commanded the Israelites to celebrate the Passover meal once a year. Since we believe the Communion to be a time of cleansing and renewing of fellowship in the Body of Christ; once a year is not enough. Some think the early Church partook of Communion every week, although this cannot be proven from the Scriptures. Paul said "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death til He come." (**I Corinthians 11:26**). This would indicate the Communion can be frequent, but we should not allow it to become a mechanical form or ritual.

**11. CAN ANYONE PARTAKE OF THE COMMUNION?**

No. The Communion is definitely NOT for people who are not saved or living for the Lord the way they know they should. Only those Christians who are in Covenant relationship with God should take part. Every participating Christian should search his own heart to be sure he does not have any offenses against any member of the Body of Christ (the church). He must not be in rebellion against Jesus Christ nor the leadership of the local assembly.

Small or young children who probably do not have a proper grasp on what Communion is, should not be allowed to partake in something so sacred.

**12. HOW CAN WE BE SURE WE ARE READY FOR THE COMMUNION?**

We must examine our attitude and life, making sure things are right between us and our brothers and sisters and between us and God. It is not our responsibility to examine others.

"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." **I Corinthians 11:28**

**13. WHAT ATTITUDES SHOULD WE HAVE IN COMING TO THE LORD'S TABLE?**

A. We should come to the Table with a desire to participate.

B. We should come remembering (a memorial). Read **I Cor. 11:24-25**.

C. We should come with thanksgiving.

"And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, 'Take this, and divide it among yourselves'." **Luke 22:17**

D. We should come as a Body.

"For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." **I Corinthians 10:17**

#### **14. WHAT IS IMPARTED THROUGH OUR PARTAKING OF THE COMMUNION?**

##### **A. For the unworthy:**

We make ourselves unworthy of the Lord's Supper when we refuse to judge sin in our lives. If we hold resentments and refuse to forgive. **WE RECEIVE JUDGMENT IN THE COMMUNION INSTEAD OF STRENGTH.**

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." **I Corinthians 11:29-30**

##### **B. For the worthy:**

We are worthy to take the Communion when we examine ourselves, making sure we have a clear conscience and right attitude toward the Lord and our brothers and sisters. **WE SHOULD NEVER DODGE COMMUNION, BUT DEAL WITH OUR SINS AND THEN PARTICIPATE** in the Lord's Supper. To dodge the Communion is to frustrate God's purpose in true fellowship.

By properly discerning the Lord's Body (understanding Jesus' sacrifice and that our brothers and sisters make up the Lord's Body on the earth today), we can receive healing (through His shed blood) symbolized in the fruit of the vine. As we gather together at a common table, it should be a time of unity also.

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." **I Corinthians 10:16-17**