

## **LIFE WITHIN THE FELLOWSHIP**



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

We have been learning about our life within the fellowship. What do we do when we meet together as the church? As we have seen, we worship God, and that includes singing praises and giving our tithes and offerings. Another part of our worship is to celebrate the Lord's Supper together.

#### **A. Why do we Celebrate the Lord's Supper?**

##### **1. It is a command**

The first reason is that it is a command given by Jesus. When Jesus was celebrating the Passover meal with his disciples, he told them to do this in memory of him. Although the Apostle Paul was not a disciple at that time, Jesus later revealed to him how believers were to take the bread and the cup when they met together. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.

##### **2. To remind ourselves**

The reason Jesus gave this command was so that his disciples would remember him and what he has done for them. (And for us!) It was also a reminder that Jesus is coming back to complete our salvation and reign as King of the earth. 1 Corinthians 11:26

##### **3. To worship Him**

As we have seen, taking the Lord's Supper is part of our worship. Whenever we take the cup and the bread we are to give thanks to God for his gift of salvation and offer ourselves afresh to him. 1 Corinthians 10:16

#### **B. What does it Mean?**

Jesus tells us that the bread is a symbol or picture of his body, and the cup is a symbol of his blood. 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

##### **1. The bread**

Jesus called himself 'the Bread of Life' and the 'Living Bread'. This is why he uses bread as a picture of his body that was broken for us. In 1 Peter 2:24 it tells us that Jesus' body was wounded so we can receive healing. As we take the bread we are remembering and thanking him for giving his body to be broken for us. If we are weak or sick we can trust Jesus to heal us as we take the bread. This isn't something magic! We receive healing by faith.

##### **2. The cup**

Jesus said that the cup, which was filled with wine, was a picture of his blood, that would be shed on the cross for the forgiveness of our sin. So as we take the cup, we remember what he has done for us. If we have any unconfessed sin in our hearts, it is important that we ask God to forgive us before we drink from the cup. As soon as we take it, by faith, we receive his forgiveness. Paul said that it was important that we never take the cup with sin in our hearts, as this dishonours Jesus. 1 Corinthians 11:27

### **C. How are we to take it?**

#### **1. We take it together**

Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples, and when we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we do so together as the Body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 11:20 This means that it is only for those who have asked Jesus into their hearts as Lord and Saviour. It is good that children wait until they have personally received Jesus as their Saviour and they understand the significance of the Lord's Supper.

#### **2. We examine ourselves**

Before taking the Lord's Supper, we need to examine ourselves, and if there is any unconfessed sin in our lives, to ask God's forgiveness. This is what we are told in 1 Corinthians 11:28.

#### **3. We take it in faith**

After preparing our hearts, we need to come in faith. If we simply take the Lord's Supper as a ritual, we will miss the blessing God has for us. As we come in faith, remembering what he has done for us, he touches us afresh by his Spirit.

#### **4. We take it regularly**

In the early church the believers often celebrated the Lord's Supper together. In Acts 2:46 it says they 'broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.' There is no rule as to how often we should take the Lord's Supper, but it an important part of our worship, just as praise and giving are.

Jesus has asked us to celebrate the Lord's Supper together, to remember and give thanks for his death, until he returns. The bread and the cup are wonderful symbols or pictures of his body and blood that was given for us. It's important that it never just becomes a ritual, but we always come with expectancy and faith. When we do, Jesus will not disappoint us.