

The Lord's Table

'Do this in remembrance of Me'

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Based on Bible teachings by Pastor Vince Fenech)

Note: All Bible Scriptures from **New King James Version (NKJV)** and the **Jerusalem Bible (JB)**

Introduction

In these notes you will read about the meaning of Communion or the Lord's Table as explained in the Bible.

When you read this booklet, you will understand the significance of participating in Communion; Communion is a vital part of EVERY Christian's life and we are obliged to heed the Words of Jesus during the Last Supper when He commanded us; 'Do this'.

Jesus Christ who is eternally living, is present in a real way in all our life, especially during Communion, because as the Bible says, where two or more are gathered in the name of Jesus, He is in their midst.

 Jerusalem Bible (JOHN Chapter 6) - <http://www.seraphim.my/bible/jb/JB-NT04%20JOHN.htm>

IV. ANOTHER PASSOVER, THE BREAD OF LIFE

The miracle of the loaves

6:1 Some time after this, Jesus went off to the other side of the Sea of Galilee - or of Tiberias -

6:2 and a large crowd followed him, impressed by the signs he gave by curing the sick.

6:3 Jesus climbed the hillside, and sat down there with his disciples.

6:4 It was shortly before the Jewish feast of Passover.

6:5 Looking up, Jesus saw the crowds approaching and said to Philip, 'Where can we buy some bread for these people to eat?'

6:6 He only said this to test Philip; he himself knew exactly what he was going to do.

6:7 Philip answered, 'Two hundred denarii would only buy enough to give them a small piece each'.

6:8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said,

6:9 'There is a small boy here with five barley loaves and two fish; but what is that between so many?'

6:10 Jesus said to them, 'Make the people sit down'. There was plenty of grass there, and as many as five thousand men sat down.

6:11 Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and gave them out to all who were sitting ready; he then did the same with the fish, giving out as much as was wanted.

6:12 When they had eaten enough he said to the disciples, 'Pick up the pieces left over, so that nothing gets wasted'.

6:13 So they picked them up, and filled twelve hampers with scraps left over from the meal of five barley loaves.

6:14 The people, seeing this sign that he had given, said, 'This really is the prophet who is to come into the world'.

6:15 Jesus, who could see they were about to come and take him by force and make him king, escaped back to the hills by himself.

Jesus walks on the waters

6:16 That evening the disciples went down to the shore of the lake and

6:17 got into a boat to make for Capernaum on the other side of the lake. It was getting dark by now and Jesus had still not rejoined them.

6:18 The wind was strong, and the sea was getting rough.

6:19 They had rowed three or four miles when they saw Jesus walking on the lake and coming towards the boat. This frightened them,

6:20 but he said, 'It is I. Do not be afraid.'

6:21 They were for taking him into the boat, but in no time it reached the shore at the place they were making for.

The discourse in the synagogue at Capernaum

6:22 Next day, the crowd that had stayed on the other side saw that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not got into the boat with his disciples, but that the disciples had set off by themselves.

6:23 Other boats, however, had put in from Tiberias, near the place where the bread had been eaten.

6:24 When the people saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into those boats and crossed to Capernaum to look for Jesus.

6:25 When they found him on the other side, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?'

6:26 Jesus answered: 'I tell you most solemnly, you are not looking for me because you have seen the signs but because you had all the bread you wanted to eat.'

6:27 Do not work for food that cannot last, but work for food that endures to eternal life, the kind of food the Son of Man is offering you, for on him the Father, God himself, has set his seal.'

6:28 Then they said to him, 'What must we do if we are to do the works that God wants?'

6:29 Jesus gave them this answer, 'This is working for God: you must believe in the one he has sent'.

6:30 So they said, 'What Sign will you give to show us that we should believe in you? What work will you do?'

6:31 Our fathers had manna to eat in the desert; as scripture says: He gave them bread from heaven to eat'.

6:32 Jesus answered: 'I tell you most solemnly, it was not Moses who gave you bread from heaven, it is my Father who gives you the bread from heaven, the true bread;

6:33 for the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world'.

6:34 'Sir,' they said 'give us that bread always.'

6:35 Jesus answered: 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never be hungry; he who believes in me will never thirst.'

6:36 But, as I have told you, you can see me and still you do not believe.

6:37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I shall not turn him away;

6:38 because I have come from heaven, not to do my own will, but to do the will of the one who sent me.

6:39 Now the will of him who sent me is that I should lose nothing of all that he has given to me, and that I should raise it up on the last day.

6:40 Yes, it is my Father's will that whoever sees the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and that I shall raise him up on the last day.'

6:41 Meanwhile the Jews were complaining to each other about him, because he had said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven'.

6:42 'Surely this is Jesus son of Joseph' they said. 'We know his father and mother. How can he now say, "I have come down from heaven"?'

6:43 Jesus said in reply, 'Stop complaining to each other.

6:44 'No one can come to me unless he is drawn by the Father who sent me, and I will raise him up at the last day.

6:45 It is written in the prophets: They will all be taught by God, and to hear the teaching of the Father, and learn from it, is to come to me.

6:46 Not that anybody has seen the Father, except the one who comes from God: he has seen the Father.

6:47 I tell you most solemnly, everybody who believes has eternal life.

6:48 I am the bread of life.

6:49 Your fathers ate the manna in the desert and they are dead;

6:50 but this is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that a man may eat it and not die.

6:51 I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world.'

6:52 Then the Jews started arguing with one another: 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' they said.

6:53 Jesus replied: I tell you most solemnly, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you.

6:54 Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him up on the last day.

6:55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

6:56 He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him.

6:57 As I, who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me.

6:58 This is the bread come down from heaven; not like the bread our ancestors ate: they are dead, but anyone who eats this bread will live for ever.'

6:59 He taught this doctrine at Capernaum, in the synagogue.

6:60 After hearing it, many of his followers said, 'This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?'

6:61 Jesus was aware that his followers were complaining about it and said, 'Does this upset you?'

6:62 What if you should see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before?

6:63 'It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.'

6:64 'But there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the outset those who did not believe, and who it was that would betray him.

6:65 He went on, 'This is why I told you that no one could come to me unless the Father allows him'.

6:66 After this, many of his disciples left him and stopped going with him.

Peter's profession of faith

6:67 Then Jesus said to the Twelve, 'What about you, do you want to go away too?'

6:68 Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life,

6:69 and we believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God.'

6:70 Jesus replied, 'Have I not chosen you, you Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil.'

6:71 He meant Judas son of Simon Iscariot, since this was the man, one of the Twelve, who was going to betray him.

John 6: Inheriting Eternal Life

We should keep in mind that this Chapter has nothing to do with the institution of the Table of the Lord. These events took place before the Last Supper and not during the Last Supper. So the scenario in John chapter 6 is different from the one found in the Last Supper.

When reading John Chapter 6 from the beginning, you will notice that Jesus compared Himself to bread and those around Him were seeking Jesus not to listen to Him, but for the bread He distributed before performing a miracle. So people were following Him so that He will give them the material bread they were seeking to fill their bellies.. But He told them not to seek the material bread that passes away but to seek the bread that fills the soul. The message that Jesus wanted to bring was that no matter how much material bread they ate, it was useless to satiate the eternal need of the soul which lives forever. So Jesus was not instituting the 'Eucharist', as it is termed by many.

Many also question whether Jesus was speaking in literal terms in John Chapter 6, when He said that He is the Bread of Life. There are many who believe that Jesus was speaking in a metaphorical way to explain that we need to believe His Word to have eternal life.

There are also others who subscribe to the view that the bread is transubstantiated into His Body during Communion and therefore strengthen what Jesus' said; 'I am the Bread' on many occasions. Apart from this, Jesus explained afterwards in Verse 63 that, 'The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life', because there were many who did not understand. And even though they did not understand, Jesus did not repeat that the Spirit gives life (meaning that they would have eternal life only if they took Jesus' spiritually not merely in material bread). But since Jesus said He is the Bread more than once, there are those who assume that Jesus was speaking about bread solely in literal terms.

Not only this, Jesus did not stop the Disciples leaving Him because they did not understand how they could eat Jesus' body (when Jesus was speaking in metaphorical terms). So one would ask; If it was easy for Jesus to explain to them that He was comparing Himself to bread, why did not Jesus explain to them again, so perhaps they would finally understand and keep following Him? So, to many this would appear to mean that this signifies that He was truly the bread that could be eaten. Not only this! When He saw them leaving, He turned to the Apostles and told them, 'Do you want to leave as well?' All these questions make one believe that Jesus told us to literally eat His body. But now we will analyse properly Jesus' Words to understand what He really meant.

Reading Verse 66 in John Chapter 6, we find that many of His Disciples left Him. This means that not all of them left, but many. It also says that those who left did not walk with Him or followed Him again. There again, this means that these were not called to understand fully God's Greatness.

The fact that they did not follow Him ever again means that they could never come to a point to return back to Jesus. In fact in Verse 64, after Jesus explained that 'It is the Spirit that gives life', (since many thought that He told them to eat His flesh), Jesus already knew beforehand those who would not believe Him. So, even if He explained to them for the umpteenth time what He meant when He said that He is the Bread of Life, they would have never believed Him because they were not called to have this revelation. This explains why He did not explain again the Words, 'I am the Bread of Life' and not because it was difficult for Him to explain what He meant.

The Apostle Peter was one of the called ones and after he understood that Jesus had the words of eternal life (John 6:68), Peter understood that Jesus was comparing the material bread to the Words that He gave us for eternal salvation. Peter understood that Jesus was speaking in metaphorical terms so that people could understand Him easily.

In Verse 27 of John Chapter 6 (cf. Mathew 26:26; John 6:53-54), Jesus shows us that He spoke metaphorically by comparing something with something else; 27 Do not labour for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life." Is there any food that you can touch and keep on for everlasting life? No, then Jesus is not speaking literally here. This verse continues as follows '...which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.'" This means that

what Jesus was referring to in this Chapter is something set with a seal (seal also signifies covenant). What is Jesus really giving us according to this Covenant? His Word or His Flesh?

In the pages that follow we find a detailed explanation of this New Covenant that God made with us through Jesus and which the Apostle Paul describes in Hebrews 10:16-17,

16 “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,” 17 then He adds, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” (NKJV)

The underlined words refer to something written. Therefore, we notice that what the Son of Man gave us was a Covenant through His written words and not through eating literally His flesh. It is through nourishing ourselves in the spirit and soul by taking Jesus spiritually in our hearts through the revelation and knowledge given to us by the Holy Spirit that we are spiritually fed. And how is it possible to take in Jesus in us? This is done only through the written Word, and His written Word is found in the Bible.

Continuing on the same line of thought of Verse 27, Jesus said that He will give them (not that He is going to give them; but He is speaking in the present which shows that He was already giving them (they were already tasting the bread He was referring to). The Body which we take during Communion was not given at that point, but His Word was given out. This continues to confirm that Jesus was speaking metaphorically (cf. Mathew 26:26; John 6:53-58).

The Apostles asked Jesus how they can do the Will of God. In Verse 29, He replies, “This is the work of God, that you *believe* in Him whom He sent.” Jesus did not say ‘that you should eat my flesh’. Jesus continually refers to those things He gives us through Faith in His Word.

By the above, we understand that in this Chapter, Jesus is talking about the Word that He gives us for eternal life. He is comparing what we drink, which is important for our sustenance on earth, with what He gives us, which is most important not only during our stay on earth but also for eternal life.

Why does Jesus say that the bread is His Body and compares it to the Word? The answer is found in John 1:14,

14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (NKJV)

Before Jesus came on this earth, we only had the Word, but then God the Father sent Jesus so that what had been written in the Word would come to pass, so that the Word that Jesus gives us will not remain written but comes out of His mouth and thus became the Living Word just like the body. This explains that; The Word of Jesus = Eternal Life and not, ‘eating His flesh during communion’.

In Revelations 19:13 we continue to find confirmation of this,

13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. (NKJV)

If you read all through Chapter 13, you will also notice that Jesus' Name is being referred to as 'the Word of God'. This means that Jesus is the Word of God and when we take the Word of God, that is when we believe it and follow it in our lives, we are truly consuming Jesus.

In John 6:47 and John 6:54, Jesus says,

6:47 I tell you most solemnly, everybody who believes has eternal life. (JB)

6:54 Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him up on the last day. (JB)

Here Jesus is using the same Words with the difference that where He mentions His Body and His Blood, He is tying them to Faith (He is comparing Faith with His Body and Blood). This means that Jesus is saying that who eats of His Body and Blood (who Believes), has eternal life.

To strengthen this, Jesus confirms that He is speaking about His Body and Blood in spiritual (Faith) terms and not literally. In John 6:63,

6:63 'It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. (JB)

It is here that when the Disciples were not understanding, He said that the flesh profits nothing.

It is the Spirit that gives life. So, **Spirit = Eternal Life**. And then He adds the Words that they are spirit and life. So, **His words = Spirit and life** (eternal). (not eating His Body and drinking His Blood).

In Verse 68 of John Chapter 6, the Apostle continues to confirm this with,

6:68 Simon Peter answered, 'Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, (JB)

So what is required to have eternal life according to Jesus Words? Is asking us to eat His Body or to believe His Words? To inherit eternal life we need to consume His Words in our spirits. If Jesus was literally referring to eating His Body and drinking His Blood in John Chapter 6, He would have been contradicting Himself because in Verse 63, He said that the flesh profits nothing.

More than this, in Verse 35, Jesus says,

6:35 Jesus answered: 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never be hungry; he who believes in me will never thirst. (JB)

If Jesus was speaking in literal terms, how is it that after Communion you still need to eat materially and you still need to drink materially? And we should not forget that in this Verse 35, Jesus is saying 'He *who believes* in Me shall never thirst' and not who drinks His Blood. Can you drink Faith? So is it possible to conclude that Jesus is speaking in literal terms when He said to eat His Body and drink His Blood?

Again in the Gospel of John we observe a series of comparisons where Jesus compares Himself with someone or something. For example in, **8:12** 'I am the Light of the world' , **10:7** 'I am the Door of the sheep', **10:11** 'I am the Good Shepherd', **11:25** 'I am the Resurrection and the Life', **14:6** 'I am the Way' **15:1** I am the True Vine.

So does the above mean that Jesus is a door, shepherd or a road? So when is there the phrase such as, 'I am the Bread of Life' (John 6:35), Jesus is always comparing Himself to different things to bring forth His Message. Jesus is not saying that He is literally a door but comparing Himself to a door to reveal His Message.

This shows that the style with which John spoke is one which shows Jesus as comparing Himself with something or someone to teach something. The same is found in Chapter 6 where He compares His Words with inheriting eternal life.

What follows are a few examples from the Gospel of John that show Jesus laying great emphasis on the importance of receiving His Word and that it is His Word that gives eternal life and not in eating His Flesh and drinking His Blood in literal terms,

- **John 12:49-50 (NKJV)**

49 For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. 50 And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.” Jesus is saying that it is through the Word He gave us that we inherit eternal life.

- **John 10:27-28 (NKJV)**

27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

- **John 3:16 (NKJV)**

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

- **John 11:25 (NKJV)**

25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

- **John 6:35 (NKJV)**

35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. Jesus is explaining how we go to Him. Through believing Him. And He is again comparing Faith with drinking and eating.

So all the above does not make it at all difficult for us to understand John Chapter 6 where John the Evangelist was also speaking on the importance of Jesus' Word for eternal life and that it only through His Word that we inherit eternal life.

Another important question that arises is; then, if in John's Gospel (Chapter 6), Jesus is asking us to 'eat His Body', and He was referring to His Word, then what is Jesus referring to in Verse 54, when He says, 'drink my Blood?'

It is true that Jesus spoke and focused more on the bread since people sought Him after performing a miracle involving bread (as the miracle did not involve wine but only bread), but Jesus could not speak about His Body without referring also to His Blood as these are inseparable for life within the Body.

Therefore, we need to give weight and importance to the same Words of Jesus where in Verse 54, Jesus says, **54 Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him up on the last day.** This does not imply that Jesus gave us His authority to eat His Body and drink His Blood during Communion. So what was Jesus referring to when He told us to drink His Blood?

What is certain is that Jesus here is not speaking in literal terms, because when referring to His Body He was not only speaking metaphorically but since Jesus is also God, He could not contradict His own Words. In the Word of God, we read the following relevant verses,

Genesis 9:4 (NKJV)

4 But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.

We believe that Jesus is Alive, so is it Biblical to drink the blood of someone who is still alive? No!

Acts 15:20 (NKJV)

20 but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood.

So, even in the New Testament, it is evident that drinking blood is prohibited. So, if during Communion Jesus is telling us to literally drink His Blood, He would be contradicting the Bible itself. (See also Acts 15:29 and Acts 21:25).

When Jesus hanged on the Cross He gave us and shed **ALL** His Blood for us so He cannot give you His material Blood again. As a matter of fact, in John 19:34 we read that ,

34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. (NKJV)

All His Blood came out so much so that water gushed out.

All these factors show that Jesus did not ask us to literally drink His Blood and this we have already seen when He was referring to His Body as bread. It makes sense to understand Jesus when He tells us that consuming His Blood in the same manner as when consuming His Word (compared to His Body), will have eternal life. But why did Jesus ask us to consume His Blood (when He was not speaking literally)? Would it not be enough to consume His Body for eternal life?

We should reiterate that it is impossible to separate Jesus' Blood from His Body. This, we have already read in Genesis 9:4 where it is clearly stated that life is in the blood. Jesus laid up His Life for us and when doing so, He gave us both His Body and also His Blood (as we have already seen, when Jesus gave us ALL His Blood). Jesus gave Himself up totally for us, when He died on the Cross for His Resurrection. If He would not have resurrected, He would have been just like one of the other Prophets.

But, through the Victory by His shed Blood, Jesus truly showed us that His Words are the Truth, and that He is truly God and that when He said that those who believe Him will have eternal life, He was speaking the Truth. Jesus did not come on earth to give us His Word only, that is symbolised through His Body in John's Gospel, but to give us also His Blood (His Life), so that He would be able to take away our sins in front of the Heavenly Father and obtain forgiveness when we sin. Jesus suffered for us so that we can inherit eternal life – He gave up all His Life, He gave us His Blood.

Therefore, we begin to understand that Jesus' Blood represents suffering and sacrifice (because He died for us – and took all our sins away). He gave up everything for us for the remission of our sins and have eternal life through His Resurrection from the dead. So how are we to consume Jesus' Blood? By being prepared to suffer as He did, sacrificing ourselves (Romans 12:1) and dying to sin to have eternal life. This is only possible through the Blood Covenant Jesus made with us which is in the Holy Spirit revealing to us what pleases God the Father.

Jesus died for us so that our sins are forgiven and it is through this that we have Salvation. This does not mean that everyone is going to be saved because as Jesus tells us in John 6:47, 'He died for the many' (*not everybody*) (cf. Hebrews 9:28, 1 Peter 2:24, 'our', 1 Peter 3:18 'us';, Matthew 26:28, 'Shed for many' Titus 2:13, 'Gave Himself for us').

6:47 I tell you most solemnly, everybody who believes has eternal life. (JB)

So, in order to be saved, you need to first believe in Jesus with all your heart and trust Him. To truly believe in Jesus is to believe that it is only through Him that eternal life is inherited. You need to believe also that He died and was resurrected for the forgiveness of sins and believe in all Jesus said and done and not believe what convenes your choice.

To believe Jesus completely means following His footsteps. It is only through taking this road that one can call himself a Christian because it entails following Christ's footsteps 100%. This is what Scripture says in 1 John 2:6,

6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. (NKJV)

When you decide to follow Jesus and heed to His Words, you will realise that to do what Jesus commands you in His Word, you must let go of yourself and be prepared to sacrifice yourself. This is what it means to 'drink His Blood'. You cannot say that you believe Jesus if you do not obey His Words and if you truly obey His Words because you believe that it is only through Jesus that eternal salvation is inherited, you will automatically experience certain sacrifices and die to sin.

The following are some Verses from Scripture which show us that to follow Jesus, we must drink His Blood, which means that we have to deny ourselves and be prepared to go against the urges of the flesh. You are in reality crucifying yourself to the world as Jesus did, when He shed all His Blood for us. The world is depicted as sinful in the Bible (because there are many temptations to sin in the world) and as a matter of fact we read many times in the Bible that whosoever lives by Faith should not follow the precepts of the world. Among these, we find in Romans 12:2,

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (NKJV)

And in John 15:18-19

18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. (NKJV)

The following are other quotations that explain what drinking Jesus' Blood means denying yourself and living only for God,

Galatians 2:19-20 (NKJV)

19 For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 2:15-17 (NKJV)

15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, 16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

17 "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not!

Luke 14:26-27 (NKJV)

26 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. 27 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

Mathew 10:38 (NKJV)

38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

Luke 9:23-24 (NKJV)

23 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily,[a] and follow Me. 24 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it.

Galatians 5:24 (NKJV)

24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

1 Peter 2:24 (NKJV)

24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.

2 Corinthians 5:15 (NKJV)

15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

Romans 6:10-11 (NKJV)

10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:12-13 (NKJV)

12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Colossians 3:5 (NKJV)

5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

John 12:25 (NKJV)

25 He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

We have seen some examples from the Word of God that reveal to us that to truly believe in the Word of God, we must be ready to drink from the same Blood that Jesus shed for us and this means that we must die to the world and our desires. So to inherit everlasting life, we must “eat” Jesus’ Body’ (through consuming His Word) and “drinking” His Blood (by obeying His Word and be prepared to deny ourself and suffer to follow only its instructions).

We are now going to take a glance at what it means to participate in the Lord’s Table as Jesus instituted it in the Last Supper.

The Last Supper

Before going into what Jesus said during the Last Supper, it would be appropriate to look at how the Lord’s Table was conducted in the Old Testament. The Lord’s Table existed since the Old Testament Times. It did not start when Jesus instituted the Last Supper but it had been in existence well before that time. The Lord’s Table had started as a remembrance after God had freed the Israelites from their exile and slavery in Egypt.

God sent Moses and Aaron to warn the Pharaoh to let the people of God leave Egypt. Despite several warnings and punishments on all the nation of Egypt, the Pharaoh still hardened his heart and did not allow them to leave. So God allowed the devourer to visit them and all the first-born were slain (both human and beast). To protect the Israelites, God told them to slaughter a lamb and smear the doorposts of their houses with its blood so that when the devourer passed over their dwellings, they would be protected.

As a remembrance of this event, God wanted them to start celebrating this day as ‘The Passover’ and on that day they ate unleavened bread (Exodus 12:14-15).

It was the Passover meal that Jesus also ate with His Disciples (see Luke 22:7; Mathew 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16). And it was during the Last Supper with His Disciples that the Lord Jesus instituted Communion. And this He did because the Passover meal was to reach its full meaning in Jesus who is the Lamb of God (John 1:29) who came on this earth to free us from sin and thus consecrate us to believe Him and give our lives to Him. In the same way as the Israelites remembered their freedom from

Egyptian slavery, we remember (as Jesus commanded us) our freedom from sin, the consequence of which is death.

<u>OLD TESTAMENT</u>	<u>NEW TESTAMENT</u>
1. <u>By the blood of the lamb, the people of God were delivered from the devourer.</u>	1. <u>By the Blood of Jesus, who is the Lamb of God, we the people were delivered from sin and the devil.</u>
2. <u>In remembrance of this, they hold a meal.</u>	2. <u>In remembrance we hold a meal.</u>
3. <u>During the meal they eat unleavened bread.</u>	3. <u>During the meal we eat unleavened bread.</u>
4. <u>They do not eat the lamb or its blood because this was done only once.</u>	4. <u>We do not eat Jesus' Body or drink His Blood because this sacrifice was done only once.</u>

The following Table makes the significant comparisons:-

This is what Jesus told us to do during the Last Supper; to remember the day in which He, as the Lamb shed all His Blood for us to deliver us from sin.



We read in 1 Corinthians 11:24, that during the Last Supper Jesus said:

24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” (NKJV)

He did not say to bring forth His Body and Blood but to do this in remembrance. This clearly shows that when we celebrate Communion, Jesus wants us to remember only (as He told us, IN REMEMBRANCE) His Death, His Resurrection and His Second Coming. When you do something in remembrance, you would be remembering something and not actually performing it in the present.

It is appropriate to quote also from the Apostle Paul's, 1 Corinthians 11:26,

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. (NKJV)

Point 1: He says, Proclaim and not do

Point 2: He says, Till He comes. This shows that during Eucharist, Jesus does not come in the literal sense, i.e., in the flesh. Because, 'Till He comes' means that He has not yet returned with His Body; the same Body with which He came upon this earth and with which He will return for the Second Coming. (Hebrews 9:28). So, Jesus cannot literally come in the bread because He is literally coming with His Body on this earth only twice and not every time we celebrate Communion. He came for the first time when He died for us and He will come for the Second and final time on the last day with His Glorious Risen Body that was given to Christ after His Resurrection. Apart from this, in John 12:16 we find,

16 His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him. (NKJV)

You will realise that we can never take again the Body which Jesus spoke about during the Last Supper. This is so because Jesus' Body is now a Glorified Body and is no longer in material flesh and blood as it was during His Crucifixion. It is evident that when Jesus spoke during the Last Supper, He was not referring by any means to continually drink His Blood and eat His Body which is still being shed for us!

Jesus is now continually present and in reality in all our lives. Once we declare and invite the Lord Jesus to enter into our lives, He will never leave us. This means, that there is no need of Communion for Jesus to come and dwell in you because once you accept Jesus, He will remain in you all the time. This does not imply that we should not receive Communion, but to the contrary when one feels that he/she should do so, that person is obeying and following the Will of Jesus because Jesus told us, 'do this in remembrance of me'.

If Jesus gives Himself in the same way by giving us His Body and Blood, as during His death on the cross when celebrating Communion, He would be dying again for us. But this is not what the Bible tells is. In Hebrews 10:10.

10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (NKJV)

We must also keep in mind that the earthly Body of Jesus has now passed away and that He has been given a Glorious Body that never passes away.

So, Jesus gave us His Body and Blood ONCE FOR ALL and this He did when He was on the cross. To say that Jesus is literally present in a personal way in the waifer, means that you do not believe Jesus' Words when He said, 'It is done'. What was required from Jesus for eternal life, He did (meaning that one inherits eternal life through Jesus' Resurrection and our Faith in Him and not through Communion). We can now only remember what He did and do it in His Memory. To remember Him means to do what Jesus commanded us, and when you remember someone or something, you do not bring that event back in the present. An example of this is when you celebrate your birthday. This does not mean you are born again. In the same manner, when you celebrate your marriage anniversary, you are not re-marrying again, but only remembering that day when you married.

Jesus will not give up His Body again to us. Why? In 1 Peter 3:18, we find,

18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit. (NKJV)

Halleluia! This shows us clearly that we are taking Jesus in the spiritual sense, whereas He gave us His Body only once on the cross.

Why is it not Biblical to believe that Jesus' Body and Blood is present in the bread and wine?

The Bible is clearly against any reasoning that during the Lord's Supper, Jesus is present in His Body and Blood. Why?

When we perceive the bread and the wine used during Communion as our god, we would be making something of a material nature as a god. In fact, many worship, kiss and kneel in front of the bread and wine during the Eucharist.

The Bible tells us clearly that God does not inhabit temples and other material man-made things. This is amply clear from the following two Scriptures,

Acts 7:48-50 (NKJV)

49 'Heaven is My throne,

And earth is My footstool.

What house will you build for Me? says the Lord,

Or what is the place of My rest?

50 Has My hand not made all these things?'

And in Acts 17:24 (NKJV)

24 "God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.

Jesus inhabits everywhere spiritually and dwells in us all the time as we are the living temple in which He can inhabit because we have been created not by man but by God Himself. In fact, St. Paul said the following in 1 Corinthians 6:19 (NKJV),

19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

The question comes natural: So, if bread is man-made, is it Biblical to say that Jesus comes to dwell in it? The Bible says that God does not inhabit in temples, tabernacles or other places made by man. If you believe the Bible, the answer to the question is No.

Other Factors which show that the Bread and Wine cannot transubstantiate into the Body and Blood of Christ

- It is noted that during the Last Supper, He did not compare His Blood to wine but to the chalice. If He was speaking literally, is it possible to drink the chalice (as a cup)?
- During the Last Supper, the chalice did not change into the Blood of Jesus and this we are certain of. If we take Mathew 26:29 as an example, we find that after Jesus blessed the bread and the chalice (who many believe that after the blessing became the Body and Blood of Jesus), they did not transubstantiate into flesh and blood. In fact, after the blessing, Jesus refers to the chalice as 'the fruit of the vine' and not as His Blood. St. Paul continues to strengthen this in 1 Corinthians 11, where after saying that Jesus broke the bread and took the chalice and gave thanks, He refers to bread as bread and the chalice as chalice (Verse 26) (*It is also noted that what they did was in **remembrance** and this means they did not transubstantiate after the blessing*). The word Blessing does not mean that someone can change something into something else just by the act of blessing it. When you bless it means that you give thanks to God (and this we should do whenever we eat and when God provides). This is evidently clear when Jesus consecrated the bread. We can read the exact Words of Jesus during the Last Supper in Luke 22:17-19 (NKJV),

17 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves; 18 for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.”

19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

It is true that in Mathew 26:26, it is written that Jesus *consecrated* the bread, but to continue to confirm that the Word ‘blessing’ means ‘to give thanks’ to God, after He took the chalice, Jesus did not say ‘bless’ but ‘gave thanks’.

- It was not possible for the bread and chalice to be transubstantiated into His Body and Blood during the Last Supper because Jesus had not yet died and resurrected, and Communion is a remembrance of the death and resurrection of Jesus. But despite the fact that He was present with them with His Body, He told them ‘Take this is my Body’ and He did not say ‘this is going to be my Body’ or ‘this is going to be my Blood’. After this explanation, even if you take the words literally during the Last Supper, the bread and the chalice could have never been transubstantiated into the Body and Blood of Jesus.
- In Luke 22:20; Mark 14:24 and Mathew 26:28, Jesus uses the word ‘shed’, a word which is used both to mean something done in the present and also in the future. But Jesus during the Last Supper had not yet shed His Blood for us. If Jesus wanted to mean that the chalice was going to be transubstantiated, He would have said, ‘it is going to be shed’ because in reality His Blood had not yet been ‘shed’.
- In the same manner, Jesus referred to His body as ‘given’ and not ‘shall be given’, but in reality His Body had not yet been ‘given’. Surely, Jesus would never contradict Himself!
- After Jesus’ Death and Resurrection, the Disciples met and they **broke** bread. There is never a mention that they met to drink and eat the Lord’s **Body**.
- In Mathew 13:38, Jesus says that the **field is the world**. But is the field the world?
- And in Luke 8:11, He says that **the seed** is the Word of God. But **is the seed** the Word of God?

It is evidently clear that Jesus used symbols to drive His Message home. In this case He told them that the seed ‘IS’ and the field ‘IS’. In the same way as He did during the Last Supper, when Jesus said ‘IS’ my Body and the wine ‘IS’ my Blood. He never implied that the bread becomes His Body or the chalice His Blood. In fact He never said they **become** my body or **become** my blood.

- When Jesus appeared after His Resurrection in the account of Luke 24:30, He again breaks bread so that they eat together. If Jesus told us to celebrate Eucharist so that He becomes present in us and with us, would there have been the need for them to celebrate this on the day He appeared, when He was present amongst them? It is noted

that Jesus did not eat of the bread because He had told them during the Last Supper in Mathew 26:29,

29 But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom. (NKJV)

When Jesus instituted the Ordinance of Communion, He wanted us to **remember** the event in memory of Him together, and not to **bring into the present** His Body and His Blood. He wanted us to celebrate the Eucharist to remember/proclaim **His Death, His Resurrection and His Second Coming.**

This is also very clear in 1 Corinthians 11:26,

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

Until His Second Advent, He has not yet returned with His Glorious Body. So as we have already seen;

- a) During Communion Jesus is not present with His Body and His Blood and the Flesh as when He walked amongst us on earth.
- b) To the same extent, He is not becoming present in His Glorious Body! So Jesus is now present with us spiritually. After His Second Coming, then we will drink with Him in the Kingdom of God.

To understand even better, we can compare this to someone who is going abroad. When someone travels, he/she will leave a photograph so that when you look at it, you will remember the person better. It does not mean that you do not keep communication with that person because you still can phone, send letters and use the internet to keep in touch. And there is no need for the photograph to remember the person. But when you look at the photograph which the person gave you, you will remember that it was that person who gave it to you. And when the person returns from abroad, although the photograph remains, the experience with the person is different because the person is now physically present with you, and not merely mentally, but personally. The same applies to Communion.

The above contrasts within the context of Communion: **Jesus** went abroad (He went on the right Hand of the Father) and He left us the Eucharist so that when you celebrate it you remember Him. It does not mean that you are communicating with Him because this you can do through the **Holy Spirit**. And it does not mean that you need Communion to remember Him. But when one obeys the Ordinance, you are remembering that He has granted you this gift. Then, when **Jesus** returns, although the

Lord's Supper is still in existence, the experience is different because He is present with you not only in **Spirit** but personally.

- Whoever believes that Jesus is present in the bread and in the chalice, would be going against the Second Commandment which states in Exodus 20:4-5 (**NKJV**)

4 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them.

1. This commandment is saying that when you bow down in front of an image you would be breaking God's Commandment.
2. Do not make for yourself a carved image/likeness. Likeness means when you do something that represents something. If the bread is worshipped as the Body of Jesus, then you would be making an image of something that is in Heaven. And this means that you would be breaking this Commandment.
3. If you believe that the bread becomes the Body of Jesus, you would be making the bread your idol. Why? Idol means to cherish and worship something or someone as if it was a god.

The above shows us that if one believes that the bread becomes the Body of Christ then, the person would be treating the bread as:

- a) An image – representing someone (Jesus), and
- b) An idol – the image is being worshipped and cherished as if it was a god (Jesus is God). And what does the Bible have to say about this?

In Deuteronomy 4:23 (NKJV), we read,

23 Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the Lord your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of anything which the Lord your God has forbidden you.

And also in Exodus 20:4-5 (NKJV), we also find,

4 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them.

You might say; but the bread represents Jesus because Jesus comes in the bread. But this is not possible. As we have already seen God does not dwell in things made by man. It is God who made us and not we create God in bread! Acts 17:24-25 (NKJV) says as follows,

24 “God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. 25 Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.

So if Jesus is not literally present during Communion, what is the New Covenant which is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 11:25 when Jesus said?:

25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” (NKJV)

What is the New Covenant as shown in the Word of God?

We have seen that Jesus does not literally dwells in the bread and wine.

In 1 Corinthians 11:25, Jesus mentions ‘the new covenant’. The word ‘new’ implies that this covenant would be different from the one we are experiencing; **different from a literal body and blood covenant with Jesus**. After His resurrection Jesus was going to be on the Right Hand of God and in His stead, He was going to send us the Holy Spirit so that through Him we build a relationship with Jesus and the Father and experience His presence in our lives.



In John 14:16-17 (NKJV), we read,

16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

So, one would ask: So the Holy Spirit was not in eternal existence before Jesus sent Him forth? If you believe in the Holy Trinity, then you cannot not believe that the Holy Spirit was not in eternal existence.

The difference lies in that the Holy Spirit before Pentecost was UPON humanity (apart from certain people who had been chosen to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them because it was given directly to them by God) and not in them as today. The Holy Spirit was not in everyone but He was present from eternity ON humanity. (See Numbers 11:17; Numbers 11:29; Judges 3:10; Judges 14:6, 19; Judges 15:14; 1 Samuel 10:10; 1 Samuel 11:6; 1 Samuel 19:23; Isaiah 11:2; Isaiah 59:21).

Ezekiel prophesied that we would have a new Spirit; a Spirit that will dwell IN US and not upon us and this took place after Jesus rose from the dead. See Ezekiel 36:26-27.

Also, in the New Testament, before Jesus' Resurrection, we see that the Holy Spirit came above man. A clear example is when the Archangel announced to Mary, and told her that 'the Holy Spirit will OVERSHADOW YOU in Luke 1:35 (NKJV)

35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

On the Day of Pentecost, we see all the Disciples being overshadowed (filled) with the Holy Spirit because the Promise of Jesus had been fulfilled (Acts 2:4, 16-18).



Jesus also confirms that the Covenant He made was not through Communion but through the Holy Spirit (which is received after believing in the Word of Jesus so that you will inherit eternal life). This was so because when Jesus appeared to the Apostles (He had not yet sent forth the Holy Spirit upon them) and told them that the Promise (or Covenant) had not yet come into effect, Luke 24:49 (NKJV),

49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

Jesus Christ clearly tells them that they were not endued with power. Jesus continued to appear to the Apostles for 40 days (Acts 1:3) and after 10 days He did not appear anymore (that is 50 days after He rose from the dead) He sent the Holy Spirit as promised. This means that the Holy Spirit came after Jesus ascended to Heaven with His Body and the Holy Spirit came to guide those who are His.

In the same Chapter of Luke, before Jesus said that the New Covenant had not yet taken effect, we see that in Verse 30, the Disciples were taking part in the Lord's Table. So, we understand that the New Covenant was not Communion because if it was so, He would not have told them that the New Covenant was yet to take place. So, the Covenant was something which they had not yet experienced. They had not yet received the Holy Spirit.

Our Covenant with Jesus is only possible now through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. In John 14:25-26 (NKJV), Jesus says,

25 "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. 26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Jesus is saying, "These things I have spoken to you while being present with you". *Jesus is giving one to believe that Jesus was not going to be present forever in His Body, Blood and Flesh. So how can Jesus Body be present in the bread? 'But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you'.*

It is through the Holy Spirit that Jesus comes to dwell in us. In John 13:20 (NKJV),

20 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

And how do we receive the Holy Spirit so as to also receive Jesus? As we saw in John 14:25-26, the Holy Spirit teaches us and reminds us in all that Jesus taught us and if we receive what the Holy Spirit tells us, we start following Jesus' Words, learn from Him and build our life on His Words, so that in what we do, Jesus will be always be in our heart and mind. This means that through the Holy Spirit we can build a relationship with the Father.

And to understand fully that this constitutes the Covenant that Jesus made with us, St. Paul in Hebrews 10:15-17 (NKJV), tells us,

15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before,

16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them," 17 then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." (See also Jeremiah 31:31-34).

One may ask: was there any need for Jesus to die to send us the Holy Spirit? Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit because it was a Covenant. A Covenant is a Testament and for a Testament to take place the person who made the Testament has to die, because until that person is still alive, the Testament remains closed. This is also mentioned in the Bible in Hebrews 9:17 (NKJV),

17 For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.

The Old Covenant itself required someone to die to take effect. St. Paul in Hebrews 9:18 (NKJV) says,

18 Therefore not even the first covenant was dedicated without blood.

We see this in Exodus 24:8 (NKJV) when Moses sacrificed oxen,

8 And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people, and said, "This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you according to all these words."

So, for the New Covenant to take effect, it was necessary that someone had to die. Jesus shed all His Blood as a sacrifice so that the propitiation of all sins is made complete through His Perfect Sacrifice. He sent us the Holy Spirit so that through Him we can know Jesus and when we sin, we ask forgiveness from our heart, and Jesus who is the Life and sits on the Right Hand of the Father and advocates for us so that through His Death and Victory over death, God forgives us.

From this, we understand that the New Covenant which Jesus mentions is a spiritual covenant through the Holy Spirit. St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:3-4 (NKJV) refers to Jesus as our spiritual food and drink,

3 all ate the same spiritual food, 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

Jesus is present in our spiritual life.

Why is it important to take part in the Lord's Table?

It is important to note that the Lord's Table is a commandment/ordinance given by Jesus (this means it is a decree/order by Jesus to do it, in the same way as Baptism is also a decree/ordinance). Jesus told us in John 14:15 (NKJV),

15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

When we celebrate the Lord's Table, we would be showing obedience to Jesus' Words, when He told us to do this in remembrance of Me, and so we are showing our Faith in His Words, being united in His Word and above all, showing our love to Him.

We would also be showing our joy in celebration because the Lord's Table is a manifestation of celebration. The Lord's Table is also a show of unity. Many people during Biblical feast days organised a meal and to the present day they still organise a meal so that the family is united together. A meal is a symbol of unity and with regard to the Lord's Table, we are showing our unity in Christ. In Mathew 18:20 (NKJV), we read,

20 For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."

When we participate in the Lord's Table, Jesus is present spiritually in us (Jesus is always present in us all the time but when we celebrate the Lord's Table, we are obeying His Commandment and giving Him

Glory and Worship so that the Lord delights in us) and He is delighted by our unity in Him and through Him.

By means of the Lord's Table, we would be taking part in what the Lord Jesus did for us.

1 Corinthians 10:16-17, (NKJV),

16 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? 17 For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

It is noted that in this Scripture, St. Paul does not say that they become the Body and Blood of Jesus but a communion of the Body of Christ. This, we do because we are giving witness (when you are witnessing you are uniting yourself to someone) and showing faith that Jesus truly resurrected and emerged victorious over sin. We are also declaring that there is someone Who is greater than us and that saves us. And it is through this teaching we have from Jesus, that the Church is edified, **which is the Body of Christ.** And in this way, we are in true unison with the Body of Christ. St. Paul refers to us as 'bread'. This continues to show that when we speak and teach about the Lord's Table, we should not take the words literally but metaphorically.

St. Paul's words continue to confirm that when he spoke these words, he was not referring to His physical Body. Why? In the Bible we find several Verses that show that the Body of Christ is made up of all those who accepted Christ and truly believe Him. The following are some examples:

Romans 12:5 (NKJV)

5 so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

1 Corinthians 12:27 (NKJV)

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

Ephesians 5:30 (NKJV)

30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

Colossians 1:18 (NKJV)

18 And He (*Jesus*) is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

Ephesians 4:12 (NKJV)

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

1 Corinthians 12:27 (NKJV)

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

When we take part in the Lord's Table (as a Church which is the Body of Christ), we automatically are remembering the Death and Resurrection of Christ, and thus never forgetting what God did for us and how much God loved us, even before we were born. When remember in what Jesus did and believe His Words are the Truth, we are allowing the Word of God to work in us and thus benefitting from the New Covenant; the Covenant that God made through the Word of the Holy Spirit and which works in us so that we follow the Word and do the Lord's Will unto Salvation.

Why did Jesus choose as a remembrance of His Death and Resurrection the Lord's Table?

Why did not Jesus, choose His Death and Resurrection and not His Birth, or His Baptism or the Miracles that He performed? This is truly a rightful question. I believe that Jesus wanted us to remember this event which is important just like the other events, but it is the climax and fulfillment of His Mission for the inheritance of Eternal Life. Through His Death and Resurrection, Jesus showed us that He is truly God, who is the Lord of Life and that Scripture is the Truth because the prophecies were fulfilled.

How should we approach the Lord's Table?

When participating in the Lord's Table, which is the remembrance of Jesus' Death and Resurrection, you are declaring that you believe that Jesus forgave you and so if you believe in forgiveness, you need to examine yourself before receiving Communion so that you **ask for forgiveness** where you sinned. You cannot declare that you believe in forgiveness of sins and not ask for forgiveness if you know that you sinned in some area.

St. Paul said the same thing in 1 Corinthians 11:27-29 (NKJV),

7 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

If we do not ask for forgiveness before receiving Communion, we would not be acknowledging that the Lord Jesus' Body that was given for us as sacrifice for our sins brought us Salvation and our sins are forgiven. So ask God for forgiveness where you sinned, whoever you are, if you truly believe with your mind and heart in Christ that He forgave you, then you can receive Communion. See 1 John 1:9 (NKJV),

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

What did St. Paul mean in 1 Corinthians 11:29 when he said, '29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body'?

In Ephesians 2:20-22 (NKJV), St. Paul said that we are now,

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Here, St. Paul is saying that we are now edified on what the Apostles and Prophets said, together with what Jesus said, that He Himself had preached to us through His Apostles and Prophets. The edifice needs to be fitted together well. In fact, also in Ephesians 4:25 (NKJV) , we read,

25 Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another.

We are all members of the same Body of Christ and therefore we need to walk in righteousness to truly imitate Christ. So when we celebrate the Lord’s Table, we are united together as one in the Body of Christ and we need to be fitted together well, and we also need to know what it means to be part of the Body of Christ and follow His teaching. Who believes in Jesus, is also acknowledging that he/she is a sinner and that Jesus is The Saviour. If there was anyone without sin, then this person would not need a Saviour. Mary, the Mother of Jesus also exclaimed that she was a sinner, because she had acknowledged Jesus as her Saviour in Luke 1:47. So, to acknowledge that you are part of the Body of Christ, is to declare also that you are a sinner and it is for this reason that you become part of the Body of Christ (which is His Church) unto the Lord’s Table, to examine yourself before you ask for forgiveness.

Before the breaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, you need to examine yourself and thank God for all He provided you. In this manner, we are following the example Jesus gave us during His Last Supper on this earth.



How do we participate fully and according to the Will of God?

In Mathew 26:26-27 (NKJV), Jesus said,

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

27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."

Jesus wants us to remember His Death, His Resurrection and His Second Coming through participating both in the breaking of bread and in the fruit of the vine. We cannot take the bread alone or the wine alone because the Lord's decree was 'eat' and 'drink'. In 1 Corinthians 11:26 (NKJV), we read,

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

So when we take the bread and wine we are participating fully.

It is important to show the Father that you believe Him by following His Word and obey all the decrees that He gave us. We cannot delete or add with what He told us to do. Those who put to practise the Word of God, truly show Him that they are His sons and daughters because to simply say, 'I believe' is not enough. The devil also believed in the Word of God and this is seen from the Scripture references that the devil made when He tempted Jesus. If we take the example of Mathew 4:6 (NKJV), the devil told Jesus,

6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written:

'He shall give His angels charge over you,'and,

'In their hands they shall bear you up,

Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'"

We see that the devil knows what is written in the Bible and believes that what is written is the Truth because he saw the Greatness of God with his own eyes and it was for this that he brought his own downfall because he wanted to be greater than God. This reveals to us that even the devil knows what there is in the Word of God because he quoted it, but he does not follow it!

The devil adds and deletes from the Word of God. This is clear when in Genesis, all he did was add a question to what God had said to Adam and his wife and in this way he managed to instill doubt in their minds and sin entered the world. So, would we be showing that we are of God if we delete or add to His Word? Therefore, it is important that when we participate in the Lord's Table, we take part both in the breaking of bread and drinking the fruit of the vine.

It is important that when we receive Communion we wait for each other so that everyone eats and drinks together and show unity. We read this in 1 Corinthians 11:33, (NKJV),

33 Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

How did the first Christians partake in the Lord's Table?

If you look up the history of the first Christians, you will find they did not partake with the belief that the bread literally becomes the Body of Jesus. There is nowhere to be found in the Bible that shows that the bread became the body and the wine became blood. They participated to remember what Jesus did. The teaching that the bread and the chalice becomes the flesh and blood of Jesus is just a teaching that was developed in the Third Century after Christ. In Acts 2:41-42 (NKJV),

41 Then those who gladly received His word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Also in Verse 46, we read,

46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,

'Breaking bread from house to house' reveals that they broke bread and took part in the Lord's Table in each other's homes notwithstanding the fact that they had temples. We, therefore understand that there was no need for Churches, (Here, we mean Church as a stone building because the real Body of Christ which is made up of persons is important for teaching and strengthening in the Faith) tabernacles and altars to partake in the Lord's Table. The first Christians understood this in Acts 7:48-50 (NKJV),

48 "However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says:

49 'Heaven is My throne,

And earth is My footstool.

What house will you build for Me? says the Lord,

Or what is the place of My rest?

50 Has My hand not made all these things?'

They believed so because we are the Temple of the Holy Spirit and God dwells in us all the time and not only during Communion.

So, we have seen what it means to take part in the Lord's Table. We also saw that when one partakes in the Lord's Table, one is taking part within the Body of Christ which is the Church, *Ecclesia*. So, it is important that our partaking is according to the Lord's Will. If the Fellowship that one joins is one that believes (as a community) goes against the Word of God, then when you participate in Communion, you would be joining in the beliefs of that community. And as St. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 12:20 (NKJV),

20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.

This means that when you take part in something within the Church, although many are taking part in that moment, Jesus is looking at us as one entity, one Body. So, you should seek to join with those Fellowships that form part of the Body of Christ as Jesus wants us so that we would not be making part with beliefs that go against the Word of God.

Conclusion:

If, today, you recognise who Jesus Christ truly is, and you want Him really in your life for ever and live for Him, say this prayer.

Father in Heaven, I know and declare that I am a sinner. I do not deserve to inherit your Kingdom, but I believe that You love me so much that you sent your Begotten Son Jesus Christ to die for me, for the forgiveness of my sins. I also believe that He emerged victorious over His death and that He can now emerge me victorious over death when He calls me. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Only Saviour and only He can forgive my sins and appear clean in front of His Heavenly Throne and live Eternal Life with Him. I thank you Lord for granting me Your Salvation by the big price YOU paid. Help me to show my appreciation of this by assisting me in all my life to live for You. In the Name of Jesus Christ I pray. AMEN.

Come and join us to worship the Lord:

Sunday from 10.30 to 12 pm or/and from 7.15 to 8.30pm

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What did Jesus mean when He said, 'Take and eat: this is my body, and 'Drink all of you; this is my blood'? Is it true that Communion is eternal life? What is the Promise of the New Covenant? Is the way that the first Christians celebrated the Eucharist the same as we celebrate it today?