

# **What is Communion All About?**

## **Communion: Understanding its True Meaning**

Imagine going to a restaurant and the person ahead of you doesn't know how many people are dining with them. This confusion highlights the importance of understanding why you're there and who you're with. The same clarity is needed when approaching the Lord's Table for Communion.

## **Communion's Essence**

The term "Communion" inherently implies togetherness. It is related to words like "common" and "communication," emphasizing shared participation. Communion involves more than just consuming a wafer and a cup of juice. One can perform the ritual without experiencing the intended fellowship and partnership. It's possible to partake in the ordinance of Communion without true spiritual communion and vice versa, much like sitting with family but being mentally distant. Despite this, we should partake in Communion as Jesus instructed: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me" (1 Corinthians 11:25). This act is a periodic reminder of our ongoing fellowship with God, celebrating our relationship founded on Jesus' sacrifice.

## **Why Participate in Communion?**

We partake in Communion to externally express an inward reality:

- Remembrance of Christ's past death
- Awareness of His present presence in our lives
- Anticipation of His future return

## **The Personal Aspect of Communion**

Communion always involves a "table for two"—a personal encounter with Jesus:

- Jesus died, shed His blood, and forgave you personally.
- You are a child of God, indwelt by His Spirit, with Jesus' broken body providing personal healing and restoration.

Paul's teachings in 1 Corinthians 11:23-30 emphasize recognizing Jesus' sacrifice and examining oneself. This self-examination should not lead to condemnation. The table of Christ is open to all repentant sinners, not just the perfect. William Barclay noted that the way to Communion is open to those who love God and their fellow men, despite their sins.

## **Examining Yourself and Discerning the Lord's Body**

Examining yourself involves recognizing areas needing adjustment and understanding that God is supportive, not condemning. Jesus' body was broken for our healing, as prophesied in Isaiah 53:4-5 and fulfilled in the Gospels and 1 Peter 2:24.

### **Communion as a Collective Experience**

Communion is also a “table for all.” It symbolizes unity and shared inheritance among all believers, regardless of denominational labels. Paul stressed the importance of discerning the Lord’s body, which includes recognizing and honouring fellow believers.

### **Communion and Unity**

Unity was lacking in the Corinthian church, where strife and division affected their approach to the Lord’s Table. True communion involves both personal fellowship with Jesus and collective harmony with others. One cannot fully enjoy God's blessings while harbouring ill-will toward others.

### **Respecting the Body of Christ**

Handling the Communion elements with respect symbolizes our attitude toward the actual Body of Christ—the fellow believers. Jesus said, "Whenever you did it for any of my people, no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did it for me" (Matt 25:40). Honouring the bread while dishonouring fellow believers contradicts the essence of Communion.

### **Conclusion**

Communion is a dual-faceted experience.

It is both a personal fellowship with Jesus and a collective unity with all believers.

It is a time to remember Jesus' sacrifice, celebrate the benefits of His shed blood and broken body, and recognize the equality of all as part of the Body of Christ.

It is a place where we acknowledge & give thanks to God for what He’s done for us all through the Lord Jesus Christ.