



Our Communion Policy

We believe that the observance of the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion, is a sacred privilege and responsibility for every Christian. It is a privilege because it is a gift from God and a means of grace to nourish our souls and sustain our unity as a church (1 Cor. 10:16-17). It is a responsibility because its regular observance was commanded by our Lord Jesus Himself (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:23-26). And yet, we do not believe that this sacrament is the exclusive right of any Christian. The observance of the Lord's Supper takes place within the context of the local church, the community of baptized believers in Christ (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 1 Cor. 5).

Therefore, we ask all who are present during the observance of the Lord's Supper to examine themselves to ensure that they take this meal in a "worthy manner." Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, "Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself" (1 Cor. 11:27-29 ESV). When Paul speaks of "discerning the body" he is not speaking of a general understanding of what the Lord's Supper symbolizes. Instead, as can be seen by the context, he is speaking of the church (ie. "body of Christ"). Therefore, what it means to take the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner is to have a worthy relationship to Christ and His church.

(1) A "worthy" relationship to Christ --

- a. He/she should be converted: repenting from sin and trusting in Christ (Mark 1:15; John 3:3).
- b. He/she should publicly confess Christ through baptism (Matt.28:19-20)

(2) A "worthy" relationship to the church –

- a. A member committed in good standing in a gospel-affirming church (either our's or another). To not be recognized by a local church as a visible member would require abstaining from the Table (1 Cor. 5:9-13)
- b. Not under discipline of the church (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 11:31).
- c. Experiencing reconciled relationships within the church (1 Cor. 11:17-22).

Out of our desire to please the Lord and protect people from taking His meal in an unworthy manner, we ask that all who are present during the Lord's Table humbly regard the words of Scripture. We hope that all who do not partake would feed upon Christ in their hearts and receive the invitation to follow Christ in obedience and love with His people.

For further reading:

Bobby Jaimeson, *Understanding the Lord's Supper* (2016)

Richard Barcellos, *The Lord's Supper as a Means of Grace: More than a Memory* (2013)