



Approaching Jesus' Communion Table

The communion table is patterned after the Passover meal that the Israelites prepared and ate the night before they were delivered from Egyptian bondage. This was a sacred observance and as such those partaking thereof had to meet a standard set by God. (See Exodus 12). All of this was done to announce the coming of the Savior who would bring the ultimate communion by his body and blood. (See Isaiah 53:1-6). Communion celebrates the fellowship made possible thru the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ.

Jesus instituted this observance with greater meaning in the New Testament when he broke bread with His Disciples in the Upper Room. (See Luke 22:15-20). The bread is symbolic of His body which was broken for you and the wine/juice is symbolic of His blood that purchased your salvation. (See Isaiah 53:7-11 & John 6:51). Even though Jesus gave greater meaning to communion, He did not remove the requirements to partake of it.

1. You must be a part of the Body of Christ.
 - Circumcision of the flesh was a legal requirement. Now that we live under the covering of grace, the requirement is circumcision of the heart through Jesus Christ. (See Colossians 2:10-14.)
2. *"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord."* 1Corinthians 11:27
 - Unworthily is better translated to mean irreverently or disrespectfully, referring to a state of mind, heart, or attitude. This is further noted in verse 1 Corinthians 11:29^b *"not discerning the Lord's body."* Everyone must examine themselves.
 - Jesus also addressed this principle of the heart in His sermon on the mount in Matthew 5:21-24. Do not partake of the communion table with unforgiveness in your heart!
3. In 1 Corinthians 11:18-26, Paul reminds us of the true purpose of our coming together. We are not coming to a party, but to honor the sacrifice of Jesus' body and blood for our sins. (See Luke 22:19-20). Accordingly, we must approach this service as if we are coming into the presence of the King. (Communion table = table of Presence)

CONCLUSION

If you have not experienced a circumcision of the heart by means of the born again experience in John 3:3-5; 9-16; James 2:14-17, do not partake of communion, it holds no value to you.

If you have hatred or unforgiveness in your heart toward a brother or sister, bring resolution and peace before partaking of the communion table.

THIS IS A SACRED ORDINANCE.