

THE LORD'S SUPPER

a GUIDE for the CHURCH

What is The Lord's Supper?

The night before Jesus' crucifixion, He sat down with His disciples to celebrate the Passover meal. This meal commemorated the pivotal event in Exodus 12 when God's judgment "passed over" His people in Egypt who put the blood of a lamb over their doorposts.

While celebrating this Passover meal, Jesus took the bread from the table, broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." He then took a cup and gave it to them saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

Jesus did this to symbolize His impending death on a cross, which would bring about the forgiveness of sins for many. Furthermore, He commanded His disciples to continually enjoy this meal in remembrance of His sacrifice on the cross.

The Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11 and subsequently many Christians today refer to this meal as "The Lord's Supper," for it was instituted by Jesus and celebrates the memory of His

sacrificial death. In addition, we consider The Lord's Supper an *ordinance* of the church because Christ *ordained* that it be performed.

Who should partake in The Lord's Supper?

The Scripture is clear that The Lord's Supper is a sign of continuing in the Christian life and is therefore reserved for those who have placed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, those who have not placed their faith in Christ and publicly declared this faith through the ordinance of baptism should abstain.¹

Furthermore, the Apostle Paul warns of participating in an "unworthy manner" (1 Corinthians 11:27). He calls all Christians to first examine themselves and their relationships in the body of Christ, lest they "eat and drink judgment upon themselves" (1 Corinthians 11:29). That is, Paul is teaching that we must come to the table with a repentant heart, both towards the Lord and our brothers and sisters in Christ.

¹ See Article VII of the Baptist Faith and Message, 2000.



*Following Jesus,
Becoming like Him together*

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A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

How do I know if my child is ready?

The decision to allow your child to take The Lord's Supper should not be taken lightly. Since The Lord's Supper is reserved for those who have placed their faith in Christ, the following questions can help you discern if your child is ready to partake of The Lord's Supper.

1. Does my child understand the Gospel? Does my child understand that he was made to worship a holy God? Does he understand that he has not done this, but has sinned and deserves eternal separation from God? Does he understand that Jesus died and rose again, taking the punishment he deserved for his sin? Does he understand that God offers salvation to those who turn from their sin and believe in Jesus? Does he understand that salvation is a free gift that he cannot earn?

2. Does my child demonstrate a genuine walk with Christ? Can you discern a changed heart in your child? Does your child demonstrate a desire to know and honor Christ? Is your child convicted by their sin? Do they see their need for Jesus? Is there evidence that they are growing in Christ? Is the Gospel mere facts or a life-changing message that has changed who they are? Has your child publicly professed his faith by being baptized?

3. Does my child want to take it for the right reason? Do they understand the significance of the Lord's Supper? Many children want to participate in the Lord's Supper because they are hungry or because they don't want to be left out. Help your child understand The Lord's Supper is an act of worship that should be taken seriously.

How can I prepare my child to one day participate?

As a parent, God has called you to be the primary disciple-maker in your child's life. Here are two ways you can help prepare your child for The Lord's Supper.

1. Talk. Talk about The Lord's Supper together. Use this guide as a resource. Read the passages in Matthew 26, Mark 14, and Luke 22.

2. Demonstrate. Bring your child to the worship service with you and let them see you partake in the Lord's Supper. Demonstrate this act of worship.



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