

Thoughts on The Lord's Supper

What is The Lord's Supper?

The Lord's Supper, also known as The Breaking of Bread, Communion or the Remembrance Meeting, is a specific time set aside to remember Jesus Christ and what he did in giving his body and his blood for mankind. Symbols of bread and wine are partaken of by the assembly at this meeting. The Lord's Supper is one of two ordinances of the Church (the other being Baptism). Jesus instituted this meeting when he said to his disciples, "*do this in remembrance of me,*" (Luke 22:19).

Why is the Lord's Supper important?

The Lord's Supper is important, not only because Jesus' dying request of his disciples was that they 'remember' him, but because the epistles of the New Testament prescribe the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 11:17-34), and the Acts of the Apostles describe "*the breaking of bread,*" (Acts 2:42) as a precedent of early believers.

How do we celebrate the Lord's Supper?

We usually get together for about an hour every Sunday morning. Someone opens the meeting and we enjoy about forty minutes of singing, Scripture reading, prayers and comments about the person and work of our Lord. Then someone gives thanks for the bread, and it's passed to the people to partake of; similarly, someone will then give thanks for the cup before it is distributed. There may be an offering taken at this time. The meeting usually ends with an Elder giving some announcements relevant to the assembly, and closing the meeting in prayer.

When do we celebrate the Lord's Supper?

We usually meet at 9:30 every Sunday morning. Why every Sunday? Early church precedent (Acts 20:7): "*On the first day of the week we came together to break bread.*"

Who participates in the Lord's Supper?

Everyone who is a believer in Jesus is welcome to join and to partake in the bread and the cup. Everyone is encouraged to prepare their hearts and minds for worship through Scripture passages, songs and devotional thoughts that draw them to Christ and his sacrificial work (1 Corinthians 14:26; 11:26). As Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians 11 and 14, men should have their heads uncovered and be prepared to lead audibly as prompted by the Holy Spirit; women should have their heads covered and be prepared to participate as part of the congregation, not taking a leading role. 1 Corinthians 11:28 says '*a man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.*' Not that sinless perfection is required to partake at the Breaking of Bread; the trouble comes when, as the next verse says, '*anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.*'

Because much of the meeting (about 40 minutes) is unscripted, those brothers who are exercised to lead should help promote a meaningful, orderly meeting by considering the following guidelines:

- 1.** The focus of this gathering is our Lord Jesus Christ and his work, so songs, Scriptures, prayers and comments should focus accordingly; no need to follow any other 'theme'. Devotionals, challenges, testimonies should be left until after the bread & cup are taken, or another meeting.
- 2.** This isn't the time for sermons. Since time is limited, please encourage wide participation among the brothers by limiting your time to about five minutes, or less.

May all be done to the glory of God, and may the name of Jesus be exalted at the Lord's Supper, which is what many believers consider the ultimate worship meeting this side of heaven.