

## *Discipleship Lesson 5*

# **The Lord's Supper**

*Key Memory Verse:*

*And when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."*

*1 Corinthians 11:24*



# Discipleship Lesson 5

## The Lord's Supper

As you study this lesson you will understand why the following statements are **not** true.

1. When we receive the Lord's Supper we are receiving Jesus Christ as our Savior.
2. The Lord's Supper must be taken every week or every service.
3. The elements of the Lord's Supper are transformed into the literal body and blood of Christ.

### Why Is the Lord's Supper Important to Me?

The Lord's Supper serves as a memorial to the shed blood of Jesus Christ and binds together the members of the local church. Every believer should participate in this ordinance.

### Purpose

The Lord instructed His Church to keep alive this memorial called the Lord's Supper. It is an important rite (or ordinance) in the local church and it signifies many spiritual truths that apply to us today. This lesson is intended to give the Bible's clear and definite teaching on this subject so we may understand perfectly what God's intention is regarding this memorial.

### I. The Bible Records the Event of the Last Supper in Several Passages

Review these passages of Scripture and then answer the following questions: Matthew 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:14–23.

- A. According to these passages, who was with Jesus?

- B. Jesus had a \_\_\_\_\_ desire to eat this *Passover* with them. Luke 22:15

## II. The New Passover

In John 6:22–63, Jesus draws a comparison between the delivery of the nation of Israel from slavery in Egypt (the OT Passover, Exodus, chapters 12 and 13) and the new order of redemption He is initiating (the new Passover).

What do the following verses say about the bread (manna) given during the wandering in the wilderness (sometimes called “the exodus”)?

- A. Who ate the bread from heaven (manna)? See John 6:31–32.
- B. What happened to the people who ate the manna in the wilderness? See John 6:49.

These verses make it clear that the manna given to the people of Israel during their wanderings in the desert was not the true bread from heaven.

What do the following verses say about the true bread from heaven?

1. According to verses in John 6:31–35, 48, and 50, who is the *true bread* from God (also called the *bread of life* or *living bread*)?
2. What does Jesus promise to those who partake of the true or living bread? Review John 6:35, 50, 58.

- C. According to John 6:63 who is it that provides life?

It is the Word of God manifest in the flesh (Jesus) that is the true Bread from Heaven and the fulfillment of all the Old Testament promises embodied in the Passover.



## Notes and Questions:

### III. Jesus Wanted Us to Remember His Actions at the Last Supper

Describe in your own words what the following passage of Scripture says about the Lord's Supper: 1 Corinthians 11:23–26.

The events of the Last Supper are to be **memorialized**! Jesus wanted us to **remember** His actions. We call this memorial the “Lord’s Supper.”

### IV. What is the Importance of the Lord's Supper?

The Lord’s Supper is important because it helps us remember three things. What three things from the Lord’s Supper can you identify from 1 Corinthians 11:24–26, and what is significant about each one?

1. Verse 24:
  
2. Verse 25:
  
3. Verse 26:

**Covenant:** A mutual undertaking between two parties or more, each binding himself to fulfill obligations. It also means a promise or undertaking, human or divine (Galatians 3:15–18).

### V. How Do We Celebrate the Lord's Supper?

It is essential that we approach the Lord’s Supper in an appropriate manner.

- A. Describe the problems that plagued the memorial at the church at Corinth as seen in 1 Corinthians 10:14–22 (key verse 14), 11:17–22.
  
- B. What does Paul instruct the Corinthians to do prior to partaking of the Lord’s Supper? See 1 Corinthians 11:28, 31.

- C. What are the consequences of not following Paul's instructions as seen in 1 Corinthians 11:29–30, 32?
- D. Read 1 Corinthians 11:18–19. Why does God allow divisions or selfish opinions in a church body?

## Notes and Questions

### VI. How Do I Examine Myself as in 1 Corinthians 11:28?

*The American Heritage Dictionary* defines *examine* as “to inspect or scrutinize (a person, thing, or situation) in detail; observe or analyze carefully” (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981, p.456). The Greek word *dokimazo*, which is used here, conveys a similar meaning: “to prove, test, approve” (*Vine's Complete Dictionary*, Thomas Nelson, 1985, p. 213).

#### Start by analyzing these areas in your life:

- A. God demands absolute authority over our lives. Have you placed yourself in **complete submission** to His authority? Review Exodus 20:2–6.
- B. We must move away from the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19–21a) and toward becoming more Christ-like. Is there any **unrepented sin** in your life that you have not relinquished? Review 1 John 3:6.
- C. Are you harboring ill will, an angry spirit, or jealousy toward someone? We are commanded to be united in purpose (Ephesians 4:1–6; 1 Corinthians 1:10). Far better to leave your gift at the altar—go and be **reconciled** to your brother or sister (Matthew 5:23–24).
- D. Is there anything your **conscience** is revealing to you? Review James 4:17.

God is far more concerned about your heart than with your past failings. (Read Psalm 51:16–17.) If you have discovered any unrepented sin in your life, take the time right now to confess it to God and get it right with Him.

Confession before God and reconciliation is what the memorial of the Lord's Supper is all about (1 Corinthians 11:31). It is a time for us to stop and remember the tremendous sacrifice made by our Savior. With His sacrifice clearly in our mind, we should have the right perspective from which to ask and grant forgiveness of one another. What a powerful and awesome opportunity we have in the Lord's Supper!



## Notes and Questions:

### VII. Who Should Participate in the Lord's Supper?

- A. The passage of Scripture that is used to teach about the Lord's Supper was written to a local New Testament church (1 Corinthians 11:20–34).
- B. Christians who are out of God's will and will not repent should not participate in the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:27–30). Why?

- 1. It is important to understand the significance of being a baptized believer before participating in the Lord's Supper.

Baptism is the first act of obedience in submission to the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:41). If you are saved and refuse to be baptized, then you are out of the will of God and should not participate in the Lord's Supper.

- C. Unbelievers are not included at the Lord's Supper because the death and suffering of Christ has no significance to them.

### VIII. Basic Questions

- A. Am I really eating His body and drinking His blood?

- 1. There are some religions which teach that the body and blood of Christ are actually being consumed when their members take communion, but that teaching is not found in Scripture.

When Jesus Christ spoke of eating His flesh and drinking His blood in John 6:53–63, He was very careful to explain that He was not speaking literally. John 6:63 tells us the words that Christ spoke unto them “are spirit.” They were not to physically eat Him, but to spiritually “partake” of His life, death and resurrection.

- 2. The Jews were commanded in Leviticus 17:11–12 not to eat blood, for the blood is the life of the flesh. That is why the Jews in John 6:52 and verse 60 were confused with Christ's statements and said, “This is a hard saying.” They were trying to apply what Jesus had said literally and physically. They thought He was teaching them to go against Old Testament scripture.

3. Would Christ teach us to be cannibalistic? What was it that the Jerusalem Council commanded the newly saved Gentiles in Acts 15:28–29?

- B. Since the Lord's Supper is important, how often should it be held?

The only instructions God has given us concerning the frequency with which we observe the Lord's Supper is found in 1 Corinthians 11:25–26. In verse 25 it says “as often as you drink it,” and verse 26 states “For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup,” indicating that it is decided by the local church when the Lord's Supper should be held. No other passage tells us how often this ordinance is to be celebrated.

- C. How should the Lord's Supper be performed?

There are no explicit instructions on how to perform the Lord's Supper. Those believers who wish to participate should be allowed to do so, and as God wants all things done, it should be done decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40).

This lesson speaks about examining yourself prior to partaking of the Lord's Supper. If you were to partake of the Lord's Supper right now, is there anything that you would have to confess before partaking? Why not take those things to the Lord right now in prayer?

## IX. Practical Application

- A. How have your ideas changed about the Lord's Supper as a result of studying this lesson?
- B. What is the significance to you personally of the Lord's Supper?
- C. Name two important truths or principles that stood out to you from this lesson.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

## Notes and Questions

