

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Spiritual Energy Boost

The Lord's Supper is much more than a light snack at church. Often we call it Communion, which means "sharing" or "close friendship."

In this ceremony we strengthen our friendship with Jesus and our fellow Christians by

- washing each other's feet
- sharing bread and grape juice

It's a special time to remember Jesus' death for us (1 Corinthians 11:24, 25).

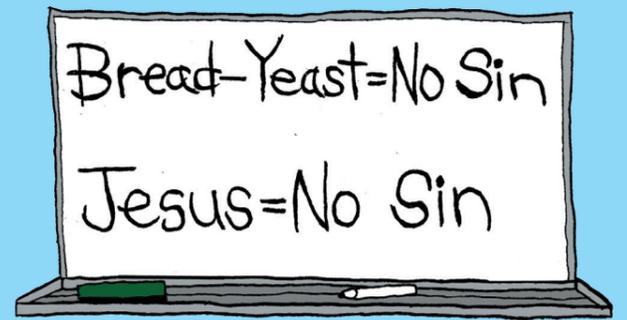


FROM PASSOVER TO LORD'S SUPPER

The Communion service is based on Jesus' Last Supper with His disciples the night before He died. At this meal they were celebrating the Passover, a Jewish holiday that reminded the people of their escape from Egypt.

Look at the similarities between the two meals:

Passover	Lord's Supper
Putting a lamb's blood on the doorposts saved the firstborn son from death.	Jesus, the Lamb of God, died to save us from eternal death.
The Israelites ate unleavened bread because they didn't have time to let it rise.	Jesus used unleavened bread to represent His body.
God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.	God frees us from slavery to sin.
God made promises to His people (a "covenant").	God promises us forgiveness because of Jesus' death (a "new covenant").

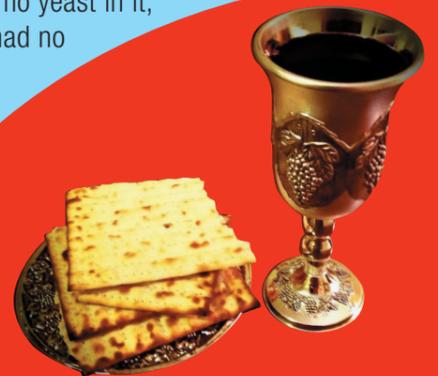


JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE

At the Last Supper Jesus broke bread in pieces and gave it to His disciples. He told them, "This is My body. It is given for you" (Luke 22:19). Breaking the bread showed that His body would be cut and injured when He was crucified.

The bread we eat during Communion looks like flat crackers because it's unleavened—it has no yeast in it to make it puff up. Yeast (leaven) can be a symbol of sin (1 Corinthians 5:7, 8).

The bread has no yeast in it, just as Jesus had no sin in Him.



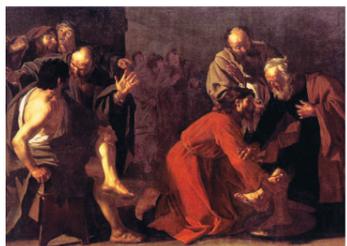
THE ULTIMATE POWER DRINK

Jesus shared a cup of grape juice with His disciples. He said, "This is my blood. . . . It is poured out to forgive the sins of many [people]" (Matthew 26:28).

Jesus bled when He died on the cross. His death made it possible for our sins to be forgiven.

The juice we use at Communion is often called "wine," but it's actually grape juice. It doesn't have alcohol in it. It's pure like Jesus.

JESUS SET THE EXAMPLE



At the Last Supper the disciples were arguing about which one of them was most important (Luke 21:24). Jesus showed them once and for all that they needed a new attitude.

Jesus, their leader, did a job that only servants would do. He washed the disciples' dusty feet. Then He said, "I have given you an example. You should do as I have done for you" (John 13:15).

Washing someone else's feet might seem embarrassing or pointless—especially when they're not even dirty! But foot washing isn't about getting rid of sock fuzzies. It encourages us to serve others humbly and unselfishly as Jesus did.

That's why this part of the Communion service is often called "the ordinance of humility." (An ordinance is a religious ceremony, in case you were wondering!)

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

The bread and grape juice aren't Jesus' actual body and blood. They're emblems—objects that represent something else.



The Communion service reminds us that we need

Jesus just as much as we need food. Without Him we would die.

We can take Jesus into our lives every day by "eating" His Word, the Bible (John 6:54, 63). That just means reading and thinking about it.

GETTING READY FOR COMMUNION

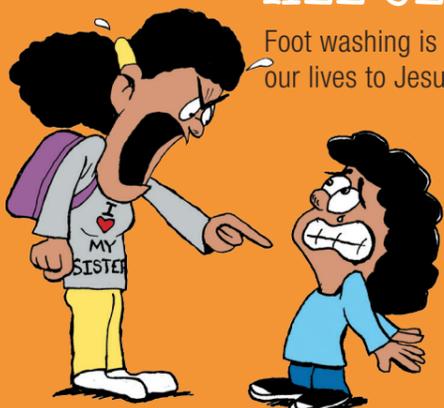


The Lord's Supper is a time to strengthen our friendship with Jesus and our fellow Christians. We can get ready for it by making things right with God and other people.

- If we've hurt someone, we should ask for their forgiveness.
- If we've done wrong, we should confess to God.

We should always treat the Communion service with respect (1 Corinthians 11:27–29).

ALL CLEAN AGAIN



Foot washing is like a mini-baptism. Even after we give our lives to Jesus, we still commit sins and need God's forgiveness. We need Him to clean us up again (John 13:8–10).

You don't have to be rebaptized every time you yell at your sister or lie to your teacher. But when you let someone wash your feet, you show that you are sorry for your sins and that you want God to forgive you and clean sin out of your life.

SUPPERTIME IN HEAVEN

The Bible says that when we get to heaven, we will share a meal with Jesus. He will serve the food Himself (Luke 12:35–37)!

At the Last Supper Jesus said, "I will not drink of this fruit of the vine [grape juice] from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26:29, NKJV). He's waiting to celebrate with us.

When we participate in the Lord's Supper, we look forward to spending time with Jesus in heaven—forever!

Bible texts from NIV unless noted.