



SPIRITUAL PRACTICES: COMMUNION

A. References To The Sacrament In The New Testament

Matthew 26:17-30

Mark 14:12-26

Luke 22:7-39, 24:13-35

John 6:35, 51-58; John 13-17

Acts 2:42-46, 20:7

1 Corinthians 5:7, 10:14-35, 11:17-34

Jude 12

B. Sacrament Names

1. THE LORD'S SUPPER - A time of covenant.

The Lord's Supper is derived from what some refer to as the "Last Supper," when Jesus enjoyed the Passover Meal (Seder) with His disciples before He was arrested. At this meal, Jesus explained how the Passover Meal is the fulfillment of the Passover where the climax of the story is no longer just freedom from slavery in Egypt, but eternal freedom purchased on the Cross. The old covenant has been fulfilled and a new covenant was made. Every time we partake in the Lord's Supper we are renewing our covenant to God.

2. COMMUNION - A time of fellowship with God and one another.

Communion is akin to ancient Israel's Fellowship Meal, which celebrated a Fellowship Offering. It's a celebration of the fellowship and peace we can now have with God because Jesus' death and resurrection (the ultimate Fellowship Offering). Communion trains us to remember and recognize that God communes with us, and is also a communal practice that is shared with His people.

3. EUCHARIST - A time of gratitude.

The word "Eucharist" comes from the Greek word (Eucharisto) which means Thanksgiving or Thanksgiving Meal. At the Eucharist, we acknowledge all the blessings in our life, and then we express our thankfulness to God. The practice of taking the Eucharist glorifies God, magnifies our own joy and also regularly trains our hearts towards thankfulness.

4. BREAKING BREAD - A time of reflection on Jesus' life, presence and second coming.

And when we break bread, we look backwards and reflect on the life of Jesus (His entire life, and of course His death and resurrection). We also anticipate the future of His second coming, when we will all sit at the Lord's table in his kingdom and share in the Great Banquet.

Finally, the sacrament focuses on the present... the presence of Jesus who dwells with us, right now, through His Spirit.

“For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.” 1 Cor. 11:26

“Breaking Bread is where the past and future come rushing together into the present, pouring an ocean of meaning into the little bottle of now.” Pastor John Mark Comer

5. AGAPE FEAST/LOVE DINNER - A time of celebration.

Just like how the Passover meal celebrates the passover sacrifice of a lamb, and is a memorial characterized by praise, joy and thanksgiving, the Love Feast celebrates the sacrifice of Jesus, the lamb of God. At the Agape feast we are at the Table because the Son went to the Altar.

C. Further Resources

- *Come To The Table*, John Mark Hicks
- *Seven Practices For The Church On Mission*, David Fitch
- *The Meal Jesus Gave Us*, N.T. Wright

Questions? Email me at: leland@monterey.church

And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. Hebrews 11:6