

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

SUMMER  
AT  
HILLSIDE

August 6, 2023

## COMMUNION - Aaron McRae

This Discussion Guide is designed to help you **think more deeply** about the sermon and **engage with others** through thoughtful conversation, biblical exploration and **allow God to work** in your life as you apply what you discover.

### ➤ CONVERSATION STARTER

**When you are celebrating something special, what is your favorite meal?**

### ➤ EXPLORATION

Have you ever wondered why we eat a tiny cracker and drink a sip of juice at church? You're not alone.

For thousands of years, the Church has continued a practice called "Communion", or "The Lord's Supper." Jesus initiated this practice with his followers just before his death and resurrection.

This simple act of taking Communion is a beautiful reminder of what Christ did for us. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, we see that there are important things to consider as we participate in Communion.

**1 Corinthians 11:17-22 (From your bible, read aloud)**

Apparently, there were some concerns about the way the early church was taking Communion. Rather than being a time to unify the church, some

of the people followed pagan practices that promoted division.

Sometimes the rich people had access to better bread and looked down on the poor rather than sharing equally with each other. Other times, people would continue to drink the wine and would get drunk.

**What church tradition or practice has been confusing to you?**

**How will you take initiative in order to gain a better understanding?**

### THE TABLE

Paul teaches them what the Lord's Supper is all about.

**1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (From your bible, read aloud)**

**What stands out to you from this passage?**

The bread represents the body of Jesus which was broken for us. The cup represents the blood of Jesus which was shed for us.

The 3 most common commands in the bible are:

- Do not be afraid
- Rejoice
- Remember

Paul is telling his readers that Communion is a time for us to remember the incredible gift that Jesus gave to us by dying on a cross in our place. Jesus took on the punishment that we deserved and paid the price once and for all.

Because the price for our sin has been paid, we can take Communion as a way to acknowledge and remember this gift with thanksgiving.

## **A SEAT AT THE TABLE**

There is a seat at the Communion table for anyone who puts their faith in Jesus. No one who comes to the table with faith is excluded.

## **What are you most grateful for in your relationship with Jesus?**

Communion is a time to look back and remember, but it is also a time to look forward and proclaim that the sacrifice that Jesus made is sufficient to wipe away all our sin.

*“Because of God’s grace and because of God’s mercy and the sacrifice of Jesus, there is a place at the table for you.” ~Aaron McRae*

## **EXAMINING YOURSELF**

Paul clearly states that we would be wise not to take Communion lightly, but instead, to examine ourselves before we participate in this beautiful exchange.

**1 Corinthians 11:27-28 (From your bible, read aloud)**

Before we take time to remember the gift and even before we proclaim its meaning, Paul tells us that we need to examine our hearts. This is an invitation to allow God to do what only God can do, to search our hearts and make us aware of anything that needs healing in our lives.

Communion is for Christians. It is for those who have faith in Jesus. This does not mean that we have to be perfect. It simply means that we need to

be open and willing to allow God to be the Lord of our life.

## **Take a few moments to pray**

**“God, search my heart...Show me if there is any sin in me.”**

## **Pause and listen - pay attention to anything that comes to mind.**

If anything comes to mind, take a moment to confess it to God and to ask for forgiveness.

**1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to purify us from all unrighteousness.”**

You can be confident that you are forgiven!

## **> TAKE AWAY**

Communion is sometimes referred to as the Lord’s Supper, because just like a good meal provides nutrients for our body, Communion is good for our soul. It gives us the space to remember the gift, to proclaim its importance and to center us on the character and nature of God.

## **If possible, take communion together.**

### **Be sure to pray together:**

- **Thank God for the gift of Jesus**
- **Take time to remember**
- **Proclaim that Jesus is enough**
- **Celebrate God’s goodness**

## **> 1000 TABLES**

There is still time to be part of 1000 Tables. If you haven’t had a chance to share a meal with someone new, we encourage you to be bold and invite some people to join you for a time of food, sharing your story and prayer. Be sure to snap a picture and send it to us at [communications@hillsidechurches.com](mailto:communications@hillsidechurches.com)

***Join the fun! It’s not too late!***