

# THE LORD'S SUPPER

*“Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, ‘Take and eat; this is my body’. Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins’.” —MATTHEW 26:26-28*

The Lord's Supper, also known as 'Communion', is repeated frequently because it reminds us of our need for ongoing cleansing and ongoing renewal of our communion with God. Jesus asked us to do this in remembrance of Him.

At His last Passover Supper, Jesus said something that would have dismayed His disciples, but which conveys a fundamental truth of the Gospel. He first took the bread, and said, “This is my body. Take it; eat it in remembrance of me.” Jesus had told His disciples several times He was going to die, so that wouldn't have shocked them. Then He took the cup of wine, and said, “This cup is my blood of the covenant. Drink from it, all of you.” That's the part that would have shocked them.

No Jewish person ever drank blood. Blood was expressly forbidden, not because of health issues, but because it was commanded by God. Deuteronomy 12:23 says, “Be sure you do not eat the blood, because the blood is the life, and you must not eat the life with the meat.” Leviticus 17:11 tells us, “The life is in the blood”. Under the Old Covenant, the reason why they were not permitted to consume blood was because there was no provision for life. That's why the word 'regeneration' doesn't appear in the Old Testament.

Under the Old Covenant, sins were forgiven by the sacrifice of bulls and goats, and their blood being shed was a foreshadowing of the blood of Christ shed for us for the forgiveness of sins. The blood of Christ nullifies the blood of animals, so there were no longer any restrictions on what people were allowed to eat or drink. Jesus was telling His disciples they could now break the law that forbids the consumption of animal blood.

The life of Jesus Christ was offered up in sacrifice for us, and under the New Covenant, we are given His life to drink. If I can make this distinction – the bread represents Jesus giving Himself for us, and His blood represents Jesus giving Himself to us. The body given for us is what enables the life of Jesus to be given to us. In asking His disciples to drink of the cup of the covenant, He was letting them know that the life was not in the blood, but in Jesus, Himself.

***PRAYER: Thank You, Precious Lord, for Your blood shed on the cross for me. You are my life, and I pray for an ever increasing knowledge of You.***

***TO REFLECT UPON: What does taking part in the Lord's Supper mean to me?***