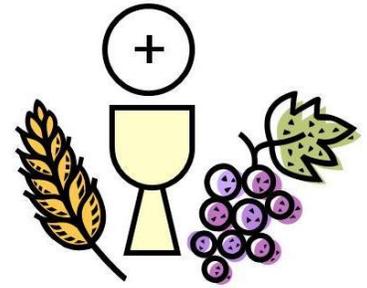


A HEAVENLY FEAST



INTRODUCTION: Review what makes a sacrament a sacrament. Why do you think God found it desirable to attach his promise of forgiveness to a visible sign or element?

Holy Communion – Part 1: What is the Sacrament of Holy Communion? (Luther’s Small Catechism)

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ for us Christians to eat and to drink.

Where is this written?

The holy evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and the apostle Paul tell us: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples saying, ‘Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’ Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.’

When did Jesus institute the Lord’s Supper? (also called Holy Communion, the Eucharist, Sacrament of the Altar)

- Matthew 26:17, On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Where do you want us to make preparations for you to eat the Passover?”

The Lord’s Supper was instituted at the _____ feast on _____
_____, the night before he was _____. On that night the Jews commemorate their
miraculous _____ from _____ in the land of _____.

What do we receive when we commune?

- 1 Corinthians 10:16, “Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation (*koinonia*, “*communion*”) in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?”
- 1 Corinthians 11:27, “Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord.”

The visible elements include _____ and _____. Together with
this food Jesus gives us _____. These elements are “in communion” with each
other.

What (mis)understandings of Holy Communion should we be aware of?

“transubstantiation”		“representation”

Why did Jesus give us the Lord's Supper?

- 1 Corinthians 11:25-26, "In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."
- Matthew 26:28, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

He gave it as a _____ of his _____ for us, but especially as a personal _____ (promise) of _____.

What admonishment does the Lord give to all who wish to commune?

- 1 Corinthians 11:28, "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup."²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself."

We should _____ ourselves for sin and faith before communing. (See hymnal, page 156)

What should I do to prepare? Note Martin Luther's comment: *Fasting and other outward preparations may serve a good purpose, but he is properly prepared who believes these words, "Given" and "poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins."* But whoever does not believe these words or doubts them is not prepared, because the words "for you" require nothing but hearts that believe. (Small Catechism)

Who, therefore, should not participate in Holy Communion?

Those who do not _____ of their sins or are not willing to change their life. (See Mt 26:28 above)

Those who cannot _____ themselves for sin, remember God's promises, or believe his teaching about the Real Presence of his body and blood. (See 1 Corinthians 11:28 above. Examples?)

Those who are not _____ with us in the one true faith. ("close" or "closed" communion)

- 1 Corinthians 10:17, "Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf."
- 2 John 9-11, "⁹ Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰ If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. ¹¹ Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work."

Some questions:

1. What if I have sinned in the past week? Should I take communion?
2. Do I have to go to confession first?
3. Can I use leavened bread instead of unleavened, or grape juice instead of wine? What if I have allergies to products containing gluten?
4. What if I can't come to church?

For thought:

- Do I believe that I truly receive Jesus' body and blood together with the bread and wine--or is it merely earthly elements that don't convey God's covenant of forgiveness?
- Am I willing to examine myself for sin and faith, or will I continue the "same old same old"?

FOR NEXT TIME:

Complete Lesson 8 Worksheet. NEXT CLASS: _____