

Celebrating the Lord's Supper

Introduction: The last week of Jesus' life is like a climaxing story line of a movie script. The first Lord's Supper that Jesus had with his disciples before going to his death on the cross is one of the most moving scenes portrayed in all of the Gospels. And one thing common to Christians throughout the world and throughout the ages—in spite of all our differences—is that Christians have always observed what we call the Lord's Supper. Luke reads this way, "And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, *"This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."* (Luke 22:19) Do this in remembrance of me. In a few minutes we will take communion together; first I want us to take a brief look at the significance of this ceremony, and what it means to us today.

THE STUDY:

1A. The names are significant.

- The word Eucharist means "thanksgiving."
- Matthew 26:26
- The Lord's Supper is also called "Communion" or "Holy Communion."
- When we partake of the Lord's Supper, we are entering into a communion with Christ.
- It also symbolizes the communion we have with one another.

2A. The symbolism is significant.

- Matthew 26:26-28
- The bread symbolizes Jesus' body that is about to be broken; it symbolizes his life that is about to be taken.

- When we partake of the bread, we are reminding ourselves of the sacrificial death of Jesus upon the cross.
- The wine symbolizes the blood of Christ.
- Hebrews 9:22
- Through the shedding of his blood—in other words, through his death—we are forgiven.
- He is serious about our relationship with him—and he was willing to die in order that we might be saved.
- Through his blood, through his death, Jesus broke the power of sin, and you can be free from it.

3A. The purpose is significant.

- One reason for the Lord's Supper is for us to take a look backward, to celebrate redemption.
- Another purpose for the Lord's Supper is for us to take a look forward, to anticipate his return to earth to establish his kingdom.
- Matthew 26:29

Conclusion:

1. Paul warns against taking the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner (*1 Corinthians 11:27).
2. If you're serious about it, as we prepare to take communion, you will turn your heart to Jesus and ask him to cleanse you of your sin and remove anything that stands between you and God.