



### C. The Purpose of the Lord's Supper

1. Memorial
  - a. The Lord's Supper is foremost a memorial of the Lord's death.
  - b. Consider the following passages that emphasize the phrase "in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24, 25).
  - c. When partaking of the Lord's Supper "ye do shew forth the Lord's death" (1 Corinthians 11:26).
2. Prophetic; It looks forward to:
  - a. The coming of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:26)
  - b. Our future fellowship with Christ (Matthew 26:29)
3. Purification (1 Corinthians 11:27-34)

### D. The Practice of the Lord's Supper

1. The place
  - a. When ye come together into one place (1 Corinthians 11:20)
    - (1) "Ye" is plural and indicates a time when the "church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Corinthians 1:2) would be gathered together in one place.
    - (2) This is also referred to as the "church of God" in contrast to the houses of the people (1 Corinthians 11:22).
  - b. Not just any situation will do (1 Corinthians 11:22)
2. The order
  - a. The bread (1 Corinthians 11:23-24)
    - (1) The taking of bread (1 Corinthians 11:23)
    - (2) The giving of thanks (1 Corinthians 11:24)
    - (3) The breaking of bread (1 Corinthians 11:24)
    - (4) The partaking of bread (1 Corinthians 11:24)
  - b. The cup (1 Corinthians 11:25)
    - (1) The taking of the cup (1 Corinthians 11:25)
    - (2) The giving of thanks (Matthew 26:27)
  - c. The singing of a hymn (Matthew 26:30; Mark 14:26)
3. The parts
  - a. The bread
    - (1) The type of bread
      - a) The institution
        - i) The disciples came together to partake of the Passover meal (Matthew 26:17).
        - ii) The bread at the Passover was to be unleavened bread (Exodus 12:1-11).
        - iii) The institution of the Lord's Supper occurred right on the heels of the Passover.
        - iv) The bread at the Lord's Supper had to be unleavened bread or else the Lord would have been violating the Passover.
      - b) The negative viewpoint of leaven; Leaven is likened to:



- i) False doctrine (Matthew 16:6-12)
      - ii) Hypocrisy (Luke 12:1)
      - iii) Sin (1 Corinthians 5:4-8; Galatians 5:9)
    - (2) The symbol of the bread
      - a) Christ told His disciples the bread symbolized His body (Matthew 26:26).
      - b) He repeated this to the apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-24).
      - c) If the bread was leavened, it would signify that the body of Christ was full of sin (1 Peter 1:21-22).
  - b. The cup
    - (1) The content of the cup
      - a) The fruit of the vine
        - i) The fruit of the vine (Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18)
        - ii) The *fruit of the vine* would be the fruit produced by the vine without the intervention of men.
      - b) New wine; Though the Bible never uses the term *wine* with the Lord's Supper, this word was used to signify both the alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverage. New wine is:
        - i) Found in the cluster (Isaiah 65:8)
        - ii) The blood of grapes (Genesis 49:11)
        - iii) The "pure" blood of grapes (Deuteronomy 32:14)
        - iv) Note: The Lord emphasized that He would drink it "new" with His disciples in the kingdom of God (Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25).
    - (2) The symbol of the cup
      - a) The Lord Jesus told His disciples that the cup pictured His blood (Matthew 26:27-28).
      - b) This was reaffirmed to Paul (1 Corinthians 11:25).
      - c) The only "pure" blood (1 Peter 1:19) would be the freshly squeezed juice from the vine. Therefore, the "fruit of the vine" could not have been fermented wine.
4. The time
- a. Time of day
    - (1) Instituted in the evening (Matthew 26:20; 1 Corinthians 11:23)
    - (2) We are given no direct commands as to what time of day we are to partake of the Lord's Supper.
  - b. Frequency
    - (1) People have different opinions as to the frequency of partaking of the Lord's Supper
      - a) Some say daily
      - b) Some say weekly
      - c) Some say monthly
      - d) Some say quarterly
    - (2) The Bible does not suggest a *quantity*, but rather a *quality* (1 Corinthians 11:24-26).



E. The Participants of the Lord's Supper

1. Open communion

a. Description

- (1) Open communion can be and is defined in many different ways. For the purpose of this class, we will define it as permitting all who are saved to participate in the Lord's Supper regardless of denomination, or church affiliation.
- (2) For example—an Independent Baptist Church allowing a visiting Southern Baptist (or any other denomination) to partake of the Lord's Supper.

b. Refutation

- (1) The ordinance was said to be for "*When ye come together therefore into one place*" (1 Corinthians 11:20).
- (2) The recipient of this epistle and the "ye" of the previous verse is "the church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Corinthians 1:2).

2. Close communion

a. Description

- (1) Close communion likewise, can be and is defined in different ways. For this class, we will define it as permitting all who are of the same doctrinal statement to participate in the Lord's Supper regardless of church membership.
- (2) For example—an Independent Baptist Church allowing a visiting Independent Baptist to partake of the Lord's Supper.

b. Refutation

- (1) The ordinance was said to be for "*When ye come together therefore into one place*" (1 Corinthians 11:20).
- (2) The recipient of this epistle and the "ye" of the previous verse is "the church of God which is at Corinth" (1 Corinthians 1:2).
- (3) This was given for a local body, and was meant to be practiced by that body. Someone who is an active member of another body ought to partake of the Lord's Supper with that body.
- (4) We have no way disciplining like 1 Corinthians 5:11.

3. Closed communion

a. Description

- (1) Closed communion likewise, can be and is defined in several different ways. For the purpose of this class, we will provide and explain two categories of closed communion.
- (2) Category one: Allowing only active members of the local church to participate in the Lord's Supper.
- (3) Category two: Allowing only active members and faithful attendees to participate in the Lord's Supper. Note: The faithful attendees would need to be known by the congregation and would need to have a personal testimony of salvation.

b. Biblical support

- (1) This option does not contradict the fact that the Lord's Supper is for the local body of believers.



- (2) This option permits the body of believers to exercise any type of discipline that needs to be executed.
- c. Tough questions
- (1) Should a person be required to be an official member to participate in the Lord's Supper?
- In our day, we have an official way for people to unite with a local body of believers. This can be accomplished a number of ways, but in the end a person is officially instituted as a member of that church.
  - Therefore, it is possible for someone to be at every church service, faithfully participate in outreach, and faithfully support the work financially ever officially uniting with a body of believers.
  - Was the same thing true of the early church? We know:
    - The Lord added to the church (Acts 2:47)
    - People could be received (Philippians 2:25-30) or rejected (Titus 3:10)
    - Churches were able and responsible for church discipline (Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6)
    - People could be put out (1 Corinthians 5:13)
  - In conclusion, we do not have definite verses to prove that those who frequently and faithfully attend our services today would not have fit under the description of being part of a local body in the early church.
  - Note: It is not wise to take this to the extreme of dropping church membership in our day. Many reasons could be given for the maintaining of an official membership. It is certainly not an unscriptural practice.
- (2) Should all church members be able to participate in the Lord's Supper?
- Some believers will strongly advocate that the Lord's Supper is only for official members of a local body, yet they will neglect to make sure that the members of that body are scripturally able to participate in the Lord's Supper.
  - Every man ought to examine himself (1 Corinthians 11:28)
    - Let a man examine himself
    - And so let him eat that bread, and drink that cup
  - Every man ought to examine others
    - We are not to eat with out of the way brethren (1 Corinthians 5:11).
    - We are to put them out (1 Corinthians 5:13).
    - We are to avoid those who cause divisions and offences (Romans 16:17).