

“Communion Is A Time For” by Pastor Ed Terry delivered 11 03 19

Colossians 3: 1 – 17; Acts 2: 42 – 47; Luke 22:7 – 23; 1st Corinthians 11: 20 – 32 (Sermon)

Today we have the privilege of celebrating the Sacrament of Communion.

This sacrament is also called The Lord’s Supper because The Lord feeds us spiritually.

This sacrament is also called the Eucharist.

The word Eucharist means thanksgiving.

Today I want us to review the basic emphasis of the Sacrament of Communion as described in the New Testament.

Some churches observe communion on an annual basis, other churches celebrate Communion on a quarterly basis, still others celebrate communion on a monthly basis, a biweekly basis, or a weekly basis.

It appears that the early church observed communion each time the church gathered together.

In the Presbyterian Church the Session determines the frequency for celebrating Communion.

One of the reasons The Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church was to rebuke them for the way they were celebrating the Sacrament of Communion.

Some of the Corinthians would bring a large meal for themselves and eat while other less fortunate members had nothing to eat.

Paul was not addressing the frequency but rather Paul was addressing the way communion was being celebrated.

When Jesus observed His last Passover with His disciples Jesus instituted a new ceremony that we call The Sacrament of Communion.

Jesus used some of the elements of the Jewish Passover but Jesus changed its emphasis and its meaning.

At Passover Israelites look back and remember God miraculously delivering Israel from slavery in Egypt and The Angel of Death passing over every Jewish home that had the blood of the Passover Lamb on the door post.

Just as it took the death of a Passover lamb’s blood on the door posts to save the first born, Jesus death on the cross and shed blood would save a believer from spiritual and eternal death.

Communion is a time to remembering.

Jesus said “*do this in remembrance of me*”. (Verses 24 & 25)

We remember that Jesus voluntarily died on the cross to pay the penalty of our sins.

Jesus died so that we could have eternal life.

Communion reminds us that Jesus redeemed us by shedding His blood and that we belong to Jesus Christ.

Communion reminds us that Jesus saved us from spending eternity in hell.

Communion is a time us to remember all that Jesus has done for us.

Communion is also a time for self-examination.

In 1st Corinthians 11:28 we read these words: “*Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.*”

Self-examination is not designed to condemn you; self-examination is designed to draw you closer to Jesus and to help you to avoid The Lord’s judgement.

In John 3:17 we read that Jesus “*did not come into the world to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved.*”

Our God is a forgiving God and The God of Salvation to all who believe in Him.

Communion is a time to judge ourselves.

We are to judge our attitudes and our actions.

Communion is **not** a time to judge fellow believers.

1st Corinthians 11: 29 – 32 says; “*For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.* ³⁰ *That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.* ³¹ *But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment.* ³² *Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world.*”

Self-examination and judging ourselves are good and necessary but self-examination and judgment are worthless unless we confess our sins and ask for The Lord’s forgiveness.

Communion is a time of confession.

1st John 1:8 - 10 tells us; “*If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us*

from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar and His word is not in us.”

Confession is good and necessary but confession is worthless unless we repent.

So Communion is a time to repent.

To repent means that we turn away from our sins and we turn to Jesus.

To repent means that we are so sorry that we sinned that we never want to repeat that sin.

God gave us The Indwelling Holy Spirit to give us the power to resist sin, power over Satan, and power to live the victorious life that God planned for us.

Communion is also a time of fellowship.

The word “*communion*” is from the Greek word *koinonia* which means fellowship.

The word “*koinonia*” is used 13 times in the New Testament.

In our lesson from The Book of Acts we read where the early church “.... *devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*” (Acts 2:42)

When we receive communion we are joined with Christ our Lord through the power of The Holy Spirit.

That is why we call it communion. Jesus said; ***“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”*** (Matthew 18:20)

Communion is a time of unity.

When we gather in communion we come together *“Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.”* (1st Corinthians 10:17)

We are in unity one with another. Our mind is on Christ.

On the night Jesus was betrayed and arrested, Jesus prayed for the unity of believers.

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one” (John 17:20-22)

While there are many different opinions and different practices in Christianity but there is unity in the need to celebrate Sacrament of Communion and there is unity in the importance of the Sacrament of Communion.

Communion is a time when we claim Jesus promise to return.

Jesus said; ***“I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”*** (Matthew 26:29)

In John 14:2 & 3 we have Jesus’ promise to return.

“My Father’s house have many rooms; if that were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”

Jesus will return and Jesus will establish His eternal kingdom on earth.

This promise is certain and true.

Communion is a time to give thanks to God.

“Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?” (1st Corinthians 10:16)

“when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” (1st Corinthians 11:24)

Communion is a time of thanksgiving. Thanksgiving to The Lord for all he has done.

Communion is a time of proclaiming the good news of the gospel ***“For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you show The Lord’s death until he come.”*** (1st Corinthians 11:26)

The word gospel means “good news” and the good news is that Jesus chose to come to earth and Jesus voluntarily died on the cross to pay the price for our sins.

The good news is that Jesus took our place.

Jesus took our guilt and shame and Jesus declared us righteous so we could have peace with God.

Jesus paid it all.

The good news is that Jesus loves us and Jesus wants everyone to be with Him.

Jesus is The Lord and Jesus is The King.

Communion is also a time of recommitment.

When we remember all that Jesus has done for us the only acceptable response is for us to recommit ourselves to live a life that is pleasing to The Lord.

As Christians we are call to tell the unsaved people God has put in our lives about Jesus. (Acts 1:8)

As Christians we are called to reflect the love, the peace, the joy, the hope, and the forgiveness of Jesus in all that we do and all that we say.

As we come to The Lord's Table this morning we all need to remember our Lord's warning to all who ***“eat the bread or drink the cup of The Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of The Lord.”*** (1st Corinthians 11: 27)

As we come to The Lord's Table this morning we all need to remember our Lord's warning to all who ***“eat the bread or drink the cup of The Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of The Lord.”*** (1st Corinthians 11: 27)

So today as we celebrate The Sacrament of Communion we are to remember, we are to thank Jesus, we are to confess our sins, we are to repent, we are to proclaim The Lord's death and resurrection, and we are to recommit ourselves to serving and obeying our Lord Jesus Christ.
AMEN