

By going over what Communion is and its meaning, your child will have a better appreciation for what's going on.

## **WHAT IS COMMUNION/THE LORD'S SUPPER?**

- Jesus chose to institute the Lord's Supper during the last Passover He celebrated with His disciples. (Luke 22:14-15)
- Passover is a yearly celebration during which Jews remember God's deliverance of their nation from Egypt, and how the angel passed over those homes that had been marked with blood from a lamb. (Exodus 12)
- Jesus, through His actions at this supper, showed Himself to be that sacrificial lamb. (Luke 22:7-20)
- As Jesus took the bread and shared it with His friends He told them, "This is My body, which is given for you" (Luke 22:19). Jesus' further command in (Luke 22:19) was, "Do this in remembrance of Me." "In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (Luke 22:20)

Every time WE celebrate Communion, it is important to help them know that the bread and cup are not the actual body and blood of Jesus but serve as reminders that Jesus gave up His life on the cross so that all people could have salvation. We participate in the Lord's Supper to declare that God's gift of grace and forgiveness has been accepted and a personal relationship with Christ has been established.

## **HOW DO I EXPLAIN IT TO MY CHILD?**

Communion is when we join together to remember and honor how Jesus sacrificed for us by dying on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins.

Communion is also called the Lord's Supper because we eat together at church just like Jesus did with His disciples the night before He died.

- Read 1 Corinthians 11:24-26 *And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." 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." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*
  - Jesus told us we should continue to eat this special meal of bread and wine (or grape juice) to always remember Him. The bread reminds us of Jesus' body, and the wine reminds us of His blood. Jesus gave His body and His blood away when He died for our sins. He did this to take the punishment we all deserve so that we won't have to be punished when we die but will go to Heaven with Him.
- Read 1 Corinthians 11:27-29 *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. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on themselves.*

- We look inside of our own heart before partaking in communion so that we are certain to hold no unforgiveness towards anyone including ourselves. We are encouraged to confess their sin and ask God to give us a clean heart before partaking in the bread and wine (grape juice).

We should be very serious when we're taking Communion, it is a special time of worship. It's not a time to be silly or to talk to other people. It's a time to remember what Christ did on the cross and to pray and thank God for His love and for sending His Son Jesus for us.

## **IS MY CHILD READY TO TAKE COMMUNION?**

The first main question that you need to answer is....

**“Has my child accepted Jesus Christ into their lives and do they have a personal relationship with Him?”**

The answer to this question gives you a definite answer to your next steps. If you are unable to answer the question with a resounding yes then I would consider answering, no.

- No...go to **Helping Your Child on the Road to Salvation.**
- Yes...go to **Questions to Ask Your Child.**

The fact that children develop over time leads us to remember that children grow in faith just as they do physically and socially. The way they understand the work of Jesus in ten years will look very different from their understanding right now.

## **HELPING YOUR CHILD ON THE ROAD TO SALVATION**

- God is our creator and loves us (Genesis 1)
- We all sin (make mistakes) (Romans 3:23)
- God sent His son to die on the cross for our sins (Johns 3:16)
- We need to repent (ask forgiveness and turn away from) of our sins (Romans 20:21)
- We are made new (1 John 1:7, 2 Corinthians 5:17)
- We grow in our relationship with the Lord (Romans 6:14,18, Ephesians 4:24)

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD**

Questions like the ones below may help you in deciding whether you are comfortable with your child taking communion.

Q1. Why do you think we take communion?

A1. Jesus commanded it...or...to remember what he has done for us

Q2. *What does the bread represent?*

A2. Jesus' body

Q3. *What does the wine represent?*

A3. Jesus' blood

Q4. *Who did Jesus give this meal to?*

A4. To those who believe in him, His family.

Q5. *Are you part of his family?*

A5. Yes!

Q6. *Do you believe that he died for you?*

A6. Yes!

Q7. *Do you want to take communion with the rest of our church family?*

A7. Yes!

Remember, you are not looking for perfect answers but answers that are appropriate for where your child is developmentally.

## QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE

- *What if I am not ready for them to start taking communion? What do they do then?*

Go to the section called, **Giving Your Child Guidance**.

- *What if I have one child who takes and one who does not?*

If your child asks why they are not taking communion, tell them that you are waiting for the day when they are ready and that it will happen.

- *What if my child only wants it because they think it is a snack?*

Many children are partially drawn to the table out of a desire to eat the food that everyone else is eating. Sometimes they understand very well the spiritual significance of what is happening but seem focused on the physical elements.

- *How can I prepare my child for their first time?*

In addition to reminding them about the purpose of communion, talk them through the logistics of what they will do, in what order.

If your child has accepted Christ into their lives but is not ready for communion please read the section called, **Giving Your Child Guidance**.

## GIVING YOUR CHILD GUIDANCE

There are times in life when the best learning experience is participation. Communion is a celebration that may be enriched by opportunities to learn before participation. The following are some basic steps to assist you in preparing a child for communion. They move through three stages: observation, involvement and participation.

- **Observation**

- Watch others take part in communion
- Let them ask questions after service
- Share what communion means to you

- **Involvement**

- Before a communion service lead them through a time of personal reflection just as you would engage in self-examination to prepare your own self. Help them

understand both the seriousness and the celebration of thankfulness that accompanies forgiveness.

- Read the story of Jesus' Last Supper (Luke 22:7-20) and communion scriptures in the New Testament with them (1 Corinthians 11:11-22).
- During communion, allow them to handle communion trays as they are passed. Remember to encourage your child during this growing process.
- **Participation**
  - After observing and being involved when asked question, "Can I take communion today?" will not come as a surprise.
  - You will be able to respond with confidence that your child has understood the significance and meaning of communion.

You are best suited to determine if your child has made a genuine commitment to follow Jesus Christ.