



The Good News

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Appreciating the Lord's Supper

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Have you ever been asked by a friend, co-worker, or family member to explain the Lord's Supper? Most of us know what the Lord's Supper is all about, but maybe it is hard for us to put it into words. The religious community has different opinions about it; some partake of it on certain days, like Easter, and others don't partake of it at all. Most simply view it as some rite or ceremony that churches do out of tradition. How can we as Christians quickly and easily explain what the Lord's Supper is and why we partake of it?

What is the Lord's Supper? The Lord's Supper is a memorial, instituted by Jesus, in which we remember the sacrifice of Jesus. His body is represented by unleavened bread, as Jesus said, "*Take eat, this is my body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.*" (I Cor. 11:24) His blood is represented by "fruit of the vine" (Mt. 26:29) as Jesus said, "*This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.*" As we partake, we remember the body that was beaten and scourged. With an eye of faith, we look back to see the nails driven into His hands and His feet. We see the blood come forth from His wounds as He hangs on the cross. With a divided heart of shame that He had to be sacrificed, and thankfulness that He was willing to die for us, we take the Lord's Supper.

Was this only given to the apostles? While it is true that it was among the twelve apostles that He instituted this memorial, we'll find Paul say in **I Cor. 11:26-27** "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." Paul was writing to saints in Corinth who were making the Lord's Supper a feast instead of a memorial and were not partaking in a

worthy manner. These were not apostles, but other Christians. Therefore, when we partake, we remember Jesus' sacrifice and we proclaim His death.

When and how often are we to partake of it?

We find in **Acts 20:7** the saints gathering to "break bread" on the Lord's Day (Sunday). This is in the context of worship and teaching and is referring to the Lord's Supper, just as in **Acts 2:42**. In **I Cor. 16:2**, Paul commanded for a collection to be taken "On the first day of the week". It is said in such a way that it is implied that the saints are already gathered together on Sunday and they can, therefore, use the opportunity to take up a collection. They were already gathered together to partake of the Lord's Supper. While the taking of the Lord's Supper is done in a congregational setting, the command is to individuals, not churches. Paul addresses the individuals of the church at Corinth because they were abusing the Lord's Supper. Notice in **I Cor. 11:27-29** that Paul says a man is condemned if he partakes unworthily, not a congregation. In **I Cor. 10:16-17**, Paul shows that by each individual member partaking of the Lord's Supper, we add ourselves to the fellowship (communion) of the body of Christ.

Consider the wisdom of God in having us partake and remember Jesus' death every Sunday, not just Easter or Christmas...it ensures that we will not forget it. As we partake today, let us remember these important truths. And the next time someone asks about it, we will know what to tell them.