
SOLA FIDE

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The Lord's Supper

Growing up, I did not take the Lord's Supper seriously. I went to churches where people took many pieces of bread as if to fill their stomachs. I experienced some churches where Christians and non-Christians alike participated in the Lord's Supper without much thought. Because of these experiences, I had a hard time understanding the importance of why Christians were eating the bread and drinking the drink on Sundays. I knew the bread (or rice cake or plastic-like wafers you are presented with) represented Jesus' body and the drink (wine or juice) represented Jesus' blood, but I did not know how or why the Lord's Supper was significant for a Christian. But eventually, I realized that The Lord's Supper (also known as the Eucharist or Communion) is very important for Christians.



Jonathan Edwards was a pastor in the 18th century, and is considered to be one of the greatest theologians and pastors in American history. When he was young, he served as an assistant pastor to Solomon Stoddard, his grandfather, who believed anyone and everyone could participate in the Lord's Supper. Edwards, however believed in believer's communion, where only believers could participate in communion. After Edwards took over for his grandfather, his congregation did not like his staunch and restrictive view on the Lord's Supper. Edwards was willing to be excommunicated from his church for the sake of believers' communion, and eventually was kicked out of his own church. He considered the believers' Lord's Supper important enough to endure being kicked out by his own church members.

In 1 Corinthians 11:27, Paul explains, "So then, 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." The church of Corinth had various issues, but one of the issues was not taking the Lord's Supper seriously. Paul emphasizes the importance and seriousness of partaking in the Lord's Supper and that it should not be taken half-heartedly. That if any were to do so, it was sin! Jesus himself commanded the disciples multiple times throughout the gospels to participate in the Lord's Supper and with genuineness (Matt 26:26-28, John 6:53-56). He said to eat the bread as if it were his body and to drink the drink as if it were his blood. This shows how significant it is for

Christians to participate in the Lord's Supper and participate in it with sincerity and genuineness. Jesus himself commands it and commands with clear instruction!

Within the Christian circle, there are four main different views on the Lord's Supper. These views were disputed between Catholics and Reformers, amongst denominations within the protestant/evangelical Christian circle and amongst theologians throughout history. The 4 views are:

Transubstantiation: This is the view held by the Roman Catholic Church and this belief holds that once the priest prays over the Lord's Supper, through the miracles, the substance of the bread and wine are transformed into Christ's actual physical body and blood.

Consubstantiation: This is the view held by the Lutheran denomination and this belief holds that the body and blood of Christ is "in, under and with" the bread and wine, but the actual body and blood of Christ does not become the bread and the wine. In other words, the body and blood of Christ coexists separately with the bread and the wine of the Lord's Supper.

Memorial-sign view: This is the view held by the majority of the Baptist denomination and this belief holds that the bread and wine are mere symbols of Christ's body and blood and does not have any spiritual implication when participating in the Lord's Supper.

Real Presence: This is a view held by Reform, Anglican and other Christian groups and this belief holds that the presence of Jesus Christ (his body, blood, and spirit) makes supernatural union with the participants, by the power of the Holy Spirit, when the participants partake in the Lord's Supper. This view emphasizes the spiritual nourishment of believers through the spiritual presence of Christ.

My church and I believe in the Real Presence view, but regardless of where you stand, the Lord calls each and every Christian to partake in the Lord's Supper, and only the Christians, with sense of sincerity and genuineness, in faith, which is led by the Holy Spirit. In the early church, Christians gathered together and participated in the Lord's Supper daily (Acts 2:42). The frequency of the Lord's Supper is dependent upon every church (although it should not be infrequent), but whether you partake in it once a week or few times a year, Jesus calls the believers to participate in the Communion with sense of sincerity and genuineness. In 1 Corinthians 11, as stated above, Paul explains to the Corinthian church that if we partake in the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, we are sinning against the Lord's body and blood. Paul says to examine our hearts before we partake of the Lord's Supper because the act of participating in the Lord's Supper is our actual proclamation of his atoning death until his return (1 Cor. 11:26). Simply put, the Lord's Supper should not be taken lightly!

Let us examine our hearts before partaking in the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is such a blessing that God has bestowed upon His people because through it, we get to unite with the Lord's presence supernaturally. So let us partake in the Lord's Supper with proper examination, with reverence, thankfulness, joy and with the body of believers eagerly anticipating the return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

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