STARTING OUT AS A CHRISTIAN · STUDY NOTES

Study 6: The Lord's Supper

For personal study or groups

Your name

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How to use these notes. Watch each part's video on biblehelp.net, or read the text below. Look up each passage in your own Bible and write the answer on the lines. The verses are printed at the back if you need them. At the end there are questions to think about on your own or to discuss in a group.

PART 1

Looking back, outward and forward

A service of thanksgiving

The Lord's Supper is one of the most important parts of our worship. But what is it all about? What does it mean? What should be going through our minds as we eat the bread and drink the wine?

The Lord's Supper is a service of thanksgiving. At His last meal with His disciples, Jesus gave thanks for the bread and wine they were sharing. He said the bread and wine were to be the symbols of His body and blood, and so the Lord's Supper began (Luke 22:14–20). When we take part in the Lord's Supper, we give thanks too, and for a very special reason: Christ gave His body and shed His blood for us!

Paul records the events of that last meal again in 1 Corinthians 11:23–31. We will look at it in five ways.

1. Looking back to Christ

At the Lord's Supper we especially remember Jesus' death for our sins. He tells us to take the bread and wine in remembrance of the time when He gave His life for us.

1 **Read 1 Corinthians 11:23–25**

What did Jesus say about the bread and the cup?

The bread and wine represent Christ. He cannot be physically present in the bread and wine, for He is risen and His body is in heaven. As we receive the bread and wine, we remember that Jesus is the Bread of Life, and we feed on Him by faith.

2. Looking outward and forward

Whenever we eat the bread and drink the cup at the Lord's Supper, we (a) "proclaim the Lord's death" (b) "until He comes".

2 **Look up 1 Corinthians 11:26**

What do we proclaim when we eat this bread and drink this cup, and until when?

The Lord's Supper announces the gospel in actions and words. This is mainly for our own encouragement as Christians, but it should also remind us to look outward and proclaim Christ to others.

The Lord's Supper also points us to Jesus' return. We receive the bread and wine "until He comes". When He comes, we shall no longer need a reminder of His dying love. We shall be with Him, and shall sing for ever, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain".

3 **Look up Revelation 5:12**

Who is worthy, and what had been done to Him?

PART 2

Looking inwards, around and onwards

3. Looking inwards

No one should take part in the Lord's Supper carelessly or lightly. The bread and wine should be taken thoughtfully, remembering the holy Person they represent (1 Corinthians 11:27–31). We should come to the Supper in true repentance, searching our hearts and examining ourselves before we eat the bread and drink the cup.

4 **Look up 1 Corinthians 11:28**

What must each one do before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup?

4. Looking around us

The Lord's Supper is a family meal, so it is not eaten alone. Our family in Christ is all around us. Jesus died for us personally, but He also died for our Christian brothers and sisters. In the early church, the Lord's Supper was part of a church meal. Today churches emphasise the "fellowship" of the Lord's Supper by:

- joining together in this act of remembrance;
- praying for one another, especially those in need;
- often welcoming new members at the Lord's Supper.

The oneness of the church family is emphasised at the Lord's Supper.

5 **Look up 1 Corinthians 10:17**

Why are we, who are many, one body?

5. Looking onwards

If the Lord's Supper is to be meaningful, it must lead to a renewed commitment to Christ. It speaks to us of the cost of our salvation, and challenges us again to take up the cross and follow Jesus.

6 **Look up Matthew 16:24**

What must anyone do who wants to come after Jesus?

6. Finally

There are many wrong views of the Lord's Supper. Some say the bread and wine become Christ's body and blood, and that Christ is sacrificed again; this is called "the Mass". But there is no need for further sacrifices, because our Saviour died for all our sins – past, present and future. When we fail in our daily efforts to please Him, His blood goes on cleansing us from all sin.

7 **Look up 1 John 1:7**

From how much sin does the blood of Jesus cleanse us?

Jesus did all that was needed to save us, and there is nothing left for us to do. God's justice was fully satisfied by the punishment He bore on the cross. After hours of intense suffering, having completed His saving work, He cried, "It is finished."

8 **Look up John 19:30**

What did Jesus say before He yielded up His spirit?

It is finished

Christ's sacrifice was once for all. The Lord's Supper does not repeat it; it remembers it, proclaims it and gives thanks for it.

We have seen that the Lord's Supper keeps us anchored to the central truths of the gospel, and strengthens us for Christian living. It helps us rejoice in what God has done for us, and reminds us how we should live for Him. The Lord's Supper rightly holds a central place in our worship and life together as Christians.

THINK IT THROUGH

Questions for reflection and discussion

1. What should be going through your mind as you take the bread and the cup?

2. Why is it important that Christ's sacrifice was "once for all"?

3. How can the Lord's Supper renew your commitment to follow Christ?

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

Memory verse for study 6

Learn this verse by heart this week. Cut out the card and keep it where you will see it.

STARTING OUT AS A CHRISTIAN · STUDY 6 · MEMORY VERSE

“For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.”

1 Corinthians 11:26

Berean Standard Bible · biblehelp.net

“I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You.” (Psalm 119:11, BSB)

AT THE BACK

The Bible passages (BSB)

1 **1 Corinthians 11:23–25** *[23]For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread, [24]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." [25]In the same way, after supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."*

2 **1 Corinthians 11:26** *For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.*

3 **Revelation 5:12** *In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!"*

4 **1 Corinthians 11:28** *Each one must examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.*

5 **1 Corinthians 10:17** *Because there is one loaf, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one loaf.*

6 **Matthew 16:24** *Then Jesus told His disciples, "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.*

7 **1 John 1:7** *But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

8 **John 19:30** *When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished." And bowing His head, He yielded up His spirit.*

Scripture: Berean Standard Bible (BSB), public domain. Quotations keep its American spelling. Like many English Bibles, it often says 'man', 'he' or 'brothers' where it means people in general, men and women alike.

FOR GROUP LEADERS

Study 6: The Lord's Supper

> **Memory verse:** “For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.” (1 Corinthians 11:26). Say it together at the end, and ask who can say it without looking.

Aims

- Explain the Lord's Supper as a service of thanksgiving and remembrance of Christ's death.
- Look at it five ways: back, outward and forward, inwards, around, onwards.
- Show why Christ's sacrifice is never repeated: "It is finished."

Suggested timing (about 60 minutes)

- **5 min** Welcome and short prayer.
- **20 min** Part 1 video (4 min); Luke 22:14–20, 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 and Revelation 5:12.
- **30 min** Part 2 video (4 min); 1 Corinthians 11:28, 10:17, Matthew 16:24, 1 John 1:7, John 19:30 and the discussion questions.
- **5 min** Summary and closing prayer.

Tips

- Some in the group may come from a Catholic background. Speak of the Mass respectfully but clearly, from the Bible: Christ's sacrifice was once for all.
- "Examine yourself" is not meant to keep believers away, but to bring them in repentance and faith.
- Explain how and when your church shares the Lord's Supper, and who may take part.

Answers to watch for

- **1 Corinthians 11:23–25:** "This is My body... This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this... in remembrance of Me."
- **1 Corinthians 11:26:** we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.
- **Revelation 5:12:** "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain..."
- **1 Corinthians 11:28:** examine yourselves before you eat and drink.
- **1 Corinthians 10:17:** one loaf, one body.
- **Matthew 16:24:** deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Christ.
- **1 John 1:7:** the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin.
- **John 19:30:** "It is finished."