

The Lord's Supper

Study

Key verse: 1 Corinthians 10:16.

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?

Kick Off

Masterchef is one of many food based programs people watch. Different cultures are known by their food. What food comes to mind when you think of Italy, Greece, China or America? Why does food and drink work so well in bringing people together?

STUDY

The Lord's Supper has been warmly debated in church history in relation to its significance and practice. From a reformed Protestant position the debate has been caused by attributing to the meal either more or less weight than what God's word has to say about it.

1. Beyond the Word

The Roman Catholic tradition makes the sacrament the key event of their services. For them 'the Mass' is the re-sacrificing of Christ by God-appointed Priests for the salvation of souls. In the mass the elements become the actual body and blood of Christ. Look up these scripture passages and discuss why this view goes beyond Scripture.

- Hebrews 7:27, 9:12, 10:10, 1 Peter 3:18.
- New Testament priests, 1 Peter 2:5.

2. Less than the Word

Protestants who are not in the Reformed tradition tend to reduce the Lord's Supper to a remembrance meal. For them there is no spiritual value in the meal and we do the meal out of obedience. Look up these scripture passages and discuss why this view is less than what the Bible teaches.

- 1 Corinthians 10:15, 11:26, 29.
- Acts 2:42-47

3. Applying the Word.

As we wrestle with the significance of the Lord's Supper it's worth asking some basic questions.

- Who is Jesus according to John 1:29, 36 and what example of life and practice did Jesus leave for us to follow according to Luke 22:24-7.
- When did Jesus establish the Lord's Supper and what is significant about this time of the year for the nation of Israel, Luke 22:7-20?

- Is there a parallel between the Old Covenant Passover meal and the New Covenant Lord's Supper?

Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

4. What is going on at Corinth that Paul is not happy about?

5. What does Paul mean by the 'body of the Lord' in v29 and how have the Corinthians by their actions failed to recognise this body?

6. What ought to be our attitude in gathering together for the Lord's Supper v33 and who is to do the examining as to whether a person makes the grade v 28?

7. Paul mentions sickness and death as the result of Christians behaving in a greedy self-serving manner at the Lord's Supper in v 30. Do you think this would be physical or spiritual or both?

THINK AND APPLY

If the Lord's Supper replaces the whole family participation of the Passover meal should children of the believing community also participate in the Lord's Supper?

Are God's New Covenant blessings contingent on the intellect of the recipients or on his amazing grace?

At the Lord's Supper should our focus be on ourselves or on our brothers and sisters gathered with us?

Is participating in the cup of Christ really about participating in his sacrificial suffering and death for the good and salvation of others?

Have a go at explaining how the Lord's Supper is both a great reminder of how we are saved and how we are to live?

PRAYER

What can you pray about arising from this study?



**For next week
Read
Acts 1:1-26**