

A Liturgy of the Lord's Supper

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The introduction of the Lord's Supper should provide some explanation.

Example:

The Lord's Supper

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

"For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed took bread, 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.

The Lord's Supper:

- is commanded of all believers until Jesus comes again.
- is for all believers but believers only.
- is a ritual for the church gathered, not a private act.
- symbolizes the completed, self-sacrifice of Jesus for us.
- presents Jesus personally, spiritually, to us in the bread and cup.
- ministers God's grace to us, strengthening us by his Spirit as we participate believing.
- calls for self-examination of attitude and conduct; particularly it challenges us to consider how we are treating each other.

Why do we observe the Lord's Supper so often?

Jesus commanded the Lord's Supper for our spiritual benefit. Just as we regularly engage God in his word and prayer, so we engage Him in the Lord's Supper. We stand constantly in need of grace and the Lord's Supper is a primary means whereby God ministers his grace to us. We desire to avail ourselves often of that grace to sustain and strengthen our faith. It is also significant that the Lord's Supper visibly and tangibly communicates the good news (Gospel); by it we are reminded of salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

What does God do and what do we do in the Lord's Supper?

Most significant is what God does; he ministers his grace to us but we also respond by:

- Receiving with thanksgiving the continuing, faith-nurturing grace of Jesus provided by his "cross-work." "This is my body, which is for you."

- Remembering with gratitude the fact and meaning of Christ's death for us. "Do this in remembrance of me."
- Relating with joy and love to God's people "We who are many, are one body."
- Renewing with conviction our commitment to follow him. "You proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

Pastor to the congregation:

"If you are trusting in Jesus Christ as your saving-Lord, we invite you to participate with us in the Lord's Supper, whether you are member of this church or not." (Some denominations require baptism and/or membership in their denomination or local church.)

"If you are **not** participating today, I refer you to the printed remarks and prayers in your bulletin." (See prayers below)

Hold up the whole loaf of bread and say:

1 Corinthians 10:17 **"Because we, who are many, are one body, we all partake of the one loaf."**

Break the loaf and say:

1 Corinthians 11:24 **"The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 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."**

Hold up the decanter and pour the juice into the chalice and say:

Luke 22:20 **"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."**

Prayer (some refer to this as the "consecration" while others consider Jesus' consecration of it, noted above, as perpetual).

Serve the bread and cup where people are seated or have people come forward to receive the elements.

Everyone eats after the pastor says:

"This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

Everyone drinks after the pastor says:

1 Corinthians 11:25 **"This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."**

Finish with congregational response: 1 Corinthians 11:26 "Whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

PRAYERS of THOSE NOT TAKING THE LORD'S SUPPER

We welcome all Christians who are forsaking sin and trusting in Jesus for salvation to participate in the Lord's Supper with us today. If you are not able to participate, please use this time to meditate on one of the following prayers.

PRAYER OF ONE SEARCHING FOR THE TRUTH:

"God, Jesus declares that He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. If what He claims is true, please guide me, teach me and open my mind and heart to the reality of who He is. Give me an understanding of Him that is coherent and convincing and that leads to the life you promise. Amen."

PRAYER OF ONE NOW RESPONDING TO JESUS:

"Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before dared to admit, but through You I am more loved and accepted than I ever before dared to hope. I thank You for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that You have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and trust You as my Saving-Lord. Amen."

Note: Many denominations have prescribed or suggested liturgies to follow (e.g. the Anglican Book of Common Prayer).