

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

THE TABLE - COMMUNION

Story

Last week we were invited to join with a small group of friends to enjoy dinner, reflection, communion and fellowship. Interestingly enough, we have sat with the same friends at the same table, too many times to count – but this was different. This was an intentional weekly practice, cultivated at the beginning of COVID, to embed the Sabbath, communion and intentional reflection on the words of Jesus. We left thinking about Jesus. We left remembering His words and life, by all who shared around the table.

Communion in the Early Church

In the early church communion, the Lord's Supper, the Table, the Eucharist was about communion with each other, as well as Jesus himself. There's no doubt it was the center of gravity in their weekly gathering. The Table, the Lord's Supper, communion each unpack a more specific meaning, but for our working definition Communion represents the blood and body of Jesus Christ crucified, resurrected, and in community or fellowship with one another.

“Do this in remembrance of me.” Do all of this remembering me – all of me – in every aspect of your life. When you eat and drink, proclaim the Messiah. NT Wright says, “it's bringing the past story in the present story – actualization now!” What if the reality of Jesus Christ and His story was brought to our table each time we gathered with others?

Jesus gathered at the table often. He dined with tax collectors, prostitutes, wedding guests and with those closest to Him.

Share: Have you ever spent time around a table reflecting upon Him, and His body and blood shared on the cross for you? Describe a bit of your experience.

Read: 1 Corinthians 10:21 -- We learn in this context, Jesus was the host of the table. We must remember first and foremost the Table is about Jesus Christ.

Share: What would it look like to have gatherings around a table with Jesus being the host? How might this change the conversation around your table? What comes to mind as you picture Jesus being the host? How might he stimulate or guide the conversation?

Read: 1 Corinthians 10:16 -- Here we find the Biblical reference to communion, “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?” (NIV). The word “Participation” is the Greek word Koinonia, which can be translated as “fellowship.” It's about a group of people participating in something together – sharing our lives, giving of ourselves, sacrificing our preferences for the other, sharing our resources like in Acts 2.

Share: Is taking the breaking of bread and taking the cup part of your regular practice? Why or why not? How do you think this practice could enhance your “fellowship” with others? What might it look like for you to add into your meal with others a pause to actually share in communion together?

Eucharist - Thanksgiving

The word Eucharist can be seen in Luke 22:19, "And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.'" The phrase "gave thanks" is the Greek word, *Eucharistesas*, and can be translated as Thanksgiving.

At the Eucharist, we give thanks to God for all that he has done for us in Christ Jesus and his final victory over all things. This gives us great hope!

Eucharist is the Thanksgiving Meal of the Church. A meal where we gather together to give thanks for all that God has done for us in Christ and look forward to when he returns to restore all things as they were meant to be. Our worship response in the Eucharist is to give thanks and to hope.

Take Action

Grab a friend or a group and take the bread and cup, and verbalize some things that you are thankful for to others. Our posture of thanksgiving before Jesus and each other brings us into alignment with our King! Enjoy a moment of true *koinonia* around the table!
