



BIG DECISIONS

COMMUNION



IS YOUR HEART PREPARED TO TAKE
COMMUNION?

Know God- Live out Faith- Shine for Jesus

What is Holy Communion?

Christ instituted two ordinances for the Church-Baptism and Communion. The big thing to remember about communion is that is for the believer to, well, remember! Jesus at the Last Supper with His disciples told them to keep doing this to remember Him. So, guess what? Communion is the way we REMEMBER Jesus' sacrifice for us and that He is coming back for us!



Communion- Importance and Significance

Communion reminds us that Jesus' body was broken for us and that our sins are forgiven.
(1 Corinthians 24-26)

Communion traditionally consists of eating bread and drinking grape juice, but other elements can be used when they are not available. What matters is the heart and the remembrance.
(Matthew 26:26-28)

Taking communion gives life to our spiritual man and connects us to Him.
(John 6:53-58)

We must stop and search our hearts for sin and repent before taking communion. This is a very sacred command to believers.
1 Corinthians 11:27



Is my child ready?

As your child's spiritual guardian, your main goal is to make sure your child understands the truths of the Gospel and displays a true love for Jesus. Communion without relationship with Jesus is unbiblical and of no value. Therefore, your goal is to make sure your child understands what sin is, that God is holy, and why Jesus dying on the cross is significant so that he or she can respond in faith. This is a serious commitment. This is a serious decision.

Listed below are the central truths of Christianity.

Does your child understand these truths? Could he or she articulate it in his or her own words?

I'm a sinner

God is holy so sin had to be paid for

The penalty for sin is death and eternal separation from God

God, in his love, gave us a way to be restored to Him by sending His Son, Jesus.

Jesus lived perfectly, and died as a substitute for our sins

Through faith & belief in Christ, Jesus becomes our substitute and pays the debt that we could never pay

His resurrection from the dead proved that Jesus was exactly who he said he was

Because Jesus is my Lord and Savior, my desire is to be his disciple and the Holy Spirit gives me the power to do that.

Is your child (to the best of your knowledge)...

_____ A believer in Jesus Christ?

_____ Aware of the gravity of his or her sin?

_____ Genuinely repentant for sin?

_____ Putting faith & trust in Christ alone for salvation?

_____ Beginning to show the signs of being filled by the Holy Spirit and a pattern of growth in their Christian life?

If you can answer "Yes!" to these questions, then it may be time to begin a discussion about communion.



Should we wait?

In the Scriptures, the only specification we see for someone to take communion is to be a believer. We have to be able to understand what we are remembering in order to partake in communion. It is our belief that with children it is best to make sure there is a genuine faith relationship and a child-appropriate understanding of the gospel in order to take communion.

Our salvation is more than a simple prayer. In Scripture, it is clear that genuine believers in Jesus should be obedient to Jesus' commands, one of which is to remember Him in communion. This is a sacred ordinance, and it is our duty to teach our children to treat it as such. It is a wonderful opportunity to teach them how to treat sacred things and ceremonies.

Some more thoughts as you consider your child's decision to take communion:

There are some definite reasons to wait on communion. When the plate gets passed around, it leaves the parent with questions- should I give some to my kids? Is this a big deal? They want some, so can they have some?

For all of the reasons above, children need to understand that communion is a special and sacred ordinance that we cannot treat as something ordinary. This is a serious thing! We always need to check our hearts and remember the beauty of the Lord's sacrifice for us.

One way to help your family understand communion and its importance and significance is joining in communion together at home! We always need to live in remembrance of what Jesus did for us, and at home is a perfect place to teach children of its utmost importance to the life of a believer.

It is important to note that the decision to wait should only be to maximize the spiritual benefit for your child and to ensure your child has a real and genuine faith in Christ. Jesus explicitly commands believers to take communion! So there is no benefit to waiting just to wait if these other factors have been accounted for.



Other Questions

Q: Is there a minimum age? How young is too young?

A: The Bible doesn't give a specific age to take communion. All that we can infer from the Bible is that a child must be able to give a credible profession of faith. Therefore, we don't make age a matter of policy or requirement. Instead, we empower parents as spiritual guardians to talk with each other and to begin the process of talking about salvation and communion with their kids. In general, older elementary age is when kids gain a greater understanding of what communion is and can appreciate and remember these moments in a more significant way. For communion to be meaningful to a child, they need to understand what they are doing and what they are remembering. We don't want children to partake in communion just to check off of a list or ensure their salvation, because communion is none of these things. It is the ordinance of remembrance when children have a personal relationship with Jesus.

Q: Why is communion important to my family?

A: As we've established, communion is a remembrance of the Lord's death until He comes again. God is a God of grace and love, but it is important to teach our children that God is holy. He is perfect. The Bible says "fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." This is not the afraid kind of fear, but rather a serious reverence for who God is in our lives. Communion brings that ceremonial, sacred moment to your home where children learn to know who God is.

Q: What if my child has a developmental disability?

A: A very high percentage of developmentally disabled people are considered in the teachable category. Thus, they can hear the word of God, the truths of gospel, and possibly respond in faith. Parents should do so with enthusiasm and belief that seeds planted are a worthy endeavor in the life of their child. We want to avoid two potentially faulty reactions to a person's desire to take communion. We do not want to children to take communion just because it is part of the service. Nor do we want to restrict a qualified person (even if they are developmentally disabled) from being baptized. Thus, we will approach each case with care and individual attention and seek God's leading.



Additional Resources

How do I lead my child to Christ? A Simple Guide

There are many ways to begin a conversation with your child about faith in Jesus Christ. There are many methods to present the gospel message (ABC's of Salvation, The Gospel Wheel, etc.). If you do not have a preferred method, feel free to use this one. It is called "Bad News/Good News." Always remember that hope and salvation is found in the message, and not the method.

Bad News

1. You are a sinner – Romans 3:23

Ask your child to think about whether or not he or she has done everything in their life up until this point perfectly (should get a "no"). Give a simple illustration about trying to jump over the ocean or some other impossible task. It can't be done, just like being perfect according to God.

2. There is a consequence or penalty for being a sinner – Romans 6:23

The wages (what we earn) for our sin is death (eternal separation from God, etc.) Give a simple illustration about how you get paid for your chores or a job that you do. What you earn for sin is death.

Transition–Assure them that this is terrible news, and it is, but that is what makes the good news so good.

Good News

1. Christ paid the penalty for sin – Romans 5:8 or 2 Corinthians 5:21

Jesus Christ, the only perfect person, the only one who was in right relationship with God, died in our place so that we could miss out on the consequences of our sin. Give a simple illustration about someone else going to jail for a crime that you committed, etc.

2. All that is required is faith and belief – Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:16, John 1:12

All that we have to do to receive God's free gift is have faith and believe that what God said was true and that Jesus did pay the price for you. Try this illustration: If I were to tell you that I would give you one dollar right now for free, would you believe (be sure of my promise – Heb. 11:1) that I would give it to you? In the same way, Jesus is offering eternal life as a free gift if we will believe Him for it right now. You can believe He will give you eternal life as a free gift because He is God and He died for your sins and rose again from the dead. You must believe that eternal life is a gift and not earned by being good or doing good things. (Ephesians 2:8,9) Ask your child, "If you were to tell me how I could have all my sins forgiven and to have eternal life, what would you tell me?" (Make sure you ask them this first instead of asking a yes or no question if they have eternal life.) If they do put their faith in Christ alone, make sure to assure them of what they've done and the promises God has made. (John 5:24, 1 John 5:13)



Other Questions

“Saying the Prayer”

One of the things that often accompany kids and salvation is “the prayer.” Remember that a prayer does not save- it’s faith in Jesus that saves. However, for children and adults alike, a prayer is a useful tool in verbalizing our faith to Jesus Christ. The “Sinner’s Prayer” isn’t some magical combination that opens up the secret door. The prayer offered in faith is the beginning of a lifetime journey that can’t be found in mere words, but a heart transformation that leads the believer on a beautiful road with Him. Please don’t be afraid to use a prayer as a tool with your kids, but always reiterate the fact that it is Jesus Christ who saves and our faith in Him.

“What should I do as a parent?”

You are the spiritual leader of your home and your children are looking to you not for a picture perfect view of Christianity, but a true relationship with Jesus lived out daily. Talk to your kids about the gospel- what it means to you, how it has changed you, what daily faith looks like. Spiritual formation begins and takes place in the home. The greatest goal of any parent, grandparent, and spiritual guardian is to share the gospel with the children that have been entrusted to you. Not only so that they can go to heaven and you can have peace, but because you love them and want them to have the most abundant, best life, exactly the life that Jesus promises. Be a prayer warrior for your children. Pray everyday that the Holy Spirit would open the eyes and soften the hearts of your children to the truth of the gospel. Pray that the grace of God will be real to them and they will learn to love and experience his goodness and presence from a young age. Ultimately, you cannot make the decision to serve Jesus for your children- they must make the faith decision for themselves. The decision that they own, that they understand, and that is under the conviction of the Holy Spirit is the one that will lead to a lifetime of love of Jesus. Remember the Holy Spirit draws us to Him. Do your part, and trust God that he’ll bring about the relationship He desires with your children.

**Any more questions
about communion?**

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