

THE CHANNELS OF THE NEW COVENANTAL BLESSINGS

John 6:51 I am the **Living Bread** which came down from heaven. If anyone **eats** of this bread, he will **live** forever; and the **Bread** that I shall give is **My flesh**, which I shall give for the **life** of the world." NIV

This article shows how the **Holy Communion is a powerful means and channel of God's grace. You receive His very life, His Covenantal Blessings and the Power to effect victory in your circumstances and over weaknesses in your lives. The other means of grace is Baptism and the Word.**

1. You proclaim what Christ has done and receive the power to effect your victory

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

"Our bodily meals return often; we cannot maintain life and health without this. And it is fit that this spiritual diet should be taken often too. The ancient churches celebrated this ordinance every Lord's day, if not **every day** when they assembled for worship." **Matthew Henry**

"As often as, οσακις - as **many** times; for it is **often** to be partaken of." **Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown**

When you **focus** on Christ and His sacrifice and **hear the word**, "My Body broken for you," you realize that Christ has **already paid** the highest price for your sins and **the issue of whether God will answer your prayers is settled**. You **know** God will **surely** bless you and heal you. You have **boldness** to ask from Him.

As you **focus** on **His** death and His sacrifice, you receive the **faith** to lay hold of the promised Covenantal Blessings. If you focus on your **own** self effort and sacrifice you will **never be sure** if you have done enough. Instead, you will always feel that you have not done enough to merit your blessings.

2. You receive His very own Body that releases Life

John 6:48 I am the bread of life. NKJV

The word, 'Bread of life,' is **zoe life**. **Zoe life** refers also to a dynamic **physical** life, the absolute **fullness** of life and not just the afterlife.

John 6:56

He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who **feeds** on Me will **live** because of Me. NKJV

1 Corinthians 10:16

16 The cup of blessing which we **bless**, is it not a **participation** in the **blood** of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a **participation** in the **body** of Christ? RSV

Some people take the Holy Communion as a **symbolic** picture of the body and blood of Christ, very much like in a wedding when we say, "This ring is a token of my love." However, in that instance, we clearly say it is a token. **Here, Christ said clearly: "This is my body,"** and not, "This is a **symbol** of my body."

It is the same God who said, "Let there be light," and there was light! When Christ said, "this is my Body," that same **creative** power is released with His **Word!**

1 Corinthians 11:24

When He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "**Take, eat; this is** My body which is broken for you; do this in **remembrance** of Me." NKJV

The Greek word for remembrance is αναμνησσις. It means to bring something from the **past into the present**. In the Holy Communion, the **historical** event of the Cross is brought into the **present** moment so that we can receive its **benefits now**.

The Commentary to the Book of Common Prayer (Anglican)

Does it mean that somehow as a priest blesses the bread, it **magically** becomes the very body of Christ? **No, it is by faith, as we hear the Word proclaimed, "Take and eat," this is my body," and partake of the bread, we receive the very body of Christ.**

Hebrews 11:28 **By faith** he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood. NKJV

By faith we partake of the very Bread of Life.

How can eating and drinking do such a great thing? Well, this is how sin entered the world – through eating!

How do we make sure we are **worthy** to partake of the Holy Communion?

1 Corinthians 11:29 For he who eats and drinks in an **unworthy** manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not **discerning** the Lord's body. NKJV

Our worth and righteousness is in Christ (Rom 5:17). The problem is not that the Corinthians were **not worthy** to receive the Holy Communion, but that they took the Holy Communion in the **wrong way, not discerning the BODY, not recognizing the very sacrificial BODY of Christ**.

The word 'unworthy' is an **adverb**, describing an **action not the person** as unworthy. They **took it** as an ordinary meal and **fought** to fill their stomachs, **not recognizing** the most important truth of the Holy Communion – it is the very Body of Christ and not just an ordinary meal. (See the **context** in 1 Cor 11:20-22 and 33-34)

Some of them were sick not because the Holy Communion caused them to be sick. They were **already** sick. Because they didn't discern the body, they didn't receive the healing power they needed, the very Bread of Life. If we said, "Take this medicine properly and you will be well," but you didn't take it correctly, would the medicine be blamed if you became more sick?

3. You experience the promised Covenantal Blessings

Matthew 26:27

Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "**Drink** from it, all of you. 28 **This is my blood** of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." NIV

In the Holy Communion, we receive the grace and favor to partake of the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant. Grace is the **channel** through which God releases His **goodness, mercy and enabling power** in our everyday life.

Psalms 105:37 He also brought them out *laden* with silver and gold, And there was none feeble among His tribes. NKJV NIV

If under the Old Covenant, people were blessed in every area, how much more in the New Covenant, a much better covenant? Heb 8:6 "*Better Promises*"

Ephesians 2:7 So that in the ages to come He might show the **surpassing riches** of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. NASB

Galatians 3:29

29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's **seed**, and **heirs** according to the promise. NIV

Romans 4:13 **Heir** of the **world**

Deuteronomy 11:21

That your days may be **multiplied**, and the days of your **children**, in the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give them, as the **days of heaven upon the earth**. KJV

4. You receive the power to overcome your weaknesses

Matthew 26:28

This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. NIV

The greatest power to overcome sin is to know that you have already been forgiven totally and completely as you come to Christ. The most important self-examination is not a morbid focus on our sins but a total focus on His grace and His complete forgiveness. The weaker you are, the more you need to take the Holy Communion.

Rom 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. NKJV

Luke 7:47

Therefore I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; that's why she loved much. But the one who is forgiven little, loves little. HCSB

Luke 19:3,8

3 And he sought to see who Jesus was ... 5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house." 8 Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold." NKJV

HOW TO GIVE HOLY COMMUNION IN YOUR HOME?

Sometimes, we don't feel qualified to give Holy Communion in our homes. The truth is if the leader of a household in the Old Covenant was commanded to officiate the Passover, how much more in the New Covenant! Lutherans believe in the 'priesthood of all believers,' 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 5:10. Pastors, however, are ministers of the Gospel called to public office (Rom 15:16; Titus 1:5). The Holy Communion, nevertheless, needs to be conducted in an orderly way.

Matthew 26:26-28

26 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks (bless, speak well, eulogeo) and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."

27 Then he took the cup, gave thanks (eucharisteo) and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." NIV

The phrase, "give thanks," eucharisteo ευχαριστω, literally means 'well grateful grace.' It is to give thanks with a deep sense of gratitude out of a deep understanding of grace. In some churches, they call it the Eucharist.

Short Worship and Praise

Seek and sense His presence as you worship. Focus on His grace and goodness. "Give thanks to the LORD; his faithful love endures forever!" 2 Chron 20:21 NLT

Brief Exhortation

Share a passage of the Bible that speaks of Christ and His Grace, like Psalms 103:1-5, or share one of the purposes of the Holy Communion.

The Great Thanksgiving (Eucharisteo)

We thank you Heavenly Father for giving your Son Jesus Christ to die for us on the Cross, giving us the very Bread of Life, the fullness of Life. As we partake this bread and wine, help us to receive the Body and Blood of Christ with faith and to discern His Body and receive the Covenantal Blessings You promised.

Or you can use this very ancient prayer of thanksgiving from the early church fathers: Praying this prayer gives you a sense of belonging and connection to believers past, present and future.

It is indeed right, it is our duty and our joy, at all times and in all places to give You thanks and praise, Heavenly Father, Almighty and Eternal God, through Jesus Christ Your Son our Lord. For He is the Living Word; through Him You have created all things from the beginning. Through Him You have delivered us from the slavery of sin, giving Him to die upon the cross. You raised Him from the dead and exalted Him to Your right hand on high. Therefore, together with all the company of heaven, we proclaim Your great and glorious name, forever praising You and saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of Your glory. Hosanna (Oh save, prosper) in the highest. Grant that by Your power, these gifts of bread and wine may be to us His Body and His Blood.

Through Christ's offering of Himself made once for all, You have made us a people for Your own possession and Your own special treasure. (Deut 7:6)

You may add the Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your Name. Your Kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, and so (ωσως) we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen. JY

Distribute the bread and say: "The Lord Jesus says, take and eat, this is My body broken for you."

Distribute the wine and say: "The Lord Jesus says, take and drink, this cup is the New Covenant in My Blood, poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins."

When the words are spoken, receive with faith, the Body and Blood of Christ.

Thanksgiving and Prayer

Each member of the family to take turns to pray short prayers: Thank God for what He has done and pray for one another. Pray for those in authority, pastor, loved ones and those in need (1 Tim 2:2). Thank God and pray: Favor, protection and wisdom (discernment).

Blessing your loved ones. Anoint one another with the Anointing Oil. Receive the power to overcome challenges and weaknesses in your lives.

Rom 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are ... under grace. NKJV

John 8:11 Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more. NKJV

Psa 23 Prepare a table – presence of enemies – anoint with oil – cup overflows – surely goodness and mercy - forever

The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn His face toward you and give you peace. Numbers 6:24-26 NIV

Or ...

The God of all grace, Who called you to His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, establish, strengthen and settle you in the faith and the blessing of Christ, Who has nourished you with Himself the Living Bread.

Or ...

I bless you with the blessing of Manasseh, able to forget past bitter situations. I bless you with the blessing of Ephraim, with the anointing to produce wealth and be doubly blessed even in the toughest situations. I bless you with the blessing of Joseph, every adversity becomes a stepping stone and an opportunity for the thousandfold increase. I bless you with the blessing of Benjamin, to receive five times more, receiving grace, ability and favor beyond the natural.

I bless you with the blessing of Sarah, able to overcome your natural limitations as you see yourself as God's masterpiece. I bless you with the blessing of Rebecca, a woman of excellence and uncommon. May you be like Leah, finding favor where there is no favor. I bless you with the blessing of Rachel, a woman beautiful on the inside and outside. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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