

**“Come to the Lord’s Table”
1 Cor. 10:16 – 21**

Big Idea – The Lord’s Table is open for everyone who wants to come.

Special occasions are often connected with food—Thanksgiving, Christmas, anniversaries, birthdays, etc. Whenever there’s a special meal, we can’t wait to be told: “Come to the table!” Or as momma used to say, “Sit up.”

This morning, Jesus Christ has set the table and is inviting us, “Come to My Table.” There are several things we need to “bring to the table”...

How should we “come to the Lord’s table, the Lord’s supper?”

1. Come with clean hands.

Psa. 24:3 Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place?...4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart...”

You don’t work in the garden or garage and then come inside, sit down, and eat dinner. You wash up first.

why the Bible says to examine ourselves before receiving Communion.

1 Cor. 11:28, “But let a man examine himself...”

Not your neighbor, not your husband, not your wife, not your son or your daughter, not your father or your mother!! Like the songs says, “It’s me, it’s me O Lord standing in the need of prayer.”

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us...and cleanse us from all unrighteousness”

We may see something that needs to be confessed and cleaned up. When we come to Jesus with remorse and repentance, we find forgiveness, restoration, and an invitation to His table. Some people get so burdened by their sins, that instead of asking forgiveness, they figure they’re too unworthy to participate, and they pass by the Lord’s table. Satan wants to make you think you’re not worthy, but God says you are!!

None of us are worthy, but if we've trusted Christ, we are eligible, not because of us, but because of Him. He invites and authorizes us to come to the table.

2. Come with a good appetite.

What would happen if you were invited to someone's house for dinner, and an hour before the meal you ate a bag of chips, a Coke, and a package of Twinkies? After all this junk food, you'd have little appetite for the good stuff!

God offers us good spiritual food – a first class meal—the Bread and Cup won't fill us up physically, but they will satisfy our spiritual hunger. When we stuff ourselves with the junk food of sin we lose our appetite for the banquet God has prepared for us.

Psalm 34: 8 "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! 9 Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him. 10 The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing."

We need to "taste and see" the satisfying goodness of the Lord

Dr Leroy Creasy of Cornell University has identified a chemical in grapes that reduces the risk of heart disease. He reports in the Journal of Applied Cardiology that grape juice lowers cholesterol and cleanses the heart of life-threatening impurities.

At the Lord's Table grape juice represents the blood of Christ, which *1 Jn. 1:7* says "*cleanses us from all sin.*"

We are in the world, but we don't have to be of the world. We are exposed to sin, but we can resist temptation. Do we get an appetite for what God has for us, when we've been dwelling on things below, rather than things above? When our perspective is fixed on temporal things, we can get caught up in that which has no lasting value. Jesus promises,

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."
Matthew 5:6.

What does Jesus mean when He says we'll be "filled"? I think a lot of people live their lives on EMPTY. They go day-to-day without much purpose or meaning, and when they reach the end they wonder what the point was in living. They are starving spiritually. How much different to know that God loves us individually, and has a specific plan for our lives. Jesus fills our days with a sense of significance and satisfaction.

3. Come expecting to enjoy the fellowship.

When you're dining, you also need time to enjoy the moment. There is a fast-food restaurant in NJ called the "Eat It and Beat It". I hear the chairs in places like MacDonalds and Burger King are designed so that people won't get too comfortable, so they'll eat, leave, and make room for more customers.

In Europe, when you sit at a table, it's yours for as long as you wish—sit down for lunch, and linger the whole afternoon if you like. No one is urging you to go. American tourists complain that European waiters keep a low profile—the reason is, they don't want to appear to be rushing the customers. Sometimes we're in such a hurry that we don't enjoy our food; we inhale it and rush on to something else!

When we partake in the Lord's Supper, we come to savor the moment, to linger and reflect and remember. The word translated "*communion*", Gk word "*koinonia*" means fellowship or sharing. When we come to the Lord's Supper spiritual food should be the focus of why we're here

4. Come in harmony

Psalm 133:1 "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers and sisters to live together in unity!"

Ephesians 4:1 & 3 "Walk worthy of your calling as a believer...work at keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

Harmony at the meal table is important. I heard about a family who got together for a meal, and before long the table conversation got controversial. They started talking about current events, but the discussion slipped into political differences. Not everyone shared the same viewpoint, and the enjoyment of the meal got ruined as they argued. We can't expect everyone in our congregation to agree on every issue, but we are expected to get along.

In vs 17 Paul makes a point of saying that "we are one body" and we "partake of one bread."

Conflict, tension, disharmony, can all ruin a perfectly good meal. One thing we don't bring to the table is divisiveness. What unites us is greater than what divides us.

5. Come with gratitude for Jesus Christ's provision.

When we come to the Lord's Table, we need to eat with gratitude and should never take it for granted. God provided manna, miraculous food, to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and all they did was complain.

We need to appreciate the cost of this meal. It is free for you and me but it cost Jesus His life – he suffered, bled and died a horrible death which He totally felt as a human being.

Jesus has prepared a meal for us that cost Him His life. “

“The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 6:23

We should appreciate the sacrifice of our Savior; otherwise we miss the whole point of this table.

6. Come with undivided loyalty to the Lord.

1 Corinthians 10:22 “What? Do we dare to rouse the Lord's jealousy? Do you think we are stronger than he is?”

James 1 says “a doubleminded person is unstable in all their ways.”

Paul is talking about how people try to eat at the devil's table, yet also come to God's. We serve a jealous God (vs 22), Who will not be replaced with substitutes. He demands our undivided loyalty.

The Christians at Corinth were tempted to revert to the idolatry of their former lives. We don't see overt pagan idol worship today, yet idolatry is still prevalent in our society - trusting anything for what God alone provides is idolatry.

Eating at the Lord's Table means communing with Christ and identifying with His death. Our partaking of Communion indicates that we are undivided in our commitment to Christ. He is our top priority; He has preeminence in our lives. As we come to the communion meal of bread and juice that reminds us, represents for us the Lord's body and blood, let's check to be sure our loyalty and our allegiance is undivided.