

What Protestants & Catholics Can Learn from Each Other

“What About Communion, Mass, or the Eucharist?”

1 Corinthians 10-11 – May 25, 2003

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- April 27 - “What Protestants Can Learn From Catholics”
- May 4 - “What Catholics Can Learn From Protestants”
- May 11 - “What About the Mother Mary, Rosary, and the Saints?”
- May 18 - “What About Purgatory, Confession, and Celibacy?”
- May 25 - “What About Communion, Mass, or the Eucharist?”

Review

- **1 Thessalonians 5:19-22** – *Do not put out the Spirit’s fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.*
- **What Protestants can learn from Catholics:** 1. The depth of tradition; 2. A high view of the Sacraments; 3. Mother Teresa; 4. Single-mindedness
- **The #1 thing Catholics can learn from Protestants:** The primary authority of Scripture above all other authorities (Mark 7:1-13)
- **Acts 17:11** – *Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*
- The Bible clearly teaches the “Jesus’ gift plus nothing” plan of salvation (Romans 3:28; 4:4-5; Galatians 2:16; 3:11; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5)

Different Names Given to Communion

- **Sacrament** = “a thing set apart as _____”; “a mystery”
 - Protestant churches believe Jesus set apart 2 ceremonies as sacred for His Church:
 1. Baptism (Matthew 28:19)
 2. Communion (1 Corinthians 11:24-25)
 - Catholic churches set apart 7 ceremonies as sacred:
 1. The Sacrament of Baptism
 2. The Sacrament of Confirmation
 3. The Sacrament of The Eucharist
 4. The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (Confession)
 5. The Anointing of the Sick (or Extreme Unction)
 6. The Sacrament of Holy Orders (Ordination)
 7. The Sacrament of Matrimony
- **The Eucharist** – The Greek word for “_____.” The term is used in the Catholic Church to refer to the bread and wine - the taking of which is a time of thanksgiving.
- **Mass** – Derived from the Latin phrase (*missio* = “sending forth”) used at the end of the Eucharist service in Catholic churches to dismiss the faithful

so that they can fulfill God’s will in their lives. The term Mass is used to describe the entire service in which the priest (according to Catholicism) participates in the sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ.

- **The Lord’s Supper** – The term _____ gives in 1 Corinthians 11:20 to the act of believers partaking of the bread and wine.
- **Communion** – Term used to describe the Lord’s Supper because, in it, we participate with or _____ with Christ (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). “Communion” = King James translation of “participation.”

Four Major Views of Communion

View	Christ and the Elements	Significance	Scripture Used
Transubstantiation (Roman Catholic)	Bread and wine literally change to body and blood of Christ.	Recipient partakes of Christ, who is being sacrificed in the Mass to atone for sins.	John 6:51-58
Consubstantiation (Lutheran)	Bread and wine contain the body and blood of Christ but do not literally change. Christ is actually present “in, with, and under” the elements.	Recipient receives forgiveness of sins and confirmation of one’s faith through partaking of the elements, but they must be received through faith.	1 Corinth 10:16-17; John 6:51-58
Reformed (Presbyterian, Reformed)	Christ is not literally present in the elements but there is a spiritual presence of Christ.	Recipient receives grace through partaking of the elements.	John 6:63; 1 Corinth 10:16-17
Memorial (Baptist, Mennonite)	Christ is not present physically or spiritually.	Recipient commemorates the death of Christ.	1 Corinth 11:23-26

*chart adapted from Paul Enns’ The Moody Handbook of Theology, p.362.

Looking at the Scriptures for Ourselves

1 Corinthians 10:14-22

1. Main (only) command = “flee from _____” (v.14).
2. Partaking of the bread and wine is a “participation” (*koinonia*) in the body and blood of Christ (v.16).

3. *Koinonia* = fellowship, sharing, communion, participation. Term frequently used to describe how Christians are to interact with one another (Acts 2:42-47).
4. We are to avoid idolatry because to idolize something is to have _____ with it (vv.14,18-22).
5. **Application:** What or whom have I been idolizing other than Christ Himself? _____
What steps do I need to take to stop this false communion? _____

1 Corinthians 11:17-34

1. This whole section appears to be a confrontation against _____ all the Lord's Supper bread or wine and, thus, getting drunk or leaving nothing for anybody else (vv.17-22, 27, 33-34). This seems to be the "unworthy manner" discussed in v.27.
2. The format for taking Communion is given in vv.23-25:
 - Give thanks
 - The words of Christ
 - Breaking the bread and taking the cup
 - Implied: For believers only (1 Corinthians 1:2)
3. Noticed what is NOT dictated here:
 - No where does it say that a priest or pastor has to administer the Lord's Supper
 - No where does it say how often
 - No where does it say that this is necessary for salvation
4. Notice from Jesus' lips WHY He wanted us to take the Lord's Supper: "do this in _____ of Me" (vv.24-25).
5. Notice from Paul's lips WHAT HAPPENS when we take the Lord's Supper: "you _____ the Lord's death until He comes" (v.26).
6. This Bible passage exhorts us to _____ ourselves before taking Communion (vv.28,31).
7. **Application:** Perhaps the best way to do this is to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any unconfessed sins in your life (Psalm 139:23-24) and then to confess those before the Lord (1 John 1:9).

John 6:51-58

1. At first pass, this Bible passage could seem to support a transubstantiation view of Communion: the bread is literally Jesus' flesh and the wine is literally His blood.
2. However, this whole section seems to be an _____ to describe who Jesus is. As a matter of fact, Jesus uses 7 analogies in the Gospel of John (using "I am" statements) to tell us who He is:
 - I am the bread of life (John 6:35)

- I am the light of the world (8:12)
 - I am the gate for the sheep (10:7)
 - I am the good shepherd (10:11)
 - I am the resurrection and the life (11:25)
 - I am the way and the truth and the life (14:6)
 - I am the true vine (15:1)
3. To say that the "I am the bread" verse is literal seems to indicate that all 7 would be literal. They appear to be analogies.
 4. Jesus Himself indicates in John 6:63 that the words that He had just given in 6:35-62 were _____ words.
 5. The parallel between John 6:40 and 6:54 strongly indicates the analogy (vs. literal) and strongly supports _____ as the means of salvation (not taking Communion). Other Scriptures agree: Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; Romans 3:28; 4:4-5; Galatians 2:16; 3:11.
 6. **Application:** Place your faith in Jesus alone for your salvation (Romans 10:9).

Does Divorce Disqualify Someone From Taking Communion?

- Catholic Catechism (1650): In fidelity to the words of Jesus Christ – "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery against her; and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery" (Mark 10:11-12) – the Church maintains that a new union cannot be recognized as valid, if the first marriage was. If the divorced are remarried civilly, they find themselves in a situation that objectively contravenes God's law. Consequently, they cannot receive Eucharistic communion as long as this situation persists. For the same reason, they cannot exercise certain ecclesial responsibilities. Reconciliation through the sacrament of Penance can be granted only to those who have repented for having violated the sign of the covenant and of fidelity to Christ, and who are committed to living in complete continence.
- Martin Luther's summary of the Bible's teaching on marriage: "Marriage is an indissoluble union except by death or its equivalent." Three Biblical examples of "death or its equivalent" (see sermon 5-16-1999):
 - 1) _____ death (Romans 7:2-3)
 - 2) death by _____ (Matthew 5:31-32)
 - 3) death by _____ by an unbelieving spouse (1 Corinth 7:12-15)
- Why is divorce the unforgivable sin? _____!
(Matthew 12:22-32)
- What I believe Jesus would say (John 8:1-11): "Neither do I _____ you. Now, go, and _____ no more."