



Communion: Memorial Day - At the Table

Leader's Guide

Main Idea: This week we are taking a closer look at communion by: **Looking back** to Christ's completed work on the cross for perspective; **Looking inside** ourselves with self-reflection and examination; and **Looking ahead** - because of what Christ did, we have a hope for our future and for eternity.

Opening Discussion Question:

On Memorial Day, we acknowledge and commemorate the lives of our military men and women who served our country so selflessly, boldly, and courageously, and gave their lives for our freedoms. How have you commemorated or celebrated Memorial Day, or some other special event or occasion, and why is this such a meaningful occasion for you? Share your thoughts with the group.

Read: Luke 22:7-13 and Luke 22:14-20

1. Looking back to Christ's completed work on the cross gives us perspective. What do Jesus' words in Luke 22:14-20 mean to you when you take communion? Discussion points:

- a. As Jews, Jesus and His disciples celebrated the Passover meal. (Exodus 12:1-30)
- b. Isaiah prophesied nearly 700 years before Jesus died on the cross, that God would send the Lamb to be sacrificed for the sins of many. (Isaiah 53)
- c. John called Jesus the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. (John 1:29-34)
- d. Isaiah said "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." (Isaiah 1:18)
- e. Peter tells us that we "...were redeemed by...the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect..." (1Peter 1:18-19)
- f. Peter also tells us that "...He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed..." (1Peter 2:21-25)

2. Looking inside for self-reflection and examination helps us to look at ourselves as God sees us. Why is it important to look at yourself when you take communion? Discussion points:

- a. In scripture, we are instructed to examine our lives to see if we are eating the bread and drinking the wine in a worthy manner. . To do otherwise would be sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. (1Corinthians 11:23-28)
- b. Scripture also tells us we should ask God to search us...to know our heart...to test us...to know our anxious thoughts...to see if there is any offensive way in us...and to lead us in the way everlasting. (Psalm 139:23-24)
- c. It is good to get real with God by confessing our sins to Him. (Psalm 51; Psalm 32:5)
- d. If we confess our sins, God forgives us and even purifies us of all unrighteousness. (1John 1:9)
- e. King David confessed his sins to God on numerous occasions, and he was a man after God's own heart. (Psalm 51; Psalm 32:5)

3. Looking ahead to your future and to eternity, why do you have faith or hope? Discussion points:

a. God is Crazy about You! (John 3:16)
b. We have all sinned and fallen short of God's Glory. (Romans 3:23)
c. The wages of sin is death. (Romans 6:23)
d. But God demonstrated His own love for us, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)
e. If you declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. (Romans 10:9-10)
f. In God's mercy, he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade. (1Peter 1:3-4)
g. Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. (Hebrews 11:1)

4. Have you ever felt that things will never change in your life, or that there really isn't any hope for the future? Explain why or why not. Discussion Points:

a. When we believe and receive Christ as our Lord and Savior, God gives us the right to become his children...born of God. (John 1:12)
b. He forgave us all our sins...having cancelled the charge of our ...indebtedness which condemned us...nailing it to the cross. (Colossians 2:13-15)
c. Jesus came so that we might have life to the full. (John 10:10)
d. When we know the truth, the truth will set us free. (John 8:32)
e. When the Son sets us free, we are free indeed. (John 8:36)
f. God can give us a new life. (Psalm 40:1-3)
g. We can even become one of His ambassadors. (2Corinthians 5:17-21)
h. All is not as it one day will be! (Revelation 21:1-8)

Next Steps: The next time you take communion at church, slow down, be still, listen for God to speak to you through his Holy Spirit, and focus on these things:

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| ● Look back: Give thanks for God's grace and to what Jesus did for you. |
| ● Look inside: Examine yourself honestly and try to look at yourself from God's perspective. |
| ● Look ahead: To God's promises for your future and eternity. |

Reading Plan

Sunday – Exodus 12:1-30; Isaiah 53

Monday – Luke 22:7-20; 1Corinthians 11:23-26; John 19:30

Tuesday – 1Peter 1:18-19; 1Peter 2:21-25

Wednesday – Psalm 139; Mark 10:27; John 14:27

Thursday – 1Peter 1:3; Colossians 2:13-15; Hebrews 11:1; John 3:16

Friday – Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Romans 5:8; Romans 10:9-10

Saturday – Revelation 20; Revelation 21; Revelation 22