

FORM FOR CELEBRATING THE LORD'S SUPPER



Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ,

Institution
1 Cor 11:23-29

Listen to the words of the institution of the holy supper of our Lord Jesus Christ as described by the apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians:

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgement on himself.

In order that we may now celebrate this holy supper of the Lord to our comfort, we must first rightly examine ourselves. Further, we must use it as Christ intended it, namely, to his remembrance.

**Self-
examination**

True self-examination consists of the following three parts:

First, let everyone consider his sins and the curse that he deserves, so that he, detesting himself, may humble himself before God. For the wrath of God against sin is so great that he could not leave it unpunished but has punished it in his beloved Son Jesus Christ by the bitter and shameful death on the cross.

Second, let everyone examine his heart whether he also believes the sure promise of God that all his sins are forgiven him only for the sake of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ and that the perfect righteousness of Christ is freely given to him as his own, as if he himself had fulfilled all righteousness.

Third, let everyone examine his conscience whether it is his sincere intention to show true thankfulness to God with his entire life and, laying aside all enmity, hatred, and envy, to live with his neighbour in true love and unity.

**Invitation and
admonition**
1 Cor 5:11
Eph 5:5

God will certainly receive in grace all those who are thus inclined and count them worthy to partake of the supper of our Lord Jesus Christ. But those who do not experience this testimony in their hearts, eat and drink judgment upon themselves. Therefore, according to the command of Christ and of the apostle Paul, we admonish all those who know themselves to be guilty of the following offensive sins to abstain from the table of the Lord, and we declare to them that they have no part in the kingdom of Christ: all idolators; all

Ex 20:12-17
Zech 8:17
Lev 19:12
Gal 5:19,21

who invoke deceased saints, angels or other creatures, those who revere images; all those who engage in witchcraft, fortune-telling, occult practices, or other forms of superstition; all those who despise God, his word, and his holy sacraments; all blasphemers; those who seek to cause discord, factions, and dissension in the church or in the state; all perjurers; all who are disobedient to their parents and those in lawful authority; all murderers, contentious people, and those who live in hatred and envy against their neighbours; all adulterers, fornicators, drunkards, thieves, the greedy, robbers, gamblers, covetous people, and all who lead offensive lives. All those who continue in such sins shall abstain from the Lord's Supper, which Christ has given solely to his believers, so that their judgement and condemnation is not made heavier.

Beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord, this warning is not intended to discourage those believers with contrite hearts, as if no one might come to the Lord's Supper unless they are without sin. We do not come to this Supper to testify of our own perfection and righteousness, but, on the contrary, we come seeking life in Jesus Christ apart from ourselves. We come confessing our misery that we lie in the midst of death, admitting that we have many shortcomings and do not have perfect faith. We also confess that we do not serve God with sufficient zeal, but that we must struggle daily with the weakness of our faith and struggle against the evil lusts of our flesh. However, the grace of the Holy Spirit makes us heartily sorry for our shortcomings, gives us the desire to live according to God's commandments, and helps us to fight against unbelief. Therefore, we rest assured that no sin or weakness that still remains in us against our will can prevent us from being received by God's grace and from being made worthy partakers of this heavenly food and drink.

Remembrance Let us also consider the purpose for which our Lord has instituted his Supper: that we should do this in remembrance of him. We are to remember him in the following manner:

Lk 22:44
Col 2:14
Mt 27:46
Jn 19:30

First, let us be fully persuaded in our hearts that our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the promises made to our forefathers in the Old Testament, was sent by the Father into this world; that he assumed our flesh and blood; that he took upon himself for us the wrath of God, under which we should have perished eternally; that from the beginning of his incarnation until the end of his life on earth, he fulfilled for us all obedience and righteousness of the divine law. This was especially evident when the weight of our sins and of the wrath of God caused him to sweat drops of blood in the garden (of Getsemane). He was bound, so that we might be loosed from our sins, and afterward he suffered countless insults, so that we might never be put to shame. Let us confidently believe that he was innocent yet put to death that we might be acquitted on the day of judgment; that he even allowed his own blessed body to be nailed to the cross, so as to cancel "the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross". In doing so, he took from us the curse and bore it himself, so that he might fill us with his blessing. He humbled himself to the very deepest reproach and anguish of hell, in body and soul, on the cross, when he cried out with a loud voice: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" He did all of this so that we might be accepted by God, never again to be forsaken by him. Indeed, with his death and the shedding of his blood, he confirmed the new and eternal covenant, the covenant of grace and reconciliation, when he said, "It is finished"

1 Cor 11:23-25

In order that we might firmly believe that we belong to this covenant of grace, during the Last Supper, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples,

and said: Take, eat; this is my body. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. That is to say, “As often as you eat of this bread and drink of this cup, as a sure reminder and pledge, you shall be admonished and assured of my great love and faithfulness toward you. Because you otherwise would have suffered eternal death, I give my body and blood for you in my death on the cross.” and “As certainly as this bread is broken before you, and this cup is given to you, and with your mouth you eat and drink in remembrance of me, so surely do I nourish and refresh for everlasting life your hungry and thirsty souls with my crucified body and shed blood.”

1 Cor 10:17

From the institution of this Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, we see that he directs our faith to his perfect sacrifice, once offered on the cross, as the only ground and foundation of our salvation. By this perfect sacrifice, he has become to our hungry and thirsty souls the true food and drink of life eternal. For by his death, he has taken away the cause of our eternal death and misery, our sin. He has also obtained for us the life-giving Spirit, who dwells in Christ our Head and in us, his members, and enables us to have communion with him and be made partakers of his riches, including eternal life, righteousness and glory.

Besides, by this same Spirit [of Christ], we are also united as members of one body in true Christian love, as the apostle Paul says: “Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread”. As many grains are ground to prepare one loaf of bread, and as many grapes are pressed together to produce wine, so we who by true faith are incorporated into Christ shall be one body, through Christian love, for the sake of our dear Saviour, Jesus Christ. He loved us so greatly in order that we might show his love toward one another, not only in words, but also in deeds. May the Almighty, merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ help us in this, through his Holy Spirit. Amen.

That we may obtain all these blessings, let us humble ourselves before God and with true faith implore Him for His grace:

Prayer

Merciful God and Father, in this supper, in our official gathering, we cherish the glorious remembrance of the bitter death and sufferings of your dear Son, Jesus Christ. We ask that in this supper you will so work in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, that with true confidence we might give ourselves up, more and more, unto your Son, Jesus Christ. We pray that this might allow our burdened and contrite hearts to be nourished and refreshed with the true body and blood of him who is true God and true man, the only heavenly bread. Empower us to no longer live in our sins, knowing that he lives in us, and we in him. May we truly be partakers of the new and everlasting covenant of grace. May we not doubt that you will forever be our gracious Father, who does not impute the guilt of our sins to us, and who provides us with all that we need for body and soul, as your dear children and heirs.

Grant us also your grace, that we may take up our cross cheerfully, deny ourselves, confess our Saviour, and in all tribulation - with great anticipation - expect our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven. There he will make our mortal bodies like unto his glorified body and take us to be with him in eternity. Answer us, O God and merciful Father, through Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray:

Mt 6:9-13 Our Father who is 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever.
Amen

**Upliftment of hearts
(Exhortation)** *Then the minister of the Word says:*

That we may be nourished with Christ, the true heavenly bread, let us not cling with our hearts to the visible signs of bread and wine, but lift our hearts to heaven, where our advocate, Jesus Christ, is, at the right hand of his heavenly Father, where the articles of our Christian faith direct us. Let us not doubt that we shall be nourished and refreshed in our souls, with his body and blood, through the working of the Holy Spirit, as truly as we receive the holy bread and drink in remembrance of Him.

Formula *In breaking and distributing the bread, the minister shall say:*

The bread which we break is a communion of the body of Christ. Take, eat, remember, and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was broken for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.

And when he gives the cup, the minister shall say:

The cup of blessing for which we give thanks is a communion of the blood of Christ. Take, drink from it, all of you, remember, and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.

After the communion, the minister shall say:

Doxology Beloved in the Lord, since the Lord has now nourished our souls at his table, let us together praise His holy name with thanksgiving, and let everyone say in his heart:

Ps 103:1-4, 8-13 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!
Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,
who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy....
The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever.
He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.
For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.
As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.

Rom 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more

Rom 5:8-10 shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. Therefore, my mouth and heart shall show forth the praise of the Lord from this time forth, for evermore. Amen.

Prayer O merciful God and Father, we thank you with all our heart that of your boundless mercy you have given us your only begotten Son as Mediator, the sacrifice for our sins, and as our food and drink unto life eternal. We also thank you that you give us a true faith, whereby we become partakers of these benefits. We thank you that you have instituted and ordained the holy supper for the strengthening of our faith. We earnestly ask you, faithful God and Father, that by your Holy Spirit this celebration may lead to our daily increase in true faith and fellowship with Christ. This we pray through him, your beloved Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

Trial Translation