

SHORTENED FORM OF CELEBRATING THE LORD'S SUPPER



Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ,

Institution 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:

1 Cor 11:23-29 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.

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

Self-examination True self-examination consists of the following three parts:

We must consider our sins and accursedness, and we must humble ourselves before God with deep remorse. We must believe the sure promise of God that all our sins are forgiven only on the grounds of the atoning work of Jesus Christ and that his perfect righteousness is imputed and gifted to us. We must have the sincere desire to show true gratitude to God with our entire life, and walk uprightly before him and live with our neighbour in true love and unity.

Invitation and admonition All those who are thus inclined, God wants to accept in grace and allow them to partake in the blessings of the Lord's Supper. But those who stubbornly and without remorse transgress God's commandments, eat and drink a judgment upon themselves. Therefore, we proclaim to all idolators; sorcerers, fortune-tellers and all who believe in them, blasphemers and those who cause schism in church and state; perjurers; all who are disobedient, murderers, contentious people, adulterers, fornicators, drunkards, thieves, robbers, gamblers and covetous people that they must not come to the Lord's table. Because no one that lives a loveless and offensive life has part in the kingdom of Christ. Yet, we do not come to the Lord's table because we think we are sinless or perfect. On the contrary, we come especially because we seek our life outside ourselves in Christ.

1 Cor 5:11
Eph 5:5
Ex 20:12-17
Zec 8:17
Lev 19:12

Gal 5:19,21

Thereby we acknowledge that we are by nature dead in sin. We admit that we have many shortcomings: lack of faith, lack of zeal in God's service, lack of love for God and our neighbour. However, as the result of the grace of the Holy Spirit we have deep sorrow for our sins, and we sincerely desire to live according to all the commandments of God.

Therefore, we can be assured that God accepts us in grace and makes us worthy to partake in this heavenly food and drink.

Remembrance The Lord teaches us the purpose of the Supper when he says: “Do this in remembrance of me.” To do this we must sincerely believe that he was sent by the Father into this world, that he became true man, and as sinless Lamb that he bore the wrath of God during his whole life on earth for us.

Lk 22:44 He fulfilled the law of God for us with perfect obedience. He carried our shame, so that we might never again be put to shame. Though innocent, he was sentenced to death, that we might be acquitted before the judgment of God. He was nailed to the cross, so that he might nail the record of debt of our sins to the cross. In doing so, he took our curse upon himself, so that he might fill us with his blessing. He suffered hellish pain, anguish and fearful God forsakenness when he cried out with a loud voice: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” so that we might never again be forsaken by God. Finally, with his death and the shedding of his blood, he fulfilled the eternal covenant of grace with the words “It is finished”.

Mt. 27:46 When we think of him in this manner, the symbols of bread and wine always become a confirmation that he gave himself over in our place and that he surely feeds us with his body and blood as surely as we eat and drink the bread and wine. In this way the living Christ through his Spirit wants to assure us of his love and bring us to the **firm confidence/belief/certainty**¹ that we also belong to this covenant of grace. And every time we celebrate the Lord’s Supper we proclaim his death until he comes.

Jn 19:30
1 Cor 11:23-25
Rev 19:6-10

Therefore, the feast of the Lord’s Supper makes us longingly look forward to the marriage supper of the Lamb. So, the Lord’s Supper teaches us to embrace in faith the one sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross as the only ground for our salvation. There his body was broken; his blood was shed for a complete atonement of all our sins and he became for us the true food and drink of eternal life. Through his death he has also obtained for us the life-giving Spirit, who binds us in Christ in true communion and makes us share in all his riches.

1 Cor 10:17

The same Spirit also binds us together as members of one body in true love. Because we all partake of the one bread, we are one body. Therefore every one of us who is incorporated into Christ through faith, must show this unity in love with word and deed towards each other. May God help us to do so by His Spirit. Amen.

Let us humble ourselves before God and with true faith implore him for his grace:

Prayer Merciful God and Father, we thank you that we may remember the comforting event of the bitter death of your Son, Jesus Christ. We pray that you would give us a sincere confidence in our hearts, through the Holy Spirit, so that we might surrender ourselves all the more to your Son; so that we might be refreshed with him, the heavenly bread, and no longer live in our sins, but in him. Assure us that you are our gracious Father, and that we are your children and heirs. Help us to deny ourselves, confess our Saviour and to eagerly wait for his return when he will take us to be with him in eternity. Hear us, o God and merciful Father, for Jesus’ sake. Amen

¹ If the brothers could help which word would be the best translation for “...vaste wete...”

Hereafter follows an applicable Psalm. The minister, then, goes to the table and says:

Upliftment of hearts (Exhortation) Lift up your hearts to Jesus Christ our Advocate at the right hand of the heavenly Father and be assured that the Holy Spirit strengthens you with Jesus' body and blood as surely as you receive the signs of bread and wine in remembrance of him.

Formula:

The bread which we break is a communion with 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.

The cup of blessing which we bless 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.

Doxology Beloved, since our Lord has refreshed our souls with the heavenly bread, let us jointly praise his name with thanksgiving, with these words:

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.
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?

Rom 5:8 Therefore our mouth and heart will proclaim the praise of the Lord from now unto eternity.
Amen.

Prayer Merciful God and Father, we thank and praise you that of you have confirmed the wonderful promises of the gospel to us with this Lords' Supper. We thank you that you have given us your only begotten Son as Mediator and sacrifice for our sins. We also thank you for the true faith, whereby we partake in the sacrifice of your Son. We pray that through the working of your Holy Spirit, the proclamation of the death of our Lord will enable us to daily grow in faith and in the blessed communion with Christ, for his name' sake. Amen.