

Communio Sanctorum: Holy Guests

SERMON NOTES AND STUDY QUESTIONS – FEBRUARY 23, 2020 – 1 CORINTHIANS 11:17-34

Sermon Notes

1. Holy Communion is the _____ . (*This is my body...for you*)
2. _____ alone makes one worthy to receive the sacrament.
“that person is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words: “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” - Small Catechism
3. _____ **Logic of Faith**
 - A. Jesus’ Body is here for me to eat for forgiveness.
 - B. Jesus is not a liar.
 - C. Therefore I am forgiven when I eat.
4. **Reflexive Logic of Faith**
 - A. Jesus forgives those who truly examine themselves and eat.
 - B. I have truly examined myself.
 - C. Therefore I am forgiven when I eat.

We believe, teach, and confess that the entire worthiness of the guests at this heavenly feast is and consists solely and alone in the most holy obedience and complete merit of Christ, which we make our own through genuine faith and of which we are assured through the sacrament. Worthiness consists not at all in our own virtues or in our internal and external preparations. Formula of Concord, VII

5. Biblical Self-Examination – 1 Cor. 10 and 11

- Faith in the Sacrament affirms two things (10:16-17)
 1. The _____ of Jesus Present Body (10:16 - “The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?”)
 2. The _____ of Jesus present Body (10:17 - *Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.*)
- The Corinthian church was rejecting the effect of the Body in practice (11:17-22).
- Paul corrects them by reminding them of the reality of Christ Body and its effect (23-26)
- Paul’s remedy for each person to examine whether her words or deeds are denying the Body —meaning _____ its reality and its effect (27-32).

When in I Corinthians [11:28] Paul said that a man should examine himself, he spoke only of adults because he was speaking about those who were quarreling among themselves. However, he doesn’t here forbid that the sacrament of the altar be given even to children.” (Luther, Table Talk)

6. _____ Communion

- The Biblical Confessional Standard – “Knowing what they seek and why they come”
- History –
 - Rite of First Communion Prior to Confirmation (LSB Agenda 2008)

Therefore let every head of a household remember that it is his duty, by God’s injunction and command, to teach or have taught to his children the things they ought to know. Since the children are baptized and received into the Christian church, they should also enjoy this fellowship of the sacrament so that they may serve us and be useful. For they must all help us to believe, to love, to pray, and to fight the devil. (Large Catechism)

Life Group Discussion Questions

Getting Started

1. What about today's lesson was new, surprising, or challenging to you? Share your questions with the group.
2. Have you ever felt unworthy to receive the sacrament? Why?

Into the Word

1. The holiness of God cannot abide the presence of sin. Read Isaiah 6:1-7. How does God overcome Isaiah's sin to allow him to enter God's holy presence?
 - a. How has God allowed you to enter his holy presence? (Hebrews 10:19-23)
2. The difference between a Sacramental and reflexive logic of faith is subtle, but important to grasp. How does the story from Isaiah show his sacramental faith? What would have happened if Isaiah had resorted to reflexive faith?
 - a. Read Matthew 14:22-33. How does this story show the fundamental difference?
3. Read 1 Cor 11:26. What are we doing when we take communion? Why is what Paul says here true?
4. The devil delights in finding ways to divide the church. Read Galatians 2:11-13; Matthew 19:13-15; 1 Cor. 1: 11-13; Gal 3:27-28. What are some examples of human divisions that Jesus overcomes?
 - a. How have you seen the church make these divisions in your own experience?
5. There are times when professing Christians should be excluded from the table. Read 1 Cor. 5:1-5 for an example. Why is Paul's instruction to exclude the man (Let him...be removed from among you) consistent with the belief that faith alone makes one worthy?
 - a. What would the man see if he examined himself in the manner Paul exhorts?

Application

1. Luther penned a series of questions for people to ask themselves prior to communing. Go through the questions on the following sheet (especially 18, 19, 20), then compare your answers with those on the back. Discuss anything that surprised you with your group.
2. What should you do the next time you feel unworthy to commune?

Luther's Christian Questions with Their Answers

After confession and instruction in the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the pastor may ask, or Christians may ask themselves these questions:

1. Do you believe that you are a sinner?
2. How do you know this?
3. Are you sorry for your sins?
4. What have you deserved from God because of your sins?
5. Do you hope to be saved?
6. In whom then do you trust?
7. Who is Christ?
8. How many Gods are there?
9. What has Christ done for you that you trust in Him?
10. Did the Father also die for you?
11. How do you know this?
12. What are the Words of Institution?
13. Do you believe, then, that the true body and blood of Christ are in the Sacrament?
14. What convinces you to believe this?
15. What should we do when we eat His body and drink His blood, and in this way receive His pledge?
16. Why should we remember and proclaim His death?
17. What motivated Christ to die and make full payment for your sins?
18. Finally, why do you wish to go to the Sacrament?
19. What should admonish and encourage a Christian to receive the Sacrament frequently?
20. But what should you do if you are not aware of this need and have no hunger and thirst for the Sacrament?

NOTE

These questions and answers are no child's play, but are drawn up with great earnestness of purpose by the venerable and devout Dr. Luther for both young and old. Let each one pay attention and consider it a

serious matter; for St. Paul writes to the Galatians in chapter six: “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked.”

Answers to Christian Questions

1. *Yes, I believe it. I am a sinner.*
2. *From the Ten Commandments, which I have not kept.*
3. *Yes, I am sorry that I have sinned against God.*
4. *His wrath and displeasure, temporal death, and eternal damnation. See Romans 6:21, 23.*
5. *Yes, that is my hope.*
6. *In my dear Lord Jesus Christ.*
7. *The Son of God, true God and man.*
8. *Only one, but there are three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*
9. *He died for me and shed His blood for me on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.*
10. *He did not. The Father is God only, as is the Holy Spirit; but the Son is both true God and true man. He died for me and shed His blood for me.*
11. *From the Holy Gospel, from the words instituting the Sacrament, and by His body and blood given me as a pledge in the Sacrament.*
12. *Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.” In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”*
13. *Yes, I believe it.*
14. *The word of Christ: Take, eat, this is My body; drink of it, all of you, this is My blood.*
15. *We should remember and proclaim His death and the shedding of His blood, as He taught us: This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.*
16. *First, so we may learn to believe that no creature could make satisfaction for our sins. Only Christ, true God and man, could do that. Second, so we may learn to be horrified by our sins, and to regard them as very serious. Third, so we may find joy and comfort in Christ alone, and through faith in Him be saved.*
17. *His great love for His Father and for me and other sinners, as it is written in John 14; Romans 5; Galatians 2; and Ephesians 5.*
18. *That I may learn to believe that Christ, out of great love, died for my sin, and also learn from Him to love God and my neighbor.*
19. *First, both the command and the promise of Christ the Lord. Second, his own pressing need, because of which the command, encouragement, and promise are given.*
20. *To such a person no better advice can be given than this: first, he should touch his body to see if he still has flesh and blood. Then he should believe what the Scriptures say of it in Galatians 5 and Romans 7. Second, he should look around to see whether he is still in the world, and remember that there will be no lack of sin and trouble, as the Scriptures say in John 15–16 and in 1 John 2 and 5. Third, he will certainly have the devil also around him, who with his lying and murdering day and night will let him have no peace, within or without, as the Scriptures picture him in John 8 and 16; 1 Peter 5; Ephesians 6; and 2 Timothy 2.*