

# **The Lord's Supper**

By W. Madison Grace II

## **Pre-Session Assignments**

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

### **Assignment One**

Read the accounts of the Last Supper in the Gospels (Matthew 26:17–35; Mark 14:12–31; Luke 22:1–28; and John 13:1–38). List all the common events presented. Prepare to share the list with your group.

### **Assignment Two**

Read Leviticus 10:1–2 and Acts 5:1–11. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: Why is God concerned with the way we worship Him in things like the Lord's Supper?

### **Assignment Three**

Read 1 Corinthians 10:14–16. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: How is the church unified in taking the Lord's Supper?

### **Scripture to Memorize**

*"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."* 1 Corinthians 11:26

### **Session Goal**

Consistent with God's Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will understand better the practice of the Lord's Supper.

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## It's in the Book

30 minutes

### Real-Life Scenario

Suppose a friend spends Saturday night with you. Even though this is a first, your friend plans to go to church with you. You try to help your friend know what to expect and how to understand what will be going on. You remember that your church will observe the Lord's Supper Sunday morning. When you mention that, your friend asks, "What's the Lord's Supper, and what does it mean?"

How would you answer?

**Read** 1 Corinthians 11:23–34 out loud.

### Studying the Passage, vv. 24–25

The book of 1 Corinthians addressed several problems within the church at Corinth. One of those problems was how they were practicing the Lord's Supper. First Corinthians 11:17–22 made clear that the church was practicing the Lord's Supper improperly.

**Verses 24–25. do this in remembrance of Me.** To address this issue, Paul reminded the church what the Lord's Supper was supposed to be and what it was supposed to mean. First, he retold the story of the first Lord's Supper. Paul quoted Jesus as Jesus presented both of the elements, the bread and the cup, to the disciples. In both instances He said, "In remembrance of me."

Therefore as one is participating in the Lord's Supper today—eating the bread and drinking the cup—one is doing so "in remembrance" of Jesus Christ.

### Discussion Question

According to the passage, what does taking the Lord's Supper "in remembrance" mean?

### Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now report on the common elements regarding the Last Supper presented in the four Gospels.

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 26. you proclaim the Lord's death.** Paul provided clarity concerning the goal of the Lord's Supper. Verse 26 clearly shows that the Lord's Supper provides a time of remembrance that leads to the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We share the good news because we look back to what Christ has done for us. **until He comes.** Jesus also announced how long we are to share the gospel. We are to do this until Jesus comes back for His bride, the church. Therefore, the Lord's Supper also looks forward to the future when Jesus makes all things new. When disciples take the Lord's Supper today, they are looking back in remembrance and looking forward in hope.

### Discussion Question

If the Lord's Supper is observed too often, it might become a ritual no one thinks about. If it is observed too infrequently, disciples may fail to remember the sacrifice of Christ. In your opinion, how frequently should a church observe the Lord's Supper?

### **On Your Own**

Jesus intended that the Lord's Supper would proclaim the gospel. In the space below, write some of the ideas or concepts of the gospel that come to your mind when you take the Lord's Supper.

### **Studying the Passage**

**Verses 28–30. Let a person examine himself.** Paul moved his discussion from what the Lord's Supper is to how church members should partake in the Lord's Supper. He said believers should not eat of the bread and drink of the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner.

**Verse 30. That is why many among you are weak and ill, and a number sleep.** Paul stated that there is a proper way to take the Lord's Supper. We must not come to the Lord's Supper lightly. Rather we are to come a certain way. That way is provided in verse 28: "Let a person examine himself." This examination of the self should occur prior to partaking of the Supper.

### **Discussion Question**

What are some ways we can prepare ourselves before taking the Lord's Supper? What areas of our lives should we examine?

### **Assignment Two Feedback**

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now share an answer to the question: Why is God concerned with the way we worship Him in things like the Lord's Supper?

### **Studying the Passage**

**Verse 33. when you come together.** Paul wrote about the Lord's Supper because the church was not practicing the Supper correctly. The Supper is to be taken as a church. The phrase "when you come together" uses the language of gathering. This gathering is the coming together of the church. The Lord's Supper is to be a communal time. The church participates together in proclaiming the Lord's death rightly until He comes through sharing the bread and the cup.

### **Assignment Three Feedback**

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now share an answer to this question: How is the church unified in taking the Lord's Supper?

### **On Your Own**

In the space below, write what you now know to be true about the Lord's Supper and why it is important in your faith.

## **Heart and Hands**

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit says to you below, and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

## **Since Last Week**

5 minutes

Give the group this update: "In our last session I made a commitment to . . . I want to let you know how that turned out. On that same issue I think the Holy Spirit now is leading me to . . ."

## **Grace-Filled Accountability**

5 minutes

Disciples can agree on a way to hold one another accountable. Confessing faults with other disciples allows them to offer grace, insights, and encouragement. Even more important is confession to Christ, the source of true forgiveness and cleansing.

## **Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service**

5 minutes

Groups of disciples always are making preparations for evangelism, missions, and service. Use these minutes to work on the next plan.

## **Prayer**

7 minutes

Every disciple will pray aloud, offering praise to Jesus, thanking Him specifically for His gracious acts, making heartfelt confession, committing to actions flowing from the Bible study, praying toward evangelism locally and globally, and interceding for others as prompted by the Holy Spirit.

## **At Home: Nail It Down**

The Lord's Supper has been practiced since Jesus first instituted it on the night of His betrayal. The apostle Paul teaches us what the Lord's Supper is in chapter 11 of his first letter to the Corinthians. There he was addressing an incorrect practice of the Supper, where some people were receiving the Supper and some people were not.

Paul explained what the Lord's Supper is. Using the words of Jesus, "in remembrance of me," he showed believers that the Supper is a memorial of Jesus's sacrifice on our behalf.

The Lord's Supper is the proclamation of the Lord's death until He comes. When we take the Lord's Supper, we are telling the good news of how Jesus gave Himself up for us. We remember so we can tell and proclaim.

We also take the Lord's Supper with the hope and expectation of Jesus coming again. So we are both thinking back and looking forward as we take the Supper.

When we take the Supper, we are to do so in reverence. This is not something to be done thoughtlessly. Rather, we are to come to the Supper with humility and after having a time of prayer and confession.

Finally, we are to take the Lord's Supper with other believers in the church. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances of the church. They build unity in the body of Christ, and they keep disciples focused on the mighty King of all kings.

### **Follow up Question**

*When we take the Lord's Supper at church, what does it mean?*

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.