




Theme: 3 Powerful Gifts


"Communion"


 You also can get these Meditation Moments each day directly on your phone. Just text "**med moments**" to **970-426-0700** to receive the **daily Meditation Moment** each morning and start your day grounded in faith and peace.

Weekly Memory Verse:

²⁶ For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until he comes again. –1 Corinthians 11:26

Meditation Moments for Monday, October 6 – Read 1 Corinthians 11:20-26. Most scholars date Paul's first letter to Christians in the city of Corinth around 20 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus, and ten years or more before the earliest gospel. Paul's words in Corinthians are the main source of information about Communion, or what we also call the Lord's Supper. The apostle had a practical reason for sharing this Christian "tradition." Verses 20-22 tells us that some Corinthian Christians held to Greek social customs built on rank. 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 commands that the Lord's Supper should unite the church, since they both belong to Jesus, not divide it.


 In the Roman Empire, dying on a cross was a horrible, disgraceful fate. No one ever said, "Be sure to tell people I died on a cross," at least no one until Jesus. But the young, rapidly spreading Christian movement had this central act of worship, one Jesus himself started on the night before his execution, which (as the apostle put it) "broadcast the death of the Lord." How can Communion help to remind you that you serve a Lord the Romans executed?


 At most Christian Communion services, everyone gets the same amount of bread and the same amount of juice in the cup. No one feasts; no one starves. Yet in subtle or overt ways, today's economic and social divisions seep into church life anyway. How can Communion help you focus on Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 12:13 that the church is "one body"? How can sharing

Communion move us all toward living our faith as a family set free from human divisions?

Prayer: *Living Lord, thank you for the Lord's Supper when I can act out you being as integral to my spiritual life as the juice-soaked bread becomes part of my physical life. Thank you for welcoming me to your family table. Amen.*

Tuesday, October 7 – Read **Exodus 12:1-7, 13, 21-27 and Luke 22:11**. Communion has its roots in the Passover feast, as that was the meal Jesus was having with his disciples when he blessed the bread and cup that last night of his earthly life. Using a hyssop branch to put the blood of a sacrificed lamb on their doorposts delivered Israelites from death into life. Saved by God's power, they were able to leave their Egyptian captivity as free people.


 Three symbols were at the core of the Passover Supper. Israelites **sacrificed** a “flawless” lamb, its blood **protected** the Israelites from death, and eating the lamb was an act that **set them apart as God's people**. How can the meanings of the Passover symbols of lamb, blood and eating, add deeper meaning for you as a Christian taking part in the Lord's Supper?


 We read in Exodus 12:17 that the Hebrew people also called Passover, “the Festival of Unleavened Bread.” For them, that preserved the memory of a departure so rushed that there wasn't time to let bread dough rise, of a moment when God's people had to respond NOW, not later. Have you ever faced a situation in which delay was practically the same as refusing to move at all? How can you live ready to respond to God, even if it leads to unexpected changes in your life?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, you asked your people to honor symbolically how you set them free, protecting them by the blood of the sacrificed lamb. Help me, their spiritual descendant, to value the way we honor your great deliverance by sacrificing yourself. Amen.*

Wednesday, October 8 – Read **Exodus 13:3, 1 Corinthians 11:24-25 and 1 Peter 1:14-19**.

The word “remember” was fundamental to Israel's Passover observance. In the rough-and-tumble Middle East, which is still unstable today, Israelites were never to forget that their freedom and existence as a people was not based on their own strength or military prowess, but on God's action on their behalf. Christians, in an even more profound way, must always remember that our life as God's beloved children is based, not on any spiritual accomplishment of our own, but on Jesus' self-giving love.

 Why would Jesus think it important to ask his followers to “remember” him by sharing bread and wine? They'd been with him for three years—they **surely** wouldn't forget. But Moses had asked Israel to “remember” the epic event of the Exodus. John 2:25 said Jesus, “didn't need anyone to tell him about human nature, for he knew what human nature was.” Yes, we forget. How does taking part in Communion help you remember what Jesus has done for you?

 It's important to fully grasp Peter's call for God's people to “be holy in every aspect of your lives.” Often, we have come to believe that “holy” means having

unloving, judgmental or exclusive attitudes. 1 Peter 1:22 and 2:1 clearly understood being “holy” to mean living as much like Jesus as possible. Luke 7:34 tells us how the religious leaders felt about Jesus as they saw him in a negative light because he was a “friend of sinners.” How can the Communion elements remind you to aim for a life like Jesus, being his presence in the world?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, I want your love and goodness to fill me all the time. I'm not always there yet, so keep me growing in expressing your love authentically. Amen.*

Thursday, October 9 – Read **Luke 22:20, Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Hebrews 12:22-24.**

Have you heard the service where we share bread and cup called “the Eucharist”? That comes from the Greek word eucharistic, which means, “thanksgiving”. The “remembering” meaning of the service is not just about history or nostalgia. Jesus gave up his body and blood “for you”—to fill every day with his grace as we follow him. Jesus' self-giving allows us to experience the “new covenant” the prophet Jeremiah promised. It is Jesus who invites us into the cosmic worship that Hebrews described.



We read in the Hebrew Bible, our Old Testament, that when God and Israel start over, God's instructions such as Jeremiah 31:33 will be “engraved” on the hearts of the people. Everyone will know God and receive God's forgiveness. How can thoughtfully engaging in the Communion service deepen your gratitude for God's forgiving, renewing mercy in Jesus? How has your gratitude for Jesus moved you away from hurtful patterns and toward living as God wants you to live?



Hebrews spoke to Christians who were facing persecution. They wondered if it was worth holding to their faith in Jesus. The writer was convinced that the believers were a part of something truly awesome; a reality that reached beyond time and space and was worth any price it took. How can a small piece of bread dipped in juice deepen your gratitude that, “you have drawn near to...countless angels in a festival gathering... to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant?”

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, I'm grateful that what you want most is for me to love you, and to let everything else flow from that. Guide me as I learn to live in the “unforced rhythms” of your grace. Amen.*

Friday, October 10 – Read **Luke 22:14-18, Isaiah 25:6-8 and Revelation 19:6-9.** The Hebrew prophet Isaiah said when God fully rules our world, he will prepare “for all peoples a rich feast,” the way rulers marked victories in the first century and even today. Luke 22:16 words “until it is fulfilled” is a promise to Luke's readers, those earliest followers of Jesus, that the kingdom truly will come. In Communion we look not just back, but ahead to the truth of Jesus' words in John 16:33: “In the world you have distress. But be encouraged! I have conquered the world.”



None of the gospels quoted Jesus, just **before** he endured the cross, as saying, “I'll eat this with you again IF we ever get to God's Kingdom.” For him, there was no “maybe.” Even as darkness closed in, he was sure that in the end, love and goodness would defeat hatred and evil, and God's kingdom would become

reality. When life's darkness seems to be closing in on you, how can Jesus' "until" remind you that darkness **never** has the last word?



Many religious leaders in Jesus' day were sure God wanted only *them* as guests at the great final banquet. They'd misread Isaiah's vision. In one of the visions in Isaiah, God is imagined preparing a banquet not just for the elders on Mount Sinai from Exodus 24, nor even for the people of Israel, but for all the nations. That's why at Summit we invite anyone who loves Jesus to join in the Communion service. How does your heart react to God's generous, inclusive vision?

Prayer: *Lord God, I do not want my walk with you limited to this time-bounded existence. Thank you for inviting me to trust in and finally participate in your eternal banquet. Amen.*

Saturday, October 11 – Read **John 1:29, 1 Corinthians 5:7-8, Revelation 5:4-12 and**

15:3-4. As John the Baptist saw Jesus, he said, "Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" Where did he get that? With nearly 200 Biblical mentions of "lambs," this is the only use of the phrase "Lamb of God." The apostle Paul made the connection when writing to Christians in Corinth. He wrote, "Christ, *our Passover lamb*, has been sacrificed." Our Communion service, full of powerful symbols and meanings, grew from Jesus redefining the Passover supper for his disciples on the night before the crucifixion. Lambs are specifically mentioned in connection with sacrifices more than eighty times in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers. This sacrificial idea reaches its fulfillment in Christ, who is called "the Lamb of God" in John 1:29 and 36 and the "Passover lamb" in 1 Corinthians 5:7. His blood is referred to in 1 Peter 1:19, "like that of a flawless, spotless lamb." The book of Revelation reaches its heights when Christ was called "the Lamb twenty-eight times.



People often see the Book of Revelation as an inexplicable puzzle. Some symbols in the book are obscure, but not the one in Revelation 5. John's angel guide told him "The Lion of the Tribe of Judah," an image of victorious power, could open the seven-sealed scroll. But when John looked for the "Lion," he said, "I saw a Lamb, standing as if it had been slain." Instead of thinking, "How disappointing," he and the hosts of heaven sang versions of "Worthy is the Lamb" for the rest of the vision. The word "Lion" was never used again by Jesus in Revelation. Jesus is "the Lamb," our Passover Lamb, the One we remember, honor, and look forward to being with eternally in every Communion service. How would you express the spiritual power of the vision's poetic message as all creation worships the "Lion" by singing "Worthy is the Lamb"? When have you found a deeper inner sense of the power of God's self-giving love in Communion?

Prayer: *Lamb of God, you sacrificed yourself by going to the realm of death, and you returned alive! You offer me the choice to share that victory with you. I accept your offer of life eternally beyond death's power. Amen.*