

Communion at New City Fellowship

We love Jesus. He is our Sovereign Servant, our Savior, and our King. He alone did not deserve to die, and yet he gave his body and blood for us, and now he is risen from the grave. It is our habit to celebrate together at his table every Sunday. Why?

- The bread and the cup are **reminders** of what Jesus did for us on the cross, and of the New Covenant he established for all who look to him with saving faith. The elements of bread and cup are symbolic; they are not the actual blood and body of Jesus.
- The table is **a participation** in the body and blood of Jesus that we enjoy **together** as a church.
- It is **a declaration** that Jesus is our greatest joy and our only Lord.
- It is **an opportunity** for us to reflect on the gravity of our sin, but most of all on the forgiving power of our Great Savior, whose blood was spilt and whose body was broken for us.
- Finally, the table we celebrate is **a proclamation** of Jesus' death, and **an expression** of our eager anticipation of his glorious return.

(Luke 22:14-20 and 1 Corinthians 10:14-22; 11:17-34)

Should you join us in the Table today? Consider the following questions:

1. Do you see the Table like we do, as described in the statements above?
2. Have you been baptized into the body of Christ?
3. Are you “discerning the body” today (1 Corinthians 11:28–29)? That is, do you recognize that this is Jesus' table, and that we are his guests *together*? Are your current relationships with other Christians reflecting the grace of God toward us in Christ?

If you can answer “yes” to all these questions with a good conscience, then we welcome you to enjoy the Table with us today.

But if you answer “no” to any of these questions, then out of respect for the One who gave us this Table, and for your own benefit, we urge you not to partake today. Instead, please think about these things, and if you think it might be helpful, we invite you to talk with one of our members after the service today.



July 24, 2021

Participating in the Table: *6 Ways to Look*

If you are participating in the Table with us today, then come up with the others to receive the bread and cup. Take these back to your seat and wait. When everyone has been served, we will pray and partake in unison.

While you wait to receive and to partake, here are “6 ways to look.”¹

1. ***Look within.*** Consider whether your relationships with other believers are in line with the gospel. “Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup” (1 Cor. 11:28; see also Col. 3:12–15). None of us is worthy to participate in the Table. We are here due to the grace of Jesus alone. At the same time, we are called to participate “in a worthy manner” (see 1 Cor. 11:27).
2. ***Look back.*** Reflect on the humble sacrifice of our Savior on the cross. “...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’” (1 Cor. 11:23–25)
3. ***Look up.*** Recognize that we are in fellowship with the risen Christ—it is *his* Table. “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?” (1 Cor. 10:16).
4. ***Look around.*** Give thanks and pray for the body of Christ—and the individual members of it—with whom you are in fellowship. “Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread” (1 Cor. 10:17).
5. ***Look outward.*** Realize that partaking of the elements is a proclamation. When we partake, we are proclaiming that Jesus Christ has died on the cross for our sins, and that he is coming again to judge the living and the dead. “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes” (1 Cor. 11:26). Pray that onlookers would understand what the Table says.
6. ***Look forward.*** We partake of the Table “until he comes” (1 Cor. 11:26b). Set your hope on the return of Christ and pray for his return. In the closing words of the book of Revelation, Jesus says, “Surely I am coming soon.” And we respond, “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!”

¹ See *40 Questions about Baptism and the Lord's Supper* by John S. Hammett, pages 305-307 (Kregel Academic, 2015); also, Andrew David Naselli's commentary on 1 Corinthians found in the *ESV Expository Commentary, Volume X: Romans–Galatians*, pages 326–328 (Crossway, 2020).