



Cleansed and Fed: The Sacramental Life God Feeds Us Jesus

COMMUNION IS A GIFT BEYOND COMPARE

Hebrews 9:22

Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

Why does this teaching offend sinful pride?

What role does blood play in the forgiveness of sins?

Medicine of Immortality

Genesis 3:6

When Eve saw that the fruit was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

What was wrong with eating this fruit that looked and tasted good?

Genesis 3:19

Dust you are, and to dust you will return.

What physical consequence came as a result of this eating? Why?

Take and eat... Take and drink... For the forgiveness of your sins...

How is Communion like *medicine*?

What happens if you push the Communion/medicine comparison too far?

Psalm 32:

When I kept silent, my bones wasted away.... You forgave the guilt of my sin... Rejoice... Be glad... Sing!"

Job 19:25-27

I know that my Redeemer lives... Even after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God... How my heart yearns within me!

What physical blessings are connected to God's forgiveness?

Agree / Disagree: If you are sick, you should go to Communion for healing.

It is often said that those who die continue to live in our memories. How does this sentiment compare to the immortality God offers and gives us through faith in the saving work of Jesus?

How can it help us to think of Communion as a "medicine of immortality"?

Sing or say the following hymn stanzas together.

Here, O my Lord, I see you face to face;
Here would I touch and handle things unseen,
Here grasp with firmer hand eternal grace,
And all my weariness upon you lean.

This is the hour of banquet and of song;
Here is the heavenly table spread anew.
Here let me feast and, feasting, still prolong
The brief bright hour of fellowship with you.

*Horatius Bonar
Christian Worship Hymn 315, s.1-2*

Fuel for Christian Love

Matthew 22:37-40

³⁷ Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

How much love does Jesus want us to have? Where does he want us to aim our love?

Apply these two commandments to various callings and stations in life. What would life in this world be like if everyone followed what Jesus said in Matthew 22?

- Spouse
- Parent
- Son or daughter
- Sibling
- Employer
- Worker
- Citizen
- Church member

Explain: The problem isn't with our ability to love, but with our ability to aim our love in the right direction.

Matthew 26:26

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and give it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”

In the Sacrament of Holy Communion, at whom does Jesus aim his forgiving love?

What practical help does Communion give for the stations of life listed above?

Sing or say the following hymn stanza together.

I have no help but yours nor do I need
Another arm but yours to lean upon.
It is enough, O Lord, enough indeed;
My strength is in your might, your might alone.

*Horatius Bonar
Christian Worship Hymn 315, s.3*

How can eating and drinking do such things?

In his Small Catechism, Luther says:

How can eating and drinking do such things? It is certainly not the eating and drinking that does such things, but the words “Given” and “poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.” These words are the main thing in this sacrament, along with the eating and drinking.

Which words are “the main thing” in the sacrament?
Why are these words the “main thing”?

In his Large Catechism, Luther says:

Since this treasure (Communion) is entirely presented in the words, it cannot be received and made ours in any other way than with the heart.

What “other way” could he be talking about?

In what sense are the words we hear in Communion just like the words we hear whenever the gospel is preached? How are the words of Communion different?

Sing or say the following hymn stanza together.

Mine is the sin but yours the righteousness;
Mine is the guilt but yours the cleansing blood.
Here is my robe, my refuge, and my peace:
Your blood, your righteousness, O Lord, my God.

*Horatius Bonar
Christian Worship Hymn 315, s.4*

“Do This in Remembrance of Me”

Luke 22:19

**And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying,
“This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”**

What does Jesus want his disciples to remember about him?

1 Corinthians 11:26

**For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s
death until he comes.**

The benefits of this remembrance extend beyond those receiving
Communion. How so?

Who does this proclaiming at Communion? Who hears the proclamation?
What is the content of the proclamation?

1 Corinthians 10:17

**Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake
of the one loaf.**

What additional message do we proclaim when we take Communion with
other Christians?

The Large Catechism

But now the entire Gospel and the article of the Creed – I believe in... the holy Christian Church, ... the forgiveness of sins, and so on – are embodied by the Word in this Sacrament and presented to us.

Explain: When you proclaim the Lord's death at Communion you're saying more than "Jesus died." (See 1 Corinthians 2:2)

Why must those who receive Communion together confess the same faith as one another?

Ephesians 4:15

Speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

Apply this verse to our proclamation of Christ's death at Communion. What is our goal when we proclaim Christ in this way?

How can this passage help us talk to those who want to receive Communion with us but don't yet share our confession of faith?

Sing or say the following hymn stanzas together.

Too soon we rise; the vessels disappear.
The feast, though not the love, is past and gone.
The bread and wine remove, but you are here,
Nearer than ever, still my shield and sun.

Feast after feast thus comes and passes by,
Yet, passing, points to that glad feast above,
Giving sweet foretaste of the festal joy,
The Lamb's great marriage feast of bliss and love.

*Horatius Bonar
Christian Worship Hymn 315, s.5-6*