



The Lord's Supper

What is a Sacrament? Group Study

Share

Relate to the group a celebration of the Lord's Supper that was especially significant to you.

Hear

Lord's Supper Video What is a Sacrament

Pastor Mark defined 3 points as the marks of a sacrament in the Lutheran understanding:

It is a practice instituted by God

There is a tangible physical element

God gives eternal life and salvation through the practice of this sacrament and the word of God employed in it. In Lutheran circles we call this a *means of grace*.

In this session you will unpack these as a group. Be sure not to gloss over anyone's questions and dive deep to enrich everyone's understanding and experience of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Explore

Instituted by God

We have the story of Jesus' last supper in three of the Gospels carrying similar accounts of Jesus instituting this sacrament: Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:18-20. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians probably predates the writing of the gospels, so it's noteworthy to hear his account of how the Lord's Supper was commonly instituted and practiced by the believers a mere 25 years after Jesus' crucifixion. They'll sound familiar.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-25. These words are not a magic incantation that makes it a sacrament. Rather they are the words of Jesus that invites us to participate in the salvation his death and resurrection offers and celebrate it in this sacramental way.

What directives do you find in these words?

Apply

Physical Element

The gospel accounts tell us this last supper of Jesus with his disciples took place in the context of a Passover celebration, a time all Jews remembered God's rescue from slavery in Egypt.

Read Exodus 12:3-8

The blood on the doorpost was the sign of their faith in God's protection from the final plague of death and their coming rescue from slavery. The unleavened bread was a sign that they would be leaving with short notice and should prepare for life on the road. As Jews celebrated Passover through the centuries and were not always able to come to Jerusalem for the sacrifice of their lamb, wine was used at the meal as a reminder of the blood on the door posts.

Together, refer to the words of institution and discover the connection Jesus was using to explain his coming death and resurrection to the disciples.

What does it mean for your experience of the sacraments when water splashes and bread and wine is tasted and swallowed, how does the physicality of the sacrament affect you?

Plan

A Means of Grace

Find in Jesus' words in Matthew 26:28-29 the two purposes he is highlighting with this sacrament.

A regular participation in the Lord's Supper refreshes your awareness that your sins are forgiven and encourages you for a life aimed towards eternity with Jesus. *How have you experienced this? What from this discussion will you carry into your practice of the Lord's Supper?*

Closing

It is our prayer that this discussion would not only give you new understanding of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, but through your practice of it the Spirit would enrich your knowledge of Jesus' love. Pray these words for each other along with Paul, (Ephesians 3:14-19 (ESV)) For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Contact the leader of your site's children's ministry to find out how to use the Lord's Supper Family Module with your child.