

Reflecting on the Mystery

• Day One. Read Luke 14:16-25

- In the communion service, Jesus anticipated a future day when he would eat the meal again with his disciples. In this parable, he looks forward to a banquet in that future kingdom. The emphasis is on making sure every seat is filled. As you think about the communion service today, and the future kingdom meal, are there any people within your sphere of influence for whom you think there might be an “empty seat?”
- **Pray** and ask God to use you to influence others who need to know Jesus and join you at his table.

• Day Two. Read Hebrews 10:19-25

- The writer to the Hebrews encourages us to take several actions as a result of Christ’s giving us access to the “holy place” of God’s presence: (a) drawing near, (b) holding strongly to our confession, (c) encouraging others to do good works. Choose one of these to work on this week.
- **Pray** – Make use of the “holy place” that Jesus has made possible for you.

• Day Three. Look back over the five ways to participate

- These practices do not have to take place only as part of the communion service. You can practice them at any time. Pick one to practice at another time this week. What is the difference between practicing this when you are alone and practicing it when you are with others?

- **Pray** – Ask God to help you appreciate more deeply the value of community and to show you how you can participate in it more effectively.

New Life Lessons
February 20-21, 2016
Pastor Dave Vasquez

“The Mystery of Communion”

1Corinthians 11:23-26 (NIV) ²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ 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.” ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” ²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:13-20

1Corinthians 10:16 (KJV) The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

Names

Eucharist; Lord’s Supper; Communion

Mystery:

Something difficult or impossible to understand or explain

Romans 11:33 (KJV) O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

Understanding the Mystery

Mysterious origin

Luke 22:14-15 (NIV) ¹⁴ When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. ¹⁵ And he said to them, “I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.

Mysterious elements

Transubstantiation • Sacramental Union • Memorial

John 6:54-56 (NIV) ⁵⁴ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. ⁵⁶ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him.

Bread: Luke 15:17; Matthew 6:11; John 6:48-51; Deuteronomy 8:3
Wine: 1Samuel 16:20; Psalm 128:3; Genesis 49:11; Deut. 7:13

Mysterious participation

1Corinthians 11:25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Covenants: Noah (Genesis 9:8-17); Abraham (Genesis 17:1-8); Moses (Exodus 19-24); David (1Chronicles 17:11-14); Marriage (Malachi 2:13-15)

Jeremiah 31:31-34 (NIV) ³¹ “The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah... ³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

Mysterious effects

Ephesians 5:25-30 (NIV) ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—³⁰ for we are members of his body.

Hebrews 9:12 [Christ] did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.

Hebrews 10:9-10

Hebrews 10:19-20 (NIV) ¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, ²⁰ by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body...

Participating in the Mystery

1. Thank. Look up

1Corinthians 11:23-24 (NIV) ²³ The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it...

2. Remember. Look back

1Corinthians 11:24 (NIV) “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

3. Examine. Look in

1Corinthians 11:27-32 (NIV) ²⁷ Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. ²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰ That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. ³¹ But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment.

4. Take, eat, drink. Look at

Matthew 26:26-27 (NIV) ²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”

²⁷ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you.”

5. *Anticipate. Look ahead*

1Corinthians 11:23-26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

Matthew 26:29 I” tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father’s kingdom.”