

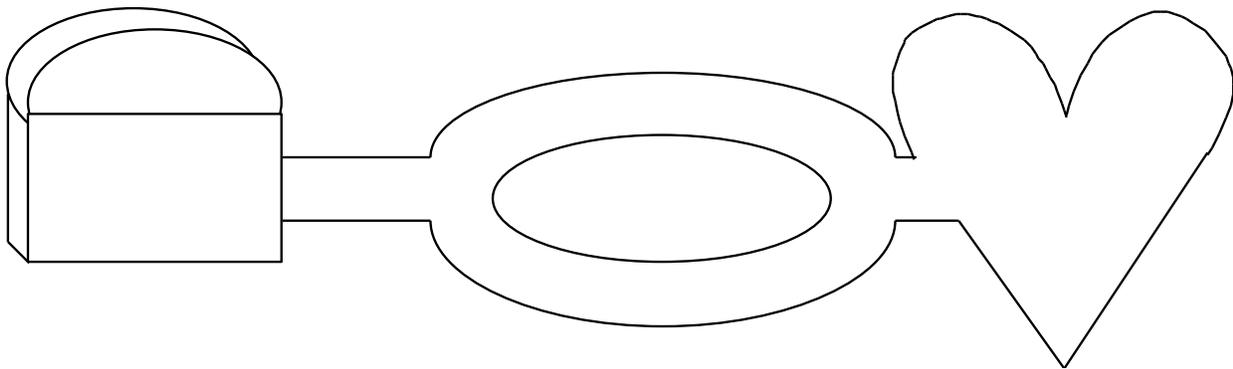
## LESSON #9 HOPE GROWS AS GOD GIVES ME A REMARKABLE GIFT -- HIMSELF!

**Rom. 5:18** Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men.

**Mark 16:16** Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

**Rom. 1:16** I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes:

**2 Cor. 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!



### What is a Sacrament?

- 1) It is a sacred act instituted (started, commanded) by Jesus.
- 2) It has a visible element connected to the Word of God.
- 3) It offers, gives, and seals to us the forgiveness of sins, new life, and salvation.

The two sacraments are Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion, The Sacrament of the Altar).

- **Jeremiah 31:31-34** (selected sections) "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. ... 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. ... For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

## I. WHAT IS THE LORD'S SUPPER?

**Read Matthew 26:17-30**

1. What special feast were they about to celebrate? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Jesus' death is fast approaching - "His appointed time is near." While they're eating, Jesus announced the sad news that one of the disciples would betray Him. Who would that betrayer be? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Jesus then instituted the Lord's Supper. What visible element does He first give to them?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What statement does Jesus make concerning the bread? (v26) \_\_\_\_\_
5. Jesus then gives them wine. What does He say about it? (v28) \_\_\_\_\_
6. What blessing does Jesus say had been given to the disciples through this? (v28b) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. A definition of the Lord's Supper: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## II. WHAT DO I RECEIVE IN THE LORD'S SUPPER?

Real Presence	Transubstantiation	Representation

**1 Cor. 10:16** Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

**1 Cor. 11:27** 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.

### III. WHAT ARE THE BLESSINGS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER?

**1 Cor. 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."

1. When I take the Lord's Supper, I'm reminded of \_\_\_\_\_.

**Matt. 26:28** This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

2. God assures me \_\_\_\_\_.

**1 Cor. 11:26** For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

3. God gives me the opportunity to \_\_\_\_\_.

**Matt. 26:26, 28** ... this is my body." ... <sup>28</sup>This is my blood of the covenant,

4. Most importantly, in a miraculous way God gives me \_\_\_\_\_.

### IV. FOR WHOM IS THE LORD'S SUPPER INTENDED?

**Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-29**

1. Paul had been taught the truths of the Lord's Supper by the Lord Himself. What did he then do with those truths? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What insights does that give us as to what God wants to happen before a person comes to the Lord's Supper? \_\_\_\_\_
3. One of the reasons that a person should be instructed before coming to the Lord's Supper is the warning contained in v27. If we take the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, what does God say we are doing? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Verse 29 further explains v27. If I come to the Lord's Supper not knowing what I'm doing, into what dangerous situation do I put myself? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. In v28 God gives us further instruction. What does God want us to do before coming to the Lord's Supper? \_\_\_\_\_

6. To examine myself, I would look at God's 10 Commandments and then measure my thoughts, my words, and my actions in that light. If I do that honestly, what will I have to admit? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Why would God want us to do that before coming to the Lord's Supper? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. God gives us one further word of instruction in 1Cor. 10:17. "Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf." If I take the Lord's Supper with someone, what am I confessing about our beliefs? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. So, before I would take the Lord's Supper with a congregation, I would want to make sure \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In summary, God teaches that the Lord's Supper is to be offered to those

- who have been properly instructed.
- who recognize that in the Lord's Supper we receive Jesus' body and blood in a miraculous way.
- who are able to examine themselves.
- who are repentant of their sins.
- who confess a common faith in all the teachings of the Bible.

This Biblical teaching is called \_\_\_\_\_, and has been the practice of the Christian Church all through the ages.

10. By doing this, God want to assure that the Lord's Supper will always remain \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Some Further Questions For Possible Discussion:**

1. Is it proper to use grape juice instead of wine, or leavened bread (bread with yeast) instead of unleavened bread? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How do we distribute the bread and wine? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why is it wrong to speak of the Lord's Supper as a *sacrifice* rather than as a *sacrament*? (cf. Heb. 10:10,14) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. How often should we come to the Lord's Supper? (Luke 22:19, 1Cor 11:24-26) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Who may distribute the Lord's Supper? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What if I'm sick or gone on a Communion Sunday? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What if I've previously taken the Lord's Supper in an unworthy way? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. If I've wronged someone and haven't settled the matter, should I come to the Lord's Supper?  
(Mt 5:23-24) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. If my faith is weak, should I come to the Lord's Supper? (Matt 11:28-29, Is. 40:29-31, 42:3)  
\_\_\_\_\_

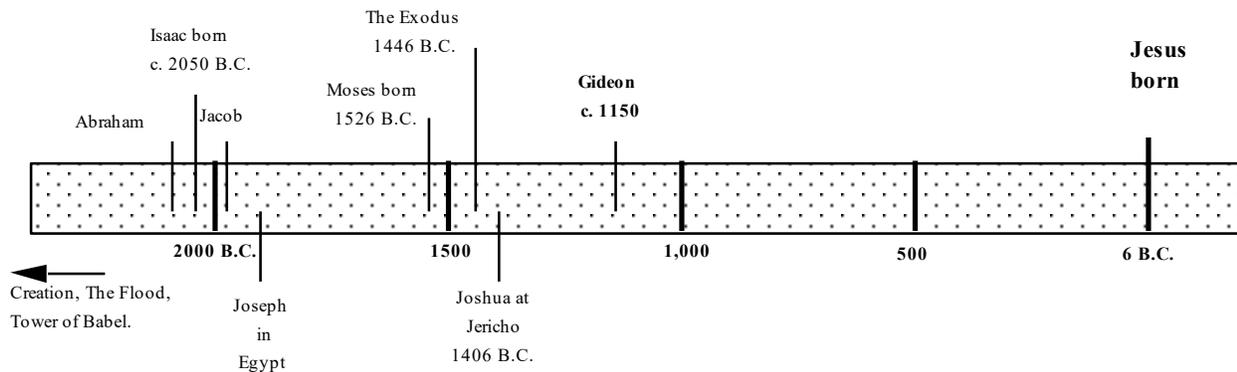
**Summary:**

- God works faith through the Means of Grace - the Gospel in Word and Sacrament.
- In the Lord's Supper, God gives me His own true body and blood together with the bread and wine. How this can take place, we don't try to explain. We trust that it does happen because God says it does.
- The Lord's Supper is a wonderful, strengthening "meal." It assures me that my sins are forgiven and that God loves me so much that He's willing to give me what is the most precious - Himself.
- The Lord's Supper is also a confession of faith; therefore, I would only want to commune in a congregation whose teachings are in full agreement with the Word of God.

**God gives me Himself - His true body and blood - and hope grows!**

## FOR STUDY AT HOME DURING THE WEEK

14. Complete the homework sections below.
15. To build up your knowledge of God's Word, memorize these passages:  
**1 Cor. 11:28**     **A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.**  
**Matt. 26:28**     **this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins**
16. Study Addendum #7, a guideline for personal preparation for Holy Communion.
17. Study Addendum #8, Luther's explanation of the Lord's Supper.
18. Suggested daily reading: Romans 8-14



Of the promises made to Abraham, only one is yet to be fulfilled -- the Savior. The other promises -- a son, becoming a great nation, and obtaining the land of Israel as a homeland -- have all been fulfilled. The rest of the Old Testament tells us how God continued to keep that final promise alive, through good times and bad.

When Joshua began to conquer the land, God told them to completely drive out or put to death the land's inhabitants. (God knew that if they were surrounded by unbelievers, they would be prone to fall into unbelief, jeopardizing not only their own salvation, but also the line of the Savior.) Although they started to do so, they didn't follow through on it.

When Joshua died, the people were left without an official leader. More importantly, the Israelites allowed themselves to be sucked into the idolatry of those people they had failed to drive out. When their idolatry would worsen, God would raise up an enemy to oppress the Israelites. Generally this would lead the Israelites to recognize their sinfulness and to turn back to God. When they did, God raised up "judges" - a person through whom God rescued the Israelites from the oppressors. The land would then have a time of peace, after which the cycle repeated itself. Today we look at one of those judges, a man named Gideon.

## Read Judges 6-7

1. In 6:1, what are we told about spiritual conditions in the land? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  2. God then allowed the Midianites to oppress the Israelites. What purpose did that serve? (6:6) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  3. In 6:12-14, God's angel appears to a man named Gideon and tells him to go and rescue the Israelites. How does Gideon react? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  4. Gideon requested that the Lord stay with him until he could bring the Lord an offering. What did God do with that offering? (6:20-21) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  5. How would this have helped Gideon? (Remember, God has just told him that he is to lead the Israelites against a vastly superior army.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  6. In 6:23-24, Gideon calls God by a beautiful name. What? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  7. The first thing that Gideon is to do is to lead the people back to spiritual truth. So God tells him to go and tear down the altar which had been built to the false god called Baal. How does Gideon show that he's still very weak? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  8. The way the people reacted shows us how horribly they had drifted spiritually. What did they want to do to Gideon? (v30) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  9. In 6:36ff, Gideon asks for two further assurances from God, both of which are miraculous. What were the two signs? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Note: God dealt with His people that way -- with signs and miracles and visions -- in the Old Testament because they didn't have the full Word of God. We now have the complete Word of God, so we don't expect God to work these sorts of signs for us. He could if He chose too. Instead, He has chosen to speak to us in the Word. cf. Hebrews 1:1-2
10. God makes a surprising announcement to Gideon in 7:2: "You have too many men!" So what does God instruct Gideon to do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. In 7:4, God tells Gideon that 10,000 men was still too many. Apparently Gideon was to put the army through some hard drills, then take them to some water. Those who got down on their knees and lapped the water like a dog were to be sent home. Those who picked up some water with their hands and lapped up the water out of their hands were to remain. After this, how many men remain? \_\_\_\_\_

12. After God again -- graciously -- strengthens Gideon to go against this huge force, Gideon gathers the men for the battle. What were the weapons given to the men? (7:16) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. In verses 19-20, we learn how the Israelites “attacked” the Midianites. What did they do?  
\_\_\_\_\_

14. When they blew the trumpets, etc., what did God cause to happen? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

15. Gideon defeated a huge army with only 300 men, armed with trumpets and jars and torches. Logically, this should not have worked. It did work because it was God’s will. What lessons might we take from this section of Scripture? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Circle the statement which is most correct.**

1. a. In the Lord’s Supper I receive two things: bread and wine.  
b. In the Lord’s Supper I receive four things: bread and wine and Jesus’ body and blood.
2. a. When my faith is weak I should come to Lord’s Supper to be strengthened.  
b. When my faith is weak, I shouldn’t come to the Lord’s Supper because I’m not good enough for it.
3. a. God wants me to examine myself to see what a good Christian I am.  
b. God wants me to examine myself to see how sinful I am, to see how much I need His forgiveness.
4. a. The Lord’s Supper is an act which I must perform for God.  
b. The Lord’s Supper is a gift which God gives to me.
5. a. It doesn’t matter with whom I go to the Lord’s Supper.  
b. God wants me to attend the Lord’s Supper with those who confess the same beliefs as I do.
6. a. The power of the Lord’s Supper comes from God’s Word and promise attached.  
b. The power of the Lord’s Supper comes from how worthy I am.

7. a. God wants me to consider the Lord's Supper as a precious, wonderful gift from Him.  
b. God wants me to consider the Lord's Supper as a ritual to be performed for Him.
8. a. In the Lord's Supper I receive two things: Jesus' body and blood.  
b. In the Lord's Supper I receive four things: Jesus' body and blood together with the bread and wine.

**Thought Questions:**

1. God tells me in His Word that I'm forgiven. God further tells me that I'm forgiven in the Sacrament of Baptism. Certainly that would have been enough! Why did God give us the Lord's Supper in addition?
2. We learned that the Bible clearly teaches "close communion." (To summarize, "close communion" means that the Lord's Supper is to be offered to those who are instructed, who are able to examine themselves, who recognize what they are receiving in the Lord's Supper, and who have a united confession of faith.) As with every teaching, God wants to bring great blessings to us through the teaching of "close communion." What might some of the blessings of this teaching be?
3. Study Addendum #7 -- Personal Preparation for Holy Communion -- and answer the following:

What are some questions I might ask myself as I examine myself?

Which sins does God want me to confess before Him?

What does it mean that God has given me His gracious forgiveness?

What further assurances does God want to give me in the Lord's Supper?

How can I be sure that all these blessings really come to me through the Lord's Supper?

How will I want to respond to God's remarkable love?

4. Study Addendum #8 -- Luther's expositions and explanations of the Lord's Supper -- and answer these questions:

What is the Lord's Supper?

What are the blessings which God gives me through the Lord's Supper?

How is it that eating bread and drinking wine can do such great things?

Who is properly prepared to receive the Lord's Supper?

**Write the Bible Passages, from memory if possible.**

1 Cor 11:28 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Matt. 26:28 \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Addendum #7

In 1 Corinthians 11:28, God instructs us to examine ourselves before we come to the Lord's Supper. Below is a way you could do it. You will find this form in the hymnal on page 156.

### PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Q: What does God tell me about myself in his holy Word?

A: *He says that I am a sinner and deserve only his punishment.*

Q: What should I do if I am not aware of my sins or am not troubled by them?

A: *I should examine myself according to the Ten Commandments and ask how well I have carried out my responsibilities as a husband or wife or single person, as a parent or child, an employer or employee, a teacher or student. Have I loved God with all my heart, gladly heard his Word, and patiently endured affliction? Have I been disobedient, proud, or unforgiving? Have I been selfish, lazy, envious, or quarrelsome? Have I lied or deceived, taken something not mine, or given anyone a bad name? Have I abused my body or permitted indecent thoughts to linger in my mind? Have I failed to do what is right and good?*

Q: When I realize that I have sinned against God and deserve his punishment, what should I do?

A: *I will confess before God all my sins, those which I remember as well as those of which I am unaware. I will pray to God for his mercy and forgiveness.*

Q: How do I receive his gracious forgiveness?

A: *His Word assures me that Jesus led a pure and holy life for me and died on the cross for me to pay the full price for all my sins. Through faith in Jesus, I have been clothed in my Savior's perfect righteousness and holiness.*

Q: What further assurance do I have that Jesus is mine and I am his?

A: *In Holy Communion he gives me his body and blood together with the bread and wine as a truly life-giving food and drink to unite me with him and my fellow believers. By means of this sacrament, Jesus not only forgives my sins but sweeps away all my doubts about his love for me, gives me his own strength to live a God-pleasing life, and grants me a joyful foretaste of heaven.*

Q: How can I be sure that I receive all these blessings in the Lord's Supper?

A: *I have his own word spoken as his last will and testament on the night before he died. There he tells me: "Take and eat; this is my body. Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."*

Q: How will I respond to this priceless gift from Jesus?

A: *I will daily thank and praise him for his love to me. With his help I will fight temptation, do my best to correct whatever wrongs I have done, and serve him and those around me with love and good works.*

Lord Jesus, with joy and gratitude I now come to your table to receive the precious food of your life-giving body and blood. May it strengthen me to remain in you as you remain in me, so that I bear fruit in devoted service to you and in acts of kindness to others. Amen.

## **Addendum #8**

Martin Luther was a pastor in Germany in the early and middle 1500's. Luther recognized the great difficulty which many people have in teaching the truths of the Bible to their children. In order to help them, Luther wrote the Catechism. (The Catechism presented the truths of the Bible in a simple, orderly way, making it easier for a parent to teach their children the important truths of Scripture.) Below are the Biblical truths regarding the Lord's Supper as Luther organized them, in a way that parents could teach them to their children.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion  
*As the head of the family should teach it in the simplest way to those in his household.*

### **THE INSTITUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

**First:** *What is the sacrament of Holy Communion?*

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ together with the bread and wine, instituted by Christ for us Christians to eat and to drink.

*Where is this written?*

The holy Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke and the Apostle Paul tell us: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat. This is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way, after supper he took the cup, gave thanks, gave it to them and said, "Drink from it, all of you. This cup is the covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

## **THE BLESSINGS OF HOLY COMMUNION**

**Second:** *What blessing do we receive through this eating and drinking?*

That is shown us by these words, "Given and poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins."

Through these words we receive forgiveness of sins, life and salvation in this sacrament.

For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

## **THE POWER OF HOLY COMMUNION**

**Third:** *How can eating and drinking do such great 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.

And whoever believes these words has what they plainly say, the forgiveness of sins.

## **THE RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION**

**Fourth:** *Who, then, is properly prepared to receive this sacrament?*

Fasting and other outward preparations may serve a good purpose, but he is properly prepared who believes these words, "Given and poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins." But whoever does not believe these words or doubts them is not prepared, because the words "for you" require nothing but hearts that believe.