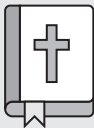


PARENTING MATTERS:
SPIRITUAL MILESTONES

COMMUNION

LIFE LOOKS A LITTLE LIKE...

...a miniature cup or an ornate chalice. A wafer, a cracker, or a loaf of bread torn into shreds. Walking to the front to pick it up, or sitting in your seat while it's passed around. At church, a wedding, a funeral, or around the kitchen table. Communion takes many forms, but no matter how it's celebrated, this milestone joins together generations of Christians in symbolic remembrance of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT COMMUNION

WHAT IS COMMUNION?

Communion is a traditional Christian practice that is done in remembrance of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. It is practiced by believers – those who have repented and committed to believing and obeying Christ – and can take place in many different ways. The essential elements are the bread (or wafer or cracker) that represents Jesus' body broken for our sins, and the wine (or grape juice) that represents his blood poured out for us, and the reading of scripture or summarizing of what communion represents, .

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT IT?

The first historical communion account is seen in the Last Supper scriptures. Found in Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-26, Luke 22:7-38 and contextualized in John 13-17, Jesus gathers his disciples for a meal before his crucifixion. These accounts walk through the disciples finding a place to eat, Jesus talking about his betrayal, leading them through the eating of bread and drinking of wine, and leaving in song to head toward the Mount of Olives. During this ceremony, Jesus explains the symbolism of each element, which is the same symbolism that is believed and celebrated today.

WHY IS IT SIGNIFICANT TO US?

Communion is a powerful time to reconnect with Jesus' ultimate sacrifice and to reflect on your role as a follower of him. There can be space during communion for prayer, repentance, remembrance, and self examination. When you take communion, you are joining with Christians all over the world - past, present, and future - who unite with God and put their faith into action. Communion is a concrete way to connect God's story with our story and to remember the sacrificial love of Jesus.

ENGAGE YOUR FAITH BY...

FAMILY COMMUNION

Supplies: loaf of bread or crackers, grape juice, a Bible.

Introduction: Taking part in communion at home is a great way to engage in conversations around what communion is and why you do it. Below is an outline to use as a starting point, but be intentional in looking for ways to make it personal to your family. Experiment with a few different ways of setting up and performing and ask your kids for feedback. The main focus is to center your heart on Christ by performing physical actions to help you honor and remember.

Action Steps:

- Gather your supplies and lay them out somewhere communal; at the kitchen table, in a circle on the floor, or around the counter
- Start off by praying, thank God for the ways he is working in your family and pray that you would be able to open your hearts to God and focus on him.
- Retell the story of the Last Supper. You can have someone read it aloud (Matthew 26:17-26), or work together to recount it.
- Hand everyone a cracker or piece of bread. Reread Matthew 26:26 and eat the bread together. Encourage your kids to take some quiet time for reflection (even 30 seconds works!).
- Read Matthew 26:27-28 and have everyone take a sip of grape juice. Encourage another time of quiet reflection.
- Ask your family if they have any questions. Take the time to talk about what this means to you. Answer questions as much as you can, but remember that it is more important to create a safe place for discussion than to have the right answers.
- End your time with a closing prayer or a worship song that you can sing together.

Follow Up: As the parent, reflect on what worked well and what needs adjusting. Think about the physical location, the individual elements, and your family's response. Work to incorporate communion into your family rhythm once a week, every month, or at significant moments. Make sure you are consistently leaving space for questions and processing as you continue to honor and remember together.

SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 11:28

Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.

PRAYER FOR PARENTS

Dear Lord, before I lead by family in communion, help me center my heart on you. Help me remember your work here on earth and your deep love for your people. Help me reflect on the abundant love you showed in your death and resurrection. Thank you for your sacrifice. Thank you for being a God of love, mercy, and compassion. I confess the ways of my heart and my life that oppose you. I confess all the times that I have chosen comfort over taking up my own cross. As we take communion, may we never forget your love, your ways, and your awesome mercy for us. Amen.

RESOURCES

The Last Supper
by Katherine Sully

Communion: A Bible Study Workbook for Kids
by Richard E. Todd

Dot & Bouncy - Communion (youtube video)

The Bible Project - Luke Chapter 19-23



PARENTING
MATTERS