



Coming to the Table New Rhythms

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me...

Repent —[Reconcile](#)—Remember—[Rejoice](#)—Receive

Coming to the Lord's Table

Each week at Jacob's Well we come to the Lord's Table. We use this time for various gospel purposes in our hearts and lives together. The following are but some broad suggestions for using this time in worship to come to Jesus in the gospel.

Confess and Repent (Mark 1:14, 15; Acts 3:19, 20; 1 John 1:9)

Each week holds temptations and challenges, some which are met in victory, others in set back. Confession is the Christian practice by which we agree with God about our sin. God always "knows," but we confess to say to him that we agree with his truth about our sin. We need to give our sins to Jesus (confess) and then turn from them back towards restored fellowship with God (repentance). The word repent in the New Testament means to change one's mind about sin—it is a turning back to God away from the deception and destruction of sin.

Reconnect and Reconcile (Matthew 5:21-24)

Communion is also an occasion to reconcile our relationships with one another. Jesus taught us that when coming to worship God we should have an urgency in our hearts about being right with one another. If you are not right with friends, family or your spouse, the Lord's Table is a time to reflect on making things right. Who has sinned against you that you need to forgive? Forgive them. Who have you sinned against that you need to ask for forgiveness? Apologize to them and ask them to forgive you. You can do this at Jacob's Well during our communion worship time. Grab your wife's hand and say "I'm sorry, please forgive me" then come to the table together. Grab a friend and step out in the hallway to pray—then come to the table together. Unity should be seen when we come to the table, not anger and broken relationships in the church.

Reflect and Remember (Luke 22:14-23; 1 Corinthians 11:24-26)

Central to the Lord's Table is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Before our eyes, in our hands and tasted upon our lips is the truth of Jesus' death for sin, shed blood to establish new covenant relationship with his people, his resurrection for our justification and his second coming for our eternal hope. The amazing grace of God in the gospel whereby he forgoes sinners like us, defeats sin, death and the powers of Hell and reconciles us to the father. Jesus taught us to "do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19) and we must not forget that our time at the table is itself a proclamation of the gospel (1 Corinthians 11:26).

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Rejoice and Worship

At Jacob's Well we intentionally do not rush through our time together at Jesus' table. We include opportunity for reflection, to rejoice in the gospel and then sing together out of gratitude in worship. At times we have been asked should our time of communion be somber and focused on our sins or celebratory and focused on Jesus' victory over them. The answer is "Yes!" If we forget our sinful need for the gospel we'll grow proud and flippant before God. If we forget the triumph of God's grace in Jesus Christ over our sins we'll always be bummed out. Our counsel is repent, confess and lament if you are in a crusty place of life; just don't forget that rejoicing in the gospel and celebrating Jesus dispels the dark clouds with blasts of joyous light.

Receive Grace in Jesus (1 Corinthians 10:16; Revelation 3:14-20)

The Scriptures teach us that the bread and cup are an actual participation in the body and blood of Christ; at the Lord's table there is real communion taking place between Jesus and his church. Intimate table fellowship with Jesus is promise for this age that will be completely realized in the eternal kingdom. Therefore, the Lord's Table is a present foretaste of eternity which breaks into the mundane of the now each week. At Jacob's Well we set the table before us so that we might "come to Jesus" and receive mercy, grace and spiritual nourishment by his grace. He is graciously inviting us to come to him in the gospel and it is the privilege of every believer to repent of sin and enjoy fellowship and communion with Jesus.

A final reminder

We do not worship the bread and wine as if it becomes Jesus nor do we "sacrifice" Jesus each week when we observe communion. Let us not forget that it is the risen and living Jesus that we worship. It is the risen one who is present with us by his spirit in the bread and cup; we do not worship the elements themselves as if they are Jesus. To do so would amount to worshipping created elements and not the one to which the elements should lead us. One theologian of the reformation said this well:

For what is idolatry if it is not to worship the gifts instead of the giver? Here the sin is twofold. The honour robbed from God is transferred to the creature, and God, moreover, is dishonoured by the pollution and profanation of his own goodness, while his holy sacrament is converted into an execrable idol.

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book 4, Chapter 17, Section 36

The bread and the wine are signs not saviors and they should be taken by Christians with joy and worship. Jesus died as a sacrifice for sin during his time on the earth and we dare not think that communion sacrifices him again and again (See Hebrews 10:1-18). Communion is a seal that connects us deeply together with our Savior and his sacrifice for us and we pray this card helps you to observe communion well as we walk together in the mission of God.

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