

## “Meaning of Communion” Luke 22:1-70

**Context:** Luke moves from Jesus’ teaching on His second coming to His arrest, interrogation, torture by the Sanhedrin, and crucifixion. His triumph over death begins the completion of the prophecies of signs and wonders that will culminate in His return. Jesus institutes communion to signify the price paid for our redemption and to point toward our redemption’s completion. On the other side of the communion text is Jesus’ affirmation that He is the One toward whom the sign refers, the Messiah, the Son of God. Astonishingly, Luke depicts that even the strongest of His disciples, such as Peter, sometimes deny His name. Luke’s account fulfills his ultimate purpose of steadying the sometimes wobbly faith of the God-lover in the face of Christ’s crucifixion, their persecution, and their possible martyrdom (cf. Luke 1:4).

**Life Principle:** A life lived in communion with Jesus daily assures a life lived with Jesus eternally (cf. Luke 22:16).

### 1. Living symbols of the kingdom - Luke 22:14-18

Jesus’ great longing for the transformation of Passover to Communion had come. The new kingdom was proclaimed through Communion, a kingdom where Jesus’ transforming presence came by His substitutionary atonement. Communion, also, transcended time by pointing to the believer’s glorification and perfected communion with Jesus at the Marriage Feast of the Lamb.

### 2. Living symbol of the bread - Luke 22:19

The bread signifies the memory of Jesus’ living presence and fellowship by the believer. Symbolically the bread is unleavened, lifted up with thanks, hidden for a time, and then received by those who seek it for life sustenance. This is likened to Jesus who came from above without sin, thanked the Father, and is received by those who seek Him for eternal life sustenance.

### 3. Living symbol of the cup - Luke 22:20

Jesus poured out the third cup, the cup of the true blessing which is His crucifixion in our place as a debt paid to God for our sin. The wine symbolizes the indelible blood pressed out of Jesus’ body. As the cup is lifted up, so was Jesus lifted up on the cross. It is an eternal covenant in His lifeblood, paid as a one-time sacrifice for our life.

### For Further Study:

- Luke 22:16-20 declares that Jesus will not eat the bread or drink from the cups of Passover until the meanings they represent are fully realized. As a **Bible study method**, look up the meanings and recitations over these acts in Edersheim’s *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, chap. 10, p. 496ff or at <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/edersheim/lifetimes.x.x.html>. How did the two cups differ in meaning (p. 496 v p. 511)? What is the significance of Judas partaking unworthily (cp. 1 Corinthians 11:30)? What did the middle part of the bread represent (cf. John 6:32-51)? How is it related to both the Messiah and the Eucharist? How is the bread related to you?
- Luke 22:16 states that Jesus will eat and drink again the day when the meanings of Passover are fulfilled. When does Scripture suggest that day will be (cf. Revelation 19:7-9)? Of what is that day a fulfillment (cp. Colossians 3:10 Ephesians 2:10; 2 Corinthians 3:18, and Revelation 19:8)? How does communion fit with and point to this fulfillment (cp. 1 Corinthians 11:26-28)?
- Our doctrinal statement does not state a precise position on the meaning of the Lord’s Table, saying only that we celebrate it (see our **doctrinal statement** <http://www.gracepointfellowship.org/what-we-believe> ). There are three positions considered orthodox by Christian churches today: transubstantiation (Roman Catholic), consubstantiation (Lutheran), and strictly emblematic (Baptist). What are the strengths and weaknesses of each position? How do you meet Jesus when you come to the table now? How will you meet Him at the Marriage feast?

### Transformation exercise:

Intentionally reflect on Luke 22:14-20 on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend communion services through December. Consider your ways that you might meet Jesus in the bread and cup at each service.