

Should My Child Take Communion?

At Bridgeway we believe communion is a celebration that the church takes part in until Christ's return. It is not a means of salvation. God has given communion to strengthen Christians' lives and to celebrate their inclusion into God's family. Only those who have personally and consciously placed their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord should take part in communion. Children are an important part of our diverse spiritual family, but as a parent it is important to give thought to how you will approach opportunities to include your children in this special sacrament.

When is the right time to include your children? Parents are the primary disciple-makers of their families. Teaching them about communion is one of the many ways that you can present the gospel to your children. Partaking of communion should be reserved for believers, but it is never too early to include your not-yet believing children by explaining the meaning behind the elements and expressing to them the reasons that they are not allowed to partake just yet.

How do I know if my child is ready to take communion? Because parenting is pastoring, parents should know their flock. It is important that each parent determine these things for their own children:

- Have they accepted Jesus as Lord and Savior and given a profession of faith? It's often easy to assume that the knowledge of Jesus automatically equals conversion in a child, especially those raised in a faithful believing home. Be careful to not assume salvation based on good behavior or a robust knowledge of Jesus and Bible stories before there is an understanding of personal sin and the need for a Savior.
- Are they showing fruit and evidence of conversion through obedience to the Word of God and love for Jesus? Upon salvation, believers become new creations according to 2 Corinthians 5:17. New believers will have new desires to obey His commands, new affections for Jesus and others, and a new awareness of sin.
- Do they understand and can they articulate the significance of communion? Waiting for understanding, maturity, significance, anticipation and meaningful memories can be a good thing for your child.

You know your children better than anyone. Be prayerful and trust in His guidance. When the Holy Spirit tells you that the time is right and your child is ready to participate in communion, it would be helpful to have a conversation that answers these three questions with your children as you prepare for Communion Celebration:

What is Communion?

Read Luke 22:14-20 together. Talk about what Jesus was teaching when He spoke to His disciples and how we continue to remember Jesus' broken body and shed blood. Be sure to explain that what we are doing is symbolic and not literal. We are not literally drinking Jesus' blood and eating His body. Like baptism, communion does not save us or cleanse us from sin.

Why Do We Take Communion?

Teach your child that we take communion because Jesus instructed us to and as a way of remembering and celebrating what He did for us. 1 Corinthians 11:26 tells us that as often as we eat of the bread and drink the cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes again.

How Do We Take Communion?

Explain the logistics of taking communion with your children, but also explain the instructions of 1 Corinthians 11:28 to "examine oneself" before eating and drinking.

Taking communion in an unworthy manner is taking it without regard to the value of Jesus' body that was broken and blood that was shed. It is to come flippantly, casually, complacently, light-heartedly, and without regard for the gravity of sin. Those who partake that are conscious of their sin and trusting only in Christ to forgive it are coming in a worthy manner.

Including your family in communion is an excited part of discipling your children. Even before they are ready to partake you have an opportunity to share the gospel with them as you remember and proclaim the Lord's death until He comes again.

For more on Communion, see Sam's sermon, "[What Happens in the Eucharist](#)" 1 Corinthians 11:23-34 from September 25, 2016