



## COMMUNION WITH YOUR GROUP

Some think communion is only something you can do at church, but when Jesus first modeled the spiritual tradition of communion, He did it in someone's home. If you follow Jesus, you can take communion just about anywhere.

You may have grown up in a church that offered communion every week, or you may be new to church and communion is still a bit foreign to you. No matter your background here is some information about what communion is and how you can take communion at home with your community group.

Jesus' last meal with His disciples before He was crucified is called the "Last Supper." You can read about the Last Supper in [Matthew 26:17-30](#) and in [Luke 22:7-38](#).

The Last Supper was part of a Passover celebration which originated in the Old Testament. You can learn more about the significance of Passover and how God brought the Jewish people out of Egypt in [Exodus 12: 26-27](#). Eating the bread and drinking the wine for the Passover meal led to what we currently call communion. Passover is still celebrated today in the Jewish community as well as some Christian communities.

During the Last Supper, Jesus took the bread, broke it and started a new tradition by saying, "Take this and eat it, for this is my body." Then He took a cup of wine, and He explained more:

*And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, "Each of you drink from it, for this is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice to forgive the sins of many." (Matthew 26: 27-28)*

Luke included some words from Jesus that same evening saying, "Do this to remember me" (Luke 22:19).

Those words as well as Paul's reminder in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, help us understand why we take communion together as followers of Jesus. Jesus asks us to use this spiritual tradition as a way to remember that He died on the cross for our salvation. His body was broken and His blood was spilled so that we could be made right with God. It's also a reminder for us to invite the Holy Spirit to examine our lives, for us to confess our sin and receive forgiveness by the grace of Jesus.

### Ideas for taking Communion:

1. Use the scriptures and information above to explain the importance of communion and why we do this.
2. Jesus used wine and unleavened bread for communion elements. Grape juice and crackers or plain bread are all good choices for communion elements. When you use juice as an element, it allows you to be sensitive to anyone struggling with alcohol within the group. Just remember, don't get hung up on the perfection of the elements. It's the meaning of the spiritual symbols that is most important.

3. Start by reading one of the accounts of the Lord's Supper in either Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20 or 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.
4. Pass out a piece of bread to everyone in the group and say (in your own words), *"Jesus took the bread and broke it and gave it to His disciples. He said that this bread is a symbol of His body broken for us. He asks us to eat this to remember that He gave His life for us. Let's remember Him together."* Then eat the bread.
5. Serve everyone a cup of juice and say, *"This juice is a symbol of Jesus' blood poured out on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins. He asks us to drink together and remember that our sins are forgiven because of this new covenant between us and God made possible by Jesus' sacrifice. Let's remember Him."* Then drink the juice.
6. Pray: *"Jesus, thank you for going to the cross for us. We don't ever want to forget your sacrifice. Thank you for pouring out your blood for us so we can be in a fully restored relationship with God. Help us always remember how you suffered and gave your life so that we could be forgiven. Amen."*
7. Remembering what Jesus did while taking communion can be somber, but communion can also be a time to celebrate the restoration of what God has done in your group. Jesus came to set us free and communion is a symbol of that. Spend a few minutes sharing stories in your group about the freedom Jesus has given each of you.
8. Ask your group to share anything they felt like God might be showing them while taking communion.

