

W @ K L J P r a J @ r J O U r n a l

**DAILY BIBLE STUDIES**

“Catechism & Communion”  
(Westminster Shorter -Question #97)

*Selected Scripture*

*July 26 – August 1, 2009*

**THE LORD'S DAY** – This week we return to our series dealing with The Lord’s Supper entitled “Catechism & Communion”. We are looking at the final question from the “Westminster Shorter Catechism” pertaining to The Lord’s Supper and Lord willing we will use the “Larger Catechism” in future months. The specific question in view this week deals with our spiritual condition when we come to The Table. Scripture tells us to examine ourselves; and this is a must if we are to avoid eating and drinking unworthily. Philip Henry, the London born nonconformist preacher of the 1600’s advised people to put to themselves 3 questions by way of self-examination before partaking of the Sacrament. They were; What am I? What have I done? What do I want? It is serious business, the state of our soul at The Table because we are here proclaiming Christ’s death for us His people. In a speech in the House of Lords in 1719, Lord Lansdowne said, 'The receiving of the Lord's Supper was never intended to be as a qualification for an office, but as an open declaration of one's being and remaining a sincere member of the Church of Christ. Whoever presumes to receive it with any other view, profanes it, and may be said to seek his promotion in this world, by eating and drinking his own damnation in the next.' Read the disciples’ self examination in **Matthew 26:20-22**.

*Suggestion for prayer: Father, teach me how to eat and drink in a worthy manner.*

**MONDAY** – #97 of the shorter Catechism: **Question:** What is required for the worthy receiving of the Lord’s Supper? **Answer:** *It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord’s Supper, that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord’s body, of their faith to feed upon him, of their repentance, love, and new obedience; lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.* There is nothing “magical” about eating The Lord’s Supper. It is not “magical”, but it is “Holy”. I have said before I think the term Holy Communion is proper and fitting for this Sacred Sacrament. In this holy time, we remember, proclaim, and celebrate the Lord’s death for us and by faith, feed on Him as we receive the benefits of His person and work for us as His sheep. We also renew our commitment to The Lord as His people as we are reminded of the covenant promises. If we are to grow and be built up in the faith by this means of grace, we need to eat it in the right way. Scripture warns us not to eat unworthily. Something’s in life are so special they take time to prepare or get ready for. There is something we must do before coming to eat and drink The Lord’s Supper; namely “examine ourselves”. Certain things are to be looked for in ourselves as we prepare to take the supper. Read **1 Corinthians 11:27-28**.

Praise & Prayer	ADORATION Hallowed be Your name. (6:9)	AUTHORITY Your Kingdom come... (6:10)	APPEAL Give us this day... (6:11)	AQUITTAL Forgive us our debts... (6:12)	ASSISTANCE Deliver us from evil. (6:13a)	ADMIRATION For Yours is the Kingdom... (6:13)	Lord's Day	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

M a t t e u 6: 9-13

Suggestion for prayer: *Father, let me learn more and more of Your holiness.*

**TUESDAY** –The Catechism explains one thing we need to look for in ourselves when it says, “...that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord’s body, of their faith to feed upon him...” Do we really understand this bread and wine represent the body and blood of Jesus, God the Son, broken and poured out to pay the penalty for the sins of His people? There is sometimes debate on how old a person should be to take The Lord’s Supper. For instance, are children invited to come to The Table? These are not refreshments Beloved. We as parents must instruct our children to understand Jesus death for sin and how that is portrayed in the elements. But people young and old often eat and drink just because those sitting around them in the pews are. Some people think they will earn favor with God by partaking of communion. People should “discern” (understand) what this Supper is about before partaking. We also examine our “faith”. Are we feeding by faith on Jesus? Do we trust Him alone to give us all we need to be made acceptable and to please The Father and also to help us grow, just as we trust in physical food to strengthen our bodies? People without faith in Christ should not participate. Read **1 Corinthians 11:29, 2 Corinthians 13:5**.

Suggestion for prayer: *Father, help me discern and understand the significance of The Supper and Jesus, help me trust You alone for my salvation.*

**WEDNESDAY** –We are also told in the catechism that we are to examine ourselves in this matter “...of their repentance...” God brings true repentance to the heart of everyone He saves. If a person has not repented of their sin they are not a Christian at all. We have recently talked a lot about repentance from our series in Mark. As one commentator so aptly said, “We are very apt to confuse two things—sorrow for the consequences of sin, and sorrow for sin. There is many a man who is desperately sorry because of the mess that sin has got him into, but that man very well knows that, if he could be reasonably sure that he could escape the consequences, he would do the same thing again. It is not the sin that he hates; it is the consequences of the sin. But real repentance means that a man has come, not only to be sorry for the consequences of his sin, but to hate sin itself. Repentance means that the man, who was in love with sin, comes to hate his sin because of its exceeding sinfulness”. We need to examine ourselves for a spirit of repentance before we eat. Even as believers we find that we still sometimes disobey God. Every day we need to take time to ask forgiveness for our sinful actions and attitudes. This we are to do before the Lord’s Supper as well. Whatever we find, we must confess to God and purpose with His help to stop doing those sins. Read **Mark 1:15, Acts 11:18, 16:31, and Lamentations 3:40**.

Suggestion for prayer: *Father, grant me the gift of true repentance. Even as Your child help me live a life of confession and repentance of my sin which Jesus bore.*

**THURSDAY** – Before we partake of The Lord’s Supper we must also examine ourselves for “...love...” A lot of people have a wrong view of “love”. For starters,

People left to themselves, will always have a natural hatred for God in their hearts. The unregenerate man is an enemy of God (**Romans 5:10, James 4:4**). When a person is brought to life in Christ through the gospel and power of The Holy Spirit their heart is changed and God replaces their hateful heart with a heart of love for Him and toward Him. True Christians know God, love God and want to please Him. True Christians will also love other Christians as well as express love toward those who are lost. Love is more than just a “feeling” we have; it is also an action, where we do for others, sacrificing our comforts and desires for the benefit and sake of someone else. Professing “Christians” who don’t express love for God or one another are probably not Christians at all and should never eat The Lord’s Supper. As mentioned with “repentance”, in this matter of “love” we sometimes sin and hurt others and we need to truly repent and confess of this before we come to partake of The Supper. We need to ask forgiveness if we have sinned against a brother or sister before we come to The Table. Read **1 John 4:19-21**.

Suggestion for prayer: *God, search my often hypocritical heart and help me love.*

**FRIDAY** –We also learn from the catechism that “It is required of them that would worthily partake of the Lord’s Supper...” to examine ourselves in the matter of “...new obedience...” If we were once rebels against God as His enemies, unwilling to repent and believe but now we are new creatures in Christ as transformed, saved sinners we will have a desire to obey God. We will want to know what God commands us in His Word and we will want to obey it. Christians care if they obey God. People who don’t really care if they obey God shouldn’t eat The Lord’s Supper. We sometimes do fail to completely obey as true Christians and therefore we should examine ourselves and confess to God our sins of disobedience before we come to eat and drink in communion. Read **1 John 2:3-6**.

Suggestion for prayer: *Father, I ask You again to work in my heart and please give me more desire to obey You and be pure. Bring holy affections to my soul.*

**SATURDAY** –The Apostle Paul was writing the Christians in Corinth to tell them that it was necessary to be clean and worthy when coming to eat The Lord’s Supper. We know that some there were not even believers while others who were believers had been put to death and made ill for eating in an unworthy manner. Those sinning without repentance and treating The Lord’s Supper in an unholy manner, were finding true what is recorded in Sacred Scripture and echoed in the catechism: “...lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.” God will judge His people who take and receive this Holy Sacrament wrongly. God takes The Lord’s Supper very seriously and so should we. There is danger in receiving the Lord’s Supper unworthily: it is actually eating and drinking judgment to ourselves; that is, provoking the Lord, by our unworthy receiving. Read **1 Corinthians 11:17-18, 20-21, and 30**.

Suggestion for prayer: *Thank You God for The Supper. Help me eat worthily. And although I am an unworthy guest, help me come and dine by the merits of Christ.*