

CFBC Hymns Class 48

Hymns Old and New for the Communion Season

- **Commemoration...Remembering**
- **Celebration...Rejoicing**
- **Consecration...Renewing**

Nowhere is God so near to man as in Jesus Christ; and nowhere is Christ so familiarly represented to us, as in this holy sacrament.

Richard Baxter

Important things take place when believers observe [the Lord's Supper]:

- 1. It is a vivid reminder of Christ's broken body and shed blood (Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:23-27).***
- 2. We meditate on Christ's death on our behalf (Matthew 26:28; 1 Corinthians 11:24).***
- 3. It is a time of affirmation that we are participants in Christ's sacrifice (1 Corinthians 10:16-17).***
- 4. It is a reminder that someday we will be with the risen Christ in His Father's kingdom (Matthew 26:29).***
- 5. It is a proclamation that Christ will come again (1 Corinthians 11:26).***
- 6. It bring to our minds that the New Covenant, in which all true believers participate, was established by Christ's sacrificing of His flesh and His blood. This New Covenant carries both great privileges and important responsibilities (Matthew 26:28; 1 Corinthians 11:25).***
- 7. It is a time of reflection during which participants should examine themselves to see if there are any broken relationships between them and other members of the body (1 Corinthians 11:27-28).***
- 8. It is a time of rich fellowship for the body of Christ in which we affirm that though many, we are one in Christ (1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:17-22).***
- 9. It includes a warning for those who participate in an unworthy manner (1 Corinthians 10:18-22; 11:29-32).***

Curtis Thomas, Retired Pastor of The Bible Church of Little Rock

Preparation...

At the heart of the present significance of the Lord's Supper is our communion or fellowship with Christ, hence the term "communion service." In coming to this service the believer comes to meet with Christ and have fellowship with Him at His invitation. The examination takes place because it would be hypocrisy for us to pretend that we are in communion with the Holy One while actually cherishing known sin in our hearts.

James Montgomery Boice

We must not make great knowledge, and great strength of grace, an indispensable qualification for communicants. A man may know but little, and be no better than a child in spiritual strength, but he is not on that account to be excluded from the Lord's table. Does he really feel his sins? Does he really love Christ? Does he really desire to serve Him? If this be so, we ought to encourage and receive him. Doubtless we must do all we can to exclude unworthy communicants. No graceless person ought to come to the Lord's Supper. But we must take heed that we do not reject those whom Christ has not rejected. There is no wisdom in being more strict than our Lord and His apostles.

J C Ryle

The Communion Season...at IPC Savannah, GA

In August of 1742, a crowd of 50,000 gathered in Cambuslang, Scotland, for an outdoor communion service amidst the revivals of religion then erupting all throughout the Western world. The setting was the Great Awakening, which burst on the scene in 1735 with the preaching of Jonathan Edwards in Northampton, Massachusetts, and the conversion of George Whitefield at Oxford.

Yet the broader context of the revivals was the practice of intense communion "seasons" by Scottish Presbyterians, as well as the Puritans of England and New England, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and indeed which persist to the present day in the Highlands and on the Isle of Lewis. Revivals in Scotland were frequent in older times, and, as the Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology says, "(they) were usually associated with the celebration of the Lord's Supper." These occasions typically began with preparatory preaching services Thursday through Saturday nights. The messages were cross-centered, Christ-focused, and soul-searching. Sunday morning communion was administered and Sunday and Monday evenings thanksgiving services followed.

The theological context of intensive communion seasons is the understanding of the Lord's Supper as a sacramental meal, which as such, has signifying and sealing functions. The latter of these means that communicants "seal" their covenant with Christ at the Table.

The Supper is that place in the life of the church where Christ and His people seal, in the sense of ratify or confirm, their mutual commitments and obligations, all in the context of shared fellowship.

Consequently the Lord's Table became that place where church members would do their business with God. It is not surprising that the "Camp Meetings," usually associated with Methodism, grew out of the Scottish Communion season. What became an "altar call," summoning the children of the church, the backslidden, the unconverted, and even the faithful to affirm or reaffirm their repentance and faith in Christ, originated as a call to the Table.

Our aim each year is to return to this older, more biblical practice of making the Table the center of the spiritual life of the church. We do this not by increasing the frequency of our observance, but the intensity. This has always been the preference of the Reformed Church when choosing between observing the Lord's Supper more often or with greater care. Careful has gotten the nod, we think rightly, over frequent.

We would like this season of cross-centered, Christ-focused, soul-searching meetings to become a regular feature of our congregational life. More than that, we are praying that it will become a means of reviving our church, and reviving our community.

<https://ipcsav.org/church-life/communion-season/>

The Communion Season...a Reformed Tradition

The sacraments are to be administered in conjunction with the preaching of the Word of God, because the symbolism of the sacraments must be explained by the Word. Accordingly, the sacraments are administered only by the minister of the Word.

There should be an enunciation of the gospel message on every such occasion. In advance of the Lord's Supper, there is also to be admonition based on the biblical directive to examine ourselves lest we eat and drink unworthily. We are to make preparation for receiving the sacrament, by considering our need for the grace of Christ and whether we have a true repentance from sin. In connection with these reflections, the observance of a fast is a recognition of the lowliness of spirit which befits us when entering into such nearness to God. Preaching at the time of the Supper ought most especially to direct attention to Christ's atoning sacrifice. Another theme at this time is the giving of thanks to God, because of his abounding grace and love in the gospel.

To assist communicants and those who look on, it is appropriate that at the time of the Lord's Supper there be a season of several days of preaching, during which consideration is given to the benefits symbolized in the Supper and to a fruitful use of the Supper. Careful preparation for partaking is accompanied by earnest expectation that Christ will be present in the midst of his people.

It is most seemly, and closest to the appointment of Christ, that communicants come up to and sit at a covered table to receive the bread and wine as at the hospitality of a meal, in enjoyment of bonds with Christ and with one another as the bread and the cup are passed around the table, and in anticipation of the marriage supper of the Lamb at the resurrection. Eating at a man's table is a sign of friendship with him.

Inasmuch as the purpose of Christ's death is to deliver us from our sins, no one should approach the Lord's table who is indifferent to repentance and to the pursuit of holy living. As at the Reformation, a caution is duly sounded at the administration of the Supper, forbidding any to partake who are living in contempt of God's law. In this way, the table is verbally fenced off against profanation. Words of encouragement and invitation are also spoken, for opening the table to those who are broken in themselves and see no relief but in Christ.

The minister offers words of support to those who are painfully conscious of their sin and unworthiness, and stirs up the people to meditate affectionately on the sufferings and death of their Savior as they assemble to commemorate his act of love. The minister then takes up into his hands the bread and the cup. The elements are set apart, by the word of institution, and by thanksgiving and prayer, to be sacred symbols for the duration of the sacramental action. The bread is broken in signification of the breaking of Christ's body for us. The bread and wine are given to the communicants and shared among them. The disciples are dismissed with an exhortation to press forward in the grace they have received.

Footnotes:

Robert Murray M'Cheyne - This Do In Remembrance of Me
Sherman Isbell, from The Master's Trumpet, Issue 4 - Administration of the Lord's Supper
David Murray - The Scottish Communion Season

<https://cornerstone-presbyterian.com/beliefs/the-communion-season>

Commemoration...

We ought carefully and with the utmost seriousness and consideration to attend the sacrament of the Lord's Supper: this was appointed for this end, to draw forth longings of our souls toward Jesus Christ.

Here are the glorious objects of spiritual desire by visible signs represented to our view. We have Christ evidently set forth crucified....

Here we have that spiritual meat and drink represented and offered to excite our hunger and thirst; here we have all that spiritual feast represented which God has provided for poor souls;

And here we may hope in some measure to have our longing souls satisfied in this world by the gracious communications of the Spirit of God.

Jonathan Edwards

Voddie Baucham's New Lord's Supper Hymn (March, 2020) Edited

This is a Communion or Lord's Supper hymn and may be sung to the tune of "O God our help in ages past" (CM)...

This hallowed ground we consecrate
With sorrow turned to praise
For Christ our sin and shame did take
And full atonement made

The moment sinless deity
Was cursed upon the tree
And his perfect obedience
Set guilty captives free

So here the bread again we break
And eat this common meal
For by our Saviour's sacred wounds
Our fatal wounds were healed

And here our cup to him we raise
A covenant of blood
For God the Son our ransom paid
When in our place he stood

And so this ground we consecrate
Not with mere bread and wine
But with our hearts and heads and hands
And lives to him resigned

Remember, then, and celebrate
His body and his blood
As here by faith our souls partake
Of Christ as holy food

<https://reformationzambia.com/voddie-baucham-composes-new-lords-supper-hymn/>

'Tis finished! The Messiah dies

Words: Charles Wesley

Music: John Kelly

Verse 1

'Tis finished! The Messiah dies,
Cut off for sins, but not His own:
Accomplished is the sacrifice,
The great redeeming work is done!
'Tis finished! All the debt is paid;
Justice divine is satisfied;
The grand and full atonement made;
God for a guilty world hath died.

Verse 2

The veil is rent in Christ alone;
The living way to Heaven is seen;
The middle wall is broken down,
And all mankind may enter in.
The types and figures are fulfilled;
Exacted is the legal pain;
The precious promises are sealed;
The spotless Lamb of God is slain.

Verse 3

The reign of sin and death is o'er,
And all may live from sin set free;
Satan hath lost his mortal power;
'Tis swallowed up in victory!
Saved from the legal curse I am,
My Savior hangs on yonder tree:
See there the meek, expiring Lamb!
'Tis finished! He expires for me.

Verse 4

Accepted in the Well-beloved,
And clothed in righteousness divine,
I see the bar to heaven removed;
And all Thy merits, Lord, are mine!
Death, hell, and sin are now subdued;
All grace is now to sinners given;
And lo, I plead the atoning blood,
And in Thy right I claim Thy Heaven!

The Background of Wesley's Communion Hymn

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)...was inspired to write this hymn after reading a short passage from the Gospel of John: "When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said 'It is finished'; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit." (John 19:30)

Of the thousands of hymn texts that Wesley wrote, this became one of his favorites. He revised the text numerous times, an unusual practice for Wesley.

Originally the hymn was published as two eight-line stanzas in *Short Hymns on Select Passages of Holy Scripture* (1762). Twenty-four years later, a substantially revised version, consisting of four four-line stanzas, appeared in *A Select Collection of Hymns, Universally Sung in All the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapels* (1786).

Upon his deathbed Wesley completed an eight-stanza version, which was published in several Methodist hymnbooks in Britain during the 19th century.

This particular incarnation of the hymn expands the themes first presented in the 1762 publication....

"'Tis Finished!" is psalm-like in that each line is a development of its predecessor; for example, "Accomplished is the sacrifice, the great redeeming work is done." Stanzas one, two and four are all narrative. Stanza three is in first person singular, which highlights the hymn's theme of personal justification.

Wesley intended this hymn to be used on Good Friday. He included a prefix in the original publication: "It is finished - John XIX.30."

The version in The UM Hymnal can also be used as a communion hymn. Wesley wrote the hymn in the present tense to highlight the reality of the crucifixion and the imminence of salvation....

The theological message of the hymn could be summarized as follows: The unblemished Son has died to accomplish our salvation. He has ensured that all who believe in him may enter the eternal kingdom. We no longer need live in guilt because we can be forgiven and renewed. Sin has lost its grip on humanity because of Jesus' death and resurrection.

The purpose of the Lord's Supper is to receive from Christ the nourishment and strength and hope and joy that come from feasting our souls on all that He purchased for us on the cross, especially His own fellowship.

John Piper

Celebration...

I will glory in my Redeemer

Steve and Vicki Cook, 2001

Verse 1

I will glory in my Redeemer
Whose priceless blood has ransomed me
Mine was the sin that drove the bitter nails
And hung Him on that judgment tree
I will glory in my Redeemer
Who crushed the power of sin and death
My only Savior before the Holy Judge
The Lamb Who is my Righteousness
The Lamb Who is my Righteousness

Verse 2

I will glory in my Redeemer
My life He bought, my love He owns
I have no longings for another
I'm satisfied in Him alone
I will glory in my Redeemer
His faithfulness my standing place
Though foes are mighty and rush upon me
My feet are firm, held by His grace
My feet are firm, held by His grace

Verse 3

I will glory in my Redeemer
Who carries me on eagle's wings
He crowns my life with lovingkindness
His triumph song I'll ever sing
I will glory in my Redeemer
Who waits for me at gates of gold
And when He calls me, it will be paradise
His face forever to behold
His face forever to behold

Consecration...

The benefits [the Lord's Supper] confers, are spiritual, not physical. Its effects must be looked for in our inward man. It was intended to remind us, by the visible, tangible emblems of bread and wine, that the offering of Christ's body and blood for us on the cross, is the only atonement for sin, and the life of a believer's soul. It was meant to help our poor weak faith to closer fellowship with our crucified Savior, and to assist us in spiritually feeding on Christ's body and blood. It is an ordinance for redeemed sinners, and not for unfallen angels. By receiving it we publicly declare our sense of guilt, and need of a Savior – our trust in Jesus, and our love to Him – our desire to live upon Him, and our hope to live with Him. Using it in this spirit, we shall find our repentance deepened, our faith increased, our hope brightened, and our love enlarged – our besetting sins weakened, and our graces strengthened. It will draw us nearer to Christ.

Continued...

In what frame of mind do we come to the Lord's Table? Do we draw near intelligently, humbly, and with faith? Do we understand what we are doing? Do we really feel our sinfulness and need of Christ? Do we really desire to live a Christian life, as well as profess the Christian faith? Happy is that soul who can give a satisfactory answer to these questions. Let him go forward, and persevere.

J C Ryle

Yet not I, but through Christ in me

City Alight

Jonny Robinson, Rich Thompson, Michael Farren

Verse 1

What gift of grace is Jesus, my redeemer
There is no more for heaven now to give
He is my joy, my righteousness, and freedom
My steadfast love, my deep and boundless peace

To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus
For my life is wholly bound to His
Oh, how strange and divine, I can sing: All is mine!
Yet not I, but through Christ in me

Verse 2

The night is dark but I am not forsaken
For by my side, the Savior He will stay
I labor on in weakness and rejoicing
For in my need, His power is displayed

To this I hold, my Shepherd will defend me
Through the deepest valley, He will lead
Oh, the night has been won, and I shall overcome
Yet not I, but through Christ in me

Verse 3

No fate I dread, I know I am forgiven
The future sure, the price it has been paid
For Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon
And He was raised to overthrow the grave

To this I hold, my sin has been defeated
Jesus now and ever is my plea
Oh, the chains are released, I can sing: I am free!
Yet not I, but through Christ in me

Verse 4

With every breath, I long to follow Jesus
For He has said that He will bring me home
And day by day I know He will renew me
Until I stand with joy before the throne

To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus
All the glory evermore to Him
When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat:
Yet not I, but through Christ in me!

When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat:
Yet not I, but through Christ in me!
Yet not I, but through Christ in me!

<https://www.cityalight.com/yet-not-i-but-through-christ-in-me/>