

Every Week Communion? Why Not? It Would Lose Its Meaning

Review Last Week:

We began considering the first of several possible reasons why we might not want to offer Communion every Sunday. That first reason was: **“If we do it too often, it will lose its meaning.”** We agreed that to take the Lord’s Supper for granted was not a good thing. At the same time, we began wrestling with a few questions to help us consider this concern, which included: (1) Do we apply this reasoning to other Christian practices, such as the hearing of God’s Word, the reading of the Bible, praying, etc.? (2) Is the Lord’s Supper less effective if one takes it for granted? (3) Does this reasoning hold when considering the eating of daily meals? Do those meals become less meaningful if one also ate yesterday?

Regarding the questions for number (1):

- God’s Word: **Psalm 1:2 “Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.”** (Also, Psalm 119.)

- Praying: **Daniel 6:10 “He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God.”** (Also, 1 Thess. 5:17.)

These questions help us to understand a statement made in the article by Rev. Rasmussen, which said, *“The sacrament is a means of grace, not a means of piety.”* We partake of Christ’s body and blood because of our need and because of what God gives to us: the forgiveness of our sins and the strengthening of our faith. It delivers eternal life to us.

Some more questions to re-evaluate this:

- Is it possible to correct the original statement this way:
 - o **“If we do it MORE frequently, it will GAIN its meaning.”**
 - To what other practices in life would this apply?

 - o And then, the opposite might be true: “If we do it too infrequently, it will lose its meaning.”
 - Can a person take it for granted no matter how often they receive?

- What is the difference between taking Communion for granted and taking it unworthily?
 - o Can I ever appreciate Communion enough?
 - o If I take it for granted, should I not partake? (See quote.)
 - o What is the proper response to realizing that I have been taking it for granted?

- Habits:
 - There are good habits and bad habits. How would we define a habit? Something that has become so routine that it is done without consciously thinking of it.
 - How might thinking of receiving of Communion as a “holy habit” guide our response to the concern of doing it too often?

- Fasting: The practice of purposely not receiving a normal necessity for a time is called fasting. So, this begs the question: does fasting apply to the Lord’s Supper?
 - The Lutheran Confessions teach that right fasting is a fruit of repentance commanded by God in the same way as right praying and right alms-giving; that fasting is useful for keeping the flesh in check; and that it is a fine external training in preparation for receiving Holy Communion. (See quotes.)

 - True/False: Fasting is done in preparation FOR the Feast, not FROM the feast.

 - Look up **Matthew 9:14-15**.
 - The disciples of John and the Pharisees are used to many prescribed fasts. How does Jesus explain His disciples’ lack of fasting?
 - What is the proper thing to do when the Bridegroom is with you?
 - When was the Bridegroom taken away?

“We must never regard the Sacrament as something injurious from which we had better flee, but as a pure, wholesome, comforting remedy imparting salvation and comfort, which will cure you and give you life both in soul and body. For where the soul has recovered, the body also is relieved. Why, then, is it that we act as if it were a poison, the eating of which would bring death?”
 (Martin Luther, Large Catechism, Part V, paragraphs 39-41).

So...what do you think about Reason #1 – “If we do it too often, it will lose its meaning”?