

Reformation Covenant Church Adult Sunday School

Worship & Liturgy

Week 5: Communion

- I. Review
 - i. Worship is the gathered _____ of God's people in God's special _____ acting out a service of offering their _____ to God
 - b. Class Outline
 - i. Week 1 – What Worship Is, Centrality of Worship, and The Regulative Principle
 - ii. Week 2 – Intro to CRW and Call to Worship
 - iii. Week 3 – Confession
 - iv. Week 4 – Consecration and Commission
 - v. *Week 5 – Communion*
 - vi. Week 6 – Vestments: A Biblical case
 - vii. Week 7 – Vestments: Practical considerations & Q&A
 - c. Five C's of Worship
 - i. **Call** to Worship – God calls us out of the world to gather in His presence.
 - ii. **Confession** and Forgiveness – God reminds us what He has done for us in Christ. We confess our sins and He absolves us of guilt.
 - iii. **Consecration** – We are set apart for holy service as God speaks to us and teaches us through His Word. We respond by giving ourselves and our tithes as fitting offerings.
 - iv. **Communion** – God invites us to commune with Him at his covenant meal, and we remember His covenant and enjoy His provisions.
 - v. **Commission** – God blesses us and charges us to extend His kingdom into the future and the world, making disciples of all nations.
- II. Communion
 - a. The climax of CRW
 - b. The invitation
 - c. The Creed
 - d. What happens during Communion?

III. Changes to Communion

- a. Two Distributions
- b. "Receiving" the elements
- c. New Testament narratives (see table next page)
- d. Revised process
 - i. Prayer for the bread
 - ii. Bread distribution
 - iii. Eat
 - iv. Prayer for the cup
 - v. Cup distribution
 - vi. Drink
- e. Rationale
 - i. Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi, "The law of worship/prayer, the law of belief"
 - ii. Family meal vs. Church meal
 - iii. Receiving and posture
 - iv. Discerning the body
 1. 1 Cor. 11: 27-34: "27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. 33 Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. 34 But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come."

Steps	Matt. 26:26–29	Mark 14:22–25	Luke 22:19-20	1 Cor. 11:23-26
Jesus took bread	26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread,	22 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread,	19 And He took bread,	23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;
He gave thanks	blessed	blessed	gave thanks	24 and when He had given thanks,
He broke it	and broke it,	and broke it,	and broke it,	He broke it
He gave it to them	and gave it to the disciples	and gave it to them	and gave it to them,	
He commanded them to eat & identified it with His body	and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."	and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."	saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."	and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."
Jesus took the cup	27 Then He took the cup,	23 Then He took the cup,	20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper,	25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper,
He gave thanks	and gave thanks,	and when He had given thanks		
He gave it to them	and gave it to them,	He gave it to them,		
He commanded them to drink and identified it with His blood	saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.	and they all drank from it. 24 And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.	saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.	saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."
				26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

Additional Resources

On the tone of communion in the early church

The ancient approach did not preoccupy itself at all with devout feelings, though it recognised that they would be there. It concentrated attention entirely on the sacramental act, as the expression of a will already intent on amendment of life, and as the occasion of its acceptance and sanctification by God; and so far as the liturgy was concerned, it left the matter at that, in a way which our more introspective devotion would probably find unsatisfying, though it served to train the saints and martyrs of the age of persecution.

Dom Gregory Dix, The Shape of the Liturgy, pg. 13

On the unity and diversity of Eucharistic practices over time

Here, I suggest, is something of the greatest significance as a clue to what is authentically christian in life and thought. That standard structure or Shape of the Liturgy can be shown to have had its first formation in the semi-Jewish church of the apostolic age. But it has persisted ever since, not because it was consciously retained as 'apostolic' or even known to be such - it was not even recognised to be there - but only because it fulfilled certain universal christian needs in every church in every age, not only for outstanding saints but for the innumerable millions of plain nameless sinful christian folk, for whom in different ways the eucharist has always been the universal road to God.

The intricate pattern of local variety overlaid on the unchanging apostolic core of the rite is the product of history. It is the proof that the christian liturgy is not a museum specimen of religiosity, but the expression of an immense living process made up of the real lives of hosts of men and women in all sorts of ages and circumstances. Yet the underlying structure is always the same because the essential action is always the same, and this standard structure or Shape alone embodies and expresses the full complete eucharistic action for all churches and all races and all times. The action is capable of different interpretations, and the theologies which define those interpretations have varied a good deal. But they can vary only within certain limits while they interpret one and the same action. Whenever and wherever the eucharistic action is changed, i.e. whenever and wherever the standard structure of the rite has been broken up or notably altered, there it will be found that some part of the primitive fulness of the meaning of the eucharist has been lost. And - in the end - it will be found that this has had equally notable results upon the christian living of those whose christianity has been thus impoverished. It may sound exaggerated so to link comparatively small ritual changes with great social results. But it is a demonstrable historical fact that they are linked; and whichever we may like to regard as the cause of the other, it is a fact that the ritual change can always be historically detected before the social one.

Dom Gregory Dix, The Shape of the Liturgy, pp. xi-xii