



CHURCH@HOME: COMMUNION@HOME

When Jesus initiated the practice that we call Communion he did it not as a simple ritual of sharing a little bit of bread and a little bit of juice or wine. He did it as part of a full meal. When he shared the cup at the end of the meal he said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." (emphasis mine, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, ESV). It's fair to say that Jesus wants us to remember him - his body broken for us and his blood shed for us - not just once a month as we celebrate Communion as part of worship, but as often as we share a meal together.

The early church celebrated Communion as a full meal sometimes called an Agape Feast. Agape (pronounced uh-gah'-pay) is one of the greek words for love. It's the word Paul used in 1 Corinthians 13 when he wrote, "Agape is patient, agape is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Agape does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."



Your CHURCH@HOME homework this week is to treat at least one meal a day as an Agape Feast by doing the following three things:

1. Pray at the beginning of the meal thanking God for the meal and for those you are sharing it with (if you are sharing it with someone), offering the time to God for his purposes and remembering those who do not have enough to eat that day.
2. Take some of the solid food (bread, meat, vegetables, whatever) and break it (or cut it) and say something like, "As this food is broken for me/us, so too was Jesus' body broken for us. As I/we eat let's remember Jesus."
3. Toward the end of the meal, take whatever your drinking, hold it up and say something like, "Let this drink remind me/us that Jesus' blood was poured out for me/us. As often as we drink, let's remember Jesus."



This is a simple process, but if you practice it regularly for an extended period of time (at least once a week), I believe that over time you will see a subtle and profound impact in yourself and among those whom you are sharing the meal with. Meal time will be not just a time to take in nourishment and share the day's events. It will become worship. If you are living and eating alone, I invite you to join our Monday Zoom "Dinner" Group (Monday evenings from 7:00-8:30 PM, email scott@garfieldchurch.org to get the zoom link.) We share communion as part of our time together every week.

May God's Spirit of grace and truth fill you and form you as you practice CHURCH@HOME for the holidays."