



## Communion: Gathering Around the Table

Stand Alone | November 5th, 2023  
Community Group Discussion Guide

*The following is a guide to help structure your time as a group together. Community Groups exist first and foremost to help us know and follow Jesus together.*

*Our groups organize their shared life together around four essential practices - studying the Scriptures, Care and Prayer, Family Hangouts, and Missional Hospitality. Our hope is that each group would live into these rhythms at least once per month.*

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### **NO Gathering - Sunday, November 12th**

Due to our Annual Family Vacation, there will be *NO* Sunday Gathering, on Sunday, November 12th. We will be back together again for worship on Sunday, November 19th at 9:30am.

#### **Lessons & Carols Christmas Service**

*Friday, December 22 | 6pm-7pm  
Matthews Community Playhouse*

On Friday, December 22nd, we will be gathering at the Matthews Playhouse with other local churches across our city to celebrate the birth of King Jesus together. This will be a traditional Lessons & Carols service, where we will sing traditional Christmas worship songs, hear the story of the birth of Jesus read through various passages of Scripture, and take intentional time to reflect on the meaning of this season.

Childcare will be provided for ages 6 weeks - 2 years old. The service will be family-friendly, and should last about 45 minutes.

This is a small part of a citywide collaboration of like-minded churches in the Harbor Network, seeking to partner together to launch, lead, and multiply thriving churches.

### REVIEW THE MISSION

Take some time to review who various people are building relationships with and seeking to share the gospel with. **Pray for these individuals - that God would open their eyes to the good news of the gospel.**

## PRAYER + SCRIPTURE

**Open with a brief word of prayer:** “God, we thank you for this time together. We open our hearts to how you might want to meet with us. Come Holy Spirit.”

**1-2 minutes of silent reflection.**

### **1 Corinthians 11:17-34**

*17 But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. 18 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, 19 for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. 20 When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. 21 For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. 22 What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not. 23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 27 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. 31 But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world. 33 So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another— 34 if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home—so that when you come together it will not be for judgment. About the other things I will give directions when I come.*

**1-2 minutes of silent reflection.**

**Close with this short prayer:** “Lord, we pray for your strength in our lives. In your grace, you have chosen to use us in your Kingdom where you open the door. We pray for eyes to see how you want to use us, hearts that desire to obey, and faith that encourages us to proclaim your Gospel. Amen.”

**As you reflect on 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, what is the Holy Spirit showing or teaching you?**

## SERMON DISCUSSION

### TAKING COMMUNION IMPROPERLY

In this week's teaching passage, the apostle Paul rebukes the church at Corinth for the various ways they are approaching the communion table improperly. We said that one of the primary ways we can do this today is through indifference. We come in a nonchalant or flippant manner to the bread and the cup.

**How have you seen this nonchalant or flippantness in your approach to communion? How was Sunday's sermon a helpful correction for that?**

### THE FOUR DIRECTIONS OF COMMUNION

In 1 Corinthians 11, we see four directions that communion points us towards:

1. Backward – as we reflect on the cross of Christ and what He accomplished for us.
2. Forward – as we look forward to the feast of the kingdom of God when Christ returns
3. Inward – as we examine our hearts and ways we need to repent
4. Outward – as we remember and celebrate the communal meal together

Let's take some time to discuss each direction and how it might help us in how we approach communion in the weeks to come.

**What backward elements of communion can we remember as we eat? What specific things has God saved us from or rescued us out of, that we can rejoice in?**

**How can we think forward in relation to communion? What griefs, sorrows, sufferings are we looking forward to God redeeming and restoring in the new heavens and the new earth?**

**How can we look inward as we eat together? Are there any aspects of our lives that need to be realigned with the message of Jesus? What are they?**

**How can we look outward as we eat together? Is there any conflict or tension that needs to be addressed between you and another follower of Jesus?**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

Pray over what was shared in the discussion, for your group to be united in the gospel, and for help from the Holy Spirit to be shaped to be more like Jesus as we put God's ways into practice.