

# PathLights

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path"  
Psalm 119:104*

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## How Often Should We Eat the Lord's Supper?

by Frank Himmel

How frequently should Christians meet together to eat the Lord's Supper? Should it be done annually, quarterly, monthly, weekly, or at some other interval?

### The Basic Question

Before addressing those questions, let's ask another: why have the Lord's Supper at all? Or more broadly, why do we do what we do in worship, or for that matter, why do we worship at all? The only reasonable answer is, because God instructs us to.

Worship, by definition, is an act of devotion and reverence to God. That being the case, what He wants, not what we want, is the main consideration. His approval, not our satisfaction, is the objective. True worship is in spirit and truth (John 4:24). It is directed by God's Spirit, who instructs us through His word which is directed to our spirits/hearts/minds, from which acceptable worship springs (Ephesians 5:18-19). And true worship is instructional in nature, teaching, reminding, and building us up (1 Corinthians 14:26).

Bible history is filled with examples of unacceptable worship. The problem varies—it may be with the who, what, when, where, why, or how—but the common thread is somehow not worshiping as God directed.

Given these truths, worship calls for a cautious approach. Every worshiper ought to be concerned about carefully following God's instructions rather than loosely approximating them. Remember the preacher's admonition: "Guard your steps as you go to the house of God and draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know they are doing evil" (Ecclesiastes 5:1).



### The Frequency Question

There is no explicit Bible statement that says we are to eat the Supper every \_\_\_\_\_. Jesus simply said "do this" and "as often as" (1 Corinthians 11:25-26). There are, however, several indications of what was intended.

The first Christians, those at Jerusalem, acted under the guidance of the apostles, who were guided by the Holy Spirit (John 16:13-16). Luke records that they "were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer" (Acts 2:42). *Continually devoting themselves* clearly indicates a regular, quite frequent participation rather than something done only once in a while. ▶

Acts 20:7 reveals that the disciples gathered on the first day of the week to break bread. The context indicates Paul knew that would be the case and waited for that assembly before leaving town. The first day is the day Jesus rose from the dead; that makes it an especially appropriate time to eat a meal that is a memorial of His death, burial, and resurrection.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 indicates that the disciples met every first day of the week. Paul instructed them to also use those occasions to give so that funds would be ready when needed.

Add it up. The disciples met on the first day of the week to break bread. They met every first day. Thus they were said to be continually devoting themselves to their worship activities, including the Lord's Supper.

**Less Is Better?**

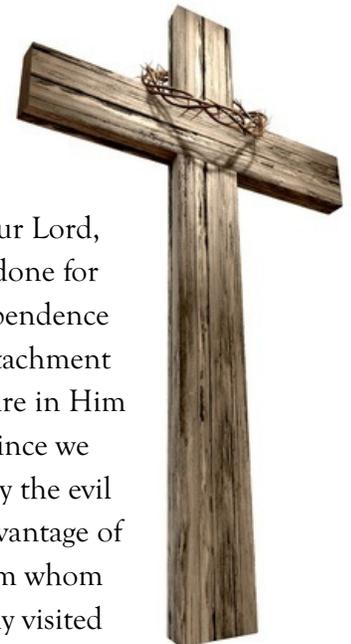
On the basis of this evidence, no one could deny that eating the Lord's Supper every Sunday meets all the Biblical criteria and thus has God's approval. Ironically, however, some assert that a less frequent observance—one that is not consistent with all the evidence and thus lacks such assurance—is actually better. The assertion is that eating the Supper less frequently makes it more special, more meaningful, whereas it loses something if done every week. This reasoning has several flaws.

First, it is an attack on the worship of the early Christians. It says that by continually devoting

themselves to breaking bread they were actually doing themselves a disservice! It seems to me this is also an attack on inspiration. As noted earlier, the early Christians were taught by the apostles, who were guided by the Holy Spirit. Is one really prepared to say that under His guidance they were worshiping in a less effective way?

Second, it is inconsistent. Why would the Lord's Supper lose something by eating it every Sunday, but singing or praying or listening to preaching would not? Every worship activity requires our hearts' concentration every time we do it, no matter how often. It surely feeds the cynics when churches remember Jesus quarterly but collect money weekly!

Third, it may miss the point of the Lord's Supper. Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19). The Supper is to remind us of our Lord, of who He is, what He has done for us, and therefore of our dependence on Him. It expresses our attachment to Him and to others who are in Him (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). Since we live in a world dominated by the evil one, can you not see the advantage of a continual reminder of Him whom we serve over an occasionally visited memorial? ■



<b>Service Leaders for the Week</b>		
	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>
GREETER SONG LEADER OPENING PRAYER LORD'S SUPPER BREAD CUP CONTRIBUTION PRAYER SERMON/INVITATION CLOSING PRAYER	Chris Brooks Sam Walters Mark Clifton  Steven Turner John Baucom Adam Wilson Frank Himmel Adam Gibson	David Gray Greg Winget   Albert Lee Harrison Adam Wilson