

Explaining Communion to Kids

Communion is an important practice of the Christian faith. Many Christian churches take part in Communion together. To start explaining Communion, let's first take a look at what the Bible says. You can find out about Communion in three gospels: Matt. 26:17–30; Mark 14:12–26; Luke 22:7–23 and in 1 Corinthians 11:23–26. Children are not too young to learn about Communion. It is important that they understand the different elements and purpose of Communion. At RVCC, we ask that parents take the practice of Communion very seriously and direct their child to take it according to their conscience. Below is a written guide that can help you when discussing Communion with your child, and deciding when they are ready to partake.

With Elementary Children and Youth

- Discuss Communion with your child before and after the church's Communion service. (At RVCC, we take Communion on the first Sunday of every month.)
- Read the stories from Matthew 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; and Luke 22:7–20, and ask: Where do we go for special meals with our family? How do you suppose the disciples felt when Jesus asked them to prepare the place for dinner? What might a disciple tell you, if you asked him about this meal? What concerns might they have had, because they knew that Jerusalem was a place where he faced danger and that the authorities were trying to "trick" Jesus in order to arrest him?
- Elementary children can read the story "The Last Supper" from the book *The Family Story Bible* by Ralph Milton.
- Read 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 and locate the words in the Scripture that are common to your Communion ritual.
- Tell them to think of things they may have done that keep them from feeling close to God, and suggest that they ask God to forgive them for those sins as the church has Communion. Assure them that God does indeed forgive us!
- As we remember Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, we recognize that Jesus has conquered death, and we can have new life through Him.
- Explain that the bread and wine (grape juice) are not actually the body and blood of Jesus, but a way for us to remember how Jesus' body was broken and his blood was shed for us.
- In 1 Corinthians 11:17–34, we read Paul's direction for our attitude in celebrating Communion. In the early church the Communion celebration was a part of a common meal, and some people were being gluttons, eating and drinking too much. They were paying little attention to persons who were poor, and Paul urges that they consider this celebration's true importance before coming to the table.
- Recall that people all over the world celebrate Communion in different ways. The first Sunday in October is World Communion Sunday, when we celebrate as the worldwide family of Christ.
- Help your children realize that a Communion meal includes more than simply eating. That is why it is important that the child understands the purpose of Communion and is mature in their faith before they partake in Communion.

Deciding if your child is ready for Communion...

A GENERAL GUIDE

Now, we are ready to address the issue of readiness. Is there a certain appropriate age for children to be able to take communion? There certainly is no age given in the Bible, and neither do we stipulate an age requirement here at RVCC.

We would recommend that you permit your son or daughter to take Communion only after they are able to clearly articulate their faith experience with the Lord Jesus and fully understand what that means. Another good way to show their commitment would be through baptism.

First, pray about it!

Then ask these questions:

Do they understand who Jesus is and what He came to do for them? Do they understand the value and meaning of the blood of Jesus as it relates to their sin, and do they grasp the importance of the bread symbolizing the sacrifice of His own body in our place? Are you seeing fruit in their life? Do their words and head knowledge coincide with their actions and behavior? Have they been baptized?

It might help, if you ask your child the following questions as a way of determining their readiness to take Communion.

SCRIPTURES FOR DISCUSSION

- Matthew 26:17-30
- Ephesians 2:8-9
- Hebrews 10:1-18
- 1 John 1:8-2:2

QUESTIONS TO PROMPT DISCUSSION

Who do you say Jesus is?

What does it mean to sin? Do you ever sin? How?

What happens when you say you are sorry to Jesus for your sin?

What happens to people who never accept what Jesus has done for them?

Do you understand why Jesus died on the cross?

What is so important about Jesus' blood, when He died on the cross?

Why is it important that Jesus rose from the dead?

What do you think would happen to you, if you were to die today?

If you were to die and God were to ask you why He should allow you to enter heaven, what would you say to Him?

How do you get to know God and have a relationship with Him? Are you doing those things?

What is the purpose of Communion?

What are good behaviors when taking Communion?

Again, these are good questions to gauge their readiness for Communion, but more importantly to assure that they too have given their lives over to Jesus. Their salvation, not Communion should be your greater concern.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

We have been discussing whether or not your child is ready to participate in communion.

How would you answer the questions given to the left? It is vital that you know the answers to these questions, before you discuss them with your child. Do you need to learn more about Communion?

Perhaps this is written for your own need for Christ even more than it is for your child.

If after reading this, you have questions regarding your own understanding of Communion or your salvation, please take time to talk to Pastor Andy or your life group leader.

They would love to sit with you and discuss this! It is important to ask questions and clarify understanding before teaching this to your child.

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<http://www.franklincma.com/img/resources/TalkingToYourChildAboutCommunion.pdf>