

## CatClub: Question 47



This week we explore further the subject of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper (=Holy Communion). Last time we learnt that, in the Lord's Supper, two things take place - broadly speaking, (i) what we do, and (ii) what God does. **This week we concentrate on what God does in the Lord's Supper.**

1. Q47 asks: Does the Lord's Supper add anything to Christ's atoning work? Answer: **No, Christ died once for all. The Lord's Supper is a covenant meal celebrating Christ's atoning work; as it is also a means of strengthening our faith as we look to him, and a foretaste of the future feast. But those who take part with unrepentant hearts eat and drink judgment on themselves.**

### Explanations:

(i) 'Covenant meal' = a meal that points to the promises of blessing made by God on condition of obedience to his commandments.

(ii) 'Christ's 'atoning work'' refers to the reconciling of God and humanity through the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross. To 'reconcile' is to restore a relationship between two sides that has been broken, i.e. between God and human beings (because of sin).

(iii) We can describe the Lord's Supper as a 'means of grace', i.e. a channel of blessing for Christians.

### 2. Investigation - please look up:

1. (In the New Testament) 1 Peter chapter 3, verse 18. This verse tells us that **Jesus died once for sinners**. There is no suggestion here or anywhere else in the Bible that Christ's sacrifice is repeated time after time when the Lord's Supper is celebrated (as Roman Catholics believe).

2. (In the New Testament) 1 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 16. Here it is made clear that when Christians take part in the Lord's Supper **they are participating spiritually in the blessings achieved by Jesus for believers through his death**. This is what we mean when we call the Lord's Supper 'a means of grace', i.e. a special channel of blessing designed to strengthen the faith of believers.

3. (In the New Testament) 1 Corinthians chapter 11, verses 17-22 & 27-30. These verses tell a sad story and issue a stark warning. At the church in Corinth there were some who were taking part unworthily, i.e. amidst disagreements, drunkenness and even refusing to share bread with others who didn't have any. **The result of taking part in the Lord's Supper in this scandalous way was that some fell ill and even died.**

### Next week's question: What is the church?

This week's songs - 'Break the bread':

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA3V3r0cxEc&list=PLv29KqSYfe2A55mzrOxvWe-iC\\_9yrYo6c&index=5](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SA3V3r0cxEc&list=PLv29KqSYfe2A55mzrOxvWe-iC_9yrYo6c&index=5)

'Remembrance':

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oCNwIA6xLc&list=PLv29KqSYfe2A55mzrOxvWe-iC\\_9yrYo6c&index=3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oCNwIA6xLc&list=PLv29KqSYfe2A55mzrOxvWe-iC_9yrYo6c&index=3)

## **1 Peter 3:18**

**<sup>18</sup> For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,**

## **1 Corinthians 10:16**

**<sup>16</sup> The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?**

## **1 Corinthians 11:17-22 & 27-30**

**<sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> 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, <sup>19</sup> for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. <sup>20</sup> When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. <sup>21</sup> For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. <sup>22</sup> 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...**

**...<sup>27</sup> 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. <sup>28</sup> Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. <sup>29</sup> For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgement on himself. <sup>30</sup> That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.**