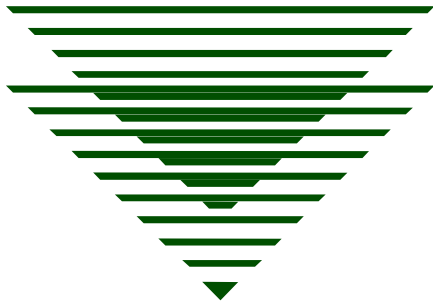


TALKING TO YOUR CHILD ABOUT COMMUNION



**A parent's guide to a child's
readiness for communion.**

SOME GOOD QUESTIONS

My daughter keeps asking me why she can't take communion. How should I answer her?

My son wants to take communion, but I am not really sure whether he should?

Is there a certain age that is appropriate for children to take communion?

My son has been taking communion and I wonder if he really understands what he is doing. How do I tell if he is ready?

A TIMELY OPPORTUNITY

Let's begin by suggesting that these questions provide an excellent opportunity to teach your son or daughter some exciting truths about who Jesus is and what He has come to do for them. Sitting down with your child to talk about what communion is and whether or not they should participate, will open up some wonderful doors for discussion. The advantage you have is that you can use some very

real object lessons - the bread and the cup - to explain visually the work of Jesus on their behalf. If your son or daughter has never personally responded to what Jesus came to do for them, they might very well do so now that you have raised these important questions. Even withholding communion to help them better appreciate this sacrament will likely deepen their hunger for truths represented in the bread and the cup. Doing so will certainly draw their attention to the seriousness of what is remembered by the experience.

Even if you have done it before, sit down again and explain again to your child what communion means. Let me add here that it will be essential, before you can explain communion to your son or daughter, that you personally are clear as to its meaning. While this brochure does not explain what communion is, the pastors and elders here at ABC are eager to explain it to you.

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 ABC. Perhaps it might be helpful to approach these questions with this general rule of thumb.

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. 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?

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

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?

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 here whether or not your child is ready to participate in communion. But are you? How would you answer the questions given above? It is vital that you know the answers to these questions before you can ever discuss them with your child. Perhaps this is written for your own need for Christ more than it is for your child. If after reading this, you have questions regarding your own understanding of communion, take time to talk to one of the pastors. They would love to sit with you and discuss this.

SCRIPTURES FOR DISCUSSION

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