

Wouldn't it be great if we could encounter Christ present in our world today? What would you say if I told you we could?

We can encounter Christ every time we receive the elements of Holy Communion.

As United Methodists, we view Communion as a sacrament. That means that we believe that something more than just a simple ritual is taking place when we partake of the elements of Christ's body and blood.

Since I am seeking to espouse a Wesleyan Way of looking at and understanding things, let me share with you some direct quotes from Wesley that will help set the stage for how he understood Holy Communion.

"I haste to this Sacrament for the same purpose that *St. Peter* and *John* hastened to His sepulchre; because I hope to find Him there."¹

It seems that Wesley thought that in the sacrament, he would be encountering the presence of Jesus.

"I come then to God's altar, with a full persuasion that these words, *This is My body*, promise me more than a *figure*; that this holy banquet is not a bare *memorial* only [...] in what manner this is done I know not; it is enough for me to admire."¹

It seems as if Wesley did not see Communion as simply some memorial service in which we think about and remember what Christ did. When he partook of the elements, he expected more than just some fond memory.

"And thus His body and blood have everywhere, but especially at this Sacrament, a true and real presence."²

Disciple Life

The Wesleyan Way

Week # 29



Start the Conversation:
Provoke One Another in Love

PROVOKING QUESTION:

This week, you are encouraged to ask a church member the following:

How often do you think someone should take communion? Would you be willing to do so every Sunday?

The Body and Blood was for Wesley a true and real presence.

So. What is the Sacrament of Holy Communion for a people called Methodist? It is a way for us to encounter the real and true presence of Jesus Christ in our lives. It is an opportunity for us to experience the grace of God in our lives. It is an opportunity for us to grow closer to God.

So. How often should we partake of the elements?

In his sermon "The Duty of Constant Communion", Wesley teaches that the early church observed communion on a daily basis and suggested that the people called Methodist should observe it as often as was possible. Perhaps his most telling words on constant communion from the sermon are these: "the benefits of doing it are so great to all that do it in obedience to Him; namely, the forgiveness of our past sins and the present strengthening and refreshing of our souls."

Do you want to have your soul refreshed? Then do not turn down an opportunity to engage in Holy Communion. This is an act of piety that brings you closer to God.

1. [Poetical Works, III, 194–95](#)

2. [Poetical Works, III, 197](#)

Carry the cross  and follow me.
Luke 14:27, NRSV

WEEKLY VERSES

A Week's Worth of God's Word

as found at Crosswalk.com

Monday

It is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God.

--1 Peter 2:15 NIV

THOUGHTS ABOUT TODAY'S VERSE... What does the world most need to hear from me today? A life tuned to the melody of grace that I claim I believe. Doing good, being like Christ, is Peter's answer to opposition, cynicism, and even persecution. We are free in Jesus, but being free means that we don't have to pretentiously prove we are free. Instead, we can live for him who died to conquer death. He renounced absolute heavenly freedom so we could find it. We are free to serve others, and most of all to serve God.

MY PRAYER... Holy Father, my Great Emancipator, you have freed me from sin, law, and death at the cost of your precious Son. I open my heart to you today to say I love you and want to thank you. Please accept the actions of my life, the words of my mouth, the thoughts of my mind, and the emotions of my heart today as my offering of thanks. Through Jesus my Sacrifice and your holy Son I pray. Amen.

Tuesday

Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit. --1 Peter 3:18 NIV

THOUGHTS ABOUT TODAY'S VERSE... Having stood over the open graves of friends, family members, and strangers, I know the appearance and feel of death's finality and our human frailty. But Christ's death is that great reminder that death is a matter of perspective and faith. I believe God raised Jesus from the dead and that he is the first fruits of those of us who believe in him. He is alive, not just in Spirit, but in bodily form and so we will also be!

MY PRAYER... Almighty God, thank you for the gifts of your grace, Spirit, forgiveness and life. Most of all, thanks for the gift of your Son, who brought life and immortality to me through your salvation. While I have no great desire to die, I know I can look through death to you and your victory in me through Jesus. Please give me the courage to live for you every day until that day you take me home. Through Jesus I pray. Amen.

Wednesday

Trouble and distress have come upon me, but your commands are my delight. Psalms 119:143 NIV

THOUGHTS ABOUT TODAY'S VERSE... This verse is hard for me, because I know I am so blessed. Trouble and distress do not seem to be a part of my vocabulary right now. But I know in many places in the world, this statement is true of Christians who are under attack and live under the threat of persecution and death. But their love for God and their commitment to obedience is greater than Satan's threats because God's will is their delight.

MY PRAYER... Majestic and holy God, I ask you to bless and liberate your church that is under persecution. But Father, I ask that if deliverance is not what is coming, I pray for my brothers and sisters and myself, that we may be found faithful in death before surrendering to compromise. Please strengthen our faith: we believe but help our unbelief. Empower us through your Spirit to be obedient: forgive us when we fall. Most of all, deliver us without fault into your glorious presence. In Jesus we find our salvation and assurance. Amen.

Thursday

Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. Psalms 119:18 NIV

THOUGHTS ABOUT TODAY'S VERSE... From our perspective of grace, having been liberated from law-keeping as a means of justification and righteousness, this is a very fitting prayer. We can look around our world and see the anarchy and brutality when there is no principle of law undergirding the soul of a society. God's law provided so many wonderful blessings, and can still bless us today if we will let it. But the greatest blessing of the O.T. Law is Jesus, in whom all of God's promises find their fulfillment.

MY PRAYER... Holy Father, thank you for your righteousness. Knowing that you will dispense justice and settle all injustice when you judge the earth gives me comfort because I know that through Jesus, you see me as righteous. My prayer today is that I can live in a way that brings honor to you and reflects the character of your Son when he walked this earth. Through him I pray. Amen.

Friday

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Psalms 119:105 NIV

THOUGHTS ABOUT TODAY'S VERSE... God's promises, God's Scripture, help us find our way in a pluralistic world of competing voices and lights our path in these times so given to cynicism and despair. What great grace we have to know God's will in our own words!

MY PRAYER... Loving Father, thank you for giving me your truth in Scripture. To know that you love me enough to communicate in language I can read is truly awe inspiring to me. Make my heart hunger for your truth revealed in your Word. I want to grow to be a righteous and gracious child in your family. With love through my older brother I pray. Amen.

Saturday

Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. John 17:17 NIV

THOUGHTS ABOUT TODAY'S VERSE... God's promises, God's Scripture, and God's clearest message of all, his Son, are truth. But only the last of these is truth, grace, deliverer, friend, Lord, Savior, brother, Redeemer...

MY PRAYER... O God, give me a holy passion to know your truth and live it in both word and deed. Make my life a reflection of your Word, who both proclaimed and lived your truth. In him I pray. Amen.

Sunday

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. Psalms 1:1-2 NIV

THOUGHTS ABOUT TODAY'S VERSE... I get to choose which sources of information I feed my mind. But this privilege and freedom is also a responsibility. God longs to bless me, but that blessing remains dormant until my heart delights in knowing and doing his will.

MY PRAYER... Wondrous Creator, just as you fashioned such a beautiful world and put me together in my mother's womb, I also ask that you create in me a desire to know your truth and an insight into how to live that truth. I know your Holy Spirit is in me to help me in this journey, but I want so much to please you and bless you because of all the ways you have blessed me. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.