

294. Who Is Unworthy to Approach the Lord's Table?

He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 1 Cor. 11, 29.

Who is unworthy and unprepared to receive the benefits of the Holy Supper? He who does not believe, or doubts, the words, "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." For the words, "For you," require all hearts to believe. We must approach the mercy-seat. Our anchor must be grounded in the Rock of Ages, our faith must stand on Christ, the Corner-stone. Faith makes a communicant worthy. But unbelief renders him unworthy.

How do *you* go to Holy Communion? This question each communicant should put to himself before he approaches the Table of the Lord. There are not a few who go to the Lord's Supper either quite thoughtlessly and stupidly or with a wrong intention. Some go from mere force of habit; others, because they are admonished by their parents; others, because they consider it a meritorious deed; still others, because they wish to acquire or retain before men the name of pious Christians. It need not be wondered at that such communicants derive no blessing from the Holy Supper, but grow worse as time goes on. How do *you* go to Communion? Do you approach the Lord's Table in the spirit of self-righteousness like the Pharisee, who prayed with himself, "Lord, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are"? Do you fancy you need no forgiveness of sins? Or do you wholly despair of obtaining forgiveness of sins? God's Word assures you that you receive it in the Holy Supper. Therefore do not give way to these thoughts of despair. Every truly penitent sinner receives forgiveness. Only unbelief can make a communicant unworthy.

There is another class of unworthy communicants; it consists of those who persist in their wicked purpose, who would rather continue to serve sin than their God and Savior, or who are at enmity with their neighbors and do not want to be reconciled to them. If you are not willing to be reconciled with a brother that has aught against you, if you are not willing to give up cursing, or some other sin to which you are addicted, then you ought to remain away from the Lord's Table. Unworthy communicants receive the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper, but they receive it to their greater damnation.

Prayer.

O holy God, Thou knowest the unworthiness of all our works, and therefore we beseech Thee, work in us by Thy Holy Spirit what we of ourselves are unable to achieve. Give us grace to appear before Thee, not only with outward reverence, but with true repentance for our sins, with firm faith in Thy mercy, and with the earnest purpose to amend our sinful lives. Eradicate the root of all bitterness and animosity from our hearts and fill our souls with love and compassion toward all men. Above all, help us not to absent ourselves from Thy Table, but forthwith to come to a penitent knowledge of our sins and to long for the forgiveness which Thou offerest and sealest to us in the Sacrament of Thy Son. Amen.

Why are its blessings all in vain
Before unwilling hearts displayed!
Was not for us the Victim slain!
Are we forbid the children's bread!

This devotion is one of 318 taken from *Daily Bread* by F. E. Pasche, published by CPH in 1926, but now in the public domain. They have been copied and reformatted by Rev. Bruce G. Ley and made available for distribution by pastors and missionaries. You may contact Rev. Ley at: pastorley@leychalet.com.

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