

The Body of Christ and Communion

by Francis Chan

Francis Chan emphasizes the profound significance of communion as a communal act that connects believers to Christ and each other, urging a deeper devotion to this practice.

Duration: 47:07

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 4:1, Ephesians 2:19, Revelation 4:8, Revelation 5:8

Topics: "Communion"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of recognizing ourselves as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. He mentions the early church's practice of kissing one another as a symbol of unity and emphasizes the need for believers to be united as one body. The preacher also highlights the worship that is happening in heaven, with angels and elders praising God continuously. He encourages believers to join in this worship and reminds them that their true identity is found in being a dwelling place for God by the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

Okay, hey, I've been excited to share this and I pray to God I can get this across the right way. God has taught me so much in the last month or two. I feel like I'm on another level.

I feel like I'm so excited about the future because I just feel like there's like nothing in store for me but greater and greater intimacy with God. I've been having these times where I'm just like in tears rejoicing over God, just enjoying his presence, and I'm just so wanting that for the church. And I'm like, God, you're teaching me so many things now, and as many of you know, we're moving at the end of February, and I'm going, God, why now? Like, I got to make sure we get this.

I want to make sure the church gets this. Like, this is this is so big, so huge, so good. You see, you know how, like, when you read the Bible, like all your life, there are always little things that you just go, I don't quite get that, but I'm sure I'll figure it out one day.

You know, and you just kind of put it aside, and there's a lot of those, right? Where there's just verses here and there, and you go, that sure sounds like this, and that sure sounds like that. Even some of these prayers for healing, like we just talked about, like, where you go, gosh, it seems like it's when the elders get together, and when they pray, and that prayer faith does heal, and so I don't get it. How come sometimes, and how come sometimes, like you said, in the Bible, you've got people like Timothy, and he's

sick, and Paul doesn't just heal him.

He says, hey, take some wine for your stomach, and he's like, ah, I'm not supposed to drink wine. You know, it's all these things, and you know, Epaphroditus, you know, where Paul left him, and he was about to die, and you go, wait, but then there's other times he could just heal people, and I don't get it. There's other times you go, well, maybe it's their lack of faith, but then you go, no, no, Peter and John walked by that beggar, and he was looking for money, and then they heal him.

He wasn't even trying, you know, and you go, that's just not, I don't get some of these things. There are certain things that we just, oh God, I don't, that's why when the disciples saw that that man born blind, they're like, hey, whose fault is it, Jesus? Because I've got this figured out, and I know it's always someone's fault, so was it his fault? Was it his sin? But he was born blind. Did he do something in the womb? You know, what did he, what is the deal? Like, they're, because they thought they had him figured out.

They go, well, it must be his parents' sin, because he wasn't born to sin, so it must be his parents', and Jesus explains to them, he goes, hey, it wasn't his sin, it wasn't his parents' sin, it was for the glory of God, and then Jesus heals him. Okay, okay, so, and then we want to make that a rule for everything, and it's like, no, no, no, I mean, you just see, I don't know what he's gonna do. I've heard of people that, you know, just like you received that gift of tongues when you're praying to be healed, I've heard of other people that as they're taking of communion, they were healed, they weren't even praying for healing.

It's just, we don't understand some of these things, and remember when we were here last, or at least some of you were, we talked about how Paul says, I want to say it's 1 Corinthians 4, 1, he says, this is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Paul says, hey, this is all I want you to remember me as. I'm just a servant, and I'm a steward of the mysteries of God.

Like Hebrews, I mean, Romans 11 says that his ways are unsearchable. Like, I can't figure him out, just like that baby, which one is that? Abby, okay. How old is she? One and a half.

She doesn't have me figured out yet. You're trying, huh? That's, that's what we are with God. Just these, our minds, he says, my thoughts are just as far as the heavens are above the earth.

That's where my mind is, and that's how we go. We can't figure him out, but he he has shown us some things, and what he has shown us, we need to, we need to humbly follow and accept, but like I said, there are certain things where you go, okay, I don't quite get this, and I'm on this journey, and we're all on this journey, and we just humbly go, let's learn from each other, let's learn as a body, let's try to get it, but uh, there were certain things in Scripture that I just didn't get, that bothered me, because I thought, this, this is maybe sin in my life, and I got to figure out how to live this out. Okay, there were some things about communion that always bothered me when I read about it in Scripture.

Number one was Acts chapter 2 verse 42, when it talks about those early believers, and they devoted themselves to the, to apostles teaching, to prayer, to fellowship, and the Lord's Supper. They devoted themselves to the Lord's Supper, and I always looked at that, and I thought, well, you know, and I would just say, well, let's just do it once a month, you know, this is at the church that I started years ago, let's just do it once a month, because you do it more than that, it'll just be like a meaningless ritual, and then I just try different ways of doing it, it's like, well, if we pass the plates, then we're gonna have to, you know, sing a solo or something while we're passing the plates, and we don't have that many soloists, it's like, you

know, just all these different things, and it's like, okay, well, well, I don't want to pressure people, I don't want this or that, and let's just put them up front, and, you know, and let people do it in their time, and, and, you know, we're just trying to figure it out, and, and it also bothered me that in, in Acts, it says that they went house to house to break bread with one another, and I thought, I've never broken bread in someone's house, I've never had communion in a house, I've never been with a family breaking bread, like, but they devoted themselves to it, and so it bothered me, because I go, okay, I've always been a Bible teacher, always, you know, studied scriptures, and so I've always felt like I've been devoted to the apostles' teaching in this book, I've also felt pretty devoted to prayer, you know, we can go up and down, but I feel like, okay, I, I, I mean, this is important to me, and gathering people to, to prayer has been important to me, and then as we started our churches, here, you know, the fellowship, and devoting ourselves to the fellowship, that used to bother me. I go, they devoted themselves to fellowship, that sounds like a lot more than just showing up on a Sunday morning, and greeting the guy next to you when the pastor makes you, you know, I thought they devoted themselves to the fellowship, there was something about the gathering of believers, and that intimate relationship, and that love for one another, so it bothered me that I wasn't doing that, but now I'm going, okay, okay, we're devoting ourselves to those things, but devotion to communion, it's always bothered me, and it still does, because I don't feel like we're there yet.

And I remember this guy from India, and I'm picking on Liz a lot today, that's just, I haven't seen you in a while, okay, so that's why, make up for it all, okay, and by the way, I didn't fire Liz, she quit, because of this, like, why would she quit, I'm so nice, I don't know, so, but my friend from India, you know, I remember him driving me to a speaking engagement I was at, and there were a bunch of people, lights, there were animals, there were like, just like this whole production, and he just kind of laughed, and he goes, you Americans are so funny, he goes, you guys won't show up unless there's a good speaker, you guys don't show up unless there's a good band, he goes, in India, when we hear that communion is taking place, we get so excited, people flock when they hear that we're going to gather for communion, what, when have you ever heard of that here, and yet over there, like, that was normal to them, like, they loved it, and I, right then, I was convicted, and I knew that actually sounds right, and biblical, and honoring to God, if God's looking down, and they're looking at one place, and going, oh, this speaker, and this speaker, and this band are going to be there, let's go, and then he sees another group of people going, hey, they're about to remember the body and blood of Christ, let's go, what, what is pleasing to him, what does he want, and I get that, I'm like, but, but how, how are we going to make it so that people here in this country actually are excited about the body and blood of Christ, and I just go, it has to happen, the early church devoted themselves to it. The other thing that bothered me about communion was 1st Corinthians 11, verse 27, whoever 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. Let a person examine himself then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and sick, and some have died, but if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. I always read that passage, and I'm going, wait, Paul says, this is why some of you died, this is why some of you are sick right now.

I'm going, whoa, he doesn't say that with anything else in the New Testament. Like, this is why some of you died, and this is why some of you are sick, because, you know, you had bad thoughts in your head, or this or that. No, no, no, he says right here, here's why some of you died, here's why some of you are sick.

It's because you didn't recognize the body and blood of the Lord, and I always thought, that's a severe warning. I mean, before coming here, I mean, how many of you went to churches where they seriously warned you, be careful, be careful, because you could die doing this? I'm going, how come no one warns about that? Like, let's say we just send your kids to child care, and I'm going, hey, over there, there's a cliff, just make sure your kids, they got to step over this one part, right, otherwise they slide and they die. You would go, okay, okay, find that area, help my kid across, let me make sure he doesn't do this wrong.

I didn't know I was going to come to church, and there was a chance that my kid would die, right? That would be a pretty serious thing. We'd probably switch locations. I mean, sorry about the bathrooms again, you know, but we're gonna switch locations, okay, there's bathrooms, there's death traps, but right, we would take that so seriously.

If I go, there's a chance they could die right there, then why do we not take this warning in Scripture seriously? We're gonna take Communion Day. Do I take the Word of God literally, and say, hey, be careful how you do this, because you do it in the wrong way. There's a judgment that can come upon you that could lead to sickness and to death.

So we don't want to say that publicly, because it sounds weird, it sounds terrifying, it doesn't sound like what you want came to church to hear, but I'm going, it's there though. See, you see how these things have bothered me? I'm like, gosh, it was a devotion to it that isn't in my life, and there's a warning there that I don't take seriously enough. There's something about this act that is huge, that those early believers would devote and go house to house, like, we've got to do this, we've got to do this.

And so I've just been studying, what does this mean? What does it mean to discern the body? Obviously, we want to discern the body rightly, and again, with however many people are here, we can all read the Scriptures and maybe come to a different interpretation, or this or that, and kind of like what we were talking about healing earlier, different people have different interpretations of that. And so what I did was I began studying the ancient church. Okay, what happened when Jesus left, and how did they celebrate the Lord's Supper? They devoted themselves to it.

But I just started looking, and again, I'm not making a statement like, okay, the early church practices are on par with Scripture. I'm not saying that. I lift up the Scriptures high above everything.

I think you guys have seen that, and my life has shown that. But at the same time, there was something about the early church practices where you have to at least consider, you know, it's like I respect Justin, I respect Rob, and if they say, hey, we've been studying the Scriptures, and we want you to look at something, I respect them enough to go, yeah, let me look. So in the same way, I'm looking at the early church fathers and going, what did they all agree on? I'm not saying, just like I wouldn't say Justin and Rob are right, in fact, never mind.

But you know, I would take it into account, I would weigh it, and so now I'm looking at all those early church fathers and the things they wrote together, and the things they said they all agree on, and go, I've got to at least weigh that, rather than going, my interpretation is better than yours, and it's better than theirs. Let me just see, what did they, how did they remember the body? How did they discern the body? What did it mean to them? And I found some really cool things there that really helped me understand the body. When they talked about discerning the body, or coming together, you see, in 1st Corinthians 11, verse 17, he says, in the following instructions, I do not commend you, because when you come together, it is not for the better, but for the worse.

For in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. Okay, he says, when you come together as the church, the ecclesia, the gathering, the early church saw, when we get together, there's something special that happens. So, so a lot of times, we don't think that way.

We just go, man, do I feel like going to the gathering today? You're thinking about yourself. What am I gonna get out of it today? And we've created church systems where we try to appeal to individuals. But how many people get excited going, wow, this is so exciting.

Today is Sunday, and we're gonna gather as a church. The ecclesia is gonna happen, the gathering, the church, the church body is coming together, and I'm a part of it. There was like a sense of incompleteness.

Every individual was coming, thinking, okay, this is that one time when I get to be what I was made for, a part of the body. I, can you toss me that bag, Zeke? You know, late in the next chapter, he talks about everyone is a part of the body, and I brought a foot because I wanted you to see this. You can get them five bucks on Amazon.

It's, you might want to just put it up in your house to remind you, but like, I don't think most of you came here thinking this was you, right? Okay, and you're thinking, this is all I am. I'm a part of a body, and I've been on my own. I can't wait to attach myself to the rest of the ecclesia, the gathering, the body.

I can't wait to come together, because when we come together, the whole body is put together, and Christ shows up as our head, and now we finally function the way we were created to function. See, too many of us come like we think we're complete, like, oh no, my mind, I just need my mind. I don't need the church.

I love Jesus, but I hate the church. You know, I'm a free thinker. It's about me, and I have my needs, I have my way of thinking.

You feel complete in yourself, because you're an American, and that's the way we think. We're individual. You do you, right? Rather than going, no, no, you don't get it.

I'm just this. I'm not even this. I'm like this, you know? You know, I'm just this little part, and that's why when they got together, man, that's why they got excited to gather for communion, because they don't see themselves as all that, like, I'm this complete, it's all about me.

It's like, man, oh, the body's gonna get together? That was their act of worship. They got excited. They're not thinking, well, who's speaking? And how long is a service gonna go? They just think, oh, good, good, good, because any chance I get, I'm running.

You know, any chance I get, I'm going, because it's the only time where you're complete. Man, seriously, when Lori was sharing, aren't you just glad? Like, man, she's a part of us, because I couldn't have explained it like that. Man, there's some of you that are so real in my life, and where I just go, oh, it's so good when we're together, because I was off on my own, and I just know that this is not fun.

This is not what we were made for. That's why God says the hand can't say to the foot, I don't need you. And it says, even if you are, you know, if you're a part of the body, because you're a part of the body, and if you choose not to serve and use your gift, you're still a part of the body.

And so if the foot doesn't show up, man, we'll get by. We'll get by. It's gonna be a lot harder without you.

Guys, we don't think this way. I'm just realizing, as I studied that early church, it's like they didn't see themselves like, it's all about me. And I just realized so much of my life, I've thought that way.

And I just confess that, and apologize for that. I'm not thinking about us. I'm not seeing myself as this.

And that's why Paul says, look, when you get together, he goes, you guys aren't even getting together for the better, but for the worse. He goes, you know why? He goes, because there's divisions among you. So when they said recognize the body, it was the body of Christ, but it was also the body of Christ, the local body of Christ.

Like, ah, let's recognize before we eat and drink that we're one with one another. That's what it means to recognize the body. But it goes further than that.

I was also reading, and I saw, and it was so interesting, because like, this these last two weeks, we've been reading in Ezekiel and Revelation, right, as a church. And these are some of the most intense passages of Scripture. So that early church, while they would take time to recognize, they even had a time to get up, and we're not gonna do this because culturally, whatever, but they would have a time of kissing each other.

I mean, just men with men, women with women, and it was just like, man, to say, no, no, no, we're one, we're one. Let's make sure everything's good between us, and that we're one body, because we don't dare come to the body divided. But beyond that, beyond just recognizing the body there, they also recognized what was going on in heaven.

I think this is so good. Okay, we read Revelation 4 and 5, we quoted from it, you know, you read it during the worship time today, we read it last week as a church, and what's going on in heaven right now? It's this picture of these high angels, right, that are screaming, holy, holy, holy, as they're looking at God. You've got the 24 elders in there, no one is dropping their crowns at the feet of Christ.

You've got a hundred million angels all worshipping Jesus, right? And you got every single creature, you know, it's talking about these end times, we're just all looking at Christ. It's beautiful. No one showed up, there wasn't like one angel that came over and was like, hey, what about me? You know, my wing hurts.

It's just, it was everyone's focus was on the throne. And what do we pray when we pray the Lord's Prayer? Lord, on earth as it is in heaven, those early believers, they would see themselves as joining the believers in heaven, the angels in heaven, the saints in heaven, Christ in heaven. They saw this as a time where heaven and earth come together.

And so imagine all of that worship is going on in heaven right now, okay? Four living creatures going, holy, holy, holy. These 24 elders just dropping their crowns, all their achievements, everything they are, we laid at the feet of Christ. The martyrs are there, angels are there, everyone's staring at the king.

This has been going on, this was going on before we got here this morning. That's why we're not saying, hey, let's start worship. No, no, let's join the worship that was going on all night long.

Okay, all night long. Do you think about yourself like that? Where all night long, this worship was going on, and so then we're kind of sneaking in the back. You know, it's just like, it's just like right here, okay? Like earlier, we were singing songs of worship, okay? What if as we were singing, you know, suddenly Rachel shows up and stops it all and goes, okay, worship can start, I'm here now.

That would just be so ugly, right? Why do you do that? So instead, what's the right thing to do for her just to go, oh man, that's beautiful worship going on. I just want to slip in the back and join them in worshipping God. And in the same way that early believers would see themselves as sneaking into the back almost, like, oh, this worship's been going on in heaven, and we're just joining ourselves with them.

And so recognizing the body to them had to do with recognizing the people in front of them, but also recognizing those, because from Christ's perspective, he sees friends of ours right now who have passed away, right? In fact, they wouldn't even call people dead that were in the church, because if we're in Christ, we never die. He just saved the departed. We don't see them, but they're still worshipping God, probably in a greater way than we were.

So they take time to even remember those who passed away, and remember that they're in the presence of God, and there's a communion going on with us, and they, because isn't it crazy that they're in Revelation 4 and 5, they're still worshipping Christ for what he did on the cross. The two things going on there, they're worshipping God the Father for his holiness, like, man, you're like no one else, like you're just so far beyond us, and Christ who died and sits on his throne, the Lamb who was slain, worthy are you. And that's what we want to do in all of our gatherings, is have this intense, oh, we're joining the angels, God, telling you are holy, and we want to remember the body and blood of Christ.

And we want things on earth as they are in heaven, and so because of that, I'm not coming up making this about me, and walking away going, oh, I didn't really like it. No, because that's not the way it is in heaven, and so that's not the way we're gonna do it here. And this is, I just want to say is a little warning to us, because, and I say this at our church, in our living room, it's like, sometimes the casual atmosphere can lead to casual worship, and we don't want that.

Okay, we meet in homes so that we can know each other, and obey these scriptures about truly fellowshiping, and knowing one another, and caring for one another's needs. We meet in homes so that we can really all exercise our spiritual gifts, so it's not just one guy, you know, using his gift, but that we all bless each other, and we're all a part of the body, you know, we do that, but in no way do we want it to become less reverent, because you're not going to a cathedral. No, it doesn't matter if you're a little house church in China, or in some grand cathedral, we're joining ourselves to what's going on in heaven, and I don't think most people even think about that when they gather, that they're a part of the body, we don't recognize the body.

We don't recognize the body here on earth, we don't recognize the body in heaven, and we're supposed to recognize, be mindful of the body of Christ. You know, let me read from Ephesians, I thought of this passage as I was reading about what they did, well actually they quote this scripture often, Ephesians 2 verse 19 says, so then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and the members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone in whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Okay, you see something physical going on, okay, this is the way we're trained to think in America in the 21st century, is just with this mind, with just what we can see, meanwhile scripture says don't dwell on the things you can see, everything you can see is temporary, the things that are unseen, that are eternal, meditate on these things, dwell on these things, and he's telling us according to scripture, there's something supernatural going on here, he says where we are, you used to be strangers and aliens, you

used to be your own man, your own woman, you doing your own thing, he goes now you're not strangers anymore, you're fellow citizens with the saints, you're actually members of heaven, as that worship's going on and we're sneaking in the back, they're not going, you don't belong here, they're going, you're one of us, and he gives this picture of how you're a part, again, just a part of this temple, but it's this mysterious temple because it spans time, he says Jesus Christ is a cornerstone and the Apostles and Prophets are the foundation, and then it's being built up with all these saints throughout time, and you're one of them, and you're joining this temple, one temple that spans time, you're being a part of a dwelling place for God, okay, see, it's such an amazing picture to think, so I'm joined with the Apostle Paul that wrote this right now, yeah, he's a piece of it, I'm a piece of it, Jesus is the cornerstone, and man, I think of people that I've loved, whose funerals I've done, they're a part of this temple, mysteriously, when God looks down, he's just seeing us, those of us who have given our lives to Jesus Christ, as we have the right to be a part of this eternal temple, which is his dwelling, we're building a temple, remember in the Old Testament, when Solomon finished the temple, and then he prayed to God, and fire came down, and the glory of God came down, and everyone just freaked out, they wouldn't even dare enter the temple, they were terrified, because God filled the temple, that was a picture of us, we're like one brick in that thing, that the Apostle Paul is a brick of, that the Virgin Mary is a brick of, like we're all a part of this thing, you're just going, what in the world, I get to be a part of something eternal, and we're all building one place, and Christ fills us, that's why when they would remember all of this, it wasn't just about me alone, and the Holy Spirit being inside of me, you know, there was a special thing about communion, because God fills his temple in a very special way when the believers are united, and you see that all through the New Testament, right?

You see that in the book of Acts, when they're of one mind, one spirit, something happens. See, this is the stuff we've got to get excited about, where we go, okay, I want to see that, I don't need a great speaker, I don't need a great singer, I don't need this or that, I want to join myself with the body, join myself to this eternal temple. See, for too long, church has not been about this.

Somehow when we gather together as a temple with all the saints, there's a deeper presence of Christ, and so as a church, as we've pursued that, and just go, man, let's get more serious about this, at least we know I haven't been coming as a part of the body, I haven't been coming as a part of this eternal body, I haven't been trying to make it on earth like it is in heaven, but let's pursue that, and as we pursue that, and get serious, however you take the body and blood, it's like, wow, we all know there should be this incredible honor to it, and just go, I want to recognize the body and the blood of the Lord, best I understand scripture, best I understand everything, and know that I'm truly partaking of the body and blood of Christ, somehow, in some real way. Again, I'm not making any, like, grand statements, I'm just saying, some of this stuff I didn't know. I didn't know that for the first 1,500 years of church history, everyone saw it as the literal body and blood of Christ, and it wasn't till 500 years ago that someone popularized a thought that it's just a symbol, and nothing more.

I didn't know that. I thought, wow, well that's something to consider, and while I won't make a strong statement, I will make a statement about this, it was at that same time that for the first time, someone put a pulpit in the front of the gathering, because before that, it was always the body and blood of Christ that was central to their gatherings. For 1,500 years, it was never one guy and his pulpit being the center of the church.

It was the body and blood of Christ, and even the leaders just saw themselves as partakers, and oh man, we're not worthy, we're not worthy, we're not worthy. I say that because the church is more divided than any time in history. What does this book tell us clearly? That he does not want any divisions in his church,

and for a thousand years, there was just one church.

Did you know that? We're so used to growing up in a time when literally there are over 30,000 Christian denominations right now, but for the first thousand years, it was just one. What was interesting is communion was at the center of the room every time they gathered, and it wasn't a pulpit where a guy preached after studying in his office by himself for 20 hours. See, right now, we've got guys like me that go in a room, study, you know, that's what I was doing for years.

Meanwhile, other guys went in their rooms and studied, and then we started all giving different messages, so many contradicting each other, and pretty soon, I follow Piper, I follow Chan, I follow, you know, it's just like everyone's following different guys. I'm just saying, I believe there was something about taking communion out of the center of the church and replace it with a gifted speaker. Not that that gifted speaker is not a part of the body of Christ and a gift to the body of Christ, but the body itself needs to be back in the center of the church.

You guys, I've been dreaming about this, I've been praying about this, going, man, I would love it if one day in our country here in the U.S., people understood the body of Christ, that they were just a part of it, and they got excited to gather and partake of the body and blood of Christ, and they celebrated together, and that's why we gathered. We have an opportunity. Man, life is short, and it's like, God, man, I want to give myself to this.

I want your body and blood to be at the center of our gatherings. The reason why we gather, I want to devote myself to this like they did. God, please surround me with a group of people that want the same thing, where I want to celebrate.

I get excited to join with the body, and now we're partaking, I'm eating of the flesh and blood of Christ. There was something intimate about it. However you take it, there's something about Christ wanting this picture for sure of, man, you're eating me, like I'm in you.

I become a part of you. There's no separation between me and you. You and I can become perfectly one, just as the Father and I are one, and then you and the body and these believers can become perfectly one, because now you and I have the same bloodline.

It's not about, that's why these racial divisions and everything else is so ugly. We're of the same bloodline. He died to make us one.

So we're all taking up this body, and God looks down, and we're saying, look, this is the greatest thing to us. This is the biggest thing to us. Francis might have some theology that's a little different from mine.

You know, Remington might have some theology that's different from mine. You know, Isaiah might have some theology. It's like, we can talk about that stuff, but we all agree, oh my gosh, we're brothers.

We're brothers. We've got the same blood. Jesus poured out his blood for us, man, and we're taking of that body and blood, and we're joining with the angels, and we're joining with the apostles.

We're joining Christ himself as we take of this, oh my gosh, I'm a part of this heavenly dwelling. We're a part of this big temple. That's what it means when you recognize the body and the blood of God.

It's like, we're the body. We're the body. Christ is the body, and man, what if that was at the center of every Christian gathering in America? I think we'd start seeing the divisions slowly disappear, and people start coming together again.

And so, we're about to take of the body and blood of Christ, and I know what some of you are thinking when you read that passage about the warning. So, you think to yourself, well, then, I better not take it. Is that the answer, though? So, the safest thing for you to do is to never take communion again, because then you don't run the risk of getting sick or dying.

Does that make sense to you? Now, the early church devoted themselves. They're like, how can I not take of this? This is my calling. This is what my life is about.

This is my identity as a part of the body and blood of Christ. So, rather than going, there's division, so I'm just not going to take of it. It's like, well, let me fix those things.

Let me reconcile with my brother and sister. Let me take time to recognize that I'm a part of this body. I came, maybe you came here today like you're just this great individual with all these significant thoughts and your own Twitter account, you know? Maybe that's the way you came, and you got here, and you go, that's not me.

I'm a toe. I'm a finger. I'm an ear, and I'm joining myself to the rest of the body, and Christ is going to show up in a crazy way, because the Ekklesia is happening here.

This is exciting. This is why we gather, and you're not going to stop me from taking of that body and blood, because I believe with all my heart that Jesus Christ died on that cross for my sins to make us one, not just me, but all the believers before me, and all the angels in heaven are celebrating, and I'm not missing out on this. I'm joining them right now.

Isn't this beautiful? We're a part of the body of Christ. We're a part of the temple, the eternal temple of God, and he's gonna fill us and empower us right now. Father, I thank you.

I thank you that you've revealed these things to me. God, please open all of our hearts. Please correct anything that I may have said wrong, Lord.

With any arrogance, any human error, fix it, Lord, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Oh, Jesus, this is so sacred, what we're doing. We're partaking of you.

God, I don't want anyone to get sick. I don't want anyone to die. I don't want anyone just doing this in the wrong way, Lord.

In all our lives, we've been told we're individuals, and it's all about us, God. Teach us to raise our kids in such a way that they understand they're just a part of a bigger body. Help us to get it.

Help us to get excited to gather, to come together as a complete body. Oh, Jesus, I pray for every part of the body that's here, and I pray for the parts of the body that aren't here today, that mysteriously you would open their eyes right now, that they would miss joining us, that they would see they're not complete without the body. And so, Father, right now we recognize the angels in heaven have been worshipping you passionately all night.

We have saints, friends who have gone before us, and they're worshiping you right now. They're all telling Jesus how wonderful he is, because there's never been anything like that. And we are joining them by partaking.

God, I pray for this bread and cup right now. I don't understand these things, Lord. I just trust you, that you do what you need to do to these elements.

You do what you need to do in our hearts and our minds, so that we take of this in such a way that it gives life to us and brings pleasure to you. In Jesus' precious name we pray, amen. So, we have some guys holding the bread and the cup, the body of Christ.

Let's just, when you're ready, and if you are a believer in Jesus Christ, again, remember the warning. If you don't even believe that Jesus died on that cross, and you don't trust him for your salvation, please don't take this. This is not a joke.

I've seen some crazy things in my life, and I believe God has had grace, because we've never, maybe you were never warned, but this is a warning. But it's also a warning of those who don't partake. You're not a part of this body, and we want you to be, but only take it when you're ready.

So, if you feel called and you believe that you're a part of the body and blood of Christ and want to join us, then take a piece of the bread, dip it in the blood, and then take it back to your seat, and let's all take it together this time.

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