

A WEEK OF FAMILY DEVOTIONS ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

You're Invited



John Bowers, Karen De Boer, S. R. Larin,
and Leonard Vander Zee

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introduction

This five-day devotional was written for families to learn and wonder about the Lord's Supper together. Designed to be used with children who are in different places along their faith journey—those considering participation in the Lord's Supper, those who have already been participating in it, those who are ready to learn more—it's a devotional you can return to again and again. For example, you may find it helpful to use all or some of these devotions as a way to prepare for the Lord's Supper together before a communion service or around the celebration of Easter.

The first devotional talks about our invitation—our invitation from Jesus to partake in the Lord's Supper and the invitation to each person in your family to learn more about the Lord's Supper in the days ahead. The remaining four days will help your family answer this question: What is the Lord's Supper all about?

Together, you will discover that it is

- a way to see, smell, taste, touch, and hear God's love.
- a very special gift.
- a way to remember.
- a reminder that we belong.

God's gift of the Lord's Supper is both incredibly simple and incredibly complex. To help children (and adults!) make connections between what they already know and what they are learning, we've used familiar objects in each devotion—an invitation, packages of food, a family photo, presents, and even the idea behind a "sacrifice fly" in a baseball game.

We also included "Faith Talk" ideas to help your family enter into a time of conversation and wondering together. And, for those adults who like to dig a little deeper, we've provided "A Closer Look" reflections on each of the devotions, along with some questions and answers from the Heidelberg Catechism.

During some of the devotions your child is invited to add details to an illustration or draw one of his or her own. If you have more than one

child or would like to use this book over and over again, you can use your own paper and staple or paper clip the drawings into the book. By saving your child's artwork in that way, each time you use this book you'll be able to see how your family's understanding of the Lord's Supper has deepened over the years!

It's our prayer that as you read through these devotions together you will understand—while standing back in awe—a little more about God's great invitation to "Come to the table!"

You're Invited!

Jesus invites you to come to the table
and share in his special meal for his family.



“Taste and see that the LORD is good;
blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.”

Psalm 34:8

An Invitation from Jesus

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- Bookmark your Bible to Psalm 34, or invite a child to locate the passage and bookmark it for you.

READ TOGETHER

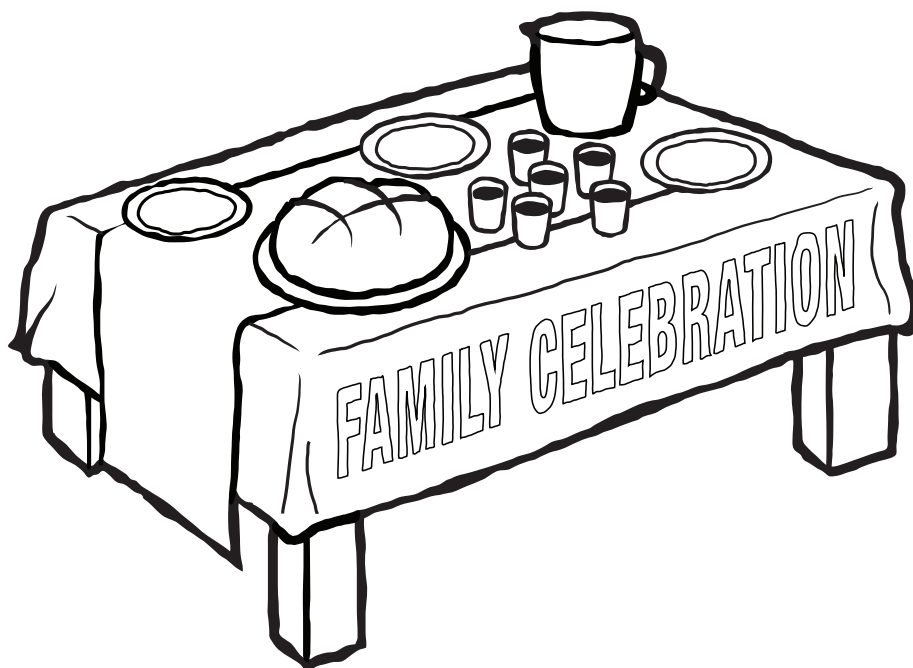
“Come to the table!”

Hot dogs and french fries . . . veggies and dip . . . deep-dish pizza melting with mozzarella cheese—it doesn’t matter what’s on the menu when we’re hungry. “Come to the table!” are the words we want to hear!

What’s really amazing is that Jesus invites us to come to the table too—the Lord’s Supper table—for a very special kind of meal. That special meal has many different names: the Lord’s Supper, communion, the Eucharist, and the Mass. And each church serves this meal in different ways.

Have you ever wondered just what this meal is all about? Why the pastor holds up the food and drink and says special words? Why people eat pieces of bread and drink juice pressed from grapes? What people are thinking about as they eat the bread and drink the juice? And who is invited to join in Jesus’ special meal?

We're going to talk about some of those questions together over the next few days. For now, we'll just answer the last one: Who is invited to join in Jesus' special meal? Everyone in God's family!



Think about the special family meals you may have been invited to—a birthday party, a wedding dinner, a meal after a baptism, an anniversary party, and more. Family celebrations are a wonderful time to get together and remember an important event. The Lord's Supper is a time when God's family gets together to celebrate and remember what God has done for us.

The very first Lord's Supper was held a long, long time ago. The night before he died, Jesus invited his followers, the disciples, to join him for a special meal. He wanted to give his followers a way to always remember just how much he loved them.

Jesus wants us to know and remember how much he loves us too! That's why Jesus invites all of his followers—everyone who believes in Jesus and is sorry for his or her sins—to celebrate the Lord's Supper in the same way today.

TRY THIS!

Look in a story Bible or online for an illustration of the first Lord's Supper. (Or search for *The Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci.) Talk about the details you see. What does it look like Jesus and the disciples are feeling? Which person might be Judas? Why? (See Mark 14:17-20 for that part of the story.) This story is often called "The Last Supper." Can you think of any other good titles?

For the next few days we're going to learn more together about the Lord's Supper and God's incredible love for us. But first, here's your invitation:

Read Psalm 34:8a.

FAITH TALK

(Use some or all of the following conversation starters.)

- Tell each other about a memory you have of a family meal or celebration.
- Why do you think Jesus chose a meal as a way for his followers to remember him?
- What words can you think of to describe the Lord's Supper?
- Is there anything else that you wonder about the Lord's Supper or Jesus' invitation?

PRAYER

Invite those who are present to respond after each line with, "Thank you, Jesus!"

Dear Jesus, you love us so much.

Thank you, Jesus!

You came to earth for us.

Thank you, Jesus!

You died for us.

Thank you, Jesus!

You came back to life for us.

Thank you, Jesus!

And you gave us a wonderful way to remember how much you love us.

Thank you, Jesus!

Amen.



**EXPLORE THE GIFT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER
WITH YOUR FAMILY**

You're Invited is a one-week devotional that will help you explain what the Lord's Supper is all about, get your kids ready to participate, and encourage your whole family to respond in gratitude for this very special gift from God.

RELIGION / Christian Life / Family

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