

Lord's Supper: Preparatory Form B

RCNZ

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Beloved in Jesus Christ, since we hope next Lord's Day to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, God calls us to prepare ourselves by examining our hearts and lives. For the apostle Paul has written: "Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup."¹

So, let us examine our lives to be sure that we humbly acknowledge God's displeasure with our ongoing sin, and sincerely turn away from all that is wrong.

Let us examine our hearts to be sure that we trust in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation, believing our sins are forgiven because of our Lord's sacrifice on the cross.

Let us examine our consciences to be sure that we resolve to live in faith and obedience before our Lord, and in love and peace with our neighbours.

Since it is necessary for us to come to the sacrament in good conscience, we urge any of you who lack this confidence to seek from the minister, an elder or a mature believer such counsel as may quiet your conscience or lead to the conversion of your life.

Anyone who is unrepentant, who does not trust in Jesus Christ, or who has no desire to lead a godly life, should refrain from the holy sacrament. If you are living in disobedience to Christ, or in hostility with your neighbour, you must repent of your sin and seek reconciliation. If you fail to do this, you partake of the sacrament unworthily and the Scriptures warn that you eat and drink judgment on yourself.²

This solemn warning is not designed, however, to discourage penitent sinners. We do not come to the supper trusting in our own righteousness, but rather testifying that we are sinners who look to Jesus Christ for our salvation. God will surely receive at the table of his Son all who are truly sorry for their sins, believe in Jesus Christ as their saviour, and desire to do his will. If this describes the condition of your heart, accept the invitation and come with gladness to the table of your Lord.

Prayer

Let us seek God's gracious help in prayer:

Almighty God, thank you for the gospel of salvation and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Please grant us the grace to prepare our hearts. Assure all who sincerely believe in your Son and truly repent of their sins that you will receive and bless them in the supper of their Lord.

However, grant a restraining fear to those who have not repented and have not put their trust in the Lord Jesus. Have mercy upon them, and grant them the gift of faith so that they may repent of their sins and seek grace and salvation in your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

We confess, Father, that all of us have offended your majesty and deserve your judgment. We have sinned in thought, word and deed. Truly there is no good in us. Be merciful, O God, and pardon us as you have promised. For you are "compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love."³ Let us come to the sacrament in the joy of your forgiving love. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

¹ 1 Corinthians 11:27–28.

² 1 Corinthians 11:29.

³ Psalm 103:8.