

# Prophetic International

## 25 Short Communion Messages

*All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.:*

*That they should:*

- 1) *Take less than 5 minutes to present!*
- 2) *Be accurate.*
- 3) *Be inspiring (as possible in a few minutes).*
- 4) *Keep to the point (i.e. communion!)*

***These messages have been designed for simplicity. This allows plenty of room for people to add some local color. So please feel free to adjust them & make them your own***

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# 1. Grace

All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.

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***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

***Grace! This is the basic message of God. May we never lose track of its true importance.***

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**God has covered us with his righteousness.  
He has covered us with his grace.**

## **What Is Grace?**

*Rom. 3:23 People are made right with God by his grace, which is a free gift. They are made right with God by being made free from sin through Jesus Christ. God gave Jesus as a way to forgive sin through faith. And all of this is because of the blood of Jesus's death.*

*Eph. 2:5 We were spiritually dead because of the things we did wrong against God. But God gave us new life with Christ.*

## **God's Riches at Christ's Expense**

Insurance companies talk about new for old insurance cover. I have to tell you that God thought of that concept a very long time ago. God offers us a new life for a soiled life. It does not depend, on the quality of the used life. This is an unconditional offer, the worse the life the better is this offer, anyone can apply.

There are no special conditions; God will accept any offer made in good faith. I suppose there is one condition. It's strictly a no refund deal. All correspondence will be entered into, but he will not give us back our old soiled life.

Grace is the free gift of new life, because of the blood, of Jesus death. It is free for us, but was expensive for Jesus. It costs us what we don't need - our sin and death. It cost Jesus everything he had.

*"And all of this is because of the blood of Jesus' death."*

It's so good - so simple - and so true.

## **Communion**

As we receive the body and the blood of Jesus by faith, we receive this new life. Let's eat the bread together.

We drink in remembrance of the blood Jesus shed.

## **Prayer**

Jesus - in the breaking of the bread and the drinking of the wine we remember your death until you come again. Amen.

## **2. We Receive by Faith**

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***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

***Jesus said many things to people during his ministry that were hard to hear and understand. Today his words still continue to stir our hearts.***

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### **A composition from the gospel of John Chapter Six.**

*(John 6:28) The people asked Jesus, "what are the things God wants us to do?"*

*Jesus said, "The work God wants you to do is this; to believe in the one that God sent . . . (32) My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. God's bread is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."*

*The people said, "Sir, give us this bread always." Then Jesus said, "I am the bread that gives life. He who comes to me will never be hungry. He who believes in me will never be thirsty . . .*

*(47) I tell you the truth. He who believes has eternal life. I am the bread that gives life . . . (50) Here is the bread that comes down. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh. I will give my flesh so that the people in the world may have life."*

*"I tell you the truth. You must eat the flesh of the Son of Man. And you must drink his blood . . .*

*(56) Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me, and I live in him . . . (58b) I am the bread that came down from heaven. He who eats this bread will live forever."*

The followers said, (60) *"This is a hard saying, who can accept it."* Part of what Jesus was saying to his crowd of followers is, how serious are you? Can you follow me even when you don't understand my words? (68) Peter said, *"Lord where would we go, You have the words that give eternal life. We believe in you."* He's saying, we don't understand either, but we trust you, because by faith we know who you really are.

This bread and wine represents the body and blood of Jesus to us. No how matter how much we know, or how much we can understand these symbols, this reality remains a holy mystery to us. There is only one choice open to us, we have to receive the sacrifice of Jesus by way of our faith. Romans 4:25-5:1 says, *"Jesus was given to die for our sins. And he was raised from death to make us right with God. We have been made right with God because of our faith."*

### **Communion**

#### **Prayer**

Lord we have received you into our hearts by faith alone, we now receive your body and blood by faith, and thank you for your sacrifice upon the cross. Help us to live out our lives for you, and for your kingdom, by faith. Amen

### **3. God's Generation Message**

These days we are far removed from ideas of generational purpose or blessing and only rarely does it filter through our day to day routine. It can come as a shock to us, to realize that God sees a far bigger picture and is very interested in us enlarging our vision.

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**When** we look at ourselves, or look at the characters in the bible, how do we look at them, what do we see? What are the boundaries or blinkers that hem in our understanding of ourselves and the people of faith we read about in the bible?

*(Spend a moment on some of the everyday things that assault our senses and alter the way we see things)*

What about God? When he looks at the same people, what does he see? What did God see, when he saw these people?

#### **Adam & Eve**

God made them a promise - *"Her child will crush your head (Gen 3:15)."* So God could see a time when there would be deliverance from the curse.

#### **Abraham**

What did he see? He saw a great nation (Gen 12:2). *"Look at the sky. There are so many stars that you cannot count them. And your descendants will be too many to count (Gen 15:5)."*

#### **Moses**

He saw a great nation that would take the land, and that God promised that he would send a deliverer to the nation.

#### **David**

God made him a promise - *"That your family and your kingdom will continue forever before me (2 Sam 7:16)."* God saw a faithful man after his own heart, he saw into the future to Jesus who would proclaim the faithful nature and heart of God.

#### **John the Baptist**

John was looking forward to the moment when he would *"see God's Spirit coming down on him (Jesus) like a dove (Mat 3:16)."* And those great words *"He must increase, and I must decrease",* illustrate Gods forward looking nature.

#### **Abraham & Isaac**

When God stopped Abraham from offering up his son as a sacrifice, and provided one of his own, he could already see the day when he would offer the perfect sacrifice of his own son. *"God will give us the lamb for the sacrifice (Gen 22:11-14)."*

#### **Jesus & Us**

God is always looking ahead. He saw Jesus that would take 12 disciples and make them able to carry on his mission on earth. He saw Jesus who would bring in a new covenant relationship by Himself being the true Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. He saw Jesus who would make peace with the Father for us so that we can be forgiven.

#### **Communion**

#### **Prayer**

Lord help us to be children of your promise. Children that move forward with you. Children that plant your seeds of faith in those we meet.

## **4. Eternal Values & Earthly Values**

All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.

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***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

**We live in a very materialistic world where every thing has to have  
a dollar value, but as someone once said,  
the best things in life are free!**

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**T**here is a lot of economic rationalism these days. Unfortunately the dollar value is placed on almost everything. And the price of everything goes up and just occasionally down.

But as Christians it's good to know that we have a constant, which is always holds its value and true. This is a value system that never goes up or down with the dollar or the price of gold. Jesus is our Constant Eternal Value, in a world, which is always going from one crisis to yet another crisis. It seems that the news on TV is always bad news, but the Bible tells us that there is a large amount of - good news. Jesus has paid a price for us that never goes up or down, and doesn't have a used by date.

Ephesians 1:6 says, *"we have been bought through his blood . . . with the riches of God's grace"*. The price was the body and blood of Jesus, God's only Son. God was prepared to pay the price, and so was Jesus.

As far as God was concerned, that was the only acceptable eternal (once for all) payment for our sins. It had to be - perfect. Only His perfection could bring us peace with God. That was the plan of God, for us and for Jesus. Jesus knew all about it. He tried to tell his disciples many times, but they couldn't make out what he was talking about, until he rose from the dead. Then it started to make sense.

Throughout history God had been preparing for this event. It was a long time in the making, as they say these days.

So the Father makes us an offer today. He says that because of Jesus, we can approach the throne of grace, and receive forgiveness and peace. That's a pretty good deal. In fact I can guarantee you won't find a better one.

1 Corinthians 6:20 *We have been bought by God for a price . . .*

1 Cor. 11:23 On the night when Jesus was handed over to be killed, he broke the bread and said, *"This is my body; it is for you. Do this to remember me."*

### **Let's eat the bread together**

In the same way, after they ate, Jesus took the cup. He said, *"This cup shows the new agreement from God to his people. This agreement begins with the blood of my death. When you drink this, do it to remember me."*

### **Let's drink the cup together.**

*"Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you show others about the Lord's death until he comes."*

### **Prayer**

Now that Jesus has opened the way for us, "Let us boldly approach the throne of grace" (Heb. 4:15). Let us receive his forgiveness and peace that passes all understanding. Let us receive his healing in our bodies, and honour the sacrifice of his perfection for us. Amen.

## **5. Bread of life**

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**I have to admit it never ceases to surprise me that some Christians feel they need to reduce the bible to a natural level of faith. Some of those religious radio discussions would have to be for me the worst offenders.**

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I was listening to an early morning religious program recently about Christian traditions of Communion, and how they must be wrong because they were in total contradiction to the acceptable Jewish standards of the day.

The argument takes the line that because Jesus was good Jew who respected the culture of his people, he would never have talked about eating human flesh and drinking blood. So this must have been an exaggeration that Paul and the Apostles added in for the sake of creating a tradition.

I think this is all quite sad. The concept that we have to bring the Gospels down to our level of understanding is extremely limiting and unnecessary. In John 6:25-65 Jesus himself talks to the crowd about saying,

*"(51) - I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh. I will give my flesh so that the people in the world will have life . . . 54 He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life." He said this in the synagogue in Capernaum.*

Let us not be like the crowd who could not understand or accept this teaching and walked away. We need to like the disciples who thought to themselves, yes this is hard to understand, but who said to Jesus, *"Lord, where would we go, you have the words of eternal life. We believe in you. We know that you are the Holy One from God."*

Let us not follow theologians who deny the very words and teachings of Jesus because they don't fit into their neat boxes, let us change the size of our understanding to let in the Glorious King.

### **Psalm 24:8-9**

Who is the glorious king?  
The Lord strong and mighty.  
The Lord the powerful warrior.  
Gates, open all the way.  
Open wide aged doors.  
Then the glorious king will come in.  
Who is the glorious king?  
The Lord of heaven's armies -  
he is the glorious king.

## **6. Jesus Gives Life !**

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**Visual illustration - Parade in using something  
that looks like an open coffin.**

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### **Jesus raises the Widow's Son**

#### **Reading**

Luke 7:11-17

**T**he widow had no hope left, she had lost her son, but she was about to lose much more than that. According to custom she was not allowed to inherit the house and money so she was about to lose that too. As you can see, Jesus literally gave her back life as she knew it.

You may not think that this has much to do with communion, but surely the message of the cross is, that "Jesus gives life." As we receive communion we receive this life.

Jesus willingly gave the son back his life. Jesus willingly gave up his own physical life, and we know that God gave him a new one, and restored him to the right hand of the Father.

We were spiritually dead because of our sins, as the bible tells us, but now we too can be raised to a new life in Jesus.

There is just one catch to this amazing blessing. In John 6:54 Jesus says *"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood shares in my life, and I will raise him up on the last day."*

We have to share in his eternal life. This is an active thing. It is not enough to tag along for the ride, or just go through the motions. We need to feed ourselves on the life of Jesus, on the living word who speaks to us in many ways.

We have to hand our lives over to Jesus, but just like the widow, Jesus gives us back a new life, similar to the old one, but it seems that all the ingredients have been rearranged, changed and renewed.

**In this new life, "we live in Him."**

## **7. Jesus and the Special Meal**

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**This communion piece is designed for older children. It is of course a true story about a special meal that Jesus had with his disciples, just before he was arrested.**

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### **There was trouble at the meal table!**

**Y**ou know what that's like, when your brother or sister is being mean to you, or saying some nasty comments under their breath, it makes you feel a bit queasy in the stomach, makes you feel bad, and doesn't do much for the atmosphere. People are not sure what to do. Even parents sometimes don't know how to stop it.

The trouble was that this was a very special meal that happened only once a year. Jesus was really looking forward to it because he said, *"I wanted very much to eat this Passover meal with you before I die."* On another occasion Jesus said, *"my food is to do what the One who sent me wants me to do."* He knew what was going to happen. He knew what the plan was.

Judas had just made a bad deal with the Jewish leaders to hand Jesus over to them, and he was probably feeling terrible about it. And you know what made it even worse? Jesus knew about it! While they were around the table, he said, *"one of you will turn against me."* It's hard to keep a secret from Jesus, he always seems to know what's going on.

The strange thing was, even though he knew that Judas was going to turn against him, Jesus still called him a friend. In Matthew 26:50 when Judas arrived with the mob to arrest him, Jesus says, *"Friend do the thing you came to do."* It's hard to understand love that deep and friendship that strong. It goes way beyond our idea of friendship.

Jesus is always committed to us.

### **Communion**

#### **A Prayer from Scripture**

Perhaps using the below Scripture, which has been adapted for use as part of a prayer of contemplation.

**Acts 8:32-33**

*(Paraphrased & adapted)*

Lord Jesus;

You were like a sheep being led to be killed.

You were quiet, as a sheep is quiet while

Its wool is being cut.

You said nothing.

You were shamed and were treated unfairly.

But we thank you Lord that you have always been our friend.

## **8. The 3 Heroes**

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**A story of David, that still speaks to us today.**

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### **1 Chronicles 11:15-19**

Three of the 30 mighty warriors went to David near Adullam . . . David had a strong desire for some water. He said, *"Oh, I wish someone would get me water from the well near the city gate in Bethlehem!"* the three fought their way through the Philistine army. And they took water out of the well near the city gate in Bethlehem. Then they took it back to David. But he refused to drink it. He poured it out before the Lord. David said, *"May God keep me from drinking this water! It would be like drinking the blood of the men who risked their lives to bring me, this water."* So David refused to drink it.

You can just imagine them overcoming ridiculous odds to do this. And David must have heard the noise and learnt what they were up to. That cup of water was poured out as an offering to God.

The cost was too much for David. I've no doubt David was really touched by their devotion to him that they would do this. Risk their lives, do the impossible, and bring back a cup of water, just to please him. If this was a comedy sketch I could just imagine them tripping over a tent rope as they came up to David and spilling the lot! (Groan! - we'll have to do it again!) But it was a very serious venture, and the idea of losing three of his best fighting men because of a silly request was way too much for David. It was a sacrifice he was not willing to make. He just couldn't drink that water!

I've often wondered what the disciples thought of the sacrifice of Jesus, we are one step removed, but they knew him intimately, they had walked with him, touched him, laughed with him, day after day for 3 years.

The bible says that water and blood poured out of the side of Jesus, poured out onto the ground. It says that he poured out his life as an offering for us. We can only guess at the grief that must have caused them. How did the disciples cope with that? How do we receive that?

### **Readings**

1 Timothy 1:14 Paul said, *"The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly . . ."*

Matthew 20:28 *"The Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give (or to pour out) his life as a ransom for many."*

Isa. 53:12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many . . .

### **Communion**

#### **Prayer**

Romans 5:5 "Hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us."

## **9. The Hyssop Plant**

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**An old covenant picture of God's deliverance  
which illuminates the work of Christ.**

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**D**oes anyone know what this is? (holding a bunch of hyssop)

It looks like lavender doesn't it, but it isn't. I'll give you a clue, it's in the bible.

It's hyssop or it's what we call hyssop today, there is some doubt. The real hyssop may be the capper plant which grows in the Sinai dessert and grows 1-1.5 meters high.

You ask why am I walking around with some blooming herbs?

In the Old Testament, a bunch of hyssop was used for cleansing. In Leviticus 14:4 it was used to pronounce a leper or a leprous house clean and healed from disease. (In Numbers 19:18) It's used for the ritual blessing and cleansing by sprinkling water.

In Ps. 51: 7-8 David spoke of it allegedly after sending Uriah the Hittite to his death and taking his wife. David writes, "purge me with hyssop and I will be clean, I shall be whiter than snow, (speak out with feeling) . . . hide Thy face from my sins and blot out my iniquities.

Moses used it at time of the first Passover meal (Ex 12:22). He commanded the Israelites to strike the lintel with the blood soaked hyssop, to provide safety from the angel of death for just one night, for all that stayed in the house.

This was called The Passover, because the angel of death passed over the houses of the Israelites. They were under the protection of the Almighty if they followed these rather messy but simple instructions. In every other house the first born of all humans and animals were struck down.

Pilot had Jesus struck with the whip and his blood flowed, healing for our sins, healing for our relationship with God, because of the blood sacrifice of Jesus, our sins have been forgiven. As the hymn says, "His blood makes the sinner clean" (Oh for a thousand tongues).

John agrees with this when he says;

(1 John 1:7) . . . If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.

### **Communion**

#### **After Readings**

The blood of Jesus has saved us from the angel of death, and bought for us the free gift of life and forgiveness.

Romans 8: 1-4 So now those who are in Christ Jesus are judged "not guilty". I am not judged guilty because in Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit that brings life made me free. It made me free from the law that brings sin and death!

## **10. An Ephesians Communion Reading**

**Another reading, or collection of verses, that stand on their own, as an authoritative statement of Christ's purpose in redeeming the church.**

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Eph. 1:5 Before the world was made, God decided to make us his own children through Jesus Christ. That was what he wanted and what pleased him.

1:11 In Christ we were chosen to be God's people. 2:5 We were spiritually dead because of the things we did against God. But God gave us new life with Christ. You have been saved by God's grace. He raised us up with Christ and gave us a seat with him in the heavens. 2:8 You did not save yourselves. It was a gift from God. You cannot brag that you are saved by the work you have done. God made us what we are.

In Christ Jesus, God has made us new people so that we would do good works. 2:11 You were born non-Jews. 2:12b And you had no part in the agreements with the promise that God made to his people. You had no hope, and you did not know God.. Yes at one time you were far away from God. But in Christ Jesus you are brought near to God through the blood of Christ's death. Because of Christ we now have peace.

3:13 In Christ we can come before God with freedom and without fear. 1:21 Christ is more important than anything in this world or in the next world. God put everything under his power. And God made him the head over everything for the church. The church is Christ's body. The church is filled with Christ, and Christ fills everything in every way.

### **Prayer 1**

Come fill us now Lord! Fill us with your body and your blood. Fill us with everything we need to become a body of people energized with your love , your gifts of service, and your mission for us in the world.

### **Prayer 2 (after Communion)**

Eph 3:6 I ask the Father in his great glory to give the power to be strong in spirit. He will give that strength through his Spirit. I pray that Christ live in your hearts because of your faith. I pray that your life will be strong in love and be built on love. And I pray that you and all God's holy people will have the power to understand the greatness of Christ's love.

3:21 To him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus for all time, forever and ever.  
Amen.

# 11. The Bible Says!

**Just to show that we do not always need to be highly original, witty, intellectual, or use any other source other than the bible, here is a simple but very powerful and effective narrative using bible verses only. The Word of God always accomplishes its work.**

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**It flows quite well, so when reading  
leave out the verse references.**

(Eph. 3:12) In Christ we can come before God with freedom and without fear. We can do this through faith in Christ.

(Eph. 2:12) Remember that in the past you were without Christ . . . You had no hope, and did not know God . . . But now in Christ Jesus you are brought near to God through the blood of Christ's death. (2:16) Christ did this with his death on the cross.

(1 Pet. 1:18-19) You were bought, but not with something that ruins like gold or silver. You were bought with precious blood of the death of Christ, who was like a pure and perfect lamb.

(Col. 1:19) God was pleased for all of himself to live in Christ . . . God made peace by using the blood of Christ's death on the cross. (22) He brings you before God as people who are holy

(Rom. 8:33-34) Who will accuse the people that God has chosen? No one. God is the one that makes them right. Who can say that God's people are guilty? No one!

(1 Pet 1:23) You have been born again. This new life did not come from something that dies, but from something that cannot die.

(1 John 1:7) God is in the light. We should live in the light too. If we live in the light, we share fellowship with each other. And when we live in the light, the blood of the death of Jesus, God's Son, is making us clean from every sin. (2:2) Jesus is the way our sins are taken away.

## **Communion**

1 Cor. 11:23-26 On the night Jesus was handed over to be killed, he took the bread and gave thanks for it. Then he broke the bread and said, "This is my body; it is for you. Do this to remember me" (eat the bread together). In the same way, after they ate, Jesus took the cup. He said, "This cup shows the new agreement from God to his people. This new agreement begins with the blood of my death. When you drink this, do it to remember me" (drink the wine together). Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you show others about the Lord's death until he comes.

# 12. The Suffering Servant

**It is hard to do better than this beautiful and moving reading from the prophet Isaiah. It speaks for itself. It is a must.**

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## Isaiah 53:2-12

He grew up like a small plant before the Lord. He was like a root growing in a dry land. He had no special beauty or form to make us notice him. There was nothing in his appearance to make us desire him. He was hated and rejected by people. He had much pain and suffering. People would not even look at him . . .

But he took our suffering on him and felt our pain for us. We saw his suffering. We thought God was punishing him. But he was wounded for the wrong things we did. He was crushed for the evil things we did. The punishment, which made us well, was given to him. And we are healed because of his wounds. We all have wandered away like sheep. Each of us has gone his own way. But the Lord has put on him the punishment for all the evil we have done.

He was like a lamb being led to be killed . . . He was put to death. He was punished for the sins of my people . . . So the Lord made his life a penalty offering . . . My good servant will make many people right with God. He carried away their sins. For this reason I will make him a great man among the people . . . He willingly gave his life . . . and asked forgiveness for those who sinned.

This prophecy of Isaiah written long before Jesus was born continues to speak to us of God's purpose for us.

God has substituted himself for us. Jesus the Son of God, for us. His perfect life, for our sinful life. Paul writes, "*The Son of God loved me, and gave his life, for me.*"

## Communion

### Prayer

*John 3:16 For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son. God gave his Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life.*

Lord thank you for this amazing and precious gift of forgiveness and new life. Help us to receive you just as you are. Your perfection into our imperfection. In Jesus name. Amen.

## **13. The Weeds of Life**

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***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

**A true to life illustration, a story that needs very  
little imagination to appreciate its truths.  
All you need is a few live props.**

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I was digging in my garden the other day and I'd like to show you some of the things I found. I found this daffodil; it was so colourful it was very easy to see. Unfortunately I also found this large clump of couch grass, I had seen it there before but I didn't realise it was so big until I had to dig it out. That is rather like some of the problems that develop in our lives; the longer we leave them, the bigger they grow, the more stubborn they are or the deeper down the roots grow.

I found some other things to. In between some flowery things I found these weeds. It seems that no matter how good the soil is, or how much you check the pH value of the soil, there are always some weeds just waiting to poke their heads out. Even mulching can't fix everything, I found these runner weeds travelling along under the mulch, it only goes to show that what we see on the outside doesn't always match up to our expectations. We need to dig down to really find out what's happening.

John 15:1,4 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful . . . No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."

The Bible says that God is the gardener in our lives and he knows that just tilling the soil isn't enough for us. Weeds grow faster than vegetables in freshly tilled soil. God knows that there is no substitute for regular feeding and weeding. Fruit trees produce their best results with other fruit trees, and the best way to achieve that is to meet together around the table of the Lord, to eat and drink together as we remember what he has done for us.

### **Communion Readings**

*Mat. 26:26 On the night he was betrayed, while they were eating, Jesus took some bread. He thanked God for it and broke it. Then he gave it to his followers and said, "Take this bread and eat it. This is my body."*

*Then Jesus took a cup. He thanked God for it and gave it to the followers. He said, "Every one of you drink this. This is my blood, which begins the new agreement that God makes with his people. This blood is poured out for many to forgive their sins."*

## **14. Signed Sealed & Delivered**

All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.

- That they should: 1) Take less than 5 minutes to present!  
2) Be accurate. 3) Be inspiring (as possible in a few minutes).  
4) Keep to the point (i.e. communion!)

***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

**Here is another modern day, real life parable that is probably a little to close for comfort for many of us, few will have difficulty grasping the relevant points even if they have never bought a house.**

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The Kingdom of Heaven, is a bit like a house contract. The nasty part of any house contract is the mortgage. Even though no one in their right mind wants to spend 20 years or so paying month in and month out for some dirt and building materials, you still sign the document. Strange isn't it, by the sweat of your brow you dig the dirt, and by pain of your bank account you keep forking out for house repairs.

It's interesting that the word "Mortgage" literally means a death hold. "Mort" is the same base word that gives us mortuary, and "gage" could also mean a strangle hold. When we put that together we come up with a financial strangle hold till death - charming isn't it! I hope I've cheered your day wit that revelation. Once you have signed your life away, the agreement is witnessed, it used to be sealed with wax as well, and finally it is delivered to the bank that keeps it till you have either died or paid the last cent. You either sign or you don't, you have to declare your allegiance, or it's no deal.

So what's the relevance for this morning? Well actually – quite a lot!

Jesus knew why he was here. Jesus had an agreement with the Father, he was a man with a mission, and the bottom line of that agreement was that he would die *"for the sins of the world"*.

Just as contracts are signed and sealed, Jesus sealed his own contract with his own blood. The fine print reads, *"Christ came at just the right time to take away all sin by sacrificing himself"* (Heb. 9:28). He laid himself on the line for us; he knew the price of redemption.

Just as the contract is delivered to the bank till we can pay the full price, Jesus was delivered to his enemies. But Hades had no hold over him, because he himself was a completely innocent man, he was bearing our sins. He paid the price in full, once and for all.

Jesus said of himself, *"I have the right to give my life, and I have the right to take it back. This is what my Father commanded me to do"* (John 10:18).

If we acknowledge that we believe in Jesus, that he has died and taken away our sin, then we are free indeed.

### **Communion**

#### **Prayer**

Jesus said, *"If anyone stands before other people and says that he believes in me, then I will say that he belongs to me. I will say this before my Father in heaven. But if anyone stands before people and says that he does not believe in me, then I will say this before my Father in Heaven (Matthew 10:32-33)."*

Jesus we belong to you, help us to stand up for you and spread the good news of your death and your resurrection life.

## **15. How hard was it for Jesus?**

All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.

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4) Keep to the point (i.e. communion!)

***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

**All of us have some understanding of the hardships of life, and this approach, shows us just how much farther Jesus was willing to go, to give us intimate access to the fathers compassion and love.**

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### **How hard was it for Jesus?**

To begin with, it meant a physical separation from the intimate relationship he had with his father.

He had to leave all of his heavenly glory behind, and live through our emotional up and down existence.

He had to fulfil in detail all the Old Testament prophesies, whether he'd read about them or not. Even his birth, his fleeing to Egypt and being raised in Nazareth.

He had to be born human, be born as a baby, vulnerable and helpless, and experience the sin of the world as we know it, and as we feel it.

He had to give up all the things we consider as earthly rights, justice, mercy were denied him.

He had to give up his own will completely, and do only what the father wanted him to say and do.

He had to live 100% for others, and not for himself.

He had to live with no permanent address or roof over his head, living of the support of others, no stability at all, as we would say. *"Birds have nests and foxes have holes but the son of man has nowhere to lay his head."*

He had to live without a wife and kids. *"Who can speak of his offspring."*

He had to be sinless. He had to live in our filth, and destructive habits, and remain sinless.

He had to live knowing how he would die, and even on which day he would die because it had to be at the time of the Passover, to fulfil Scripture.

He even knew that he would be crucified on a cross. *"When you see the son of man lifted up . . . "*

He had to overcome death. Defeat the devil. Rise from the grave, and send the Holy Spirit.

He had to leave his friends behind, knowing that they would also be killed for their faith.

Through all this he had to love all of his enemies.

What a great friend this is. Our brother, our Saviour, our redeemer, our High Priest our God and our friend.

### **Communion**

#### **Prayer**

Lord we thank you that your nature is always to have mercy, and lift us out of our mess. By your sacrifice you have restored our relationship to the Father, you have given us peace with God.

Thank you Jesus.

## **16. God in the House**

All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.

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2) Be accurate. 3) Be inspiring (as possible in a few minutes).  
4) Keep to the point (i.e. communion!)

***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

**The following parable was one of those pieces of inspiration that was a delight to hear and meditate on. The human author graciously gave me permission to add to it a little. I hope you will also find this enjoyable.**

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### **How can we describe our relationship with God?**

It is like a house with different rooms for different purposes.

1. First there is the living room; it is like the place we relax with God. Where we meet together after the days work and talk things over . . . or at least we could if we turned off the TV.
2. Next there are the laundry and toilet areas; yes it can be a delicate area. This is where we clean and air the dirty linen, where we get our sins washed away; they could even be flushed away. You could even say it's where we clean up our act with God.
3. Then there is "the bedroom", and yes you've guessed it this is where can be intimate with God, where we can relate personally. A place of tears and love, where all our emotions are employed and we face God as we are.
4. Lastly there is the dining room and kitchen, where we feed ourselves for the days service. Food for the journey - This is what the early Christians called the Lords Supper - "food for the journey" - nourishment for the time ahead when things get hard, and we feel drained of energy.

**John 6:33-35 Jesus said "God's bread is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."**

### **Communion**

*Matthew 26: 26-28 As they were eating, Jesus took some bread. He thanked God for it, and broke it, and gave it to his followers and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." Then Jesus took the cup. He thanked God for it and gave it to the followers. He said, "Every one of you drink this. This is my blood, which begins the new agreement that God makes with his people. This blood is poured out for many to forgive their sins."*

### **Prayer**

We thank you Jesus, for you promised that in your fathers house there were many rooms, and you have gone to prepare them for us, so that we can be with you, when our time here is finished.

## 17. Am I worth It?

All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.

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4) Keep to the point (i.e. communion!)

***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

**Many people suffer from feelings of being unworthy to receive the free gifts God has for us. Of course when we consider the mess we often make of our lives, we have to conclude that they are right. However, God never gives up on us and has made a way.**

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### Am I worth it?

Was it worth Jesus dying for me?

Here are 2 people that thought they were not up to it.

Moses - (Exodus) Moses tried very hard to tell God he was not much use for anything but herding sheep and goats. He ended up as a leader of millions of people by following God's step by step instructions.

Gideon - He was hiding in the winepress treading corn, he was hiding from men. The angel said he was a "*mighty man of valour*", Gideon knew he wasn't, but God knew he would be, and proved it.

Will you let him prove that you are worth it? Will you let him prove that you have a unique purpose to accomplish in his will?

Mat 9:12 *Jesus said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor. Only the sick need a doctor . . . I did not come to invite good people. I came to invite sinners."*

That is why God is here inviting us. While Jesus was alive he gave everything of himself to his disciples. He invited them to share in his life, his love for the people, his power to heal, and he invited them to share his suffering. When the time came for him to die for us all, he gave absolutely everything, to free us from our sins, and bring us home to the Father's love.

The truth is God has always considered we were worth rescuing. None of us feel 100% comfortable with that. God knew we couldn't rescue ourselves, so he did it all himself. He provided the rescue plan, the sacrifice, and the circumstances to make it happen.

Eph 2:13 At one time you were far away from God. But now in Christ Jesus you are brought near to God through the blood of Christ's death. Because of Christ we now have (inside) peace.

Hebrews 12: 2 Let us look only to Jesus. He is the one who began our faith, and he makes our faith perfect.

### Communion

#### Prayer

God, you chose us long ago to be your children (1 Peter 1:2). Help us to accept your generous invitation and your gift of eternal life and peace with the Father.

## **18. The Road To Emmaus**

All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.

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4) Keep to the point (i.e. communion!)

***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

### **The Road To Emmaus**

**An opportunity for people to close their eyes and let God write on the imagination's of their Spirit. Read with feeling!  
(Based on Luke 24:13-35).**

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We have left the city  
Two of us are walking down the road  
It's a hot afternoon  
Even the flies have called it a day, and left us alone

We are not very happy, because a friend has died  
It's strange going anywhere without him  
We'd travelled with him, laughed with him  
Cried with him, been hated & loved, along side of him  
We even tried, to protect him  
But in the end, he would win  
We couldn't stop him doing anything he wanted.

This emptiness, is hard to take  
A friend whose ways we learned too late  
If he was needed, he was there  
Full of faith, full of care.

Someone has come, to walk with us  
He questions us, we show our grief  
with soothing words, he shares our pain  
And shares the Word, of why he came  
A sadness, a burning, a hope returning  
For roads to walk, more Jesus talk.

With journey's end, we will to bend  
To stay this man, this new found friend  
Who speaks of love, that fuels our fire  
And makes us long, for a love that's higher

He takes the bread, he breaks the bread  
Behold - the  
Risen, Victorious, Living, Bread.

## **19. The Law of Life**

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***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

### **The law of death verses the law of life**

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The law of the land is a useful thing to have; it's part of the overall protection that keeps society together. But it's a very hard and unforgiving thing isn't it. In the end all it decides is whether you are guilty or not guilty, and if you're guilty you have to pay for it. There is no grey area, no loving or caring response.

2 Cor 3:7 says, "*The Law that brought death was written in words on stone.*" Of course God didn't designed it to bring death. He designed it to show the difference between right and wrong, unfortunately we cannot prevent ourselves from occasionally doing the wrong thing.

God has a problem, though of course it's our problem - he hates the sin, but wants to love the sinner. That's why God arranged for a New Covenant to be made with his people. He announced this in Ezekiel 36:26.

*"Also, I will teach you to respect me completely. I will put a new way to think inside you. I will take out the stubborn heart like stone from your bodies. And I will give you an obedient heart of flesh. I will put my Spirit inside you. And I will help you to live by my rules . . . Also I will save you from all your uncleanness.*

Uncleanness; it's a very unpleasant feeling. The good news is that "God did what the law could not do . . . He sent his Son to be an offering to pay for sin. So God used a human life to destroy sin." The power of sin has been destroyed! Isn't that a great thought? Jesus has done it. It's a reality. The New Covenant that brings life is written on our new heart of flesh, on our love for Jesus.

## **Communion**

### **Reading after Communion**

Romans 8:1-3 So now, those who are in Christ Jesus are not judged guilty . . . because in Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit that brings life made me free. It made me free from the law that brings sin and death . . . God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son to earth with the same human life that others use for sin. He sent his Son to be an offering to pay for sin. So God used a human life to destroy sin.

Thanks be to God!

## **20. The Scape Goat**

All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.

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***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

**This is a ritual sacrifice story from Leviticus that has revealing parallels with the redeeming work of Jesus. I would recommend that speaker have a grasp of the whole story from Leviticus 16: 8-27.**

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Today I would like to share with you a story of God's plan for the deliverance of His people, from the book of Leviticus.

This story begins on "The Day of Atonement". On this day of the year the high priest entered the most sacred place the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant rested.

On this day every year the high priest casts lots for 2 goats to be offered to the Lord. After offering the cleansing sacrifices for his family and the people, the high priest takes the blood of one of these goats, and enters Holy of Holies. There he offers the blood as a sin offering for the whole nation. Why? Because *"the temple where God dwells, was in the middle of a sinful people"*, and God had a problem with that. The bible says that God hates sin but loves the sinner, so he made this way to deal with the sin problem. Here comes the good part, picture this (act out this next part if possible).

Then, the high priest brought the live goat before the Lord. He laid his hands on the goat, confessing all the sins of the people, transferring them all to the goat.

Then the goat was led away, into the desert, carrying all the people's sins on itself, and they made sure that it would never return, their sins had to be removed to the desert like the goat. The scapegoat was chosen to take the sin of all the people on its head, be sent out of the city, and die alone for the people. Jesus was chosen to die for the people (*"it is better that one man die for the people"* - High Priest). He died in a desolate place.

2 Cor 5:21 *"Christ had no sin. But God made him become sin."*

Like the scapegoat, Jesus was led out of the city to die. But he had overcome sin, and rose from the dead.

The scapegoat was presented live before the Lord. Jesus was raised to life and presented with the keys of death.

1 Peter 4: 24 *"Christ carried our sins in his body on the cross,"* not just for the past year like the goat, but today, once for all, a free gift to us. It costs us very little, but it cost him everything.

### **Communion**

### **Meditation**

Isa 53: 4-5 *"But he took our suffering on him and felt our pain for us . . . he was wounded for the wrong things we did. The punishment that made us well was given to him."*

## **21. Jesus is the Light**

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***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

**Here's a vision idea from the Bible. Try leaving  
out the references, pause between statements  
and let the Holy Spirit do the rest.**

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Each of us has a vision or mental image of what Jesus is like. It may be one inspired from the Bible, from our fertile imagination, or part of a vision we have had, but in some way we can all picture him in our hearts and minds. Here's one from the Bible.

### **Jesus is light**

*(Isa 9:2) The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.*

*(2 Cor 4:6) God, once said "Let the light shine out of darkness" And this is the same God who made his light shine in our hearts. He gave us this light by letting us know the glory of God that is in the face of Christ.*

*(John 1:4) In him was life, and that life was light for the people of the world. The light shines in the darkness. And the darkness has not overpowered the Light . . . The true light was coming in to the world. The true Light gives light to all.*

*(John 3:19) Jesus said, "People are judged by this fact: I am the light from God that has come into the world . . . he who follows the true way comes to the light. Then the light will show that the things he has done were done through God."*

*(1 John 1:7) . . . If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*

Jesus is here now, standing before us, reaching out to us. Let's hand over the sin that sometimes clings to us, and the cares of the world that trouble us. Let him purify us now from our sin, that we may not walk in darkness, but in the light of his life.

### **Communion**

#### **Prayer**

*(Ps. 4:6) Let the light of your face shine upon us, Lord. (Ps 36:9) For with you is the fountain of life. (Ps 118:105) Your word is a lamp to our feet and a light for our path. (Ps 56:13) For you have delivered us from death and our feet from stumbling, that we may walk before God in the light of life.*

## **22. Jesus The 1st Born**

All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.

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***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

**There are many aspects of the God's redemption plan that receive a mention in the bible. But we are so far removed from many of them that we can rarely acknowledge their true importance.**

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### **The First Born of Many Sons**

One of the main components of the Passover story is God warning the people that the first born of all men and animals are about to die. They needed to protect themselves by spreading the blood of a lamb on their door posts, a lamb that was without spot or blemish.

God told the people they had to celebrate the Passover every year. It was a sign of God's power and deliverance. After that event it is written that all the first born sons belonged to him (Ex. 13:2).

God was serious about this because he made it a law that everyone had to redeem or buy back their first born from him by a payment of 5 Shekels (Ex 13:15, Num. 3:47, 18:16). It was a fixed price of redemption. Without exception everybody had to buy back their first born from God. That's what redemption means - to buy back.

The New Testament adds to the spiritual dimension of this. Hebrews 12:23 says, "You have come to the meeting of God's firstborn children. Their names are written in heaven." Romans 8:29 goes even further when it says, "God decided that they (that's us!) would be like his Son. Then Jesus would be the first born of many brothers. God planned for them to be like his Son."

When we become Christians we become "like his Son." As far as God is concerned we have become like "first born" or "first fruits." What does that mean? It means that we have inherited land in God's kingdom. Jesus said that he went to "prepare a place for us."

The death of Jesus has brought us this close to God. God paid the fixed price, the death of the Lamb of God. Because of his blood on the door posts of our lives, we can pass from spiritual death, over to spiritual life. Now we are being made like Jesus. Because he was the first born Son.

Jesus rose from the dead and received back his inheritance of eternal life, now that is our inheritance as well. We have now become joint heirs with Jesus (Titus 3:7). That was part of God's original plan for us that we could walk and talk with him in the cool of the evening with no barriers between us.

### **Communion**

#### **Prayer**

Father you created us to worship you and freely enjoy your presence. We thank you that you have met us in your Son and brought us home that we can once again experience the true peace of your presence.

## **23. Christmas & Easter**

All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.

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2) Be accurate. 3) Be inspiring (as possible in a few minutes).  
4) Keep to the point (i.e. communion!)

***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

**A piece that proclaims the difference between what the world remembers at Christmas, and what Christians are called to remember always.**

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**When** the busy and slightly mad end of the year rush begins, and we start working ourselves up into a frantic state, a sobering thought to remind ourselves with, is that Jesus did not ever ask us to remember his birth in any special way. He didn't ask us to spend hundreds of dollars trying to buy gifts up to some standard. But he did ask us to remember his death. We celebrate communion to remember his death till he comes again.

His birth held a lot of promise, many prophecies were fulfilled by his birth. Many prophecies were also fulfilled by his death, but with his death, the power of sin and death was broken.

Romans 6:10 says, "*He died to defeat the power of sin.*"

At Christmas people give gifts to each other, but at Easter (Rom. 3:23) "*people are made right with God by his grace, which is a free gift.*" A free gift available to all. It's a gift we need to accept for ourselves, unwrap, investigate, and partake of ourselves. It has to be our choice to accept the gift of his life.

We don't need to chase around finding the best gift, or the best deal, God has already arranged it. There's no need for a late night, last minute dash to find the best gift of all. This is the best gift of all. There's no need to worry if it will suit the person, it always does, it's a perfect gift. The only one that will do the job. The only one that brings the peace of God into our lives.

### **Communion**

### **Prayer**

Thanks be to God who has arranged at his own expense, the perfect gift. We thank you for the gift of your death, and the freedom of your risen life, Amen.

## **24. It Happened To Jesus Too**

All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.

- That they should: 1) Take less than 5 minutes to present!  
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4) Keep to the point (i.e. communion!)

***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

**For those who have also suffered loss.**

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**T**hose of us who enjoy the privilege of taking communion weekly may from time to time, lose the impact of what really happened to Jesus, and how God the Father felt about the whole thing.

This is a true story that happened in a country town in Victoria. It was a horrific event that caught the national headlines for a couple of days in 1999. A sad and yet familiar story of a family learning to how to cope with all the feelings of grief and loss.

Through no fault of the family their small child had been taken away by someone they knew. After some days of hoping for the best, the child turned up dead. He had been killed by someone who should have taken care of him. Someone who was damaged enough emotionally to completely lose sight of their social responsibilities. In the end the death was deliberate.

These days it is not an unusual story, but for those involved it is always a time of grief, soul searching, and generally a time of asking all those hard questions that have very few, if any satisfactory answers.

As we come to communion it is worth noting that Jesus was subject to the same kind of deliberate violence. He was betrayed and taken away by someone he loved. He was tortured and killed. Now we know that we are not perfect and actually deserve many of the things that happen to us.

But God the Father had to watch his perfect Son, be tortured, spat upon, and killed so he could take our sins. He had to experience that injustice, just as many still do. God experienced temporary violent separation from his son as others have to today.

The Bible says that Jesus knows our pain and suffering, he has first hand experience of grief, injustice, humiliation, suffering and loss. Jesus has not avoided any of these hard areas of life. He has gone through them himself. He has asked the hard questions. He has personal experience of how tough it can be.

## **25. Who takes the Blame**

All Communion pieces have been constructed with the following goals in mind.

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2) Be accurate. 3) Be inspiring (as possible in a few minutes).  
4) Keep to the point (i.e. communion!)

***Please feel free to adjust them & make them your own.***

**The age old question of,  
when there is nobody left,  
who takes the blame?**

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We are always quick to pass the buck when ever possible aren't we. It seems to be a firm principle of life that "the blame" is something that needs to be shared around, if not completely avoided. We find that saying, "yes you're right, it was completely my fault," is never the first thought that comes to mind. We either blame God, someone else, the equipment, the car, the world, the weather, our parents, or our teachers, but rarely do we accept the blame ourselves. That is just not a cool thing to do.

You will be glad to know that this is not a new problem. It has been around as long as people have. When we read about Adam and Eve in Genesis, we find the very first people having the same problem. Who was the first person to blame someone else? Well it was Adam. Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the serpent, and, as the story goes, the serpent didn't have a leg to stand on. As you can see it's a very old joke, almost an "original" one.

Fortunately God is good at stepping in and doing what we cannot do. In Genesis it was God who killed the first animal to cover the first people. Today it's just the same. When no one could take the blame, it was Jesus who stepped up and said, "I will take the blame." I will take blame for all of your wrong decisions. I will take the blame for all of your sin. Cast your cares on me.

Let's come before the Lord today and hand over our cares and troubles. Let's ask his forgiveness and receive the bread and wine together.

### ***Communion Time***

#### **Scripture**

*Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*