

When we commune, or fellowship, it means that we must also share with Christ; this indicates a deep commitment to following him through anything and everything. When you share an experience, you cannot really give it back if you decide that you did not like it. We become woven into it, and to try to turn back rips the fabric beyond repair. God wasn't just playing around when he sent his son to die: he was playing for keeps. This is the lesson of Hebrews 6:4-8:

*It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.*

C.S. Lewis once wrote, "The sufferings and rejections of Christ. First, the prayer of anguish; not granted. Then He turned to his friends. They are asleep - as ours or we, are so often, or busy, or away, or preoccupied. Then he faces the nation; the very nation that he brought into existence. It condemns him. There is the State; it claims to be just on a rough, worldly level. Yes, but only so far as is consistent with political expediency. There is still an appeal to the people - the poor and simple whom he had blessed, but they have become overnight a murderous rabble shouting for his blood. There is, then, nothing left but God. And to God, his last words are 'Why has thou forsaken me?' " We must not let Christ experience this forsakenness again. We must not forsake Him as did even his apostles, right after the sacred communion that they shared together. But I am afraid that this is what we do so many times.

Thomas a Kempis wrote in The Imitation of Christ, "Jesus today has many who love his heavenly kingdom, but few who carry his cross; many who yearn for comfort, few who long for distress. Plenty of people he finds to share his banquet, few to share his fast. Everyone desires to take part in his rejoicing, but few are willing to suffer anything for his sake. There are many that follow Jesus as far as the breaking of the bread, few as far as drinking the cup of suffering; many that revere his miracles, few that follow him in the indignity of his cross."

We must make every effort to not follow this path. We must stick to Him like glue, dogging His every step. Fortunately, many did not forsake Christ. Even many that we have just mentioned came to their senses once the confusion wore off and turned back to follow Him and even die for Him. We read in Acts 5:41 that after the apostles were flogged for their preaching, they "left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name." Then they went out and continuously put themselves in the same peril. They understood that now that once Christ had risen physically, the church was His body, and there were still sufferings aimed at that target.

The communion that we have with the Lord is so precious and needful to us. It is a sharing; Christ also needs to know that we feel His pain, even if it is only in some small way. We must take great care with it, as we would the actual broken body of Jesus, not to hurt him any more, but to grow in our love for him every time that we partake of it. We must be willing to share in that suffering, bearing our cross with joy as we march onward to victory.

I wonder about Christ's view of all of this; what does he think of it all? I see him remembering his suffering every time that we sin; in a sense we are grinding his nose in it. We know that the memory of the cross is precious to him; it must be precious to us as well.

Think of the power of so many minds thinking deeply of the communion together, especially at about the same time every week. There should be enough there to show Christ how much we care; it is a reflection, though very weak, of His love for us. We must make this a special sacred event every week, and we must continually consider it in our daily meditations.