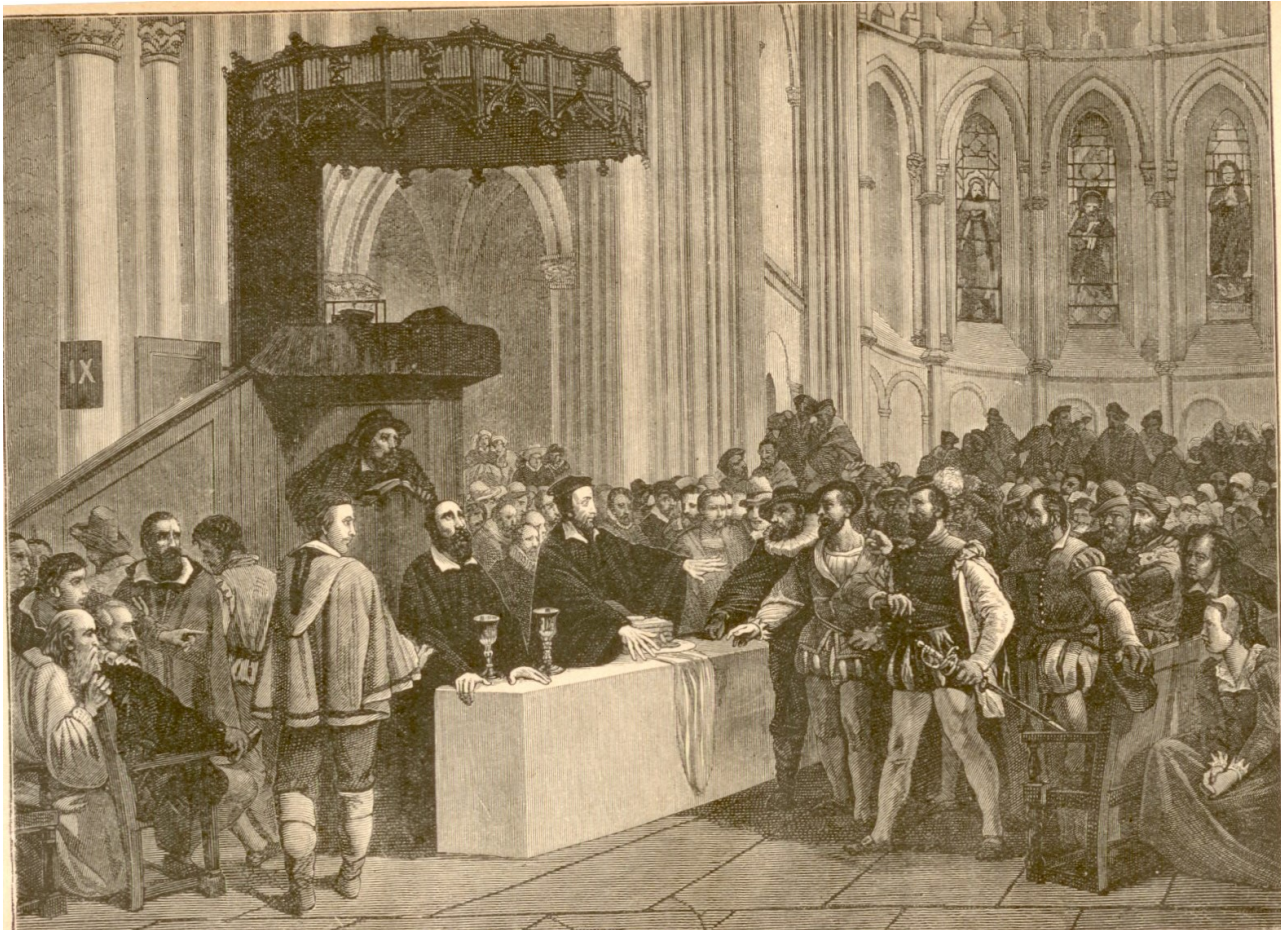


# THE LORD'S SUPPER

## INTRODUCTION

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The opposition soon made other plans to destroy or discredit the Reformer. One of these resulted in a direct confrontation between Calvin and the Council of Two Hundred. The issue was the excommunication of Philibert Berthelier, the Council's secretary, by the consistory of the Church of Geneva in 1551 and his absolution by the State Council in 1553. The following Sunday was communion. Calvin preached in St. Peter's, and at the close of the sermon declared that he would never profane the sacrament by giving it to an excommunicated person. Over his head on the pulpit his emblem was set: a heart aflame in an outstretched hand offered to God. His famous motto was embossed on the dark-red velvet pulpit cover: *Soli Deo Gloria*. Raising his voice and lifting up his hands, he exclaimed, in the words of St. Chrysostom: "I will lay down my life before these hands give the sacred things of God to those who have been branded as his despisers." A crowd of Libertines surged forward to the table. Calvin, descending from the pulpit, stood before the table. With drawn sword a Libertine cried, "Administer communion to us or you will die." His head thrown back and his arms extended over the sacred elements, Calvin responded that although they might cut off his arms, shed his blood, and take his life, they would never force him to give holy things to the profane and dishonour the table of his God. The crowd was stunned, and a long silence followed the dramatic moment. Perrin, one of the city syndics opposed to Calvin, quietly ordered Berthelier not to approach the table. After the crowd withdrew, Beza reports, communion was celebrated "in profound silence and under a solemn awe, as if the Deity Himself had been visibly present among them." (*The Banner Of Truth*; "The Reformers: The Secret Of Their Greatness"; Eugene Osterhaven)

## BIBLICAL TEXTS

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**Matthew 26:26-29** ~ While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

**Luke 22:19-20** ~ And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.

**Acts 2:46** ~ Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

**Acts 20:7** ~ On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

**1 Corinthians 11:23-30** ~ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes. Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

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### It Symbolizes Christ’s Death

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**1 Corinthians 11:26** ~ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

- The breaking of bread symbolizes the breaking of Christ’s body
- The cup poured out symbolizes the pouring out of Christ’s blood
- So when we celebrate communion we are remembering the life and death of our Lord

### It Illustrates our Participation in Christ’s Death

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**Matthew 26:26** ~ While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.”

- The invitation by Christ to celebrate communion is an invitation to participate in the benefits of Christ’s death

**Luke 22:20** ~ And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.

- Our participation in the new covenant is made possible because of Christ’s death

**Romans 6:1-14**

### It Symbolizes our Need for Spiritual Nourishment

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**John 6:53-57** ~ So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me.

- Is this text referring to communion?
- Normal eating and drinking indicates our need for satisfying our physical hunger and thirst
- In a similar way, eating the bread and drinking the cup indicates our need for satisfying our spiritual hunger and thirst
- Christ is capable of giving spiritual nourishment to our souls!

## **It Demonstrates the Unity of Believers**

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**1 Corinthians 10:17** ~ Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.

- Communion reminds us of our oneness with each other in the body of Christ and of the fellowship which we share as fellow members of that body

## **It Quickens our Anticipation of Christ's Return**

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**1 Corinthians 11:26** ~ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

- Thus, communion is both a looking back to the death of Christ and a looking forward the return of Christ
- It is a pledge of our future blessedness and glory when Christ returns for us

## **VIEWS ON THE LORD'S SUPPER**

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### **Transubstantiation (Roman Catholic)**

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- The juice and the bread are actually changed into the blood and body of Christ by the words of the Priest

"The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring: 'Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation.'"

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, section 1376

- At the moment the ordained priest raises and blesses the bread saying, "This is my body" during the mass, the bread is actually transformed into the actual flesh of Christ (though it retains the appearance, odor, and taste of bread)
- In the same way, when he blesses the wine, it is transformed into the actual blood of Christ (though it retains the appearance, odor, and taste of wine)
- Therefore, every time the mass is celebrated, the sacrifice of Christ is repeated....it is a re-presentation of the sacrifice of Christ (i.e. a real sacrifice) although not exactly the same as what Christ did on the cross
- The passage pointed to most frequently to support this understanding of communion is John 6:53-57 and take Christ's words there literally

- Problems with this view:

1. Jesus' statements in John 6 about the bread and cup being His body and blood should not be taken literally

- We should always take the Bible literally, unless taking it literally does not make sense
- In this case, Jesus' words must be interpreted figuratively or symbolically...i.e. eating Jesus' flesh and drinking His blood are symbols of fully and completely receiving Him in our lives
- Jesus made it exceedingly obvious in John 6:63 that His words are to be taken figuratively: vs. 63 ~ It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life

- Jesus was using physical concepts, eating and drinking, to teach spiritual truth...just as consuming physical food and drink sustains our physical bodies, so are our spiritual lives saved and built up by spiritually receiving Him, by grace through faith
2. Christ's death was full and complete...to add to it by making the mass another sacrifice or a re-sacrifice of Christ for our sins is to take away from the once for all death of Christ

Hebrews 7:27 ~ who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the *sins* of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

**Hebrews 9:25-28** ~ nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

**Hebrews 10:12** ~ but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God,

**Hebrews 10:14** ~ For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.

## Consubstantiation (Lutheran)

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- The elements remain bread and wine/juice, but Christ is spiritually present in the elements
- The true body and blood of Christ is in, with, and under the elements although there is no change in them
- Luther rejected the Roman Catholic view but insisted that the phrase "This is my body" be taken in some sense as a literal statement
- Instead of transubstantiation, a doctrine that must be taken on faith alone since no apparent change is present in the bread and wine, the doctrine of consubstantiation was formulated to explain what happened to the bread and wine and why there was no real physical change to these basic elements
- The change from *trans-* to *con-* is the key to seeing the bread and wine as the body and blood of Jesus.
  - The prefix *trans-* means "change" and says that a change takes place - the bread actually becomes the body of Jesus, and the wine actually becomes the blood of Jesus.
  - The prefix *con-* means "with" and says that the bread does not become the body of Jesus but co-exists with the body of Christ so that the bread is both a bread and the body of Jesus...the same thing is true of the wine...it does not become the blood of Jesus, but co-exists with the blood of Jesus so that the wine is both wine and the blood of Jesus
- How can Christ's physical body be everywhere present? → Luther answered this question by referring to the ubiquitous nature of Christ's body – Christ's human nature was present everywhere (not taught in Scripture)
- Problem with this view: we are not to take Christ's statements about the bread and juice being his body and blood literally – he is referring to spiritual realities
- The context of John 6 shows that Jesus is talking in physical terms about bread but he is explaining it in terms of spiritual reality

## Spiritual Presence (Reformed)

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- The bread and wine symbolize the body and blood of Christ but also that Christ is spiritually present in a special way in the Lord's Supper
- This view holds that there is a spiritual presence of Christ with the elements when taken in faith

- Christ is separate from the elements, but is spiritually present in a peculiar way to bless the one taking of them by faith

## **Memorial (Baptist)**

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- This holds that the Lord's Supper is a commemoration – it is in memory of the Lord's death
- The elements simply represent His body and blood

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTAKING THE LORD'S SUPPER**

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### **Must be a Believer**

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**Matthew 26:28** ~ for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

- Only those who have experienced true forgiveness of sins can participate in the Lord's supper
- An unbeliever should let the elements pass as the act of remembering Christ's death for sin doesn't yet apply to them

### **Must Have an Examined Life**

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**1 Corinthians 11:27-34** ~ Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world. So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you will not come together for judgment. The remaining matters I will arrange when I come.

- The Corinthians were guilty of participating in communion with unrepentant sin
- They were selfish and inconsiderate of one another when they were celebrating communion

**1 Corinthians 11:20-21** ~ Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

- "eating the bread or drinking the cup in an unworthy manner" refers to not taking into consideration the other relationships within the body of Christ...refers to those who are out of fellowship with other believers because they are acting selfishly
- Believers must therefore "examine themselves" (vs. 28) to ensure there is no unconfessed sin or broken relationships in their life

### **What about Believing Children?**

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- The Lord's supper is open for all true believers, including believing children
- However, it is crucial to discern if the child is truly a believer before their salvation is reinforced by the ordinances of the Lord's Supper and baptism

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

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- We must appreciate every opportunity to participate in the Lord's supper and celebrate Christ's death for us with great joy
- We must also take seriously the admonition to examine our lives for any unconfessed sin



# How Jonathan Edwards Got Fired, and Why It's Important for Us Today

By Mark Dever

(<http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/how-jonathan-edwards-got-fired-and-why-its-important-for-us-today>)

## The Communion Controversy

It was against the backdrop of these existing tensions that the controversy over Communion broke out in earnest. In December 1748, Edwards told someone that they must profess Christianity before they could take Communion. This simple instruction reversed decades of practice. Stoddard had specifically opposed such requirements. Edwards was now quietly asserting his pastoral authority in a new direction.

The applicant talked to others about this and then refused to profess being a Christian. He was happy to profess godliness, but not being a Christian. He withdrew his request for membership in the church.

Tongues wagged, and eyebrows were raised. In February 1749 Edwards proposed that he preach about this change in the terms of admission to Communion. He proposed preaching a series of sermons to teach the congregation. The leaders preferred that Edwards make his case in print, and so he did.

In the meantime, in April, Mary Hulbert presented herself for Communion and membership, but Edwards and the Church Committee could not agree on whether she should make a profession of faith in order to do this, or whether such an action would prejudice the church. In order to break the impasse, Edwards bought time by offering to resign if the church would wait until after his defense of this change was written and published, so that they would have a chance to carefully consider his views. By a 15 to 3 vote the committee would not agree to it; so she was not allowed to join. The very fact that Edwards offered to resign signals something of how frayed the relationships had become.

In the midst of all this, it became clear that Edwards had come to disagree with the Halfway Covenant — the practice in New England churches of baptizing the infants of baptized, yet non-communicant church members. This only further alienated many of Edwards's church members, who felt that their own rights to church privileges were being threatened.

In a letter to John Erskine in Scotland, written on May 20, 1749, Edwards mentioned the controversy:

A very great difficulty has arisen between my people, relating to qualifications for communion at the Lord's table. My honoured grandfather Stoddard, my predecessor in the ministry over this church, strenuously maintained the Lord's Supper to be a converting ordinance, and urged all to come who were not of scandalous life, though they knew themselves to be unconverted. I formerly conformed to his practice but I have had difficulties with respect to it, which have been long increasing, till I dared no longer proceed in the former way, which has occasioned great uneasiness among my people, and has filled all the country with noise. (Edwards to John Erskine (May 20, 1749), in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards, Letters and Personal Writings*, [Yale University Press, 1998], 271)

By August 1749 his new book had arrived in Northampton: *An Humble Inquiry into the Rules of the Word of God Concerning the Qualifications Requisite to a Complete Standing and Full Communion in the Visible Christian Church* (Edwards, "An Humble Inquiry . . ." in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, [Banner of Truth, 1974], 1:431-484). That fall a secular meeting of citizens urged the church to separate Edwards either from his new principles or from his congregation. In December a council of local ministers was convened to look into the case.

In February 1750 Edwards decided to lecture on his opinions on Thursday afternoons at 2 P.M. The sermons were well-attended by visitors, but not by his own people. And they were to no avail. There was a series of divisive church meetings throughout the spring, issuing in a meeting of a council of ministers from June 19-22, 1750. The council asked to know the congregation's mind on the matter, and in a specially called members' meeting, only 10 percent of the church's members voted for Edwards to remain as their pastor. The ministerial council then decided (by one vote) that the relations between Edwards and the congregation in Northampton should be dissolved. In effect, the council narrowly ratified what the congregation clearly desired.

Marsden sums the matter up this way:

Without his clumsily managed reversal of direction on [the terms of admission to the sacraments], he would have remained pastor in Northampton. True, there were pent-up resentments that came pouring out when the occasion arose. Nonetheless, the question of admission to the sacraments was in itself a momentous issue, with potential to disrupt even a harmonious relationship between a pastor and a town. (Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards*, 370)

Perhaps if Edwards had introduced this more gradually, matters would have turned out differently, but we can only speculate.

### Concern for the Visibility of the Church

In all of this, it is evident that Edwards's concern was a concern that had marked various parts of the Reformation and that was especially typical of the New England Puritan heritage he had received — the concern for the\* visibility\* of the church. By requiring those who are considered full members of the church to profess and demonstrate conversion, Edwards was hearkening back to the need for a clear distinction between the church and the world that had been so typical of the Puritan movement that had originally motivated so much of the settlement of New England. He was willing to put all of his personal convenience as a forty-six-year-old man, with a large (and therefore expensive to maintain) family on the line for what he understood to be faithfulness to Scripture on this particular matter.

As earlier separatists had maintained before him, Edwards understood that the visible church will always be mixed, and yet its purity was an asset to be cherished and improved. Its certain mixture was in no way an excuse for indifference or complacency about the moral purity of the church. In his sermons and particularly in his *Humble Inquiry*, Edwards advocated the simple idea that “none ought to be admitted to the communion and privileges of members of the visible church of Christ in complete standing, but such as are in profession and in the eye of the church's Christian judgment godly or gracious persons” (Edwards, “An Humble Inquiry into the Rules . . . Concerning . . . Communion in the Visible Christian Church,” in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, \* Ecclesiastical Writings\*, ed. David Hall [Yale University Press, 1994], 182).

Edwards summoned the examples of the church in the New Testament, both in the Acts and in the Epistles, as supporting his case. Based on texts such as 1 Corinthians 11:28, “Let a man examine himself . . . and so eat,” Edwards argued that “It is necessary, that those who partake of the Lord's Supper, should judge themselves truly and cordially to accept of Christ, as their only Savior and chief good; for this is what the actions, which communicants perform at the Lord's table, are a solemn profession of” (Ibid., 256). The argument is straightforward enough.

## Why Should We Exclude People from Communion?

Why should we act, like Edwards, to exclude certain people from the Lord's Table in our own local churches? Why should we act to discipline or exclude people from Communion? We could give many reasons, but let me just give you five.

1. For the good of the individual disciplined. (See [1 Corinthians 5:5](#); [Galatians 6:1](#); [1 Timothy 1:20](#); [Titus 1:13](#).) The man in 1 Corinthians 5 was lost in his sin, thinking God was fine with his having an affair with his father's wife. The people in the churches in Galatia thought it was fine that they were trusting in their own works rather than in Christ alone. Alexander and Hymenaeus thought they were fine in blaspheming God. But none of these were! So out of our love for such people, we want to see church discipline practiced. We don't want to allow them to come to the Lord's Table, to enjoy the benefits of membership in our churches. We don't want to publicly affirm to them or to the watching world that they are pictures of what it means to savingly repent and believe. We don't want our church to encourage hypocrites who are hardened and confirmed, lulled in their sins. We do not want to live that kind of life individually or as a church. We don't want to see people who are not partakers of Christ by faith being treated as if they were! And we want this clarified for their own good!
2. For the good of the other Christians, as they see the danger of sin. When Paul wrote to Timothy in [1 Timothy 5:20](#), he said that if a leader sins, he should be rebuked publicly. That doesn't mean that anytime I, as the pastor of my church, do anything wrong, members of my church should stand up in the public service and say, "Hey, Mark, you were wrong when you did this." It means that when there is a serious sin (particularly that's not repented of), it needs to be brought up in public so that others will take warning by seeing the serious nature of sin. Even Solomon Stoddard understood that those who were "scandalous livers" were not to partake of the Lord's Table. Is there anything at your church that would inhibit the "scandalous livers" from taking the Lord's Supper?
3. For the health of the church as a whole. (See [1 Corinthians 5:6-8](#).) Again in 1 Corinthians 5, when Paul was pleading with them, he said that they shouldn't have boasted about having such toleration for sin in the church. He asked rhetorically, "Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough?" Here yeast represented the unclean and spreading nature of sin. So Paul said, "Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast — as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival" — that's the Passover supper — "not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth" (NIV).

For the Passover meal a lamb was slaughtered, and unleavened bread was eaten. Paul here told the Corinthians that the lamb (Christ) had been slaughtered and that they (the Corinthian church) were to be the unleavened bread. They were to have no leaven of sin in them. They as a whole church were to be an acceptable sacrifice. This would seem to mean that there was to be no partaking by those who were not Christians, who had not been forgiven by Christ.

Of course, such a reason to practice discipline doesn't mean that discipline is the point of the church. Discipline is no more the point of the church than medicine is the point of life. Sometimes you are necessarily consumed with it, but generally it is no more than that which allows you to get on with your main task; it is certainly not the main task itself. The main task of the church, which Jonathan Edwards well knew, is glorifying God by preaching the good news of Jesus Christ. And yet, along with that, for the health of the church as a whole, Edwards also knew that church discipline should be practiced, and only those who give evidence of conversion should be allowed to come to the Lord's Table. Only they should be members of our churches.



4. We should want to see discipline practiced in a church for the corporate witness of the church. (See [1 Corinthians 5:1](#); [John 13:34-35](#); [Matthew 5:16](#); [1 Peter 2:12](#).) This is a powerful tool in evangelism. People notice when our lives are different, especially when there is a whole community of people whose lives are different. The church is not a community of people whose lives are perfect, but whose lives are marked by genuinely loving God and loving one another. Conformity to the world in our churches makes our evangelistic task all the more difficult. As Nigel Lee of English Inter-Varsity once said, “We become so like the unbelievers they have no questions they want to ask us.” May we so live that people are made constructively curious.

And finally, the most compelling reason we have to practice church discipline is:

5. For the glory of God, as we reflect his holiness. (See [Ephesians 5:25-27](#); [Hebrews 12:10-14](#); [1 Peter 1:15-16](#); [2:9-12](#); [1 John 3:2-3](#).) That’s why we’re alive! We humans were made to bear God’s image, to carry his character to his creation (see [Genesis 1:27](#)). So it is no surprise that throughout the Old Testament, as God fashioned a people to bear this image for himself, he instructed them in holiness so that their character might better approximate his own ([Leviticus 11:44](#); [19:2](#); [Proverbs 24:1](#), [25](#)). This was the basis for correcting and even excluding some of the people in the Old Testament, as God fashioned a people for himself.

And that was the basis for shaping the New Testament church as well (see [2 Corinthians 6:14 — 7:1](#); [13:2](#); [1 Timothy 6:3-5](#); [2 Timothy 3:1-5](#)). In the passages already mentioned, we find that as Christians we are supposed to be conspicuously holy, not for our own reputation, but for God’s reputation. So in Matthew 5 we see that we are to be the light of the world and that when people see our good deeds they are to glorify God (verse 16). Peter says the same thing: “Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation” ([1 Peter 2:12](#)). This is why God has called us and saved us and set us apart ([Colossians 1:21-22](#)). What else should we look like if we bear his name? Paul wrote to the church at Corinth:

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. ([1 Corinthians 6:9-11](#))

From the very beginning, Jesus had sent his disciples out to teach people to obey all that he had taught ([Matthew 28:19-20](#)). God will have a holy people to reflect his character.

And then when you read the picture of the church at the end of the book of Revelation, you see it is this glorious bride that reflects the character of Christ himself. In chapter 21, and then in chapter 22, we read the words of Christ: “Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood” (22:15).

Taking 1 Corinthians 5 as a model, churches have long recognized church discipline as one of the boundaries that make church membership mean something. The assumption is that a church member is someone who can appropriately take Communion without bringing disgrace on the church, condemnation on themselves, or dishonor to God and his gospel (see 1 Corinthians 11). Edwards understood better than his grandfather that it was not only moral uprightness but true spiritual life that is to be reflected in the church. It is by the collection of such spiritually alive people coming together that God is glorified as the church is made visible. It is through the church being made visible that the gospel is displayed. And the gospel glorifies God.