

THE MEANS OF GRACE

HOW TO RECEIVE THIS SACRAMENT WORTHILY

SKIT

Characters: Pastor, Woman

FYI: This is a true story. This skit retells a conversation that took place between a pastor and a woman following instruction on the Lord's Supper from an adult confirmation Bible class.

Woman: Pastor, do you have a minute?

Pastor: Sure. What's up?

Woman: Thanks for the lesson on Holy Communion, but I have a problem. I can't participate in this Sacrament. You see, I hate someone. I really hate someone. And since you said we should hold no grievances against another before receiving Communion, I can't do it. I hate this person.

Pastor: Can you tell me why you feel this way?

Woman: You see, Pastor, this person took a gun and held it up to my son and his best friend. He pulled the trigger and murdered my son's best friend. Then he turned the gun on my son and pulled the trigger, but it jammed, and my son got away. They caught the man who did this, and he is currently on death row in the state penitentiary. I hate what he did to my son! He murdered my son's best friend right in front of him and almost shot my son too. Do you know what my son has had to go through after all of this? There was emotional trauma of what could have happened to him, the loss of his best friend, and having to testify and face this horrible murderer again. I hate this man for what he did to my son. I hate him for what he wanted to do to my son. And since I hate him, I guess I shouldn't take Communion.

Pastor: I can't begin to imagine what you've been through.

Woman: I have to tell you this because it really bothers me. It really bothers me that I feel this way. I know I'm supposed to forgive this man for what he did. But it's hard! I'm really sorry I feel this way. But I have to be honest with you and God, and this is how I feel. You probably don't even want me to join this church.

Pastor: I really appreciate your honesty in this matter. I'm glad you felt comfortable enough to come to me and share this with me. Yes, you're right;

God wants us to forgive our enemies. I can certainly appreciate that forgiveness for this person is not easy in this case. But I have to tell you that just telling me about this tragic situation shows that it bothers you to feel this way. You see, your faith is telling you that hate is the wrong thing here. God's Law is at work in your heart, reminding you that you should forgive the sinner. Hate the sin but not the sinner.

Woman: I know, Pastor. I hate what he did. I really do! And I'm trying to come to terms with who he is. I don't want to hate him. I want to forgive him.

Pastor: And to that end, I want you to come to the Lord's Table and receive His precious body and blood for your forgiveness and the strengthening of your faith—strengthened that you may forgive this man as Christ has forgiven you.

Woman: You mean it's okay for me to take Communion?

Pastor: Absolutely! You see, if you didn't care that you felt this way, that would be another matter altogether. But that you desire to let go of this hate and forgive him, by all means come to Christ's Table. Remember, part of what we pray in the Lord's Prayer before we take Communion is "And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." God, who is faithful and loves you very much, will strengthen you to do His will.

DISCUSSION

What makes a person worthy to receive the Lord's Supper? Faith. Before attending Holy Communion, we need to examine our lives to see whether we are sorry for our sins, but only the presence of faith makes us worthy.

How do people become worthy? We receive faith as the Holy Spirit gives it to us through the Gospel. Those concerned about the condition of their faith need to hear the Good News of the life Jesus lived for them, His atoning death for their sins, and His resurrection victory over sin, death, and the power of the devil.