

SYMBOLISM OF THE SACRAMENT

(Summary from a talk given by John Bytheway, "The Best Three Hours of the Week")

1. **Cloth on Table** - The trays are received from the back room and put on the table on a cloth. The bread and water trays are arranged and then another cloth is placed over the trays. Could this represent Jesus' tomb? Christ's body was covered with a cloth. Look at the table and see if it doesn't? It resembles a body covered!
2. **Bread is Torn** - As the Sacrament begins, we sing a hymn about Christ and the bread is literally torn. Read the words to Hymn No. 181... "bruised, broken, torn for us on Calvary's Hill." We are watching the symbolism of His body being torn.
3. **Sacrament Prayers are Offered** - These are perhaps the most repeated prayers! When somebody of great respect comes into the room, it is customary to show respect by standing up. However, if Christ were to enter the room, we would show respect by kneeling. That is why the Sacrament Prayers are given while kneeling. The Prayers can be found in Moroni, chapters 4 & 5.
4. **Altar of the Lord** - The Sacrament table represents an altar of the Lord.
5. **"That they may witness unto thee"** - We are saying that we are willing to testify of Christ when we take the Sacrament! We are saying, If you want to know what Mormons believe, watch me! When I go to school, watch me! When I'm with my friends, watch me! That is testifying of Christ.
6. **Always Remember Him** - Remember the story of the mountain climbers and the term "belay?" It means to secure by a rope to something sturdy. We are belayed to Christ. When we fall, we are literally saved by just ten feet while his arms are outstretched, fingers digging into the rocks. Christ has saved us through the atonement. When someone saves our life, we don't give them a thank you gift and call it done. No. We "always remember him" who has saved us.
7. **Our Covenant Hand** - Our right hand is our covenant hand, and therefore the hand we reach to take the bread and water. We are eating and drinking perhaps to represent putting Christ (his body and blood) inside us so He can get into our hearts and into our nature.
8. **White Shirts** - Those passing the sacrament are wearing white shirts to represent the clothing we wore at baptism, and the clothes we will wear in preparation for our temple covenants.

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Sacrament Meeting and the Sacrament
Elder Dallin H. Oaks

- The ordinance of the sacrament makes the sacrament meeting the most sacred and important meeting in the Church.
- How we dress is an important indicator of our attitude and preparation for any activity in which we will engage. The same should be true of how we dress when we are to participate in the ordinance of the sacrament. It is like going to the temple. Our manner of dress indicates the degree to which we understand and honor the ordinance in which we will participate.
- During sacrament meeting—and especially during the sacrament service—we should concentrate on worship and refrain from all other activities. Sacrament meeting is not a time for reading books or magazines. Young people, it is not a time for whispered conversations on cell phones or for texting persons at other locations.
- The music of sacrament meeting is a vital part of our worship. How wonderful when every person in attendance joins in the worship of singing—especially in the hymn that helps us prepare to partake of the sacrament.
- This ordinance should always be performed with reverence and dignity. Priests who offer the prayers should speak the words slowly and distinctly. The teachers who prepare and the deacons who pass the emblems of the sacrament also perform a very sacred act.
- Young men who officiate in the ordinance of the sacrament should be worthy.
- All should be well-groomed and modestly dressed. There should be nothing about their personal appearance or actions that would call special attention to themselves or distract anyone present from full attention to the worship and covenant making that are the purpose of this sacred service.
- Elder Jeffrey R. Holland said: “May I suggest that wherever possible a white shirt be worn by the deacons, teachers, and priests who handle the sacrament. For sacred ordinances in the Church we often use ceremonial clothing, and a white shirt could be seen as a gentle reminder of the white clothing you wore in the baptismal font and an anticipation of the white shirt you will soon wear into the temple and onto your missions.”

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