

ADDITIONAL READINGS REGARDING THE BASIC MEANING OF COMMUNION

Frederick Buechner, *Listening to Your Life: Daily Meditations with Frederick Buechner* (Harper-Collins, 1992) pp. 260-261.

More Than Symbol

In its fullest sense, remembering is far more than the long backward glance of nostalgia, and in its fullest sense the symbol of bread and wine is far more than symbol. It is part of the mystery of any symbol always to contain something of the power of the thing symbolized just as it is more than a mere piece of painted cloth that makes your pulse quicken when you come upon your country's flag in a foreign land, more than a mere sound that gladdens your spirit when you hear someone speak the name of an absent friend. When in remembrance of Jesus, the disciples ate the bread and drank the wine, it was more than mere bread and wine they were dealing with, and for all the tragic and ludicrous battles Christians have fought with each other for centuries over what actually takes place at the Mass, the Eucharist, Communion, or whatever they call it, they would all seem to agree that something extraordinary takes place. Even if the priest is a fraud, the bread a tasteless wafer, the wine not wine at all but temperance grape juice, the one who comes to this outlandish meal in faith may find there something to feed his deepest hunger, may feel stirring within himself a life even more precious, more urgent, more near than his own.

Michael Green, "Communion," *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity: An A-to-Z Guide to Following Christ in Every Aspect of Life*, ed. Robert Banks & R. Paul Stevens (I.V.P., 1997), pp. 176-182.

Green is an Anglican. Free Methodism's view of the Lord's Supper is taken from our Anglican roots. In this book, the editors have chosen Green as representative of the broad Christian consensus.

Steve Harper, "Food for the Journey (Lord's Supper)," *Devotional Life in the Wesleyan Tradition* (The Upper Room, 1995), pp. 36-46.

This is a small book on practices for maintaining and deepening our walk with Jesus written for people who want to know more about perspectives in our part of Christ's family (the "Wesleyan" denominations).

John Wesley, "The Duty of Constant Communion" cf.
<<http://gbgm-umc.org/UMHISTORY/Wesley/sermons/serm-101.stm>>

This is Wesley's sermon (in print in various editions of his *Works*) on the importance of communion, and his response to those who either don't participate or don't participate very often.