One Table, Many Doctrines: Why the “Mile-Long Communion” in D.C. Is It Biblical Unity?

Introduction

In recent years, a growing movement has sought to unite Christians of all denominations under the banner of worship, revival, and national healing. The upcoming **“Communion America”** event—**featuring a one-mile-long communion table** in Washington, D.C. beginning on October 9th, 2025—is presented as a historic act of unity and spiritual renewal. Yet beneath its emotional appeal lies a deeper theological concern.

When Scripture speaks of *the Lord’s table*, it refers not merely to an outward act of fellowship, but to a sacred ordinance established for those who are united in truth, faith, and doctrine through Christ. To partake together of His body and blood is to confess agreement in His covenant and teaching. When that table becomes a public display open to all, regardless of belief, repentance, or discernment, it ceases to represent the unity of the body of Christ and instead becomes a symbol of confusion and compromise.

This article is not written to condemn those who sincerely desire revival or unity, but to **call believers back to a biblical understanding of communion and true Christian fellowship**. For unity apart from truth is not unity at all—it is mixture. Scripture commands us to test the spirits (1 John 4:1) and to walk in the light as He is in the light (1 John 1:7). The Lord’s Supper is holy, not to be used for spectacle or sentiment, but to remember the sacrifice that purchased our redemption and to affirm the truth that unites His true church.

What is this event?

From what is gathered:

- The upcoming event is called **Communion America**, to be held in Washington, D.C. October 9–12, 2025. Awaken the Dawn
- They plan a table stretching over the National Mall ("one table the length of the whole National Mall") with worship, prayer, communion, and healing ministry. Awaken the Dawn+2CBN+2
- The event is explicitly ecumenical: they appeal to Christians of many denominations to "come to the table," implying unity around the Lord's Supper despite doctrinal differences. CBN+2Awaken the Dawn+2
- The organizers present it as a "Communion Revival" or "historic communion revival"—a kind of spiritual/missional act for the nation. Awaken the Dawn+2CBN+2

So framing of—"an ecumenical false religious event" (meaning: one that goes beyond biblical guardrails)—is not without precedent in the critiques by others.

Possible Theological Concerns & Pitfalls

Here are several significant theological questions that such an event might provoke. There is a degree of overlap with what some might consider to be intuition.

Concern	Biblical / Theological Basis	How it might apply to “mile-long communion” events
Confessional Disunity and False Unity	Communion (the Lord’s Supper) is not merely a symbolic meal, but a sign of **fellowship in truth and doctrine**. When Christians partake together, they (in effect) express agreement in what they believe and teach about Christ, the atonement, ecclesiology, etc.	When very diverse denominations (with contradictory views on sacraments, Christology, ecclesial authority, etc.) are invited to commune together, there is a danger of **presenting a unity that does not exist** in doctrine. It may mislead people into thinking that doctrinal divisions are minor or irrelevant. This is a common critique of ecumenical sacramental events. (See for example “Holy Communion or Unholy Chaos?”) Modern Reformation

Concern	Biblical / Theological Basis	How it might apply to “mile-long communion” events
Closed vs. Open Communion / Guarded Table	Some Christian traditions practice *closed communion* (only those within a particular confession or who have been approved) or *fenced communion* (those who have properly examined themselves). The New Testament warns about partaking “unworthily” (1 Cor 11:27–29), and Paul rebukes Corinthian abuses of the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor 11:17–34).	In a mass, open, uncontrolled setting, the safeguards (examination, pastoral oversight, doctrinal preparation) are virtually impossible to enforce. This may lead to people partaking unwittingly who are not in fellowship or have contrary beliefs. That risks violating Paul’s warnings or making the ordinance cheap or misused.

Concern	Biblical / Theological Basis	How it might apply to “mile-long communion” events
Sacramentum vs. Symbol, Depth vs. Ritualism	Communion is more than a “show of unity” or a “symbolic gesture.” It involves divine mystery, the real (in some traditions) presence, spiritual nourishment, and the covenantal bond of believers. The dignity, sanctity, and reverence of the Lord’s Supper can be lost if treated as a mere mass symbolic act or pageant.	When you scale a communion event into a mass public spectacle, there is danger of **profanation**—losing sense of holy awe, reverence, order, and respect for the sacredness of the elements. The more the event becomes “a movement event,” the more risk it becomes about emotional experiences or public optics rather than intimate communion with Christ.

Concern	Biblical / Theological Basis	How it might apply to “mile-long communion” events
Instrumentalizing Communion for Social/Political Ends	When a communion event is framed not just as remembrance but as a national spiritual healing or petition (e.g. healing America, reconciliation of the nation), there is a risk of mixing political or social agendas with what is essentially a divine ordinance.	The event already has rhetoric about “healing the nation,” “restoring the soul of a nation,” etc. Facebook+2CBN+2 In that mix, the Lord’s Supper may be used as a means or tool toward national unity or revival, rather than held strictly as an ordinance instituted by Christ for his church. That shifts it from an act of worship to an instrument of agenda.
Minimizing the Cost of Discipleship & Confession	True Christian unity must be rooted in shared confession of Christ, repentance, holiness, discipleship, and submission to biblical authority. Unity is not just “getting along,” but unity in truth.	Events like “come as you are” to the table may overlook the seriousness of teaching, repentance, discipleship, and accountability. It might inadvertently promote a “cheap grace” mentality: “All are welcome, no questions asked,” regardless of the heart’s posture or alignment with biblical truth.

A Biblical and Historical Pattern to Consider

An insightful observation with crucial tension in modern practice, versus the biblical and historical pattern, is the modern practice of a thimble of juice and a tiny wafer. This is a significant departure—a ritualized reduction—of the original, far more substantial and communal event.

The biblical pattern has a more tangible and deeply integrated ceremonial event that's reflective of the life of the faithful body. Here is a breakdown of that pattern based on Scripture and the practice of the early church. What's next is what we'll see is a look at the biblical pattern: A Covenantal Meal within the Gathered Assembly.

The Biblical Pattern: A Covenantal Meal within the Gathered Assembly

1. The Context: A Full Meal (The *Agape* Feast) The Lord's Supper in the early church was not an isolated ritual. It was intimately connected to a shared meal, often called the *Agape* (Love) Feast. This is explicitly described in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34. The believers would gather and share a full, common meal together. The communion was the climactic, sacramental focus *within* that meal.

- **1 Corinthians 11:20-21 (NKJV):** *"Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk."* Paul's rebuke here is telling. He says their

gatherings have become so disorderly and selfish that they can't even be called a true *"Lord's Supper."* This implies the Lord's Supper was understood to be a shared, communal meal where all partook together, not a hurried snack.

2. The Elements: Common, Substantial Food and Drink The elements Jesus used at the Last Supper were not special religious artifacts; they were the common, substantive components of the Passover meal: unleavened bread and wine.

- The **bread** was a necessary part of the meal that satisfied hunger.
- The **wine** (fermented, as was all wine in the ancient world due to preservation needs) was a shared drink of celebration and covenant ratification.

This contrasts sharply with the modern, symbolic tokens that have no relation to nourishing the body. The original elements were both symbolic *and* physically sustaining, reflecting the spiritual and physical realities of Christ's gift.

3. The Meaning: A Covenantal Memorial and Proclamation The act was a participatory memorial, a tangible re-enactment of the New Covenant. It was not a somber, silent, individualistic moment but a corporate act of remembrance and proclamation.

- **1 Corinthians 11:24-26:** *"…do this in remembrance of Me… For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes."* The *"proclamation"* was a corporate testimony to one another and to the watching world of their shared faith in Christ's sacrificial death and their hope in His return.

4. The Participants: The Discerned, Local Body This sacrament was for the baptized believers who were members of the local,

visible body, living in accountability and fellowship. This is why Paul gives such a strong warning about self-examination and discerning the Lord's body (the church) in 1 Corinthians 11:27-29. It was a family meal for the family of God, not a public event for anyone passing by.

The Shift to Ritualization: How and Why It Happened

The observation that has changed in today' church, and the historically accurate account in the 1st century is noteworthy. The shift from a full meal to a ritualized token began in the early centuries of the church for several reasons:

1. **Practicality:** As churches grew larger, especially after the Edict of Milan (AD 313), hosting a full meal for the entire congregation became logistically difficult.
2. **The Structure of the Early Church:** The apostolic model was based on smaller, household-based gatherings (Romans 16:5, 1 Corinthians 16:19) that fostered close fellowship and mutual accountability. As congregations grew in size, particularly in urban centers, the practice of a shared communal meal became logistically unmanageable. This growth moved the church away from an intimate family table and toward a more formalized, ritualistic ceremony administered to a large audience, fundamentally altering the relational dynamic inherent in the original Lord's Supper.
3. **Abuses:** The very abuses Paul addressed in Corinth (gluttony, drunkenness, class divisions) continued to be a problem, leading church leaders to seek a more controlled ceremony.
4. **The Rise of Clericalism:** The role of the priest/clergy

became elevated, and the sacrament became something *administered by* the clergy *to* the laity, rather than a meal shared *among* the laity. The table became an altar.

5. **Theological Developments:** Especially in medieval Roman Catholicism, the doctrine of *transubstantiation* transformed the Eucharist into a mystical sacrifice. The focus shifted from a communal meal of remembrance to a miraculous, awe-inspiring event performed by a priest. This further distanced it from its original, simpler form.

Conclusion: Recovering the Biblical Pattern

Many reformed and conservative evangelical churches are now seeking to recover the biblical richness of the ordinance. This can look like:

- Using a full loaf of bread and a common cup to emphasize unity and substance.
- Holding communion within the context of a church-wide meal or fellowship time.
- Ensuring it is administered within the bounds of the local church membership, emphasizing its nature as a covenant sign for the faithful.

The local body of Christ needs to be mindful of discernment and correct some of the traditional errors of today’s communion practice. The modern practice, while well-intentioned, often loses the profound physicality, communality, and covenantal weight of the original command. It has become a brief ritual rather than a shared meal of proclamation, reducing a rich symbol of fellowship into a

individualized moment of introspection.