THE QUESTION

Should Christians skip communion if a brother has something against them?

Asked by a THF member on June 28, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 8 numbered quotations · the 13 early Christian passages and 21 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/should-christians-skip-communion-if-a-brother-has-something-against-them

The short answer *From the text: says what the passages say*

The early writers said to make peace first. The Didache says no one in conflict with a fellow believer should join the Lord's Day meal until they are reconciled. Irenaeus, Cyprian and the Apostolic Constitutions apply Jesus' words: leave your gift, be reconciled with your brother, then come back and offer it.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
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POINT 1 OF 8

The Didache says reconcile before gathering

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

The Didache describes the Lord's Day meal of breaking bread and giving thanks. It says anyone in conflict with a fellow believer should not come together with the church until they are reconciled, so the offering stays pure.

1

"But on every Lord's Day, gather together, break bread, and give thanks after you have confessed your sins, so that your sacrifice may be pure."

later in the same passage

"But let no one who is in conflict with a fellow believer come together with you until they are reconciled, so that your sacrifice may not be defiled."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Didache,** *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 14 (c. 50–120 AD) **Source 2, page 6** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 8

Jesus said leave your gift and go

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Tatian's Gospel harmony gives Jesus' words: if you remember at the altar that your brother holds a grudge against you, leave the gift, make it right with him, and then come back and offer it.

2

"If you are now offering your gift at the altar, and remember there that your brother has conceived some grudge against you, Matthew 5:24 leave your gift at the altar, and go first and satisfy your brother, and then return and offer your gift."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tatian,** *Diatessaron* 8 (c. 150–180 AD) **Source 4, page 6** Read it in the library ›

THF's updated English

POINT 3 OF 8

Irenaeus applies this to the church's offering

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Irenaeus is speaking about the pure offering the church makes to God. He says the Lord wants it offered with simplicity and innocence, and he quotes this same command to be reconciled first.

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3 “For through the gift, both honor and affection are shown towards the King; and the Lord, wishing us to offer it with simplicity and innocence, expressed Himself this way: “Therefore, when you offer your gift on the altar and remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift before the altar and go your way; first be reconciled with your brother, and then return and offer your gift.””

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book IV* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 6, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 8

It matters whichever side holds the grudge

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

The Apostolic Constitutions explains the gift as prayer and thanksgiving. It warns that if you hold something against your brother, or he holds something against you, your prayers and thanks will not be accepted.

4 “Now the gift to God is each person's prayer and thanksgiving. If, therefore, you have anything against your brother, or he has anything against you, neither will your prayers be heard nor will your thanksgivings be accepted, because of that hidden anger.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Apostolic Constitutions** (c. 250–380 AD) **Source 11, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 5 OF 8

God does not accept a divided worshiper's sacrifice

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Cyprian says God wants his people to be peacemakers and of one mind in his house. So he does not receive the sacrifice of someone who is in disagreement with others.

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5

"For God commands us to be peacemakers, to be in agreement, and to be of one mind in His house."

later in the same passage

"So God does not receive the sacrifice of a person who is in disagreement, but commands him to go back from the altar and first be reconciled to his brother, so that God also may be appeased by the prayers of a peacemaker."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Treatises* (c. 248–258 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 10, page 6 Read it in the library ›

POINT 6 OF 8

Forgiving others is tied to being forgiven

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Cyprian reads the Lord's Prayer as a condition: we ask God to forgive us in the same way we forgive those who owe us. Refusing to forgive puts our own mercy at risk.

6

"Here He has clearly added the law and bound us with a certain condition and obligation: we must ask for our debts to be forgiven in the same way that we ourselves forgive our debtors."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Treatises* (c. 248–258 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 10, page 6 Read it in the library ›

POINT 7 OF 8

Make peace quickly before anger hardens

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

The Apostolic Constitutions urges believers not to let the sun go down on their anger. It explains this as being reconciled quickly, before anger turns into lasting hatred.

7

"That is, be quickly reconciled, lest your anger continue so long that it turns into settled hatred and produces sin."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Apostolic Constitutions** (c. 250–380 AD)
THF's updated English

Source 11, page 6 Read it in the library ›

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POINT 8 OF 8

Correct one another in peace, not anger

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

The Didache tells believers to correct each other peacefully, as the Gospel teaches. Someone who wrongs another is kept at a distance until he repents.

8

"And correct one another, not in anger but in peace, as you have it in the Gospel"

later in the same passage

"But if anyone acts wrongly against another, let no one speak to him, and let him hear nothing from you until he repents."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Didache,** *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 15 (c. 50–120 AD) **Source 1, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**

THF's updated English

THE LIMITS

What these passages don't tell us

- These passages tell the believer to go and seek peace; they do not say what to do when the other person refuses to be reconciled.
- They speak of the gathering and the offering in general and do not give a set waiting time before returning.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 13 early Christian passages and 21 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–13, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 14–16, in Bible order), then 18 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF's updated English unless marked "1885 English" (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). "… [continues online]" marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

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EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *13 passages from 9 writers*

Didache, *c. 50–120 AD · sources 1–2*

1 *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 15 (1885 English) **Quote 8, page 5** “18:15-17 but to every one that acts amiss against another, let no one speak, nor let him hear anything from you until he repents… [continues online] **read ›**

2 *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 14 (1885 English) **Quote 1, page 2** “let no one that is at variance with his fellow come together with you, until they be reconciled, that your sacrifice may not be profaned… [continues online] **read ›**

Hermas, *c. 90–150 AD · source 3*

3 *Shepherd* (1885 English) “believing it, you will also have something to say against your brother… [continues online] **read ›**

Tatian, *c. 150–180 AD · sources 4–5*

4 *Diatessaron* 8 **Quote 2, page 2** “5:23 If you are now offering your gift at the altar… [continues online] **read ›**

5 *Diatessaron* 27 (1885 English; on point 8) “him. 16 Matthew 18:15 And if your brother act wrongly towards you, go and reprove him between you and 17 him alone: if he hear you, you have gained… [continues online] **read ›**

Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · sources 6–7*

6 *Against Heresies: Book IV* **Quote 3, page 3** “when you offer your gift on the altar and remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift before the altar and go your way; first be reconciled… [continues online] **read ›**

7 *Against Heresies: Book IV* (on point 5) bought Me incense with money, nor have I desired the fat of your sacrifices; but you have stood before Me in your sins and iniquities." Therefore, He says, "I will… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · source 8*

8 *Instructor* 3.12 (1885 English; on point 8) “in respect to forbearance. If your brother, it is said, sin against you, rebuke him… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · source 9*

9 *On Patience* 12 (1885 English; on point 7) “5:23-24 If the sun go down over our wrath, we are in jeopardy: we are not allowed to remain one day without patience… [continues online] **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · source 10*

10 *Treatises* **Quotes 5, 6, page 4** “God does not receive the sacrifice of a person who is in disagreement, but commands him to go back from the altar and first… [continues online] **read ›**

Apostolic Constitutions, *c. 250–380 AD · source 11*

11 *Apostolic Constitutions* **Quotes 4, 7, pages 3, 4** “therefore, you have anything against your brother, or he has anything against you, neither will your prayers be heard nor will your thanksgivings be… [continues online] **read ›**

Commodianus, *c. 250–300 AD · sources 12–13*

12 *Writings* (1885 English; on point 7) “not angry with your devout brother without a cause, for you shall receive whatever you may have done from him… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *Writings* (1885 English; on point 7) “also ought you. Twice do you sin against God, if you extend strifes to your brother… [continues online] **read ›**

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THE BIBLE *3 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

14 **Matthew 5:22** But I tell you that everyone who is angry with his brother without a cause will be liable to judgment. Whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ will be liable to the council. Whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the fire of hell. **read ›**

15 **Matthew 5:23** “If therefore you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother has anything against you, **read ›**

16 **Ephesians 4:26** Be angry, and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *18 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Proverbs 11:13

Matthew 5:25 · 5:42 · 5:45 · 18:3 · 18:21 · 18:22 · 19:9

Luke 6:37 · 15:3 · 15:11 · 17:3 · 17:4

Romans 12:8 · 12:9

Galatians 6:1

1 Timothy 3:4

Titus 3:2

Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “Should Christians skip communion if a brother has something against them?” on June 28, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

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THE END OF THIS STUDY