

A break down of each part of the deacon's text message and examination with a critical and biblical perspective, pointing out potential issues or misunderstandings.

1. "Teddy, I am wondering if you were listening to what Pastor _____ spoke about in his message today regarding communion.."

- Is the deacon assuming that I wasn't listening or that I misunderstood?**
- This statement assumes that understanding is uniform and disregards the possibility that different interpretations of communion exist within Christian traditions. Many denominations approach communion with varying theological perspectives.**

2. "One part was about taking communion in an unworthy manner."

- What does it mean to take communion in an unworthy manner? Who is ultimately responsible for determining worthiness? Is it meant to be a personal matter between an individual and God?**
- According to 1 Corinthians 11:27-29, Paul emphasizes *self-examination* before taking communion, placing the responsibility on the individual rather than on others to judge. Communion is a personal act of reflection, and determining who is worthy is between an individual and God.**

3. "You are not a born-again Christian."

- How does the deacon define being "born again," and is it their place to make that judgment?**
- In John 3:3, Jesus speaks of being "born again" as a spiritual transformation through faith, which is deeply personal. No one can fully judge another's heart or relationship with God (1 Samuel 16:7: "*The Lord looks at the heart.*"). Faith journeys vary, and labeling someone as "not born again" can be presumptive and exclusionary.**

4. "It is not biblical for you to take communion."

- Is this statement biblically sound, or does it reflect personal or denominational beliefs?
- Different Christian traditions interpret communion differently. Some churches practice “open communion,” where all who seek Christ can partake, while others practice “closed communion,” limiting it to members or believers of a certain doctrinal standing. The Bible does not explicitly restrict communion only to those who meet a specific denominational requirement.

5. “I intentionally passed you by.”

- Does the deacon have the authority to deny communion to another believer? Has the church specifically entrusted you with making that decision?
- Jesus welcomed all to the table, even those who would betray him (e.g., Judas at the Last Supper). Communion is an opportunity for grace and transformation, not an exclusionary practice meant to alienate those seeking God.

6. “One day I pray that you would repent/turn from your sin and trust/believe in Jesus Christ’s full payment for your sin...”

- Who among us is without sin? Are we not all in need of God’s grace daily?
- According to Romans 3:23, “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” It is incorrect to single out one person’s perceived sinfulness as a barrier to communion while others partake freely. Communion itself is an act of seeking forgiveness and renewal.

7. “...and become a member of God’s family.”

- Is membership in God’s family conditional upon a specific denominational perspective?
- The Bible teaches that those who believe in Christ are already part of God’s family (John 1:12). Faith and discipleship are ongoing processes, and no human can definitively say when someone has or has not entered God’s family.

8. “Please don’t harden your heart towards God and miss eternal life in heaven.”

- Is this statement assuming that rejection of their specific interpretation means rejection of God?
- Suggesting “hardening your heart” and “missing eternal life” is a strong assumption. Many believers seek God in different ways and grow spiritually at their own pace. Instead of judgment, encouragement and support are more aligned with Christ’s teachings.

Responding with Grace and Truth

1. Communion Should Unite, Not Divide

I believe that communion is a gift from God meant to bring believers together in remembrance of Christ’s sacrifice. Scripture, such as 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, teaches that communion represents our unity as the body of Christ. When it becomes a tool for exclusion, I fear it moves away from Christ’s intent and creates division rather than fostering love and fellowship.

2. We Are All Sinners in Need of God’s Grace

As Romans 3:23 reminds us, “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” I recognize my imperfections, but I also know that God’s grace is greater than my shortcomings. Communion, to me, is not a reward for righteousness but an opportunity to seek God’s mercy and renewal. None of us are without sin, and only God truly knows our hearts.

3. Self-Examination is a Personal Responsibility

I respect your concern for my spiritual journey, but I believe Scripture encourages self-examination when approaching communion (1 Corinthians 11:28). It is ultimately between me and God to search my heart and intentions, and I trust in His leading in my life.

4. My Faith is a Journey

I am continually seeking to grow in my faith and understanding of Christ. I appreciate your prayers and encouragement, but I hope we can have a dialogue rooted in love rather than judgment. My desire is to follow Christ with a sincere heart, and I trust that He is working in me according to His timing and will.

My heart is not hardened toward God, but rather open and seeking His truth. I

hope that, despite our differences, we can continue to worship together and encourage one another in faith.

**Blessings,
Teddy**