

More Than Bread and Water

BY RYAN CARR
Church Magazines

While we are blessed to have the chance to partake of the sacrament each Sunday, it can be easy to take it for granted because we take it so often. How can we better appreciate this sacred ordinance? Some young men from the Belgrade Second Ward, Bozeman Montana Stake, share a few ideas.

Brek and Jake Halgren and Michael and Evan Romrell want to remember the Savior and have His Atonement work in their lives. Taking the sacrament gives them—and each of us—that opportunity. It’s a chance to worship the Savior and to improve. And as the young men help with the sacrament, they use the priesthood to serve others.

Feeling Reverence for the Sacrament

These young men also know the sacrament is important to ward members, so they take their priesthood responsibility seriously. What do they think about as they share the sacrament with the ward? Jake, 16, is grateful for the chance to serve. “You realize that you’re representing the Lord,” he says.

His brother Brek, 18, says, “As a priest, I’m

trying to make sure I’m doing everything correctly. But I’m also trying to think about the Atonement. Every week you have the incredible opportunity to repent of your sins, to have a new start on the week, to work on the things you need to work on. It’s a great opportunity to be spiritually uplifted.”



EMBLEMS OF THE ATONEMENT

“When an Aaronic Priesthood bearer’s hand is extended with a sacrament tray, he isn’t just

passing the sacrament. He is introducing into the lives of members the emblems of the holy Atonement and lifting the members heavenward.”

Bishop Keith B. McMullin, Second Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric, “The Miracle of the Priesthood,” *New Era*, Apr. 2004, 14.

How can you feel the Spirit more in sacrament meeting?

Michael, 17, also thinks about the Savior: “One of the strongest parts of my testimony is of the Atonement of Jesus Christ. I can think about mistakes I’ve made and know that if I repent, those mistakes are cleared because of what He did. Every time we take the sacrament, that reminds me of the Atonement.”

Being Worthy

They understand that being worthy to hold the priesthood is important. Brek says it’s a privilege to hold the priesthood. “I see it as a great opportunity. You watch your actions throughout the week. It really helps.”

Evan, 15, says, “During the week, knowing I have the priesthood helps me choose the right so I can be able to help with the sacrament worthily.”

Learning Reverence

These young men learned reverence for the sacrament when they were children. Their parents asked them to pay attention while the sacrament was being passed. That feeling has carried over to their teen years. Michael says, “I can’t stress enough how important the sacrament is to me. The sacrament represents the Lord’s body and His blood. We take His name upon ourselves. We go forth and proclaim His gospel and try to be good examples. There’s no way that we could ever return to our Heavenly Father if it were not for Him. The sacrament is that reminder.”

They also learned reverence for the sacrament by seeing other Aaronic Priesthood holders, including their older brothers, perform their priesthood duties. Evan, for example, remembers times when his older brother, who is now serving a mission in Brazil, talked to him about the sacrament, the priesthood, and other gospel topics.

Brek’s older brothers were good examples to him too. “As they prepared the sacrament, I always looked up to them,” Brek says.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY RYAN CARR AND COURTESY OF THE HALGREN FAMILY, EXCEPT AS NOTED; LEFT: PHOTOGRAPH OF SACRAMENT BY MATTHEW REIER



DRESS CAN SHOW REVERENCE

Why do these young men wear white shirts and ties? To show respect for the Lord's sacrament. "Clothes tell others how you feel," says Evan Romrell. "If you dress sloppy, that's basically saying that you don't really care."

They want to dress nicely so they don't distract ward members from thinking of the Savior as they take the sacrament. Jake Halgren says, "If



you're in the congregation and you're watching deacons and priests and their shirts are hanging out or are dirty, people are going to be distracted by that. And they might question what you think of the sacrament. So if you're dressed well, you convey a sense of respect for the sacrament."

The Halgren (top) and Romrell brothers help with the sacrament, and they do so reverently because of their testimonies of the Savior.

Michael thinks of his mother's teaching: "She has stressed that the sacrament is the main reason why we come to church. We have the sacrament to remind us of the Atonement."

The Atonement of Jesus Christ was an act of service that affects the whole human family. On a smaller scale, Aaronic Priesthood holders can serve their ward or branch by helping with the sacrament, showing reverence for it, and living worthy to partake of it. **NE**