

The Lord's Supper
(A Meditation on Communion)

- I. The communion service of the church (Lord's Supper / Lord's Table) is the New Testament counterpart to the Passover feast of the Old Testament. **1CO 5:7-8.**
- A. The Passover was a memorial of God's great work of judgment and deliverance. **EXO 12:14.**
- B. The church's communion is similarly a memorial of God's great work of judgment and deliverance. **1CO 5:8.**
- C. The Old Testament Passover became the New Testament Communion by Christ's appointment. **LUK 22:15-20.**
- D. The O.T. Passover was not a type of the N.T. Communion feast.
1. The O.T. Passover was a *type or shadow* of Christ and His sacrificial sufferings.
 2. The N.T. Communion is a *memorial* of Christ and His sacrificial sufferings.
- E. Both feasts speak of:
1. a general judgment of death from which only some are delivered. **EXO 11:6-7 c/w REV 20:6, 14-15.**
 2. salvation provided only for God's covenant people. **EXO 12:3 c/w JOH 10:11, 26; EPH 5:25.**
 3. an innocent, blemish-free lamb that must be sacrificed. **EXO 12:5 c/w JOH 1:29; ACT 8:32; 1PE 1:18-19.**
 4. blood being applied to the same place where God's word should be written. **EXO 12:7; DEU 11:20 c/w HEB 8:10; 9:14.**
 5. the lamb's blood not to be trodden under foot. **EXO 12:7 c/w HEB 10:28-29.**
 - a. One must discern the body of Christ in the Lord's Supper.
 - b. To exploit it for carnal indulgence or to partake of it as if a common meal without regard to the body of Christ is to do so shamefully and unworthily. **1CO 11:20-22, 27-30.**
 - c. guilty of means to be "culpably responsible for (a result); to blame for the loss or destruction of (something)."
 - d. Christ's physical body will never again be subject to suffering. **1PE 3:18.**
 - e. The expression, "guilty of the body and blood" refers to guilt by association. One who unworthily partakes of the elements is deemed guilty of that which the elements represent: the body and blood of Christ.
- F. Consider some distinctions:
1. Moses by faith *kept* the Passover (**HEB 11:28**). Christ by faith *became* the Passover. **LUK 23:46.**
 - a. commend: To give in trust or charge, deliver to one's care or keeping; to commit, entrust. Now esp. used of committal to the divine keeping: 'To commit with a prayer or act of faith, 'to deliver up with confidence.'
 - b. Christ believed that the Father would receive Him in death. **LUK 23:43.**
 2. The O.T. lamb was itself under sin (**ROM 8:22**). Christ had to be made sin for us. **2CO 5:21.**
 3. The O.T. lamb was an unwilling *taken* sacrifice (**EXO 12:3**). Christ was a willing sacrifice. **HEB 10:5-7.**
 4. The O.T. lamb's blood could not take away sin (**HEB 10:4**). Christ's blood took

away our sins forever. **HEB 9:12, 26; REV 1:5.**

II. Consider the symbolism of the Lord's Supper.

- A. Jesus said of the bread, "...this is my body" (**MAT 26:26**) and of the cup, "...this is my blood..." (**MAT 26:28**).
- B. The verb form "to be" can mean "to represent." **GAL 4:24-25; MAT 13:37-39, 24.**
1. The bread.
 - a. The bread represents the *physical* body of the Lord broken for sinners. **1CO 11:24; JOH 6:51.**
 - b. It alludes also to the church, the *spiritual* body of Christ. **1CO 10:16-17.**
 2. The cup.
 - a. "Cup" is here a metonym, which is "a figure of speech which consists in substituting for the name of a thing the name of an attribute of it or something closely related."
 - b. Obviously, one is not meant to drink the cup itself, but what it contains.
 - c. The content of the cup (wine) represents the reality (blood).
c/w **2SAM 23:17.**
 - d. The cup represents the blood of Christ shed for many for the remission of sins and the communion therein of believers. **MAT 26:28; 1CO 10:16.**
 - (1) communion: Sharing or holding in common with others; participation; the condition of things so held, community, combination, union.
 - (2) Believers testify by partaking of the cup that they have a common interest in the sin-cleansing blood of Christ.
 - e. The cup represents the New Testament in Christ's blood. His death and bloodshed has put the N.T. with its provisions in force.
HEB 9:15-20; 8:10-12.
 3. Eating the bread and drinking the cup (wine) commemorates Jesus' sufferings and sacrifice to SHEW (not reenact) the Lord's death until He comes.
1CO 11:26 c/w HEB 9:24-28; 10:1-2, 10-18.
- C. The following briefly refutes the Catholic doctrine of *transubstantiation* (bread and wine become literally, naturally the body and blood of Christ) and *consubstantiation* (the literal, natural body and blood of Christ are together with the elements).
1. **MAT 26:28-29.** Catholicism maintains that the wine becomes the blood of Jesus when the priest says, "This is my blood."
 - a. Jesus referred to the cup's contents as the *fruit of the vine* after He said it.
 - b. Christians are to abstain from consuming blood. **ACT 15:20.**
 2. **1CO 11:26-28.** Catholicism maintains that the bread becomes the flesh of Christ when the priest says, "This is my body."
 - a. But Paul affirms that it is bread that is eaten, not flesh.
 - b. If it is really flesh that is eaten, is this not cannibalism?
 - c. If it is the actual body of Christ that is eaten, does it continue to be the body of Christ through the entire length of the alimentary canal?
 - d. If the bread and wine become the real body and blood of Christ at communion, then Christ is being seen and handled. But this does not fit with **1JO 1:1; 1PE 1:8.**
 3. If the priest really does transform the elements into Christ, how does this square

with **ROM 10:6?**

4. **JOH 6:53-58** has been used to support transubstantiation.
 - a. These words were spoken BEFORE the Lord's Supper was ever instituted.
 - b. Christ was speaking in the present tense of something that was THEN occurring.
 - c. Jesus was showing that partaking of Him is proof of eternal life.
 - d. In **JOH 7:37-38**, Jesus equates *coming to Him and drinking* with believing on Him.
 - e. Believers in Christ indeed have eternal life. **JOH 6:47.**
 - f. Obviously, it is a *spiritual* partaking of Christ under consideration in this passage.
5. Catholicism maintains that Christ is being continually offered for sin via the Mass. If this is so, how was His sacrifice any different from the repetitive, ineffectual sacrifices of the Law? **HEB 9:25-26; 10:2, 11-12, 18.**

III. There are lessons to be learned from the Lord's Supper.

- A. Here we perceive the attitude of God towards sin. **1PE 3:18; GAL 3:13.**
- B. Here we perceive God's love for us. It is not our circumstances that prove God's love for us; it is Calvary. **1JO 3:16; 4:9; ROM 8:32, 39.**
- C. Here we learn how to love one another. **1JO 3:16; JOH 15:12-13.**
- D. Here we find incentive for living unto God. **2CO 5:14-15.**
- E. Here is hope for the future. **MAT 26:29.**