

The Lord's Supper was the term most commonly used by the Reformation churches for the taking of the bread and wine. Other meaningful names are the Holy Communion, the Lord's Table and the Eucharist.

The Passover was the cornerstone of Jewish ritual; it has now been replaced by the Lord's Table, and just as the Lord's Table has replaced the Passover, so also did the Lord Jesus Christ replace all those who served as High Priest; and just as the High Priests have been replaced, so also did the New Testament with its grace teachings, modify the Old Testament and the Mosaic Law.

The Lord's Supper is the only remaining ordinance for the Church. It is thus observed by all Christian bodies apart from a few groups such as the Quakers. Even in Roman Catholic theology with its seven sacraments, a certain priority is accorded to the Lord's Supper.

The origin of the Lord's Supper is recounted in the Synoptic Gospels and in 1Co 11:23-26. Particular attention should be paid to the paschal setting. The apostle Paul clearly states in 1Co 5:7 that Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

1Co 11:23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,

1Co 11:24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

1Co 11:25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

1Co 11:26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1Co 5:7 Get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new batch without yeast-- as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

John the Baptist had earlier identified Jesus as the true Lamb of God Who would take away the sins of the world.

Joh 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

In the upper room Christ introduced the new symbols of bread and wine in remembrance of His sacrificial death. By instituting the communion supper Jesus emphasized the Messianic and eschatological aspects of the Passover meal.

At this feast Jesus looked forward to another deliverance not like the exodus from Egypt. The deliverance commemorated is clearly the efficacious work of Christ on the cross. Yet the meal also anticipated the final Messianic banquet when we, as Church Age saints, are introduced to Israel at His second advent. At that first Lord's table Jesus

said: "I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until I drink it with you in my Father's kingdom."

The Lord's Supper is the re-enactment in ritual format of the reality of Christ's self-offering and His expected return. The sacrifice itself is not being repeated. Rather, it is being remembered. No fresh atonement is made as Romanism and the Church of England claim. The notion that the eucharistic sacrifice derives repeated efficacy from the re-enactment of the one offering is unfounded and blasphemous.

The ritual celebration brings this one sacrifice vividly before us and overcomes the barrier of time, and furnishes us a liturgy of our participation in Christ's death and imputation of His righteousness. The Roman Catholic, and Anglican doctrine, of the Mass and the real presence of Jesus in the Sacrament is the very opposite of the truth.

To teach that the bread and wine become the very body, and blood of Jesus as a sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead, is to deny Christ's personal absence and why we celebrate the Lord's table. Recall His command, "This do in remembrance of Me."

The supper is thus an enacted preaching of the good news of salvation by faith alone in Christ alone. It does not work magically. Its force is derived from its meaning as taught by God the Holy Spirit to believers who have availed themselves, of the promises, of 1Jo 1:9: "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The celebration therefore should be accompanied by a clear declaration of its meaning, read and preached from the Word of God. Its specific function is to stress the historicity of what took place and its present relevance to the living.

The great importance attached to taking and receiving makes nonsense of the non-communicating mass and the arbitrary Roman Catholic denial of the cup to the laity. It is also, however, a reproach against too infrequent communion in many Protestant churches, in contrast to the regular administration in the early church.

Thus the physical eating is no guarantee of genuine spiritual nourishment or fellowship with Christ. The sacraments cannot be made instruments to control God's divine operation.

The meal itself represents all that God is free to do for us on the basis of the Cross. Grace itself is God's free and sovereign favor to separate certain individuals in Jesus Christ. Those who are separated are those who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Certainly the sacraments can be used by the Spirit to strengthen faith, to evoke love, to promote sanctification and to confirm fellowship with the Lord and with our Christian brethren. Such a conclusion is but an iteration of the promise that there is power in the Word, it is alive and powerful and it will accomplish that which God pleases. Heb 4:12 and Isa 55:11

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is alive, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged

sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Isa 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Christ is now present with His people, as is the Father and God the Holy Spirit. Who can deny such an indwelling in light of the Holy Scriptures. Hence Christ is indeed the Host at His table. He gives Himself to be the abiding sustenance of His people. Our participation in the Lord's Table should produce a response of thanksgiving and self-dedication, a Biblical sacrifice of praise.

The ordinance is designed to produce in us a new appreciation of what He has done and renew our commitment to perform that which He called us to do. It is a feast of joyous love in which the love of Christ evokes, confirms, and demands our love for Him and for one another. The message of the Last Supper carries with it an obligation of service to God and of service to the brethren.

Our celebration this morning is also a foretaste of the heavenly feast later to come when we return with our Lord in resurrection body. By so participating today it should stimulate an upward look of hope and joyous anticipation.

We are not to set our affections on the things of the world, but to believe and love and work as those who await the final marriage feast of the Lamb, when the Last Supper will be needed no more. But for now Christ's saving work is a reminder of that future day when we will sit at table with Him in all His glory.

Let's review the history of our Lord's table and how the transition from the Passover celebration to the Last Supper took place.

The Passover celebration was usually held in the middle of April to commemorate the passing over of the death angel in approximately 1450 B.C. It also commemorated Israel's independence from Egypt and their becoming a national entity. The symbolism of the blood on the door-post foretold of the coming Messiah and His death on the cross. How appropriate therefore is the Lord's table where He announced He would become the real Passover lamb fulfilling the transition from legalism to grace.

The writer of the Book of Hebrews has described the transition as follows:

Heb 10:1 The Temple sacrifices were only a shadow of the good things to come -- not the reality itself. The OT sacrifices could never, even though repeated endlessly year after year make perfect the ones who worshipfully offered them.

Heb 10:4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.
Heb 10:5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou

wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me:

Heb 10:6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure.

The Law was no longer necessary as a teaching aid, the reality came when Christ fulfilled the Law and made possible our so great salvation. Matthew has recorded what our Lord said about Christ fulfilling the law.

Mat 5:17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

Mat 5:18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

And of course, Christ fulfilled the Law. As a Code of conduct, spiritually speaking, Church Age believers must never reject the reality of that fulfillment by placing themselves under the bondage of the Mosaic Law. Paul in writing to the churches in Galatia concerning the futility of law keeping.

Gal 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Gal 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

Gal 3:23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

Gal 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Gal 3:25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

Christ is therefore the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believes.

Gal 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we who have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

And so also wrote Paul to the church at Rome.

Rom 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Rom 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Christ with His death, burial, resurrection and ascension was the fulfillment of that portrayed by the Passover ritual.

We often think of the Last Supper as a meal at which the Lord briefly taught His disciples concerning the meaning of the bread and the wine. Traditionally we use: Mat 26:20-30; Mar 14:17-26 and Luk 22:14-20 or some combination thereof.

And these verse do well describe the meaning of the bread and the wine but as we have seen in our last several celebrations, much more was taught as our Lord ascended up the Mount toward his rendezvous with spiritual death. I want to read the traditional passages for your comparison.

Mat 26:20 Now when the evening came, Christ sat down with the twelve.

Mat 26:21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

Mat 26:22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

Mat 26:23 And he answered and said, He that dips his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

Mat 26:24 The Son of man will be crucified just as it was written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

Mat 26:25 Then Judas, who betrayed him, answered, Master, is it I? He said unto him, you said it.

Mat 26:26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

Mat 26:27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, and said, Drink you all of it;

Mat 26:28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many as a remission of sins.

Mat 26:29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

Mat 26:30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out toward the mount of Olives.

Mar 14:17 And in the evening he sat down with the twelve.

Mar 14:18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you who sits here at the table with us shall betray me.

Mar 14:19 And they were sad, each one saying, Is it I?

Mar 14:20 And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, who regularly dips with me in the dish.

Mar 14:21 The Son of man indeed will be crucified, just as it has been prophesied: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had never been born.

Mar 14:22 And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

Mar 14:23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank.

Mar 14:24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

Mar 14:25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in my millennial kingdom.

Mar 14:26 And after singing a hymn, they went out in the direction of the mount of Olives.

Luk 22:14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

Luk 22:15 And he said unto them, I want to eat this passover meal with you before I suffer:

Luk 22:16 For I say unto you, I will not eat with you again, until the Kingdom of God comes.

Luk 22:17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

Luk 22:18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the Kingdom of God shall come.

Luk 22:19 And he took the bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Luk 22:20 Likewise also Christ took the cup and said, this cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

The Lord used the occasion of the Passover not only to eat a farewell meal; He also used the occasion to teach extensively his disciples, and by way of secondary application us of the church age. These teachings are recorded only by John in his gospel.

Jesus, after leaving the upper room, taught the disciples as he made his way toward the Garden of Gethsemene. He taught of eternal security, He taught of the need to rebound for fellowship. Christ also taught of the need for humility and impersonal love toward one another; He taught of the loss the disciples would feel when He departed the planet. Our Savior comforted both they and us by teaching of His ultimate return.

Jesus also taught of our new privilege in prayer and the coming of God the Holy Spirit to indwell because He would be leaving to go to be with the Father, where He would build mansions for us; He taught of the teaching ministry of God the Holy Spirit, the new intimacy of the grafted branches; He taught of the world's attitude toward us. Because He would be leaving, He warned of our persecution in this, the devil's world. Christ also predicted His ascension which would follow His death and resurrection and then in conclusion Christ said a prayer to the Father for all His saints who would be left behind.

This extensive dissertation is recorded only in John's Gospel. John chapter thirteen verse one through John chapter seventeen verse twenty -six.

Now we Pastors often neglect these precious teachings of our Lord and so I challenge you this morning to take it upon yourselves to read the entire account of what our Lord said to his beloved disciples as they made their way toward the Garden. For you see by way of secondary application we too are the recipients of those neglected Scriptures.

The disciples were being prepared for the suffering and ultimate departure of Christ. The Cross was Christ's ultimate and unequalled act of Love - He who knew no sin

became sin for us in order that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Like Mary, the sister of Lazarus, we figuratively bring our alabaster boxes and break them in His presence, pouring the perfume of our worship and adoration upon Him.

It is fitting that the story of Mary's devotion to Christ should precede that of the Supper which He Himself instituted. I want to read of Mary's devotion from the account found in Matthew chapter 26.

Mat 26:6 While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, Mat 26:7 a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table.

Mat 26:8 When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. "Why this waste?" they asked.

Mat 26:9 "This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor."

Mat 26:10 Aware of this, Jesus said to them, "Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me.

Mat 26:11 The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me.

Mat 26:12 When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial.

Mat 26:13 I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

The question I would like for us to think on this morning: Do we delight to sit at His table, and think of His love? that brethren is the question we must answer. Is my meditation pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the LORD?

Rightly observed, we approach the Lord's table as those redeemed by Him, As the Scripture teaches: "He, Christ, Who knew no sin became sin for us in order that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." It is therefore the purpose of the Lord's table to recall anew His glorious Person and His all-prevailing love in giving Himself as a sacrifice for sin.

Now it is time for us to prepare, a time of remembering and examining. Get your hymnals and turn to hymn number 99 and let's stand and sing together the first and last verses of "When I Survey The Wondrous Cross." Kim come and lead us.

Pastor says: Be Seated please.

Tommie Sings

I am going to ask Kim Kaufman, Jim Cooper and Bruce Simmons to come and assist in our celebration of The Lord's Table.

You may uncover the Sacraments.

In order to prepare for our Lord's Table, we need to pause for a moment of silent prayer during which you may confess your sins as may or may not be necessary and at the end of that short moment I will close by asking God's blessing on our celebration of the Lord's table.

Pastor prays: Thank you Father for your forgiveness for both time and eternity; now I

ask that God the Holy Spirit will make this Lord's Table uniquely meaningful; help us to recall the wonderful work of Jesus and aid us as we examine how we are doing with reference to becoming more like our Lord and Savior. I pray this in the Name of Jesus Christ - Amen

We do not in this Church recognize what some call closed communion. If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus you may certainly participate in our Lord's Table. I would stress however that it is a solemn ceremony: Paul warned the Corinthians that many of them were sick and some had even died because of their abuse of the Lord's Table.

1Co 11:29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

1Co 11:30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

The Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took the bread and broke it before giving it to His Disciples. The bread we shall eat today represents His body which was broken for us.

The unleavened nature of the Bread represents His sinless condition. He was peccable yet impeccable. He was capable of sin but He chose not to sin. Again let us pray.

Pastor prays: Father thank you for your presence. Help us to remember You in all we do. We are indeed awed by the example of our Savior. Like a Lamb without spot He went to the Cross in absolute perfection making our so great salvation possible. Now bless this bread and give us understanding of its true meaning for I ask this in the name of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords even Jesus our Savior. Amen. Please retain the bread until all have been served. You may serve the Bread.

After the Pastor is served he says: "At the last Passover Celebration our Lord broke the bread and said, "Take, eat: this is My body which was broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me."

The Pastor then says: "After the same manner He also took the cup, , saying, "This cup is the New Testament in My blood.

Let us pray: Thank You Father for the gift of Your only begotten Son and the shedding of His Blood so beautifully symbolic of His Spiritual Death and Atonement for sin. Again impress upon us the meaning and full implication of our Lord's Work for I ask this in the name of Jesus our Savior. Amen. Again please retain the cup until all have been served. You may serve the juice.

After the Pastor is served he says: "At that last Passover and first Lord's Table, Our Lord said: "As oft as you drink this cup you do it in remembrance of Me."

Now let's turn to page 188 in your hymnal as we sing together "Amazing Grace".