

Title: **THE MEANING OF
THE LORD'S SUPPER**

Text: 1 Corinthians 10:16-17

Subject: *The Significance of the Supper*

Date: Sunday PM — November 15, 2009

Tape # Z-72b

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Introduction:

It has been our practice for almost 30 years to observe the Lord's Supper at the end of every Lord's Day. We do so because our Lord himself commanded us to observe this holy ordinance often, and because the apostolic church, in the Book of Acts, broke bread every time they came together to worship God. This blessed ordinance must never be pushed aside into a place of insignificance and seldom observed.

**Yet, precisely because we observe the Lord
Supper every Sunday, I fear we are
constantly in danger of doing so as a mere**

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

ritual, not as an act of heartfelt worship, much like we sometimes sing hymns without paying attention to what we are singing, or hear the gospel without attentive hearts. So tonight I want to talk to you for a few minutes about **THE MEANING OF THE
LORD'S SUPPER.** My text is 1 Corinthians 10:16-17. Let us read these two verses together.

(1 Corinthians 10:16-17) “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? (17) For we *being* many are one bread, *and* one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.”

**How I wish that all of you could join us in
this blessed ordinance.** But some of you cannot. This is an ordinance for believers. If

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

you trust Christ, the table is spread for you. But if you are not yet born of God, if you are still an unbeliever, do not eat of this bread and drink this wine. But do watch and listen carefully. Maybe today God will give you faith in Christ.

The bread and wine here set before us are divinely appointed symbols of our Redeemer, representing the body and blood of Christ. Through these symbols the sacrifice of Christ is vividly set before us. By eating this bread and drinking this wine, we express and show-forth our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and his sin-atoning sacrifice for our salvation and acceptance with God.

Christ is present with us in the observance of this ordinance in a special way. By His Spirit he is always present where two or three are gathered in his name to worship him. By His Spirit he is always present in his truth.

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

But the whole body of divine truth finds its clearest and strongest expression in this symbolic ordinance, and here our Lord reveals himself and makes his presence known in the most remarkable manner.

- It is in the observance of the Lord's Supper that the believing soul apprehends Christ most fully and yields himself to Christ most completely.
- And it is in this ordinance that Christ most clearly manifests himself to his beloved in the fullest earthly communication of his love and life.

Proposition: The Lord's Supper is a holy, gospel ordinance by which believers embrace, worship and yield themselves to Christ, both symbolically and really.

Divisions: What is the meaning of the Lord's Supper. That is the question I want to answer in this message. It is...

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. A Symbolic Confession.
2. A Grateful Commemoration.
3. A Table of Communion.
4. A Renewal of Consecration.
5. A Prophetic Celebration.

CONFESSiON

First, we observe the Lord's Supper as a symbolic confession. As in baptism we symbolically confess our faith in Christ, so in the Lord's Supper we confess to all the world, to one another and to our God, our faith in Christ. — Watch and listen carefully. We will show you how sinners are saved.

Before we could be saved our Lord Jesus Christ, our blessed Substitute had to die.

— The unleavened bread broken before you and the wine poured out represent the body and blood of Christ offered up to God for the atonement of our sins. These two elements

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

vividly symbolize the atoning sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. (1 Corinthians 11:26).

(1 Corinthians 11:26) “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.”

Yet, the only way any sinner can obtain the benefits of Christ’s sacrifice is by personal faith. — Again, I say, “Watch us eat the bread and drink the wine.” Each one personally takes the bread and wine for himself. This is how we have received Christ. By personal faith we eat his flesh (righteousness) and drink his blood (redemption).

By eating this bread and drinking this wine we publicly avow, once more, that we trust Christ alone as our Savior.

- There is no way to God but Christ.

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

- His Life of Obedience is our only Righteousness.
- His Death on the cross is our only Atonement.

COMMEMORATION

Second, our observance of this ordinance is a grateful commemoration. (1 Corinthians 11:25).

(1 Corinthians 11:25) “After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.”

This is an act of worship performed in remembrance of Christ’s love, compassion and grace in suffering and dying for us.

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Have you ever taken a picture of a departed loved one, looked at the face of the one you have loved, maybe handled some precious memento of tender affection he gave you, and recalling the memory of his words and acts of love felt almost as if he were present with you? That is what this Supper does for us. Here Christ is evidently set forth crucified among us. And we gratefully adore him.

- Here is His Covenant!
- Here is His Crucifixion!
- Here is His Compassion!

COMMUNION

Third, this table, the Lord's Table, is a table of communion, sweet, blessed, intimate communion with our Redeemer and with his people (1 Corinthians 10:16-17).

(1 Corinthians 10:16-17) “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? (17) For we *being* many are one bread, *and* one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.”

What a blessed word that word “*communion*” is! It implies unity, harmony, oneness, fellowship, delight and love.

Here is a picture of our communion with Christ. We are one with Christ; and Christ is one with us. — We are in harmony with one another. — We delight in one another. — We love each other!

This is also a picture of our communion with one another in the Body of Christ, in the Church of God. (Psalm 133:1).

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

(Psalms 133) “A Song of degrees of David. Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity! (2) *It is* like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, *even* Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; (3) As the dew of Hermon, *and as the dew* that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, *even* life for evermore.”

When we eat of that “*one bread*” and drink of that “*one cup*,” we profess that we are “*one body*,” in hearty, holy fellowship with one another.

- One in Heart!
- One in Doctrine!
- One in Purpose!

CONSECRATION

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Fourth, as we partake of the Lord's Supper, this ordinance is for us a renewal of consecration. (1 Corinthians 11:28; 6:19-20; Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 3:13-14).

(1 Corinthians 11:28) “But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.”

(1 Corinthians 6:19-20) “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (20) For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”

(Romans 12:1-2) “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God,

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

which is your reasonable service. (2) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

(Philippians 3:13-14) “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this one thing I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, (14) I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Let us now consecrate ourselves anew to Christ. Seek by the grace of God...

- To Know Him.
- To Surrender to Him.
- To Obey His Will.
- To Honor Him.

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

CELEBRATION

And, fifth, this blessed ordinance is a prophetic celebration. — As Israel ate the Passover to celebrate God's deliverance, so we eat this bread and drink this wine to celebrate our threefold deliverance by our God.

- **In Redemption!**

Redeemed! How I love to proclaim it!
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb!
Redeemed through His infinite mercy,
His child and forever I am!

- **In Regeneration!**

Our quickened souls by grace arise
From the long sleep of death;
On heavenly things we fix our eyes,
And praise employs our breath!

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

- In Resurrection!

This Supper is prophetic as well as symbolic. It is a prophetic type of the marriage supper of the Lamb. When he instituted the Supper, our Lord said, — “*I will not drink hereafter of this fruit of the vine, until I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom*” (Matthew 26:29). His eyes glanced down through the ages of sorrow, oppression and blood through which his church would pass to that day of final triumph, when all his disciples would be gathered in one body before his throne, exulting in his presence, to be forever with their Lord; and he said, “This do till I come!”

As we gather at the Table, let us look backward to his agony and death. But let us also look forward to his throne of triumph

THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

and victory. As we have fellowship with Christ in his suffering and death here, we exultingly hope to have fellowship with him in the blessedness and glory of his life hereafter.

APPLICATION

This is The Meaning of the Lord's Supper. It is —

- A Symbolic Confession.
- A Grateful Commemoration.
- A Table of Communion.
- A Renewal of Consecration.
- A Prophetic Celebration.

Through all the ages “*till he come*” this ordinance is the heavenly appointed symbol to express before men our redemption and salvation in Christ, to the praise, honor, and glory of him who loved us and gave himself for us. So, my brother, my sister, eat this

THE MEANING OF
THE LORD'S SUPPER

bread and drink this wine in remembrance of our blessed Savior, the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us and gave himself for us.

Amen.