

Understanding the Lord's Supper

*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?
~ 1 Corinthians 10:16 ~*

Introductory Thoughts

Necessity: Benefit of taking some time to study this part of the Christian life, this means of grace,

1. **Faith**
2. **Frequency**
3. **Refreshment:**

Difficulty

1. **Division**
2. **Dullness**
3. **Mystery**

Calvin 4.17.32 - Now, should any one ask me as to the mode, I will not be ashamed to confess that it is too high a mystery either for my mind to comprehend or my words to express; and to speak more plainly I rather feel than understand it. The truth of God, therefore, in which I can safely rest, I here embrace without controversy. He declares that his flesh is the meat, his blood the drink, of my soul; I give my soul to him to be fed with such food. In his sacred Supper he bids, me take, eat, and drink his body and blood under the symbols of bread and wine. I have no doubt that he will truly give and I receive.

I. The Names given to the Sacrament in the Bible

A. From the Bible

1. **The Body and Blood of Christ** (1 Cor 11:27)
2. **The Supper of the Lord** (1 Cor 11:20)
3. **The Table of the Lord** (1 Cor 11:21)
4. **The Communion and Participation of the Body and Blood of Christ** (1 Cor 10:16)

B. From History

1. **A Thanksgiving**
2. **A Banquet of Love/Love Feast**
3. **The Mass**

II. Sacramental Language: Sign and Thing Signified

A. What is meant by a sign in the Sacrament

1. **That which takes up our outwards senses, particularly the eye**
 - a. Sacramental Elements
 - b. Sacramental Actions
2. **That which represents, seals, and applies to believers**
 - a. Sign: It directs the soul to Christ

- b. Seals: It assures the soul of Christ
- c. Applies: It brings the soul to Christ and Christ to the soul

3. The Trinitarianism embedded in the sacraments

B. What is meant by the thing signified in the Sacrament

So if ever you are to get good out of the Sacrament, you must get the whole Christ. Moreover, there is no instrument with which you may lay hold of Him, but faith. Therefore, come to the Supper with a faithful heart.”[47]

III. Purposes of the Lord's Supper

A. To represent our spiritual nutriment

“As he who has bread and wine lacks nothing for the full nourishment of his body, so he who partakes of the Body and Blood of Christ, lacks nothing or the full and perfect nourishment of the soul.”

- Robert Bruce, *The Mystery of the Lord's Supper*, 71

B. Witness to the world

C. For our comfort and consolation

D. To render thanks to God for His benefits

IV. Instruction about Christ

A. Reality of Incarnation

B. Extremity of His Grace

C. Love for His Church

1. Particularly

2. Corporately

D. Eternity of His Glory

E. Proximity of His Fellowship

Calvin, 4.17.18 - But if we are carried to heaven with our eyes and minds, that we may there behold Christ in the glory of his kingdom, as the symbols invite us to him in his integrity, so, under the symbol of bread, we must feed on his body, and, under the symbol of wine, drink separately of his blood, and thereby have the full enjoyment of him.