

Title: WSC Question 97: What is Required for the Worthy Receiving of the Lord's Supper?

- I. The doctrine stated by WSC Answer 97: It is Required of Them that Would Worthily Partake of the Lord's Supper, that They Examine Themselves of Their Knowledge to Discern the Lord's Body, of their faith to feed upon him, of their repentance, love, and new obedience; lest, coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgment to themselves.
- II. The doctrine proved and explained.
 - A. Only those who are members of the visible church through baptism ought to come to the Lord's Supper.
 1. EX 12:43 And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, This is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof: [44] But every man's servant that is bought for money, when thou hast circumcised him, then shall he eat thereof. [45] A foreigner and an hired servant shall not eat thereof. [46] In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth aught of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof. [47] All the congregation of Israel shall keep it. [48] And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof. [49] One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you.
 2. AC 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. [42] And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. [43] And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. [44] And all that believed were together, and had all things common; [45] And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. [46] And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, [47] Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.
 - B. Self-examination and discerning the Lord's body are necessary to worthily partake of the Lord's supper.
 1. 1 CO 11:28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. [29] For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. [30] For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. [31] For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.
 - a. Self-examination: Am I a follower of Christ and does my life demonstrate this?
 - b. Discerning the Lord's body:
 - i. Matthew Poole: "Not discerning the Lord's body; and his guilt lieth here, that he doth not discern and distinguish

between ordinary and common bread, and that bread which is the representation of the Lord's body, but useth the one as carelessly, and with as little preparation and regard to what he doth, as he uses the other."

ii. Fisher: "Q. 14. What is it to discern the Lord's body in this sacrament? A. It is to view the meritorious atonement, made by the Son of God in our nature, through the symbols of bread and wine, which are designed to signify and represent the same."

iii. Fisher: "Q. 28. What is it to come unworthily? A. It is to come without any real sense, or consciousness of the need that we stand in of Christ, as 'of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,' 1Cor. 1:30."

2. 1 CO 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: [8] Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

III. The doctrine applied:

- A. If you would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper you must be united to the visible church through baptism.
- B. If you would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper you must believe in Christ as your Savior and Lord.
- C. If you would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper you must live a life of love to God and neighbor as evidenced by obedience to the Law of God.
- D. If you would worthily partake of the Lord's Supper you must recognize that it is a sacrament and not an ordinary meal.
- E. Beware of turning the Lord's Supper into a means of cursing rather than blessing by coming to it unworthily.