

“PARTAKERS OF THE LORD’S TABLE”

INTRODUCTION

The expression, “the Lord’s Supper” is found twice in the New Testament. The Corinthians were reminded that they could **not** have fellowship with demons and the Lord at the same time, by partaking of the Lord’s table and partaking in idolatrous feasts also. 1 Cor. 10:21. Also, they were abusing the table of the Lord by mixing their love feasts with the Supper, as some were hungry, and others were filled.

It is a real privilege to be able to remember the Lord’s death in a special way upon the first day of each week, as taught in the scripture. This lesson is intended to enrich our participation **in** the supper, by noticing some things associated with the Supper, as revealed in the New Testament.

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, “SACRIFICE” is associated with the Lord’s Table.

- A. In the Lord’s table there are reminders of the “once for all” sacrifice of Jesus on the cross where His body was offered and His blood was shed—in our behalf,. Heb., 10:11-14
1. Partaking of the unleavened bread is a reminder of the body that was given as the ultimate sacrifice for sins. Matt. 26:26; 1 Cor. 11:24
 2. Partaking of the fruit of the vine (juice or blood of the grape) is a reminder of the shed blood of Jesus, as the soldiers pierced His side while on the cross. John 19:34; Matt. 26:27-28
- B. At the Lord’s Table, we remember that the church is a *living continuation* of that sacrifice. Matt. 16:18; Eph. 5:25; Acts 20:28
- C. At the table of the Lord, we are offering the sacrifice of praise to God, as we do in every act of worship on the Lord’s day. Heb. 13:15

II. 2nd, “THANKSGIVING” is associated with the Lord’s Table.

- A. When Jesus instituted the Supper, He spoke a blessing, or gave “thanks.” Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:24; 14:16
- B. At the Supper, **we** are thankful for the death of Jesus and the redemption it provides.
1. We should specifically give thanks for the bread and the cup, and **avoid** generalities in our prayers that relate to the weather, the sick, or a request for forgiveness of sins, **as** we take of the elements of the Supper,.
 2. It is not necessary that we ask for forgiveness in connection with the bread and the cup (as some do when they say, “Forgive us our sins **so that** we might be worthy to partake” of the Supper), since likely there have already been prayers **in** the assembly asking for forgiveness, and it is unlikely that we have all sinned publicly from the time that request was made, until this moment of the Supper.
 - a. Jesus **shed** His blood for the remission of sins, and we do not partake of the Supper in order **to obtain** forgiveness. Cf Matt. 26:28
 - b. Our partaking “worthily” does not mean that we have to be completely without fault to take the Supper, but it is to be in a “worthy manner”, our meditating on Christ and His death **as** we commune.
 - 1) The word “worthily” is an adverb describing the manner in which we partake.

- 2) This means that **while we partake** of each element, our minds should recall the death of Jesus, as His body was broken (or given), and His blood was shed. 1 Cor. 11:27-30

III. 3rd, “COMMUNION” is associated with the Lord’s Table..

- A. The Lord’s Supper is an act of fellowship or communion with one another and with Christ.
1. We have **unity**, through mutual allegiance to a common Lord. 1 Cor. 8:6
 2. We meet at the Lord’s table **together**. Acts 20:7
- B. This purpose of our assembling is to break bread in response to His invitation.
1. We participate in the spiritual blessings of His sacrificial body and shed blood. 1 Cor. 10:16
 2. The word “communion” is suggestive of something “common”, that we have with the one another and with the Lord at the same time. 1 Cor. 10:17

IV. 4th, “COMMEMORATION” is associated with the Lord’s Table.

- A. The Lord’s Supper is a memorial—portraying the death of Jesus. 1 Cor. 11:26
1. The breaking of bread symbolizes the broken body of Jesus, as His side was pierced and His life given for us. 1 Cor. 11:24
 2. The cup symbolizes the shed blood of Jesus as it was poured out for our sins. v. 25
- B. It is always good that we use appropriate language in our prayers and teaching about the Lord’s Table.
1. The “body” of Jesus is properly referred to as “bread” (meaning *content*) or “loaf” (meaning *form*).
 - a. In one passage in the Old Testament, both words are used in one passage while referring to something “leavened”. Exo. 29:23
 - b. In one passage in the New Testament, the words “bread” and “loaf” are used in the same verse interchangeably, both being from the same Greek word, *artos*.
 - c. When Jesus used the word *artos* in Matt. 26:26 when He instituted the Supper, He clearly was referring to the “content”. 2. The “blood” of Jesus is properly referred to as the “cup” or “fruit of the vine”.
 - a. The word “wine” is **never used** in connection with the “cup” of the Lord’s Table.
 - b. SOME wine MAY come from the juice of the grape, but it has undergone a transformation, and is no longer pure “fruit of the vine.”
 - c. Also, some wine is made from other products than grape juice, and the word “wine” is too broad a word to used to refer to the pure juice of the grape, representing the pure blood of Jesus shed on the cross.
 - d. The scripture does not use language that might have a double meaning (such as *oinos*, which might refer to fermented **or** unfermented juice of the grape), but simply to “fruit of the vine”, referring to the pure blood of the grape, representing the pure blood of Jesus.
 - e. Christians should choose not to thoughtlessly use the word “wine” for the drink at the table of the Lord.

V. 5th, “ANTICIPATION” is associated with the Lord’s Table.

- A. We can anticipate the presence of the Lord, as we commune together. Matt. 26:29

- B. We can also anticipate the future coming of the Lord each time we partake. 1 Cor. 11:26
 - 1. Christ’s return will bring a resurrection of the dead. John 5:28-29
 - 2. Christ’s return will bring an end to this physical world. 1 Cor. 15:23-24; 2 Pet. 3:10
 - 3. Christ’s return will bring eternal salvation to the righteous. Heb. 9:28

CONCLUSION

- I. The spiritual fellowship at the Lord’s Table is a great privilege for Christians of all ages.
 - A. It is enjoyed each week by the churches of Christ throughout the land.
 - B. The instructions and example of early believers is continued today. Acts 2:42; 20:7
- II. If you have not benefited by the sacrifice of Jesus who died for you, why not this very hour confess your faith, repenting of every sin, and put Christ on in baptism?

Don Tarbet