

## **“TO EAT THE LORD’S SUPPER” #2**

### **INTRODUCTION**

One of the most memorial acts of worship in the Lord’s church is the privilege of remembering the death of Jesus in the communion, or partaking of the Lord’s Supper. We previously introduced the subject by looking at the New Testament account of Jesus establishing the memorial we call “The Lord’s Supper.” We noted the words of 1 Cor.11:20, where some were abusing the Supper by mixing it with their own supper in their “love feasts.” We get the title of our lesson from that passage, but for the moment we want to leave off the word “not”, as **they** were **not** eating supper because of their abuse. Now let’s examine the elements of the Supper in more detail.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **I. 1<sup>st</sup>, let’s look at the words used to describe partaking of the supper.**

- A. In the chronology of scripture, it is called the **“breaking of bread.”** Acts 2:42; 20:7
1. The word “breaking” does not mean that each one communing actually and literally HAS to “break off” a small piece for self, but it simply means “to partake of,” whether it means to break off a piece of the bread, or to take a piece already broken off.
  2. The word “breaking” simply means that one “partakes” in the Supper by taking a small amount of the unleavened bread, as the word is used in context.
    - a. In Troas, the disciples came together to “break bread” (clearly in the Sunday worship assembly), and then the next morning Paul “broke bread” before continuing on his journey, clearly a text which shows that taking a common meal is called “breaking of bread.” cf Acts 27:34-36; 20:7, 11
    - b. Sometimes the term “breaking bread” refers to eating a common meal when one is away from the church assembly. Luke 24:29-35
    - c. The “breaking of bread” is actually a *“figure of speech”* (where a part is put for the whole) where the term represents the entirety of the supper and sometimes may include the entire worship gathering.
    - d. “Breaking” simply means to “partake” of something, whether it be a common meal or the Lord’s Supper. 1 Cor. 10:16
  3. By partaking of the bread, and drinking the cup, we are *sharing in the death of Christ* as we remember Him while partaking.
    - a. We share in the suffering of Christ when we are persecuted. 1 Pet. 4:13
    - b. Likewise, we share in the death of Christ when we commune with Him. 1 Cor. 10:16
- B. The “breaking of bread is also called the **“communion.”** 1 Cor. 10:16
- C. The “communion” is also referred to as the **“Lord’s Table.”** 1 Cor. 10:21
- D. The “Lord’s Table” is also called **“the Lord’s Supper.”** 1 Cor. 11:20

#### **II. 2<sup>nd</sup>, let’s consider what is involved in describing the elements.**

- A. There is the **“unleavened bread.”**
1. In the annual Jewish Passover feast, there was this kind of bread used. (Exo. 12:1-20)
  2. When Jesus was observing His last Passover feast with His disciples, He took some of the bread OF that feast, and gave it a **new meaning** for communion in the church, referring to the “body” of Jesus in His death. John 19:31-34; Matt. 26:26; 1 Cor. 11:23-24
- B. Then, there is the **“cup”**, containing the **“fruit of the vine.”** Matt. 26:27-29
1. The cup was “one”, in that it contained nothing else besides “fruit of the vine,” and ALL congregations are to partake of the same element--“fruit of the vine.”
  2. Paul was in Ephesus when He wrote to the church in Corinth, and he used the term “the cup” (singular in number), and He said, “THIS” is my blood, as He had already said concerning the unleavened bread, that IT was His body, but now says regarding the cup, “this” is my blood—not literally, but it represents His blood.
    - a) This means they ALL (in Ephesus and Corinth) took one bread (not from the same container, but the same element—*unleavened bread*).
    - b) They also (those in Ephesus and those in Corinth), took of the same “cup” (it’s contents) on the same day—NOT the same literal container, for it

would have been impossible for the two congregations to partake from the same “container”, as they did not have jet planes to fly the cup around to all the congregations, or to send it by computer.

c) Thus the bread and fruit of the vine meant the same thing to both congregations.

d) Jesus took the cup, and said “this is my blood” of the new testament (not the old covenant), which was SHED for them, and it certainly was not the container that was shed for them, but the blood that the cup represented.

1) One may hold up a photo of his grandmother, and say “this” is my grandmother, in that it represents her, or is a “picture” of her.

2) It is not literally her, for she may have died years before, but it is a picture of her.

C. Now, in Catholicism, it is maintained and argued that the bread and “wine” (which wine they use contains alcohol), that they literally **become** the actual body and blood of the Lord when their priests pray over them.

1. The bread still looks and tastes like bread, but they say it is not.

2. The wine still looks and tastes the same, but they say it is not the same.

3. Many priests have become alcoholics after drinking much of the leftover “wine”, which obviously was not blood, but contained its intoxicating effects.

and 4. When Jesus used the word for “is”, He did not mean that those elements were *literally* the body and blood of the Lord, but that they were reminders of the Lord’s body and blood.

5. Each Christian is to “remember” the body and blood when partaking of them. 1 Cor. 11:29, 26

D. Some mistakenly refer to the cup as “wine.”

1. We believe this to be incorrect, and inappropriate.

2. The original Greek word oinos, that **could** be translated wine in the New Testament, whether intoxicating or not intoxicating, was NOT used by the Lord in His supper, but he used another term, “fruit of the vine”, referring to pure juice of the grape, just as in the old Jewish Passover celebrations, they did NOT use alcoholic wine.

3. To use the word “wine” would open the door to the use of **any kind** of wine, much of which is NOT made from grape juice, nor from “vines.”

4. Let us use correct language when referring to drink of the communion.

#### **CONCLUSION**

I. Let us always meditate on the body and blood of the Lord, each time we partake.

A. We should keep our minds directly on the body and blood. 1 Cor. 10:16

B. Christians should NOT be talking, or even thinking of doing something else when communing, except to meditate about what the bread and cup represent—the body and blood of our Lord.

II. What does the Lord’s Supper mean to you?

Don Tarbet