

The Meaning of the Lord's Supper

Introduction

1. We assemble together each week to remember our Lord and to partake of the emblems which represent his broken body and shed blood on our behalf.
Matthew 26:26-29
2. While most Christians do understand "the meaning of the Lord's Supper," it would do us good to be reminded of how important this act of worship to our God really is.
3. It may be that you are visiting a church of Christ for the first time this morning and may not be fully aware of what the Lord's Supper stands for.

Institution of the Lord's Supper

1. The institution of the Lord's Supper is found in: Matt 26:26-29 Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-20; and emphasized by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25.
2. The Christians of the first century observed it **weekly**.

Acts 20:7 Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread.....

3. To know its significance and to observe it properly is very important.

1 Cor 11:27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an **unworthy manner** will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

- A. Not that we are unworthy - "Unworthy" meaning not concentrating on the significance of the supper.

The Lord's Supper Is a Commemoration

1. It is observed in memory of Christ.

Luke 22:19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

- A. The death, burial and resurrection of Christ is the heart of the gospel and redemption.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

2. Man's inclination to forget is admitted by all.

- A. The best memories fail. So often we confess, "I forgot".

- B. The best of people are forgotten.

Jer 2:32 Can a virgin forget her ornaments, Or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number.

Ecl 12:1 Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth...

- C. The admonition to remember is found often.

2 Peter 3:1 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder),

3. The Lord's Supper is a constant reminder of the death of Jesus.

- A. The emblems are appropriate: bread for the body and fruit of the vine for blood.

The Lord's Supper Is a Communion

1. The cup and the bread are the communion of the blood and body of Christ.

1 Cor 10:16 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?

- A. Communion is a participation or sharing in the benefits of Christ's blood and body.
- C. The Lord's Supper is proved to be of benefit for Christians only.

Matt 26:29 But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

2. The Lord's Supper is a twofold communion.

- A. **With Christ.** In eating it we signify our union with Christ; we are one with Him; we share His grace and salvation.

1 Cor 10:16 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?

- B. **With one another.** In eating it we also show we are united with one another; we are one body; we are mutual sharers of His grace.

1 Cor 10:17 For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

The Lord's Supper Is a Proclamation

1. The Lord's Supper is an announcement or declaration.

1 Cor 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

A. It is by this remembrance, that we are constantly reminded that we should proclaim the Lord's death to all.

1 Cor 2:1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God.

Mark 16:16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

B. We can't be in union with Christ, we can't be in communion with Christ, if **we are not here** to partake and be reminded of what Christ did for us!

Hebrews 10:25-26

C. Those who come to partake should come, not to satisfy hunger, not for the gratification of social feeling, but for the purpose of bearing their testimony to the great fact of redemption we have in Jesus Christ.

2. The Lord's Supper as a proclamation to the world suggests:

A. A sermon of God's love, grace and salvation that every Christian can preach every week.

B. The Christian virtues of faith, courage and zeal are thus exhibited every time we observe it.

The Lord's Supper Is a Dedication of a New Covenant

1. "This cup is the new covenant in my blood".

1 Cor 11:25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the **new covenant** in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

A. *Covenant* is the reference to the sealing or ratifying of agreements.

B. Exodus 24 records the sealing of the covenant of God with Israel - the animal's blood was sprinkled on the people.

Exodus 24:5-8

1) The blood sprinkled on the contracting parties solemnly bound them to their agreements: God promised to bless Israel, and Israel promised to obey God's commandments.

2. The Lord's Supper represents the blood-ratified covenant between Christ and Christians.

Hebrews 8:6-8, 12

A. Christ has promised to bless us with forgiveness, peace, prayer, hope and every spiritual blessing.

Ephesians 1:3

B. Christians, in eating the Lord's Supper, bind themselves to implicit obedience to Christ. Israel said, "*All that Jehovah hath spoken will we do, and be obedient*". (Exod 24:7)

C. We must eat the Lord's Supper with a consciousness of our promised dedication to Christ. Christ will keep His part of the covenant. **Will we keep ours?**

1) By remembering Christ, we should also remember our commitment to Him that we made upon our baptism.

The Lord's Supper Is an Anticipation

1. It has been given for Christian observance "until He comes".

1 Cor 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

A. In eating the Lord's Supper, the hope of the second coming of Christ fills our hearts.

Acts 1:11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

2. In view of the marvelous blessings that shall be ours when He comes again, we should desire, anticipate and rejoice in His coming.

A. We should have this hope rekindled within us **every week** as we observe the feast divine!

Conclusion

John 3:16

1 John 4:19

1. This is the significance of the Lord's Supper, and there is far more involved in eating it than meets the eye of the casual observer.

A. How can one not partake of this beautiful memorial every week?

2. If properly observed by Christians, it will result in greater love and appreciation of our Lord.

3. Truly, to the Christian, memorial day is celebrated every first day of the week!

