

THE LORD'S SUPPER: DISTORTIONS & TRUTH IN CHURCH HISTORY

Sunday, October 17, 2021 — The Lord's Supper series — msg 5 — Pastor Andrew Coleman

OUR GOAL: **LUKE 22:7-23; ACTS 2:42; 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-32**

To understand the meaning of the Lord's Supper and God's purpose for it in our lives.

REVIEW:

Message 1 THE LORD'S SUPPER: From the PASSOVER to the CROSS

Message 2 THE LORD'S SUPPER: ANTIDOTE FOR IDOLATRY

Message 3 THE LORD'S SUPPER: FELLOWSHIP OF THE TABLE

Message 4 THE LORD'S SUPPER: SAVING THE BEST FOR LAST

(TODAY) Message 5 THE LORD'S SUPPER: DISTORTIONS AND TRUTH IN CHURCH HISTORY

The Two Ordinances (commands/orders) of the Church:

- 1) Baptism** demonstrates our initial identification with Christ and His church.
(the public act indicating we have come to faith in Christ and enter His church)
- 2) The Lord's Supper** celebrates our continual identification with Christ and His church.
(the public act indicating we are staying with Christ and His church)

BUT the Lord's Supper is not merely an identification with Christ and His church... there is more.
AND through the ages there have been distortions of what the Bible says about how much more it is.

The LORD'S SUPPER in the Early Church (first 400 years):

The Didache, Ignatius (Syria), Justin Martyr (Rome), Irenaeus (Turkey), Cyprian (Tunisia), Tertullian (Tunisia), Origen (Egypt), Augustine (Algeria)

Proper Observance:

It is a command of the Lord that is to be obeyed.

It is only for baptized believers in Jesus.

It is only for baptized believers who are in proper relationship with Jesus and others.

It is to be observed on a regular basis as part of corporate Christian worship.

Varied Understandings/Distortions:

The Lord's Supper as a sacrifice. (Malachi 1:10-11; Matthew 5:23-24)

Similar to OT sacrifice but bringing faith in Christ to God as the sacrifice.

The Lord's Supper as a symbol to remember Christ's sacrifice.

The Lord's Supper as Christ's presence.

The Lord's Supper as a means of grace for sanctification (growing in/toward Christ).

The Lord's Supper as a means of grace for salvation.

The Lord's Supper does depend/does not depend on who administers it.

The LORD'S SUPPER in the MEDIEVAL CHURCH (500AD - 1500AD):

Roman Catholic dominance of Christianity at first, then a split to Eastern/Greek Orthodox (1054AD).

Distortive Observances:

- No proper discrimination between believers and non-believers.
- Lord's Supper (Eucharist/Mass) used as a political weapon.
- Lord's Supper given to infants (like baptism).
- Elements withheld -- giving the bread but **not** the cup to laity (regular church members).

Varied Understandings/Distortions:

- The Lord's Supper elements (bread and wine) become effectively the body and blood of Christ at the words of institution during the Mass. **Paschasius Radbertus 831AD.**
- The Lord's Supper elements (bread and wine) become actually the body and blood of Christ at the words of institution during the Mass. **Rolando Bandinelli 1140AD.**
(he coined the term 'transubstantiation' and later became Pope Leo III)
- **The Fourth Lateran Council in 1215AD** officially affirmed the doctrine of transubstantiation. **Thomas Aquinas** offered the definitive theological and philosophical framework based upon Aristotelian philosophy for transubstantiation.

The LORD'S SUPPER in the REFORMATIONAL CHURCH (1517 to present)

Pre-Reformer John Wycliffe (England 1384AD) attacked transubstantiation with great fury.

- 1) 'Neither Scripture nor reason nor revelation support belief in transubstantiation'.
- 2) 1,200 years of church history do not support this belief.
- 3) To the human senses, the bread and wine remain the bread and wine after consecration.
- 4) This is idolatry! Do not worship the bread and cup! Do not worship the priests!

Pre-Reformer John Huss (Czech/Bohemia) in 1409AD decried withholding the cup from laypeople. He said "We must not follow the customs of man but the example of Christ."

Martin Luther (Germany) **October 31, 1517** nailed **95 Thesis** against the sale of indulgences to the door of the church at Wittenberg. Thus, the **Protestant Reformation** begins in earnest.

- Luther taught the Lord's Supper was Christ's testament, as one who was about to die, giving his inheritance -- the forgiveness of sin, His inheritance -- to those who would believe in Him.
- Luther taught Christ testifies his death (Luke 22:19-22 "This is my body, which his given, this is my blood which is poured out"). Christ names and designates the bequest when he says "for the forgiveness of sins of those who believe" Matthew 26:28.
- Luther taught Christ's body and blood "**are with and under**" the bread and wine just as Christ is everywhere. His view became known as *consubstantiation*.

Huldrych Zwingli (Suisse) wrote extensively on Christ's words "**This is My body**" and concluded that Christ meant for us to understand that the bread and cup are to be a representation of His physical body, and thus the supper is to be a memorial (reminder) of His sacrifice for our sins. In John 6, when Christ spoke of **eating His flesh and blood** He was speaking of believing upon Christ's physical sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. Zwingli further developed the memorial view, circling back to the early church's understanding.

The LORD'S SUPPER among POST REFORMATION BAPTISTS (1570s-):

John Smyth (England) *"The Lord's Supper is the external sign of the communion of Christ and of the faithful among themselves by faith and love."*

Thomas Helwys (England) added the purpose of the observance: *The Lord's Supper is the outward manifestation of the inner spiritual communion between Christ and the faithful mutually to declare His death until He comes. (1 Cor. 10:16-17 and 1 Cor. 11:26)*

1689 BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH:

Chapter 30: Of the Lord's Supper

1. The supper of the Lord Jesus was instituted by him the same night wherein he was betrayed, to be observed in his churches, unto the end of the world, for the perpetual remembrance, and shewing forth the sacrifice of himself in his death, confirmation of the faith of believers in all the benefits thereof, their spiritual nourishment, and growth in him, their further engagement in, and to all duties which they owe to him; and to be a bond and pledge of their communion with him, and with each other. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17, 21)

*2. In this ordinance Christ is **not** offered up to his Father, nor any real sacrifice made at all for remission of sin of the quick or dead, but only a memorial of that one offering up of himself by himself upon the cross, once for all; and a spiritual oblation of all possible praise unto God for the same. So that the popish sacrifice of the mass, as they call it, is most abominable, injurious to Christ's own sacrifice the alone propitiation for all the sins of the elect. (Hebrews 9:25, 26, 28; 1 Corinthians 11:24; Matthew 26:26, 27)*

3. The Lord Jesus hath, in this ordinance, appointed his ministers to pray, and bless the elements of bread and wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to a holy use, and to take and break the bread; to take the cup, and, they communicating also themselves, to give both to the communicants. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26, etc.)

4. The denial of the cup to the people, worshipping the elements, the lifting them up, or carrying them about for adoration, and reserving them for any pretended religious use, are all contrary to the nature of this ordinance, and to the institution of Christ. (Matthew 26:26-28; Matthew 15:9; Exodus 20:4, 5)

*5. The **outward elements (bread and wine)** in this ordinance, duly set apart to the use ordained by Christ, have such relation to him crucified, as that truly, although in terms used figuratively, they are sometimes called by the names of the things they represent, to wit, the body and blood of Christ, albeit, in substance and nature, they still remain truly and only bread and wine, as they were before. (1 Corinthians 11:27; 1 Corinthians 11:26-28)*

6. That doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of bread and wine, into the substance of Christ's body and blood, commonly called **transubstantiation**, by consecration of a priest, or by any other way, is repugnant not to Scripture alone, but even to common sense and reason, overthrows the nature of the ordinance, and hath been, and is, the cause of manifold superstitions, yea, of gross idolatries. (Acts 3:21; Luke 24:6, 39; 1 Corinthians 11:24, 25)

7. Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this ordinance, do then also inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually receive, and feed upon Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death; the body and blood of Christ being then not corporally or carnally, but spiritually present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses. (1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

8. **All ignorant and ungodly persons [the unconverted, unbelievers]**, as they are unfit to enjoy communion with Christ, so are they unworthy of the Lord's table, and cannot, without great sin against him, while they remain such, partake of these holy mysteries, or be admitted thereunto; yea, whosoever shall receive unworthily, are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, eating and drinking judgment to themselves. (2 Corinthians 6:14, 15; 1 Corinthians 11:29; Matthew 7:6)

THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE (BFM) 2000

VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

KEY QUESTIONS:

- 1) Have you received Christ as the sacrifice for YOUR sin and shame so that you may be forgiven and made His own?
- 2) If so, do you see the importance of remembering His sacrificial death on a regular basis?
- 3) Does observing this memorial affect your daily life? If yes, how so? If not, why not?