

“La Cena del Señor”

La fiesta judía de la Pascua (“pasach” “פסח”, “pasar más allá”, “perdonar”) era un adelanto de la obra que Jesús hizo en la cruz por ti y por mí.

Abusos en la Cena del Señor

1ra Corintios 11:17-32

¹⁷Pero al anunciaros esto que sigue, no os alabo; porque no os congregáis para lo mejor, sino para lo peor. ¹⁸Pues en primer lugar, cuando os reunís como iglesia, oigo que hay entre vosotros divisiones; y en parte lo creo. ¹⁹Porque es preciso que entre vosotros haya disensiones, para que se hagan manifiestos entre vosotros los que son aprobados. ²⁰Cuando, pues, os reunís vosotros, esto no es comer la cena del Señor. ²¹Porque al comer, cada uno se adelanta a tomar su propia cena; y uno tiene hambre, y otro se embriaga. ²²Pues qué, ¿no tenéis casas en que comáis y bebáis? ¿O menospreciáis la iglesia de Dios, y avergonzáis a los que no tienen nada? ¿Qué os diré? ¿Os alabaré? En esto no os alabo.

Institución de la Cena del Señor

(Mt. 26.26–29; Mr. 14.22–25; Lc. 22.14–20)

²³Porque yo recibí del Señor lo que también os he enseñado: Que el Señor Jesús, la noche que fue entregado, tomó pan; ²⁴y habiendo dado gracias, lo partió, y dijo: Tomad, comed; esto es mi cuerpo que por vosotros es partido; haced esto en memoria de mí. ²⁵Asimismo tomó también la copa, después de haber cenado, diciendo: Esta copa es el nuevo pacto en mi sangre; haced esto todas las veces que la bebiereis, en memoria de mí. ²⁶Así, pues, todas las veces que comiereis este pan, y bebiereis esta copa, la muerte del Señor anunciáis hasta que él venga.

Tomando la Cena indignamente

²⁷De manera que cualquiera que comiere este pan o bebiere esta copa del Señor indignamente, será culpado del cuerpo y de la sangre del Señor. ²⁸Por tanto, pruébese cada uno a sí mismo, y coma así del pan, y beba de la copa. ²⁹Porque el que come y bebe indignamente, sin discernir el cuerpo del Señor, juicio come y bebe para sí. ³⁰Por lo cual hay muchos enfermos y debilitados entre vosotros, y muchos duermen. ³¹Si, pues, nos examinásemos a nosotros mismos, no seríamos juzgados; ³²mas siendo juzgados, somos castigados por el Señor, para que no seamos condenados con el mundo.

³³Así que, hermanos míos, cuando os reunís a comer, esperaos unos a otros. ³⁴Si alguno tuviere hambre, coma en su casa, para que no os reunáis para juicio. Las demás cosas las pondré en orden cuando yo fuere.

Lucas 22:1-20

¹Estaba cerca la fiesta de los panes sin levadura, que se llama la pascua. ²Y los principales sacerdotes y los escribas buscaban cómo matarle; porque temían al pueblo. ³Y entró Satanás en Judas, por sobrenombre Iscariote, el cual era uno del número de los doce; ⁴y éste fue y habló con los principales sacerdotes, y con los jefes de la guardia, de cómo se lo entregaría. ⁵Ellos se alegraron, y convinieron en darle dinero. ⁶Y él se comprometió, y buscaba una oportunidad para entregárselo a espaldas del pueblo.

Institución de la Cena del Señor

(Mt. 26.17–29; Mr. 14.12–25; Jn. 13.21–30; 1 Co. 11.23–26)

⁷Llegó el día de los panes sin levadura, en el cual era necesario sacrificar el cordero de la pascua. ⁸Y Jesús envió a Pedro y a Juan, diciendo: Id, preparadnos la pascua para que la comamos. ⁹Ellos le dijeron: ¿Dónde quieres que la preparemos? ¹⁰Él les dijo: He aquí, al entrar en la ciudad os saldrá al encuentro un hombre que lleva un cántaro de agua; seguidle hasta la casa donde entrare, ¹¹y decid al padre de familia de esa casa: El Maestro te dice: ¿Dónde está el aposento donde he de comer la pascua con mis discípulos? ¹²Entonces él os mostrará un gran aposento alto ya dispuesto; preparad allí. ¹³Fueron, pues, y hallaron como les había dicho; y prepararon la pascua. ¹⁴Cuando era la hora, se sentó a la mesa, y con él los apóstoles. ¹⁵Y les dijo: ¡Cuánto he deseado comer con vosotros esta pascua antes que padezca! ¹⁶Porque os digo que no la comeré más, hasta que se cumpla en el reino de Dios. ¹⁷Y habiendo tomado la copa, dio gracias, y dijo: Tomad esto, y repartidlo entre vosotros; ¹⁸porque os digo que no beberé más del fruto de la vid, hasta que el reino de Dios venga. ¹⁹Y tomó el pan y dio gracias, y lo partió y les dio, diciendo: Esto es mi cuerpo, que por vosotros es dado; haced esto en memoria de mí. ²⁰De igual manera, después que hubo cenado, tomó la copa, diciendo: Esta copa es el nuevo pacto en mi sangre, que por vosotros se derrama. 1

I. Las causas del desorden en la Cena del Señor (11.1–22)

A. Falta de subordinación de las mujeres (vv. 1–16).

A menudo se acusa a Pablo de ser crítico de las mujeres y colocarlas en una posición inferior, pero esto no es verdad. Él se dio cuenta de que Dios es un Dios de orden, y que cuando alguna cosa está fuera de orden, hay confusión y se pierde el poder. En ninguna parte Pablo enseña que las mujeres sean inferiores a los hombres a los ojos de Dios, sino más bien que Dios ha asentado el principio de autoridad (no dictadura) que hace a Cristo la Cabeza del hombre y al hombre la cabeza de la mujer. En Corinto se estaba violando este importante principio. Las mujeres estaban en competencia con los hombres por el liderazgo público de la iglesia. Aún más, al observar la Cena del Señor las mujeres no guardaban su debido lugar y venían con la cabeza descubierta; esta es la cuestión a la que Pablo se refiere ahora.

Tenga presente que Corinto era una ciudad inmoral, con «sacerdotisas» que sencillamente eran prostitutas. Una característica de una mujer pecadora era el cabello corto; tal mujer con frecuencia caminaba por la ciudad sin el velo usual que la cubriera. En algunas naciones orientales, incluso hoy, las mujeres no aparecen en público sin llevar un velo. Esto sería una señal de falta de respeto hacia sus maridos y se interpretaría como una invitación al pecador. A decir verdad, incluso entre los judíos una cabeza rapada era una señal de inmoralidad (véase Nm 5.11–31, especialmente el v. 18). De modo que Pablo advierte a las mujeres de la iglesia a que no pierdan su testimonio al adorar en público sin llevar un velo sobre su cabeza. El velo era una muestra de subordinación al Señor y a sus esposos, y un reconocimiento del principio de autoridad.

Los judíos ortodoxos, incluso hoy, llevan a sus cultos en las sinagogas un sombrerito de oración, pero esta es una práctica que Pablo prohíbe en la iglesia local. Cristo es la Cabeza del hombre; de modo que si un hombre lleva sombrero en la adoración, deshonra a su Cabeza. Si la mujer no usa un velo, deshonra a su esposo, porque «la mujer [fue creada] por causa del varón» (v. 9). Por supuesto, el simple hecho de usar (o no usar) un pedazo de tela nunca cambia el corazón. Pablo da por sentado que estas mujeres cristianas obedecían de corazón el principio de autoridad, pero que no lo hacían externamente.

Pablo da varias razones por las cuales las mujeres deben darse su lugar en la iglesia: (1) muestra honor a sus esposos; (2) honra a Cristo, la Cabeza de la Iglesia; (3) concuerda con el mismo plan de la creación, porque Dios creó a la mujer para el hombre; (4) los ángeles observan nuestra adoración y saben lo que hacemos, v. 10; (5) la naturaleza misma le da a la mujer cabello largo y al hombre cabello corto, enseñando así la subordinación; (6) esta es la práctica en todas las iglesias, v. 16 ¿Cómo se aplica a nosotros esta cuestión de «usar sombreros» o «llevar el cabello corto»? Aunque no tenemos las mismas circunstancias que Pablo tenía que considerar en relación a Corinto, debemos admitir que una persona fuera de lugar es siempre un estorbo para la obra de Dios. Debe haber modestia en la iglesia local, tanto en el vestido como en las acciones. No debemos conformarnos al mundo, para no perder nuestro testimonio.

B. Divisiones en la iglesia (vv. 17–19).

Cuando hay divisiones y facciones (herejías) en la iglesia, incluso cuando parezcan ocultas, se mostrarán en las reuniones públicas. La Cena del Señor habla de la unidad de los creyentes; las divisiones en la iglesia negarán este maravilloso mensaje.

C. *Motivos egoístas (vv. 20–22).*

La iglesia primitiva con frecuencia celebraba una «fiesta de amor», una comida de compañerismo, conjuntamente con la Cena del Señor. Pero en Corinto los ricos traían de su abundancia, mientras que los pobres se sentaban a un lado con unas migajas de pan. «¡Coman en sus casas!», les ordena Pablo. «¡Su glotonería y embriaguez son una deshonra para el Señor!» (vv. 21–22). Si los creyentes no se aman los unos a los otros, nunca podrán participar de la Cena del Señor y ser bendecidos.

II. Las consecuencias de su desorden (11.23–30)

A. *Eran juzgados en vez de bendecidos (vv. 23–29).*

Es evidente de que Cristo le había dado personalmente a Pablo instrucciones respecto a la Cena del Señor, porque el apóstol no estuvo en el aposento alto cuando se instituyó la ordenanza. Las palabras de Pablo hablan del cuerpo partido y la sangre derramada de Cristo por su iglesia, elementos que son un recordatorio constante de su amor y su regreso. Miramos en retrospectiva a la cruz y hacia adelante a su venida. Pero la Cena dejó de ser una bendición para la iglesia de Corinto, y por la manera en que abusaban de ella era causa de juicio. Sus reuniones no eran «para lo mejor, sino para lo peor» (v. 17). Así es como siempre resultan las cosas espirituales: si nuestros corazones no andan bien, cualquier cosa que hagamos se convierte en una maldición.

B. *Eran castigados (v. 30).*

Dios permitió que les vinieran enfermedades e incluso muerte a los de la iglesia de Corinto debido a que participaban de la Cena del Señor de una manera indigna. Pablo nunca nos dice que debemos ser «dignos» para comer de la Mesa del Señor; porque si ese fuera el caso, nadie podría participar. Aunque no somos dignos, podemos participar de una manera digna al comprender lo que la Cena significa: tener un corazón libre de pecado; estar lleno del amor por Cristo y su pueblo; estar dispuesto a obedecer su Palabra. Los cristianos a menudo piensan que pueden «salirse con la suya» actuando descuidadamente en la iglesia, pero esto es imposible. Si nuestros corazones no andan bien, Dios tiene que castigarnos para traernos al lugar de la bendición.

III. La corrección de este desorden (11.31–34)

A. *Juicio propio (vv. 31–32).*

Si enfrentamos nuestros pecados con sinceridad, los juzgamos y los confesamos, Dios no nos castigará. «Pruébese cada uno a sí mismo» es el mandamiento de Pablo en el versículo 28. En la Cena del Señor damos tres «miradas»: miramos hacia adentro y confesamos nuestros pecados; miramos hacia atrás y recordamos el Calvario; y miramos hacia adelante y anhelamos fervientemente su regreso. El principio es claro: si no juzgamos nuestros pecados, Dios tendrá que juzgarnos a nosotros.

B. *Amor mutuo (v. 33).*

«¡No pienses sólo en ti!», escribió Pablo; «piensa en otros». Esto es amor cristiano: poner a los demás antes que a nosotros mismos. Cuán pocos son los cristianos que obedecen este

principio cuando se trata de la adoración. Llegamos a la iglesia preguntando: «¿Obtendré algo del culto de hoy?», cuando deberíamos preguntarnos: «¿Qué puedo decir o hacer que será de bendición a alguna otra persona?»

C. Discernimiento espiritual (v. 34).

Mientras que no hay nada de malo con las comidas de compañerismo en la iglesia, el lugar para comer es la casa propia. Se necesita discernimiento espiritual para mantener a la iglesia haciendo lo que se supone que debe hacer y no apartarla con desvíos. El ministerio de la iglesia local no es entretener o alimentar a los santos; es el de la edificación espiritual de los unos a los otros para que sean capaces de salir a ganar a otros. Tal vez se pudiera asentar como principio básico que la iglesia local no debe hacer lo que Dios ordenó que hiciera el hogar o el estado. La iglesia no está a cargo de criar niños, sin embargo, ¡la gente le echa la culpa a la iglesia y a la Escuela Dominical cuando los hijos se descarrían! Si seguimos estos principios, nuestras asambleas serán reuniones para bendición y no para juicio («condenación» en el v. 32).²

[James Coffman's New Testament Commentary](#)

Verse 23

For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread.

This is the fourth time in the New Testament that the institution of the Lord's Supper is recorded. Some scholars deny that Paul received a direct revelation on this subject; but if he was merely repeating what he had received from other apostles; it is hard to see why he would have said:

I received of the Lord ...

Wuest wrote that:

Paul had doubtless heard the account of the institution of the Lord's Supper from the eleven, but he also had it by revelation from the Lord ([1 Corinthians 11:23](#)). He received his gospel by direct revelation in Arabia. ^{F45}

Leon Morris and F. W. Farrar, with many others, concur in this view.

Verse 24

And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Had given thanks ...

In Matthew and Mark, reference to this act says, "Having blessed it"; but Luke has it as here. As Hodge declared: "The two expressions mean the same thing. Both express the act of consecration, by a grateful acknowledgment of God's mercy and invocation of his blessing." ^{F46}

He brake it ...

From this it is clear that "the breaking of the bread ought not to be abandoned, as in the case when WAFERS are used." ^{F47}

²Wiersbe, Warren W., *Bosquejos Expositivos de la Biblia, AT y NT*, (Nashville, TN: Editorial Caribe Inc.) 2000, c1995.

Some have supposed that breaking the bread contradicts (by symbolism) the fact that not a bone of Jesus was broken ([John 19:36](#))! but the breaking of a bone is not the same as the breaking of the body. The spear that pierced Jesus' side certainly broke his "body," but did not break any bone. The KJV, of course, has "This is my body which is broken"; and the meaning is certainly in the passage, deriving from "he brake it." Thus the meaning is true, despite the fact of the word "broken" not being in the best manuscripts.

This do in remembrance of me ...

For more explicit comment on the commemorative aspect of the Lord's Supper, see Nature of the Lord's Supper, under verse 34.

Verses 25, 26

In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lords' death until he come.

After supper ...

This phrase is invaluable in that it shows why two cups were mentioned, one before the bread and the other afterward, in Luke 22:17-20. The first cup Luke mentioned was the fourth cup of the simulated Passover meal, which Paul here called "supper" with the strongest implications that it was in no sense the Passover itself (except by accommodation), the same being called the "cup of joy." Both the bread and the wine of the Lord's Supper were given "after supper," and in that order, the bread first, the cup afterward. See my Commentary on Luke pp. 467,468.

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

This means the same thing as "This is my blood of the covenant" ([Matthew 26:26](#)); and in Paul's statement here, it is absolutely clear that the meaning in Matthew in no sense favors the crass literalism of such doctrines as transubstantiation or consubstantiation, no semblance of any such thing being suggested here. The student should consult the sacred text and the comments in the other three New Testament reports of this event: my Commentary on Matthew, pp. 429ff; my Commentary on Mark, pp. 306ff; and my Commentary on Luke, pp. 467ff.

Regarding the superstition that the emblems of the Lord's Supper are, in their consecration, literally changed to the body or flesh and blood of Christ, Hodge gave this pertinent comment:

It is only by denying all distinctions between, matter and spirit, and confounding all our ideas of substance and qualities, that we can believe that wine is blood, or bread flesh. [F48](#)

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup ...

Regarding the proper time of observance for the Lord's Supper, the New Testament teaches that it was observed upon the first day of the week, the first day of EVERY week, and "not upon any other days of the week." This passage is therefore no permit to take it any time we please. See my Commentary on Acts, pp. 385,386, and 517.

Eat this bread and drink this cup ...

Apostolic practice makes it certain that communion under one kind, that is, taking EITHER the bread or the wine without the other, was never encouraged or allowed in the New Testament. Furthermore, Paul's use of "or drink this cup" in 1 Cor. 11:27 is not a denial of this. As Farrar said, "What he meant there was that it was possible to partake in a wrong spirit either of the bread or of the cup." [F49](#)

Ye proclaim the Lord's death until he come ...

As Dummelow said, the Lord's Supper is "a living sermon." [F50](#) Thus the instructive nature of this solemn rite is stressed. See Nature of the Lord's Supper, below. The word for "proclaim" here is [Greek: katangelo]. Morris gave the meaning as "announce" or "proclaim," saying that "It means that the solemn observance of the service of Holy Communion is a vivid proclamation of the Lord's death." [F51](#)

Till he come ...

The Lord's Supper faces in two directions, back to Calvary and forward to the Second Advent, being retrospective in regard to one and prospective with regard to the latter. The Second Advent is a major doctrine of Christianity; and it is fitting that it should be honored in this pivotal ordinance.

Verse 27

Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink of the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

Due to the rendition in the KJV, "eateth and drinketh unworthily," many Christians have erroneously concluded that their "unworthiness" forbade their observance of the supper; but this is not true at all. The rendition here makes the meaning clear that it is not the "worthiness" of the participant which is in view, but the "worthiness" of his manner of partaking of it. Indeed, who was ever worthy to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God? The moment any man might suppose that he was "worthy" to do such a thing, the presumption itself would deny it. Nevertheless, there is a real danger here. If any person shall partake of this solemn rite without discernment of the event it memorializes, or without regard to the obligations imposed by it, or without any consistent effort to partake of it continually and faithfully throughout his life, or until the Lord comes, or without the due reverence and appreciation due such an ordinance - then such a person becomes guilty of the body and the blood of Jesus, the meaning of this being that he, in a spiritual sense, has become a crucifier of the Lord himself.

Or drink of the cup ...

See under preceding verse.

Verse 28

But let a man prove himself, and so eat of the bread, and drink of the cup.

"Before taking part in such a service, the very least we can do is to conduct a rigorous self-examination." [E52](#) The word used here means "to test" and was used of the testing of metals. The point is that no Christian should observe the Lord's supper in any casual or flippant manner, treating it as something ordinary. It is the central ordinance of Christianity; and the believer's fidelity to it, or infidelity, is fraught with eternal consequences.

Verse 29

For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, if he discern not the body.

Judgment ...

may also be rendered "damnation" or "condemnation," in any event meaning consequences both serious and eternal.

Discern not the body ...

This may be indefinite by purpose on Paul's part. It would apply either to the precious body of Christ sacrificed upon Calvary for all people, or the church which is his spiritual body, the offense being the same either way the text is read. Significantly, it was the failure of the Corinthians that they disregarded the spiritual body (Despise ye the church of God?); and it is a fact that unfaithfulness at the Lord's table in all generations has been one of the most prevalent and hurtful means of despising God's church. Countless souls are continually guilty of this very thing. The apostle here warned of drastic penalties incurred by such negligence.

Verse 30

For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep.

This has usually been interpreted to mean that physical sickness and death had been visited upon the sinful Corinthians, due to their shameful perversion and abuse of the Lord's Supper; and while it must be allowed that in that age of the church, God did send visitations of divine wrath against wrongdoers, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, and perhaps also the incestuous man mentioned earlier in this epistle; nevertheless, the conviction here is that, if that had been in Paul's mind, he could hardly have said that "some sleep," sleep being too mild a word to use with reference to victims of divine wrath.

The meaning which appears to be most likely is that Paul was speaking of those who had become spiritually weak and sickly, some no doubt having perished spiritually. If that was meant, then the condition of those asleep was terminal and irrevocable, being the same as that evident in Mark 3:29; Heb. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:6; 2 Pet. 2:20; 1 John 5:16; 1 Thess. 5:19. For a dissertation on the unpardonable sin, see my Commentary on Mark, pp. 65-67. The condition of those asleep was no different from that of Ananias and Sapphira; and therefore Paul's gentle word "sleep" would appear to have been spoken in tenderness and regret.

Johnson noted that wherever "sleep" is used of death in the New Testament, it refers to the death of Christians, inferring from this that these "had not lost their salvation, but the privilege of service on earth." [F53](#) Such a conclusion seems precarious to this writer. There is an echo of Calvinism in such a viewpoint.

Verses 31, 32

But if we discerned ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

In these verses, it seems quite clearly indicated that Paul was still speaking of the weak and sickly Christians and of them that "slept." Thus, the implications would be that through the scourge of physical illness, resulting in death for some and severe sickness for others, God was chastening the people with an ultimate purpose of their salvation in view. It is therefore quite difficult to support a dogmatic opinion with regard to the meaning of 1 Cor. 11:30. One thing may be definitely learned from it; THAT is the dreadful consequences of unfaithfulness at the Lord's table.

Farrar's paraphrase of this is as follows:

If we were in the habit of discriminating between spiritual and common things, we should not be undergoing this sign of God's displeasure; but the fact that his judgments are abroad among us, is for our further moral education, and to save us from being finally condemned with the world. [F54](#)

Verse 33

Whereas, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, wait for one another.

This writer still remembers the occasions in his boyhood, when church never started on time, because "tarry ye one for another" from the KJV was interpreted to mean that church could not begin until all the members were present. Sometimes this resulted in quite sensational delays! What Paul said here, of course, was that the affluent should not bring their provisions and eat them all before the poor arrived, the primary application of this, it seems, being to the AGAPE, and not to the Lord's Supper which followed it. The relevance of the passage still holds. Considerations of love and helpfulness should always be extended to brothers by brothers in Christ, even to the tardy.

Verse 34

If any man is hungry, let him eat at home; that your coming together be not unto judgment. And the rest will I set in order whensoever I come.

This was the apostolic order that resulted in the separation of the Agape from the Lord's Supper and the eventual discontinuation of the former. The Lord's Supper was here elevated to a position higher than that of merely satisfying the appetites. The hungry should eat at home. Nevertheless, the beauty of the [Greek: agape], as practiced in the primitive church, has always enthralled and captivated the imagination; and there can be little doubt that meals served in the present times by churches "on the grounds," in their buildings, or in parks and public places, are vestigial recurrences of that once glorious custom which perished in the shameful abuses at Corinth. It was the selfishness, greediness and lust of the natural man insufficiently subdued by the indwelling Spirit which perverted, and by that perversion destroyed an age of loving innocence. The church, it seems has never been able to recapture that lost innocence. Observations of the dinners served by congregations through many years have afforded this writer many occasions to note the ease with which the Corinthian perversions invade and destroy such dinners.

THE NATURE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The central ordinance of Christianity is the Lord's Supper, standing in a metaphor as a summary of the whole Christian religion: "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man ye have no life in you" ([John 6:53](#)). See my Commentary on John, pp. 186-188. The nature of this precious rite is discerned in seven words, as follows:

1. Retrospective. It looks back to Calvary, bringing to the worshiper's mind the night of betrayal, agony, blood and tears, and the awful scenes of the crucifixion itself. Christians who have been "baptized into his death" ([Romans 6:3](#)) find in this solemn ceremony a recurring participation in Christ's death. Upon that fixed interval recurring every Lord's Day, the child of God turns his thoughts and meditations back to the cross, in his heart living with the Saviour those awful events of his Passion, reviewing over and over again the scenes and circumstances which marked the Lord's supreme act of atonement for the sins of the whole world. Christ died for our sins; and it is that historical event which anchors and perpetuates the Lord's Supper; and thus the historicity of Christ's death and resurrection is demonstrated and proved throughout all times and places by this sacred rite.
2. Prospective. The ancient pagan god of war was the two-faced Janus (from whence the name of the month January), facing in both directions, forward and backward. In a far more wonderful manner, the Lord's Supper faces toward Calvary in retrospect, and also toward the Second Advent, prospectively. When the Manhattan Church of Christ constructed a new building in New York City, the custom of writing the words, "Do this in remembrance of me" on the Lord's table, was expanded by adding the words, "This do ye until I come." Thus, the essential expectation inherent in the holy supper was Scripturally recognized. Unless Christ is coming again, all true meaning of the Lord's Supper disappears; for there is in every proper observance of it the conviction of that time when the skies will be bright with the coming of the Son of God the second time apart from sin to reward the righteous and to bring about the summation of all things.
3. Introspective. In Paul's writings in this chapter, the necessity of every man's examining himself is affirmed ([1 Corinthians 11:28](#)). It is in that rigorous self-examination which should mark every man's participation in the Lord's Supper that the introspective nature of it is seen. One's life, his sincerity, his devotion, dedication and love for the Lord who redeemed him at such awful cost should all appear within the thoughts of the participant. How can any wickedness bear the light of such an introspective searching?
4. Commemorative. "In remembrance of me," Jesus said ([1 Corinthians 11:25](#)). The Lord's Supper is one of the great memorials to the event of the Dayspring's visitation from on high, the Lord's baptism and the Lord's day being two others. What a memorial is this! No tower of stone or marble palace, no tablet or inscription, no name conferred on cities or places, no granite obelisk or shining monument could ever have a fraction of the effectiveness of this

worldwide memorial of the Lord's Supper. It has now been observed by Christians on more than 100,000 successive Lord's Days; nor is there any possibility that there will ever be a single Sunday until the end of time when it will not be observed by people who love the Lord and await his Second Advent. Under Judaism, people remembered their sins; in Christ they remember their Redeemer who has forgiven their sins ([Jeremiah 31:31-35](#)).

5. Instructive. "Ye proclaim the Lord's death until he come." If one wishes to preach a sermon of redemption to a dying world, let him faithfully observe this sacred supper. Jesus himself identified it as a proclamation. If one would instruct dying people to turn their hearts to the cross of Christ, the way to do it is to exhibit unvarying fidelity to this Christian duty. Books are cast aside, sermons forgotten, solicitous words ignored; but no man can ignore the example of a faithful life with regard to the Holy Communion of the body and the blood of Christ. The weakness of churches in this generation may not so much be attributed to weak preaching (although there is plenty of that), but to weak living on the part of her members. The man who neglects or abandons the Lord's Supper has hidden his light, stifled the message of salvation and denied his Lord.
6. Corrective. Implicit in the self-examination mentioned under 3 above, is the requirement that elements of personal life out of harmony with the high professions of Christianity will be recognized and corrected. This is inherent in the meaning of "Let a man prove himself." Faithful adherence to the duty of observing the Lord's Supper will either remove one's sins, or one's sins will remove him from frequenting the Lord's table.
7. Separative. This ordinance, more than any other, reveals who is saved and who is not saved. Here is the spiritual device of the Lord himself which separates the wheat from the chaff. Christ himself said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have not life in yourselves" ([John 6:53](#)); and men may scream about this if they please, but it is the truth. Go to church. The saints and the sinners alike sing the hymns; the believer and the infidel alike hear the sermon respectfully; the sons of light and the sons of darkness give of their money; the saved and the lost bow their heads for the prayers; but when the emblems of the Lord's Supper appear, a separation is made. The New Testament reveals that here is an ordinance so important that the whole world is polarized by it, Christians being quite properly identified as those who faithfully observe it, and non-Christians identified as those who take it not. Oh yes, to be sure, this ordinance ALONE is not the terminator; but the importance of it is such that Christ himself used it as a metaphor of the whole Christian religion. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" ([John 6:54](#)). For more on this, see my Commentary on John, pp. 186-188.