

The Lord's Supper

by Thomas Watson

Thomas Watson's sermon on the Lord's Supper emphasizes the profound significance of Christ's sacrifice and the believer's response to His love and grace.

Scripture: Isaiah 53:5, Hosea 13:14, Matthew 26:26, Romans 5:8, 1 Corinthians 11:27, Colossians 3:2, 2 Thessalonians 1:9, Hebrews 9:17

Topics: "The Lord's Supper", "Christ's Sacrifice"

Description

Thomas Watson preaches about the significance of the Lord's Supper, emphasizing the deep meaning behind Jesus' sacrifice of His body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. He delves into the bitter, lingering, painful, shameful, and cursed aspects of Christ's death on the cross, highlighting the immense love displayed by God the Father and Jesus Christ in giving Himself for humanity. Watson urges believers to surrender to God with self-examination, seriousness, intelligence, longing, penitence, sincerity, humility, heavenly-mindedness, zeal, and universal subjection to Christ, reflecting the gratitude for Christ's sacrifice through courage, fruitfulness, zeal, and heavenly living.

Transcript

The Lord's Supper

by Thomas Watson (1620-1686)

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." Matthew 26:26-28

"Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it." This shadowed out Christ's death and passion with all the torments of His body and soul. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him," Isaiah 53:10. When spices are bruised--then they send forth a sweet savor. So, when Christ was bruised on the cross--He sent out a sweet fragrance. Christ's body crucifying--was the breaking open of a box of precious ointment which filled heaven and earth with its perfume.

QUESTION. What was the cause of Christ's suffering?

ANSWER. Surely not for any desert of His own. "The Messiah shall be cut off--but not for Himself," Daniel 9:26. In the original it is, "He shall be cut off, and there is nothing in Him." That is--there is no cause in Him, why He should suffer. Why, then, was His blessed body broken? It was for our sins. "He was wounded for our transgressions," Isaiah 53:5. The Hebrew word for "wounded" has a double emphasis. Either it may signify that He was pierced through as with a dart, or that He was profaned. He was used as some common vile thing--and Christ can thank us for it. "He was wounded for our transgressions." So that, if the question were put to us, as once was put to Christ, "Prophecy to us--who smote You?" Luke 22:64, we might soon answer that it was our sins which smote Him! Our pride made Christ wear a crown of thorns. As Zipporah said to Moses, "A bloody husband are you to me," Exodus 4:25, so may Christ say to His church, "A bloody spouse you have been to Me--you have cost Me My heart's blood!"

Concerning Christ's suffering upon the cross, observe these things:

1. It was a BITTER death. "He was broken." The very thoughts of His suffering, put Him into an agony. "Being in agony, He prayed more earnestly, and He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground!" Luke 22:44. He was full of sorrow. "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death!" Matthew 26:38.
2. It was a LINGERING death. It was more for Christ to suffer one hour--than for us to have suffered forever. But His death was lengthened out. He hung three hours on the cross. He died many deaths before He could die one.
3. It was a PAINFUL death. His hands and feet were nailed, which parts, being full of sinews, and therefore very tender--His pain must be most acute and sharp. And to have the envenomed arrow of God's wrath shot to His heart--this was the direful catastrophe, and caused that outcry upon the cross, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me!" The justice of God was now inflamed and heightened to its full. "God spared not His Son," Romans 8:38. Nothing must be abated of the debt. Christ felt the pains of hell, though not locally, yet equivalently. In the Lord's Supper, we see this tragedy acted before us.
4. It was a SHAMEFUL death. Christ was hung between two thieves, Matthew 27:38. It was as if He had been the principal malefactor. Well might the lamp of heaven withdraw its light and mask itself with darkness, as blushing to behold the Sun of righteousness in an eclipse. It is hard to say which was greater, the blood of the cross--or the shame of the cross, Hebrews 12:2.
5. It was a CURSED death. Deuteronomy 21:23. This kind of death was deemed exceedingly execrable, yet the Lord Jesus underwent this, "Being made a curse for us," Galatians 3:13. He who was God blessed forever, Romans 9:5--was under a curse!
6. Also, consider the SWEETNESS of it to us. Christ's bruising--is our healing. "By His stripes, we are healed," Isaiah 53:5. Calvin calls the crucifixion of Christ, the hinge on which our salvation turns. Luther calls it a gospel spring opened to refresh sinners. Indeed, the suffering of Christ is a deathbed cordial. It is an antidote to expel all our fear. Does sin trouble? Christ has overcome it for us! Besides the two thieves crucified with Christ, there were two other invisible thieves crucified with Him--sin and the devil.

QUESTION. What is meant by Christ's taking the cup?

ANSWER. The cup is figurative of the wine in it. By this, Christ signified the shedding of His blood upon the cross. When His blood was poured out--now the vine was cut and bled. Now was the lily of the valleys

dyed a purple color. This was, to Christ, a cup of astonishment, Ezekiel 23:33. But to us, it is a cup of salvation. When Christ drank this cup of blood, we may truly say that He drank a toast to the world.

It was precious blood, 1 Peter 1:19. In this blood, we see sin fully punished and fully pardoned. Well may the spouse give Christ of her spiced wine and the juice of her pomegranate, Song of Solomon 8:2, when Christ has given her a draft of His warm blood, spiced with His love and perfumed with the Divine nature!

"This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." This is a mercy of the first magnitude, the crowning blessing. "Who forgives your iniquities, who crowns you with loving-kindness," Psalm 103:3-4. Whoever has this charter granted, is enrolled in the book of life. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven," Psalm 32:1. Under this word, "forgiveness of sin"--are comprehended all heavenly blessings: justification, adoption, and glory--in respect of which benefits we may, with Chrysostom, call the Lord's Supper, "the feast of the cross!"

See in this text, as in a looking-glass, God's infinite love displayed.

(1) Behold the love of God the Father in giving Christ to be broken for us! That God should put such a jewel in pledge--is the astonishment of angels. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," John 3:16. It is an example of love, without a parallel. It was a far greater expression of love in God to give His Son to die for us--than if He had voluntarily acquitted us of the debt without any atoning sacrifice at all. If a subject is disloyal to his sovereign, it argues more love in the king to give his own son to die for that subject--than to freely forgive him the wrong.

(2) That Christ should suffer death. "Lord," said Bernard, "You have loved me more than Yourself; for You laid down Your life for me." The emperor Trajan tore off a piece of his own robe to bind up one of his soldier's wounds. But Christ tore off His own flesh for us! Nay, that Christ should die as the greatest sinner--having the weight of all men's sins laid upon Him--here was most transporting love! It astonishes all the angels in heaven!

(3) That Christ should die freely. "I lay down My life," John 10:17. There was no law to coerce Him, no force to compel Him. It is called the offering of the body of Jesus, Hebrews 10:10. Nothing could fasten Jesus to the cross--but the golden link of love!

(4) That Christ should die for such as we are. What are we? Not only vanity--but enmity! When we were rebelling--He was dying! When we had weapons in our hands--then He had the spear in His side! "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8.

(5) That Christ died for us when He could not expect to be at all bettered by us. We were reduced to poverty. We were in such a condition that we could neither merit Christ's love--nor requite it. For Christ to die for us when we were at such a low ebb, was the very quintessence of love. One man will extend kindness to another as long as he is able to requite him. But if he is fallen to decay, then love begins to slacken and cool. But when we were engulfed in misery and fallen to decay, when we had lost our beauty, stained our blood, and spent our portion--then Christ died for us. O amazing love, which may swallow up all our thoughts!

(6) That Christ should not repent of His sufferings. "He shall see the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied," Isaiah 53:11. It is a metaphor which alludes to a mother who, though she has suffered greatly, does not repent of it when she sees a child brought forth. So, though Christ had hard travail upon the

cross, yet He does not repent of it--but thinks all His sufferings well-bestowed. "He shall be satisfied." The Hebrew word signifies such a satiating, as a man has at some sweet banquet.

(7) That Christ should die for us--rather than for the fallen angels. They were creatures of a more noble extraction and, in all probability, might have brought greater revenues of glory to God, Yet, that Christ should pass by those golden vessels and make us 'clods of earth' into 'stars of glory'--O the hyperbole of Christ's love!

(8) Yet another step of Christ's love, for like the waters of the sanctuary--it rises higher: that Christ's love should not cease at the hour of death! We write in our letters, "your friend until death." But Christ wrote in another style, "your Friend after death!" Christ died once--but loves forever. He never withdraws His affection to us. He is making the mansions ready for us, John 14:2. He is interceding for us, Hebrews 7:25. He has finished dying--yet He has not finished loving. What a stupendous love is this! Who can meditate upon His love--and not be in ecstasy? "May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it!" Ephesians 3:19. When you see Christ broken in the Lord's Supper, think of this love.

See, then, what entire affection we should bear to Christ, who gives us His body and blood in the Supper. If He had anything to part with of more worth, He would have bestowed it upon us. "He gave Himself for us to redeem us." Titus 2:14. O let Christ lie nearest our hearts! Let Him be our Tree of Life--and let us desire no other fruit. Let Him be our morning Star--and let us rejoice in no other light.

As Christ's beauty--so His bounty should make Him loved by us. He has given us His blood as the price--and His Spirit as the witness of our pardon. In the Lord's Supper, Christ bestows all good things. He both imputes His righteousness, and imparts His loving-kindness. He gives a foretaste of that supper which shall be celebrated in the paradise of God. To sum up all, in the blessed supper, Christ gives Himself to believers--and what more could He give? "Dear Savior, how should Your name be as ointment poured forth!" The Persians worship the sun for their god. Let us worship the Sun of righteousness. Though Judas sold Christ for 30 pieces of silver--let us rather part with all, than this pearl of great price. Christ is that golden pipe, through which the golden oil of salvation is transmitted to us.

Was Christ's body broken? Then we may behold sin odious in the red looking-glass of Christ's sufferings. It is true, sin is to be abominated since it turned Adam out of paradise and threw the angels down to hell. Sin is the peace-breaker. It is like an incendiary in the family that sets husband and wife at variance. It makes God fall out with us. Sin is the birthplace of our sorrows--and the grave of our comforts. But that which may most of all disfigure the face of sin and make it appear abominable is this--It crucified our Lord Jesus! It made Christ veil His glory and lose His blood.

If a woman saw the sword which killed her dear husband--how hateful would the sight of it be to her! Do we count that sin light--which made Christ's soul heavy unto death? Mark 14:34. Can that be our joy--which made the Lord Jesus a man of sorrows? Isaiah 53:3. Did He cry out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" And shall not those sins be forsaken by us--which made Christ Himself forsaken? O let us look upon sin with indignation! When a temptation to sin comes, let us say, "Is not this the sin which poured out Christ's blood!" Let our hearts be enraged against sin.

When the senators of Rome showed the people Caesar's bloody robe, they were incensed against those who slew him. Sin has rent the white robe of Christ's flesh, and died it a crimson color. Let us, then, seek to be avenged of our sins. Under the Law, if an ox gored a man so that he died, the ox was to be killed,

Exodus 21:28. Sin has gored and pierced our Savior! Let it die! What a pity is it for sin to live--which would not allow Christ to live!

Was Christ's body broken? Let us, then, from His suffering on the cross, learn this lesson--do not wonder if we meet with troubles in the world. Did Christ suffer--who "knew no sin," and do we think it strange to suffer--who know nothing but sin? Did Christ feel the anger of God? And is it much for us to feel the anger of men? Was the Head crowned with thorns? Must we have our bracelets and diamonds--when Christ had the nails and spear going to His heart! Truly, such as are guilty may well expect the lash--when He, who was innocent, could not go free.

EXHORTATIONS

Branch 1. Was Christ's body broken for us? Let us be deeply affected with the great love of Christ. Who can tread upon these hot coals, and his heart not burn? Cry out with Ignatius, "Christ, my love, is crucified!" If a friend should die for us--would not our hearts be much affected with his kindness? That the God of heaven should die for us--how should this stupendous mercy have a melting influence upon us! The body of Christ broken--is enough to break the most flinty heart. At our Savior's passion, the very rocks cleaved asunder. "The rocks split apart," Matthew 27:51. He who is not affected with Christ's love--has a heart harder than the rocks! If Saul was so affected with David's mercy in sparing his life, 1 Samuel 24:16, how may we be affected with Christ's kindness who, to spare our life--lost His own! Let us pray that, as Christ was fastened to the cross--so may He be fastened to our hearts.

Branch 2. Is Jesus Christ spiritually exhibited to us in the Lord's Supper? Let us then set a high value and estimate upon Him.

1. Let us prize Christ's BODY. Every crumb of this Bread of life is precious. "My flesh is food indeed," John 6:55. The manna was a lively type and emblem of Christ's body, for manna was sweet. "The people of Israel called the bread manna. It was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey." Exodus 16:31. It was a delicious food. Therefore it was called angel's food for its excellency. So Christ, the sacramental manna, is sweet to a believer's soul. "His fruit was sweet to my taste," Song of Solomon 2:3. Everything of Christ is sweet. His name is sweet. His virtue is sweet. This manna sweetens the bitter waters of Marah.

Nay, Christ's flesh excels manna. Manna was food--but not medicine. If an Israelite had been sick, manna could not have cured him. But this blessed manna of Christ's body, is not only for food--but for medicine! Christ has healing under His wings, Malachi 4:2. He heals the blind eye, the hard heart. Keep this medicine next to your heart--and it will heal you of all your spiritual distempers.

Also, manna was corruptible. It ceased when Israel came to Canaan. But this blessed manna of Christ's body will never cease. The saints will feed with infinite delight and soul satisfaction upon Christ to all eternity! The joys of heaven would cease--if this manna would cease. The manna was put in a golden pot in the ark to be preserved there. So the blessed manna of Christ's body, being put in the golden pot of the Divine nature, is laid up in the ark of heaven for the support of saints forever. Well, then, may we say of Christ's blessed body--it is food indeed. In the field of Christ's body, being dug upon the cross--we find the pearl of salvation!

2. Let us prize Christ's BLOOD in the Lord's Supper. It is drink indeed, John 6:55. Here is the nectar and ambrosia, which God Himself delights to taste of! This is both a balsam and a perfume. That we may set

the higher value upon the blood of Christ--I shall show you seven rare supernatural virtues in it:

1. It is a RECONCILING blood. "And you were once alienated and hostile in mind because of your evil actions. But now He has reconciled you by His physical body through His death, to present you holy, faultless, and blameless before Him." Colossians 1:21-22. Christ's blood is the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Nay, it is not only a sacrifice but a propitiation, 1 John 2:2, which denotes a bringing us into favor with God. It is one thing for a traitor to be pardoned--and another thing to be brought into favor. Sin rent us off from God--Christ's blood cements us to God! If we had had as much grace as the angels--it could not have wrought our reconciliation. If we had offered up millions of sacrifices, if we had wept rivers of tears--this could never have appeased an angry Deity. Only Christ's blood ingratiates us into God's favor--and makes Him look upon us with a smiling aspect. When Christ died, the veil of the temple was rent. This was not without a mystery, to show that through Christ's blood--the veil of our sins is rent which interposed between God and us.

2. Christ's blood is a QUICKENING blood. "Whoever drinks My blood, has eternal life," John 6:54. It both begets life--and prevents death! "The life of any creature is in its blood," Leviticus 17:11. Sure enough, the life of our soul--is in the blood of Christ. When we contract deadness of heart, and are like wine which has lost its spirits--Christ's blood has an elevating power; it puts vivacity into us, making us quick and lively in our motion. "They shall mount up with wings as eagles," Isaiah 40:31.

3. Christ's blood is a CLEANSING blood. "The blood of Jesus cleanses us from all our sin," 1 John 1:7. As the merit of Christ's blood pacifies God--so the virtue of it purifies us. Christ's blood is heaven's bath. It is a laver to wash in. It washes a crimson sinner--milk-white! The Word of God is a looking-glass to show us our spots--and the blood of Christ is a fountain to wash them away! "On that day a fountain will be opened--to cleanse them from all their sins and defilement!" Zechariah 13:1.

But this blood will not wash--if it is mingled with anything. If we mingle our good works with Christ's blood--it will not wash! Let Christ's blood be pure and unmixed--and there is no spot which it cannot wash away! It purged out Noah's drunkenness, and Lot's incest! Indeed, there is one spot so black that Christ's blood does not wash away--and that is the sin against the Holy Spirit. Not but that there is virtue enough in Christ's blood to wash it away--but he who has sinned that sin--will not be washed. He despises Christ's blood and tramples it under foot! Hebrews 10:29.

4. Christ's blood is a SOFTENING blood. There is nothing so hard, that it cannot be softened by this blood. It will soften a stone! Water will soften the earth--but it will not soften a stone; but Christ's blood mollifies a stone. It softens a heart of stone. It turns a flint--into a spring. The heart, which before was like an adamant rock, being steeped in Christ's blood, becomes soft--and the waters of repentance flow from it! How was the jailer's heart dissolved and made tender when the blood of sprinkling was upon it! "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Acts 16:30. His heart was now like melting wax. God might now set whatever seal and impression He desired upon it.

5. Christ's blood COOLS the heart.

First, it cools the heat of sin. The heart naturally is full of distempered heat. It must be hot--being set on fire by hell. It burns in lust and passion. Christ's blood allays this heat--and quenches the inflammation of sin.

Second, it cools the heat of conscience. In times of spiritual desertion, conscience burns with the heat of God's displeasure. Now, Christ's blood, being sprinkled upon the conscience--cools and pacifies it. And, in

this sense, Christ is compared to a river of water, Isaiah 32:2. When the conscience burns and is in agony--Christ's blood is like water to the fire. It has a cooling, refreshing virtue in it.

6. Christ's blood COMFORTS the soul. It is a good remedy for fainting fits. Christ's blood is better than wine. Though wine cheers the heart of a man who is well, yet it will not cheer his heart when he is greatly afflicted--or when the pangs of death are upon him. But Christ's blood will cheer the heart at such a time. It is best in affliction. It cures the trembling of the heart!

A conscience sprinkled with Christ's blood can, like the nightingale, sing with a thorn in its breast. The blood of Christ can make a prison--become a palace. It turned the martyr's flames--into beds of roses. Christ's blood gives comfort at the hour of death. As a holy man once said on his deathbed when they brought him a cordial, "No cordial like the blood of Christ!"

7. Christ's blood PROCURES HEAVEN. Israel passed through the Red Sea to Canaan. So, through the red sea of Christ's blood--we enter into the heavenly Canaan. "Having boldness therefore to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," Hebrews 10:19. Our sins shut heaven--Christ's blood is the key which opens the gate of paradise for us! Hence it is, that one calls the cross "the tree of salvation" because that blood which trickled down the cross, distills salvation. Well, then, may we prize the blood of Christ and, with Paul, determine to know nothing but Christ crucified, 1 Corinthians 2:2. King's crowns are only crosses--but the cross of Christ is the only crown!

Branch 3. Does Christ offer His body and blood to us in the Supper? Then with what solemn preparation should we come to so sacred an ordinance! It is not enough to do what God has appointed--but as He has appointed. "Prepare your hearts unto the Lord," 1 Samuel 7:3. The musician first puts his instrument in tune--before he plays. The heart must be prepared and put in tune--before it goes to meet with God in this solemn ordinance of the Lord's Supper. Take heed of rashness and irreverence. If we do not come prepared, we do not drink--but spill Christ's blood! "Whoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," 1 Corinthians 11:27. "That is," said one, "he shall be judged a shedder of Christ's blood."

We read of a wine cup of fury in God's hand, Jeremiah 25:15. He who comes unprepared to the Lord's Supper turns the cup of the Lord's Supper--into a cup of fury. Oh, with what reverence and devotion should we address ourselves to these holy mysteries! The saints are called "prepared vessels," Romans 9:23. If ever these vessels should be prepared--it is when they are to hold the precious body and blood of Christ.

The sinner who is damned--is first prepared. Men do not go to hell without some kind of preparation. "Vessels prepared for destruction," Romans 9:22. If those vessels are prepared which are filled with wrath--much more are those to be prepared who are to receive Christ in the Lord's Supper. Let us dress ourselves before a Scripture looking-glass, before we come to the Lord's Supper; and, with the Lamb's wife, make ourselves ready.

How should we PREPARE for the Lord's Supper?

1. We must come with SELF-EXAMINING hearts. "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread," 1 Corinthians 11:28. It is not enough that others think that we are fit to come--but we must examine ourselves. The Greek word "to examine" is a metaphor taken from the goldsmith who carefully tries his precious metals. So before we come to the Lord's Supper, we are to make a careful and

discerning trial of ourselves by the Word. Self-examination is difficult. It is hard for a man to look inward--and see the face of his own soul. The eye can see everything, but itself.

But this work is necessary because, if we do not examine ourselves, we are at a loss about our spiritual estate. We know not whether we are savingly interested in the covenant--or whether we have a right to the Supper. Also, because God will examine us. It was a sad question the master of the feast asked, "How is it that you are here--without a wedding garment?" Matthew 22:12. So it will be terrible when God shall say to a man, "How did you come in here to My table--with a proud, vain, unbelieving heart? What have you to do here--in your sins. You pollute My holy things!"

What need, therefore, is there to make a heart search before we come to the Lord's Supper! We should examine our sins that they may be mortified, our spiritual needs that they may be supplied, our graces that they may be strengthened.

2. We must come with **SERIOUS** hearts. Our spirits are feathery and light--like a boat without ballast, which floats in the water but does not sail. We float in holy duties and are full of vain excursions, even when we are to deal with God and are engaged in matters of life and death. That which may fill our hearts with seriousness, is to consider that God's eye is now especially upon us--when we approach His table. "When the King came in to view the guests, He saw a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes," Matthew 22:11. God knows every communicant, and if He sees any levity and indecency of spirit in us, unworthy of His presence--He will be highly incensed and send us away with the guilt of Christ's blood--instead of the comfort of it.

3. We must come with **INTELLIGENT** hearts. There ought to be a competent measure of knowledge, that we may discern the Lord's body. As we are to pray with understanding, 1 Corinthians 14:15, so ought we to communicate at the Lord's Supper with understanding. If knowledge is lacking, it cannot be a reasonable service, Romans 12:1. Those who do not know the meaning of the Supper--do not feel the comfort of it. We must know--God the Father in His attributes, God the Son in His offices, God the Holy Spirit in His graces. Some say they have good hearts--yet lack knowledge. We may as well call that a good eye--which lacks sight.

4. We must come to the Lord's Supper with **LONGING** hearts. Say as Christ, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover," Luke 22:15. If God prepares a feast--we must get an appetite. As David longed for the water of the well of Bethlehem, 2 Samuel 23:15, so should we long for Christ in the Lord's Supper. Holy desires are the sails of the soul which are spread to receive the gale of a heavenly blessing. For the exciting of holy desires and longings, consider:

(1) The **MAGNIFICENCE** and **ROYALTY** of this supper. It is a heavenly banquet. "The Lord Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine--the best of meats and the finest of wines," Isaiah 25:6. Here in this Supper, is the juice of that grape which comes from the true Vine. Under these elements of bread and wine, Christ and all His benefits are exhibited to us. The Lord's Supper is a repository and storehouse of celestial blessings. Behold here, life and peace and salvation set before us! All the sweet delicacies of heaven are served in this feast!

(2) To provoke appetite, consider what **NEED** we have of this spiritual feast. The angel persuaded Elijah to take a little of the cake and jar of water that he might not faint in his journey. "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you," 1 Kings 19:7. So truly we have a great journey--from earth to heaven. Therefore, we need to refresh ourselves along the way. How many sins have we to subdue! How many

duties to perform! How many needs to supply! How many graces to strengthen! How many adversaries to conflict with! So that we need refreshment along the way. By feeding upon the body and blood of the Lord in the Supper--we renew our strength as the eagle.

(3) Consider CHRIST'S READINESS to dispense divine blessings in this ordinance. Jesus Christ is not a sealed fountain--but a flowing fountain. It is but our crying--and He gives us food. It is but thirsting--and He opens the conduit. "Let the thirsty ones come--anyone who wants to. Let them come and drink the water of life without charge!" Revelation 22:17. As the clouds have natural proneness to drop down their moisture upon the earth--so does Christ delight to give forth of His gracious virtues and influences, to the hungry soul.

(4) There is no danger of EXCESS at this supper. Other feasts often cause gluttony; it is not so here. The more we take of the Bread of life--the more healthful we are, and the more we come to our spiritual maturity. Fullness here, increases our comforts. In spiritual things there is no extreme. Though a drop of Christ's blood is sweet, yet the more, the better; the more, the sweeter. "Drink abundantly, O beloved!" Song of Solomon 5:1.

(5) We do not know how long this feast may last. While the manna is to be had--let us bring our baskets! God will not always be spreading the Supper-table. If people lose their appetite, He will take the Supper away.

(6) Feeding upon Christ sacramentally, will be a good preparation to sufferings. The Bread of life--will help us to feed upon the bread of affliction. The cup of blessing--will enable us to drink of the cup of persecution. Christ's blood is a choice wine which strengthens. Therefore, Cyprian tells us, when the primitive Christians were to appear before the cruel tyrants, they were accustomed to receive the Lord's Supper, and then they arose up from the Lord's Supper as lions breathing forth the fire of heavenly courage. Let these considerations be as sauce to sharpen our appetites to the Lord's Supper. God loves to see us feed hungrily upon the Bread of life.

5. If we would come prepared to this ordinance, we must come with PENITENT hearts. The Passover was to be eaten with bitter herbs. We must bring our myrrh of repentance which, though it is bitter to us--is sweet to Christ. "They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced--and mourn for Him," Zechariah 12:10. A broken Christ is to be received with a broken heart. We who have sinned with Peter--should weep with Peter. Our eyes should be filled with tears--and our hearts steeped in the brinish waters of repentance. Say, "Lord Jesus, though I cannot bring sweet spices, and perfume Your body as Mary did--yet I will wash Your feet with my tears." The more bitterness we taste in sin--the more sweetness we shall taste in Christ!

6. We must come with SINCERE hearts. The tribes of Israel, being straitened in time, lacked some legal purifications. Yet because their hearts were sincere and they came with desire to meet with God in the Passover, therefore the Lord healed the people, 2 Chronicles 30:19-20. Bad aims will spoil good actions. An archer may miss the mark as well by squinting--as by shooting short. What is our design in coming to the Lord's Supper? Is it that we may have more victory over our corruptions and be more confirmed in holiness? Then God will be good to us and heal us. Sincerity, like true gold, shall allow for some grains of impurity.

7. We must come with hearts fired with LOVE to Christ. The spouse said, "I am sick with love," Song of Solomon 2:5. Let us give Christ the wine of our love to drink--and weep that we can love Him no more. Would we have Christ's exhilarating presence in the supper? Let us meet Him with strong endearments of

affection. Basil compares love to a fragrant ointment. Christ delights to smell this perfume! The disciple who loved most--Christ put in His bosom.

8. We must come with HUMBLE hearts. We see Christ humbling Himself unto death. Will a humble Christ ever be received into a proud heart? A sight of God's glory, and a sight of sin--will humble us. Was Christ humble--who was all purity? And are we proud--who are all leprosy? O let us come with a sense of our own vileness. How humble should he be, who is to receive alms of free grace! Jesus Christ is a lily of the valley, Song of Solomon 2:1, not of the mountains. Humility was never a loser. The emptier the vessel is, and the lower it is let down into the well--the more water it draws up. So the more the soul is emptied of itself, and the lower it is let down by humility--the more it fetches out of the well of salvation. God will come into a humble heart to revive it, Isaiah 57:15.

9. We must come with HEAVENLY hearts. The mystery of the Lord's Supper is heavenly. What would an earthworm do here? He is not likely to feed on Christ's body and blood who, with the serpent, eats dust. The Lord's Supper is called "communion," 1 Corinthians 10:16. What communion can an earthly man have with a heavenly Christ? First, there must be conformity before communion. He who is earthly is no more conformed in likeness to Christ--than a clod of dust is like a star. An earthly man makes the world his god. Then let him not think to receive another God in the Lord's Supper. O let us be in the heavenly altitudes and, by the wing of grace, ascend!

10. We must come with BELIEVING hearts. Christ gave the Lord's Supper to the apostles, principally as they were believers. Such as come faithless--go away fruitless. Nor it is enough to have the principle of faith. We must exert and put forth the vigorous actings of faith in this ordinance.

(1) Let us exercise the EYE of faith. Faith has an eagle's eye. It pierces into things far remote from sense. Faith takes a prospect of heaven. It discerns Him who is invisible, Hebrews 11:27. It beholds a beauty and fullness in Christ. It sees His beauty shining through the lattice of the ordinance. Faith views Christ's love, streaming in His blood. Look upon Christ with believing eyes and you shall, one day, see Him with glorified eyes!

(2) Let us exercise the MOUTH of faith. Here is the bread broken. What use is there of bread--but to feed on? Feed upon the Bread of God. Adam died by eating; we live by eating. In the Lord's Supper, the whole Christ is presented to us--the Divine and the human nature. All kind of virtue comes from Him--mortifying, mollifying, and comforting virtues. Oh, then, feed on Him! This grace of faith is the great grace to be set to work, at the Lord's Supper.

QUESTION. But does the virtue lie simply in faith?

ANSWER. Not in faith considered purely as a grace--but as it has respect to the object--Christ. The virtue is not in faith--but in Christ. Faith is the ring, Christ is the precious stone. All that faith does, is to bring home Christ's merits to the soul--and so it justifies. The virtue is not in faith--but in Christ.

QUESTION. But why should faith carry away more from Christ in the Lord's Supper, than any other grace?

ANSWER 1. Because faith is the most receptive grace. It is the receiving of gold, which enriches. So faith, receiving Christ's merits and filling the soul with all the fullness of God--must be an enriching grace. In the body, there are veins that suck the nourishment which comes into the stomach and turns it into blood and spirits. Faith is such a sucking vein--which draws virtue from Christ. Therefore it is called a precious faith,

2 Peter 1:1.

ANSWER 2. Faith has more of Christ's benefits annexed to it, because it is the most humble grace. If repentance would fetch justification from Christ, a man would be ready to say, "This was for my tears." But faith is humble; it is an empty hand--and what merit can there be in that? Does a poor man, reaching out his hand, merit an alms? So because faith is humble, and gives all the glory to Christ and free grace, hence it is that God has put so much honor on it. Faith is the grace to which Christ and all His merits belong. Therefore, above all graces, set faith to work in the Lord's Supper. Faith fetches in all provisions. This is the golden bucket, which draws water out of the well of life.

But there is a spurious faith in the world. Pliny tells of a Cyprian stone which is, in color and splendor, like the diamond--but it is not of the right kind. It will break with the hammer. So, there is a false faith which sparkles and makes a show in the eye of the world--but it is not genuine; it will break with the hammer of persecution.

11. We must come to the Lord's Supper with LOVING hearts. "Purge out the old leaven," 1 Corinthians 5:7. The leaven of malice will sour the ordinance to us. We must come with bitter tears--yet not with bitter spirits. The Lord's Supper is a love-feast. Christ's blood was shed not only to reconcile us to God--but to one another. Christ's body was broken to make up the breaches among Christians. How sad is it that those who profess they are going to eat Christ's flesh in the Lord's Supper--should tear the flesh of one another! "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer!" 1 John 3:15. He who comes to the Lord's Supper in hatred--is a Judas to Christ--and a Cain to his brother! What benefit can he receive at the Lord's Supper, whose heart is poisoned with malice?

If one drinks poison--surely food will do him no good. Such as are poisoned with bitterness and malice, are not the better for the sacramental food. He who does not come in love, to the Lord's Supper, has nothing of God in him, for "God is love," 1 John 4:16. He knows nothing of the gospel savingly--for it is a gospel of peace, Ephesians 6:15. He has none of the wisdom which comes from heaven, for that is gentle and easy to be entreated, James 3:17. Oh, that Christians were rooted and cemented together in love!

Shall devils unite--and saints divide! Did we thus learn Christ? Has not the Lord Jesus loved us to the death? What greater reproach can be cast upon such a loving Head--than for the members to smite one another? May the good Lord put out the fire of contention and kindle the fire of love and amity in all our hearts.

12. We must come with PRAYING hearts. Every ordinance, as well as every creature--is sanctified by prayer, 1 Timothy 4:5. Prayer turns the Lord's Supper, into spiritual nourishment. When we send the dove of prayer to heaven, it brings an olive leaf in its mouth. We should pray that God would enrich His ordinance with His presence; that He would make the Lord's Supper effectual to all those holy ends and purposes for which He has appointed it; that it may be the feast of our graces--and the funeral of our corruptions; that it may be not only a sign to represent Christ--but an instrument to convey Christ to us, and a seal to assure us of our heavenly union. If we would have the fat and sweet of this ordinance--we must send prayer before, as a harbinger, to bespeak a blessing.

Some are so distracted with worldly cares, that they can scarcely spare any time for prayer before they come to the Lord's Supper. Do they think the tree of blessing will drop its fruit into their mouth--when they never shook it by prayer! God does not set His mercies at so low a rate--as to cast them away upon those who do not seek them! Ezekiel 36:37. Nor is it enough to pray--but it must be with fervency and intensity of

soul. Jacob wrestled in prayer, Genesis 32:24. Cold prayers, like cold suitors, never succeed. Prayer must be with sighs and groans, Romans 8:26. It must be in the Holy Spirit, Jude 20. "He who will speak to God," said Ambrose, "must speak to Him in His own language which He understands, that is, in the language of His Spirit."

13. We must come to the Lord's Supper with SELF-DENYING hearts. When we have prepared ourselves in the best manner we can--let us take heed of trusting our preparations. "When you have done everything you were told to do, you should say--We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty." Luke 17:15. Use duty--but do not idolize it. We ought to use duties to fit us for Christ--but we must not make a Christ of our duties. Duty is the golden path to walk in--but not a silver crutch to lean on. Alas! What are all our preparations? God can spy a hole in our best garments. "All our righteousness is as filthy rags," Isaiah 64:6. When we have prepared ourselves as hoping in God's mercy, we must deny ourselves as deserving His justice. If our holiest services are not sprinkled with Christ's blood--they are no better than shining sins and, like Uriah's letter, they carry in them the matter of our death! Use duty--but trust Christ and free grace for acceptance with God. Be like Noah's dove. She made use of her wings to fly--but trusted in the ark for safety.

We see how we are to be qualified in our coming to the Lord's Supper. Thus coming--we shall meet with embraces of mercy. We shall have not only a representation, but a participation of Christ in the Lord's Supper. We shall be filled with all the fullness of God.

Branch 4. Has Christ really and truly died for us? Then when we are at this gospel ordinance, let us remember the Lord Jesus there. The Lord's Supper is a Christ-remembering ordinance. "This do in remembrance of Me," 1 Corinthians 11:25. God has appointed this spiritual festival, to preserve the living memory of our dying Savior. A Sacrament-day is a commemoration day. Remember Christ's passion. "Remembering the wormwood and the gall," Lamentations 3:19. If the manna was to be kept in the ark, so that the memory of it should be preserved--how should the death and suffering of Christ be kept in our minds as a memorial, when we are at the table of the Lord?

Remember the glorious benefits we receive from the broken body of Christ. We usually remember those things which are advantageous to us. Christ's broken body is a screen to keep off the fire of God's wrath from us! Christ's body being broken--the serpent's head is broken! Christ being broken upon the cross--a box of precious jewels is broken open! Now we have access to God with boldness. The blood of the cross has made way to the throne of grace. Now we are made sons and heirs--and to be heir to the promise, is better than to be heir to the crown! Christ having died, we are made near akin to the blessed Trinity. We are expectants of glory. The bloody way of the cross--is our milky way to heaven. Jesus Christ drank gall--that we might drink the honey streams of Canaan. His cross was stuck full of nails--that our crown might be hung full of jewels! Well may we remember Christ in the blessed Lord's Supper!

But the bare remembrance of Christ's death is not enough. Some who have a natural tenderness of spirit may be affected with the history of Christ's passion--but this remembrance of Christ has little comfort in it. Let us remember Christ in the Lord's Supper rightly.

Let us remember Christ's death with JOY. "God forbid that I should glory--except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," Galatians 6:14. When we see Christ in the Lord's Supper crucified before our eyes--we may behold Him in that posture as He was in upon the cross, stretching out His blessed arms to receive us. O what matter of triumph and acclamation is this! Though we remember our sins with grief--yet we should

remember Christ's sufferings with joy! Let us weep for those sins which shed His blood--yet rejoice in that blood which washes away our sins!

Let us so remember Christ's death--as to be conformed to His death. "That I may be conformed to His death," Philippians 3:10. Then we remember Christ's death rightly--when we are dead with Him. Our pride and passion are dead. Christ's dying for us--makes sin die in us. Then we rightly remember Christ's crucifixion--when we are crucified with Him. We are dead to the pleasures and preferment's of the world. "The world is crucified unto me--and I to the world," Galatians 6:14.

Branch 5. If Christ has given us this soul festival for the strengthening of grace, let us labor to feel some virtue flowing out of this ordinance to us. It would be strange if a man should receive no nourishment from his food. It is a discredit to this ordinance--if we get no increase of grace. Shall leanness enter into our souls--at a feast of fat things? Christ gives us His body and blood for the augmenting of faith. He expects that we should reap some profit and income, and that our weak, feeble faith--should flourish into a great faith. "O woman, great is your faith," Matthew 15:28. It would be good to examine whether, after our frequent celebration of this holy supper, whether we have arrived at a great faith.

But I would not discourage infant believers. If your grace is not risen to the bigness and proportion of a great faith--but is of the proper kind--it shall find acceptance with God. God, who bids us to receive him who is weak in faith, Romans 14:1, will not Himself refuse him. If your faith is not grown to a cedar, yet is a bruised reed--it is too good to be broken, Matthew 12:20. A weak faith can lay hold on a strong Christ! A palsied hand may tie the knot in marriage.

Only do not let Christians rest in lower measures of grace--but aspire after higher degrees. The stronger our faith--the more sweet influence we draw from Christ. This is that which honors the blessed Lord's Supper--when we can show the increase of grace and, being strong in faith, bring glory to God, Romans 4:20.

Branch 6. Has Christ provided such a blessed banquet for us? He does not nurse us abroad--but feeds us with His own breast--nay, with His own blood! Let us, then, study to respond to this great love of Christ. It is true, we can never parallel His love. Yet let us show ourselves thankful. We can do nothing satisfactory--but we may do something out of gratitude. Christ gave Himself as a sin-offering for us. Let us give ourselves as a thank-offering for Him. If a man redeems another out of debt--will he not be grateful? How deeply do we stand obliged to Christ--who has redeemed us from hell! Let us show thankfulness four ways:

1. Let us show our thankfulness to Christ, by COURAGE. Christ has set us a copy. He did not fear men--but endured the cross and despised the shame. Let us be steeled with courage, being made ready to suffer for Christ, which is, as Chrysostom said, to be baptized with a baptism of blood. Did Christ bear the wrath of God for us--and shall we not bear the wrath of men for Him! It is our glory to suffer in Christ's quarrel. "The Spirit of God and of glory rests upon you," 1 Peter 4:14. Let us pray for furnace grace. Be like those three Hebrew children. "Be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods!" Daniel 3:18. They would rather burn--than bow!

We do not know how soon an hour of trial may come. Oh, remember, Christ's body was broken! His blood was poured out. We have no such blood to shed for Him--as He shed for us!

2. Let us show our thankfulness to Christ, by FRUITFULNESS. Let us bring forth the sweet fruits of patience, heavenly-mindedness, and good works. This is to live unto Him--who died for us, 2 Corinthians 5:15. If we would rejoice the heart of Christ, and make Him not to repent of His sufferings--let us be fruitful in obedience. The wise men not only worshiped Christ--but presented unto Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Matthew 2:11. Let us present Christ with the best fruits of our garden: Let us give Him our love--that flower of delight. The saints are not only compared to stars for their knowledge--but spice trees for their fruitfulness. The breasts of the spouse were like clusters of grapes; Song of Solomon 7:7.

Christ's blood both kills sin--and makes the heart fruitful in grace.

3. Let us show our thankfulness to Christ, by our ZEAL. How zealous was Christ for our redemption! Zeal turns a saint into a seraphim! A true Christian has a double baptism--one of water, the other of fire. He is baptized with the fire of zeal. Be zealous for Christ's name and truth. Zeal is increased by opposition. It cuts its way through the rocks. Zeal loves truth most, when it is disgraced and hated. "They have made void Your law; therefore I love Your commandments above gold!" Psalm 119:126-127.

How little thankfulness do they show to Christ--who have no zeal for His honor and interests! They are like Ephraim. "Ephraim is a cake not turned," Hosea 7:8, baked on one side--and dough on the other. Christ most abominates a lukewarm temper, Revelation 3:15. He is nauseated with such professors. The location of England is seated between the torrid and frigid zones. The climate is neither very hot nor cold. I wish this were not the temper of Christians, and that our hearts were not too like the climate we live in. May the Lord cause the fire of holy zeal, to always be burning upon the altar of our hearts.

4. Let us show our thankfulness, by universal SUBJECTION to Christ. This is to make the Lord's Supper, in a spiritual sense--a feast of dedication, when we renew our vows and give ourselves up to God's service. "Truly I am Your servant," Psalm 116:16. "Lord, all I have is Yours. My head shall be Yours to study for You; my hands shall be Yours to work for You; my heart shall be Yours to adore You; my tongue shall be Yours to praise You!"

Branch 7. If Jesus Christ has provided so holy an ordinance as the Lord's Supper, let us live suitably to it. Have we received Christ into our hearts? Let us show Him forth--by our heavenliness. Let us show forth Christ by our heavenly words. Let us speak the language of Canaan. When the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles, they spoke with other tongues, Acts 2:4. While we speak the words of grace and soberness--our lips are fragrant with perfume, and drip with honey.

Let us show forth Christ by our heavenly affections. Let our sighs and breathings after God, go up as a cloud of incense. "Set your affections on things above," Colossians 3:2. We should do by our affections, as the farmers do by their corn. If the corn lies low in a damp room, it is in danger of corruption. Therefore, they carry it up into their highest room that it may keep the better. So our affections, if set on earth, are apt to corrupt and be unsavory. Therefore, we should carry them up on high above the world that they may be preserved pure. Breathe after fuller revelations of God. The higher the lark flies--the sweeter it sings. The higher our affections are raised towards heaven--the sweeter joys we feel.

Let us show forth Christ by our heavenly lives, Philippians 3:20. Hypocrites may, in a pang of conscience, have some good affections stirred--but they are as a flushed face, which comes and goes. But the constant tenor of our life must be holy. We must shine forth in a kind of angelic sanctity. It is not enough to have the image of Christ in the heart--but there must be something of Christ manifest in the life.

The scandalous lives of many communicants are a reproach to the Lord's Supper, and tempt others to infidelity. How odious it is, that those hands which have received the sacramental elements--should be unjust! That those eyes which have been filled with tears at the Lord's Supper should, afterwards, be filled with envy! That those teeth, which have eaten holy bread, should grind the faces of the poor! That those lips, which have touched the sacramental cup, should greet a harlot! That the mouth which has drunk consecrated wine, should be full of coarse jesting! That they who seem to deify Christ in the Supper, should vilify Him in His members! In a word, that such as pretend to eat Christ's body and drink His blood at church, should eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of bitterness in their own houses! Proverbs 4:17.

These are like those Italians I have read of, who, at the Lord's Supper, are so devout, as if they believed God to be in the bread--but in their lives are so profane, as if they did not believe God to be in heaven! Such as these are apt to make the world think that the gospel is but a religious cheat. What shall I say of them? With Judas, they receive the devil in the sop, and are no better than crucifiers of the Lord of glory. As their sin is heinous, so their punishment will be proportional. "They eat and drink damnation to themselves," 1 Corinthians 11:29.

Oh, that such a luster and majesty of holiness sparkled forth in the lives of communicants, so that others would say, "These people have been with Jesus!" And their consciences may lie under the power of this conviction, that the Lord's Supper has a holy and transforming virtue in it!

COMFORT to God's people.

1. From Christ's broken body and His blood poured out, we may gather this comfort--that it was a glorious sacrifice.

It was a sacrifice of infinite merit. Had it been only an angel that suffered, or had Christ been only a mere man, as some blasphemously dream--then we might have despaired of salvation. But He suffered for us--who was God as well as man. Therefore, the apostle expressly calls it "the blood of God," Acts 20:28. It is man who sins. It is God in our nature who dies!

This is sovereign medicine to believers. Christ having poured out His blood--now God's justice is completely satisfied. God was infinitely more content with Christ's sufferings upon mount Calvary--than if we had lain in hell and undergone His wrath forever! The blood of Christ has quenched the flame of Divine fury! And, now, what should we fear? All are enemies are either reconciled or subdued. God is a reconciled enemy--and sin is a subdued enemy. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is Christ who died!" Romans 8:34. When the devil accuses us--let us show him the cross of Christ! When he brings his pencil and goes to paint our sins in their heinous colors--let us bring the sponge of Christ's blood, and that will wipe them out again! All bonds are cancelled. Whatever the law has charged upon us, is discharged. The debt-book is crossed out--with the blood of the Lamb!

It was a sacrifice of eternal extent. The benefit of it is perpetuated. "He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us," Hebrews 9:12. Therefore, Christ is said to be a Priest forever, Hebrews 5:6, because the virtue and comfort of His sacrifice abides forever.

2. Christ's blood being shed, believers may lay claim to all heavenly privileges. Wills are ratified by the death of the testator. "A testament is of force after men are dead," Hebrews 9:17. It is observable in the text that Christ calls His blood "the blood of the new testament." Christ made a will or testament, and gave

rich legacies to the saints: pardon of sin, grace, and glory! The Scriptures are the scrolls wherein these legacies are registered. Christ's blood is the sealing of the will. This blood being shed, Christians may put in for a title to all these legacies. "Lord, pardon my sin. Christ has died for my pardon. Give me grace; Christ has purchased it by His blood."

3. Is Christ's blood shed? Here is comfort against death. A dying Savior, sweetens the pangs of death. Is your Lord crucified? Be of good comfort! Christ, by dying, has overcome death. He has cut the lock of sin where the strength of death lay! Christ has knocked out the teeth of this lion! He has pulled the thorn out of death--so that it cannot prick a believer's conscience. "O death, I will be your plague," Hosea 13:14. Christ has disarmed death and taken away all its deadly weapons, so that, though it may strike, it cannot sting a believer. Christ has drawn the poison out of death. Nay, He has made death friendly. This pale horse carries a child of God home to his Father's house! Faith gives a right to heaven; death gives us possession of heaven! What sweet comfort may we draw from the crucifixion of our Lord! His precious blood paints the pale face of death, into a glorious and beautiful complexion.

Here is a DARK side of the cloud, to all profane people who live and die in sin. They have no part in Christ's blood. Their condition will be worse, than if Christ had not died. Christ, who is a loadstone to draw the elect to heaven--will be a millstone to sink the wicked deeper in hell! They must feel the same wrath which Christ felt upon the cross! And, because they cannot bear it all at once, they must be undergoing it to eternity! 2 Thessalonians 1:9. So inconceivably torturing will this be--that the damned do not know how to endure it--nor how to avoid it!

Sinners will not believe this until it is too late. Wicked men, while they live, are blinded by the god of this world. But, when they are dying, the eye of their consciences will begin to be opened, and they shall see the wrath of God flaming before their eyes--which sight will be but a sad prologue to an eternal tragedy!

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