

THE LORD'S TABLE

For sometime I have intended to write down some thoughts on the Lord's table and try to put it into perspective with the personal Christian life and with the corporate Christian life and then contrast the Lord's table with the New Covenant. For example: Jesus said "This cup is the New Covenant in My blood".

In so many fellowships the Lord's table has become a shallow ritual and has about the same impact as shaking hands with each other. In other groups they take the Lord's table every Sunday so that it has the same impact as singing a special song. It appears that what Jesus did at the last supper was quite significant and was something the church was to do until the Lord returns. It would seem that since the church has been practicing this event for nearly 2000 years they would have probed to the very depths of it's meaning with nothing left to reveal. We are asking the question; What can we yet learn that will affect our lives from this corporate sharing in the Lord's table and our individual remembering this event?

1CO 10:14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. 1CO 10:15 I speak as to wise men; you judge what I say. 1CO 10:16 Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? 1CO 10:17 Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread. 1CO 10:18 Look at the nation Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices sharers in the altar? 1CO 10:19 What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? 1CO 10:20 {No,} but {I say} that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. 1CO 10:21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. 1CO 10:22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? We are not stronger than He, are we?

1CO 11:17 But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worse. 1CO 11:18 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part, I believe it. 1CO 11:19 For there must also be factions among you, in order that those who are approved may have become evident among you. 1CO 11:20 Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, 1CO 11:21 for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. 1CO 11:22 What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God, and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you. 1CO 11:23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; 1CO 11:24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 1CO 11:25 In the same way {He took} the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink {it,} in remembrance of Me." 1CO 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. 1CO 11:27 Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. 1CO 11:28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 1CO 11:29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly. 1CO 11:30 For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number

sleep. 1CO 11:31 But if we judged ourselves rightly, we should not be judged. 1CO 11:32 But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord in order that we may not be condemned along with the world. 1CO 11:33 So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. 1CO 11:34 If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you may not come together for judgment. And the remaining matters I shall arrange when I come.

MAT 26:2 “You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is {to be} delivered up for crucifixion.” MAT 26:18 And He said, “Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, ‘The Teacher says,’ My time is at hand; I {am to} keep the Passover at your house with My disciples. “” MAT 26:26 And while they were eating, Jesus took {some} bread, and after a blessing, He broke {it} and gave {it} to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” MAT 26:27 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave {it} to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; MAT 26:28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. MAT 26:29 “But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.”

LUK 22:13 And they departed and found {everything} just as He had told them; and they prepared the Passover. LUK 22:14 And when the hour had come He reclined {at the table,} and the apostles with Him. LUK 22:15 And He said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; LUK 22:16 for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. “ LUK 22:17 And when He had taken a cup {and} given thanks, He said, “Take this and share it among yourselves; LUK 22:18 for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes. “ LUK 22:19 And when He had taken {some} bread {and} given thanks, He broke {it,} and gave {it} to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” LUK 22:20 And in the same way {He took} the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.

MAR 14:22 And while they were eating, He took {some} bread, and after a blessing He broke {it}; and gave {it} to them, and said, “Take {it}; this is My body.” MAR 14:23 And when He had taken a cup, {and} given thanks, He gave {it} to them; and they all drank from it. MAR 14:24 And He said to them, “This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. MAR 14:25 “Truly I say to you, I shall never again drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

When this event is repeated in the church through out the world there are very many different understandings and quite a few misunderstandings. For example; In some churches the Lord’s table is withheld as a form of discipline or punishment. That implies the person is no longer a part of the body and therefore their salvation is in question. In other assemblies a long “cleansing period” is observed by confession of sin and making wrongs right. In one church that I served the Lord’s table they required a two week notice to prepare themselves before they could participate. That was to make sure there was no unconfessed sin in their life first. While this is commendable we wonder where they found that in the scripture. This is the verse given as the reason; 1CO 11:28 **But let a man examine himself**, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 1CO 11:29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly. 1CO 11:30 For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. It doesn’t appear that personal sin is in view but a clear discerning of the body of Christ. Personal

sin is not in this context.

1CO 11:29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, **if he does not judge the body rightly**. This is the context. It is possible to search our lives carefully for two weeks for hidden sin and still not judge the body correctly. Some have interpreted that to mean that they must “judge” everyone who is going to take the elements to see if they are worthy to take the Lord’s table before a time can be set to schedule the Lord’s table. It is obvious that we should each judge ourselves and not others. Others think there must be a complete agreement on all major functions of the local body before the Lord’s table can be served and participation can be accepted. If you cannot agree you should not participate because bodily harm may come to you.

The danger is to spend all the time on these issues and then miss the real significance of what the Lord’s table really is and so miss the blessing.

Since the Lord’s table is commonly called “communion” or “the Holy supper” we have formed doctrines that support our understanding of these terms. For example; If our concept is of the “Holy Supper” then it is reasonable that all who participate must be “Holy” and therefore they should search to see if they are “holy”.

The “supper” that was celebrated was “Passover” and had to do with the killing and eating of the Passover lamb along with eating the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs. It also involved the drinking of much wine. Passover is a type or shadow or a picture for us of Calvary where our Passover was sacrificed. 1CO 5:7 Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are {in fact} unleavened. **For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.** 1CO 5:8 Let us therefore celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. A complete study should be made of these first three feasts for a good understanding of Calvary, the Lord’s table and Passover. That is; (1) Passover (2) Unleavened bread (3) First Fruits. All these speak of Christ. 1CO 15:20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, **the first fruits** of those who are asleep. 1CO 15:22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. 1CO 15:23 But each in his own order: **Christ the first fruits**, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming,

The word “communion” has come from the translation of the Greek word “Koinonia” by the K.J.V. of the Bible. That is not wrong but it is easy to misunderstand “Communion” and confuse that with the Lord’s table. Most modern translations have translated this word “Koinonia” as “sharing in”. This word is translated other places as “participation” or “partnership” or “holding in common” or “fellowship” or “to communicate” or “to distribute”.

Because of this misunderstanding the act of taking the Lord’s table is referred as “taking communion” as if the bread and the wine were called “communion”. Communion or fellowship should be what is taking place while we are sharing in the Lord’s table. We get the term “the Lord’s table” from 1CO 10:21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of **the table of the Lord** and the table of demons. The communion or fellowship is taking place when we are sharing the Lord’s table or “the Table of The Lord”. When we all participate in or share in or hold in common the bread and the cup we may say we are taking the Lord’s table.

Then it is possible to take the bread and the cup and still not be in fellowship with the others. We could just take it as an individual even though we are with a group. We may be isolated from the

others even though we are in the same room. In that case we might not rightly discern the Lord's body. On the other hand it is possible to have good fellowship or communion but still not take the Lord's table.

The K.J.V. says PHI 3:10 that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and **the fellowship of His sufferings**, being conformed to His death; This is the word "Koinonia" translated as "Fellowship". It could also be translated as "Communion". We could say "the communion of His sufferings" but it is clear that has nothing to do with the Lord's table. It means "That I might participate (or share) in His sufferings". If we said "the communion of His sufferings" it would be accurate but not very understandable.

If we prepare a "fellowship dinner" it means that we are going to share our food with all who come and all may participate. We would be distributing our food to others. This is the meaning of "Koinonia". A carry in dinner could accurately be called "as communion dinner". In Spanish this word is frequently used to indicate we are going to sit and talk. They would say "Last week I had communion with Jose". It doesn't mean they took the Lord's table but that they had fellowship and a sharing. They participated in conversation.

In 1 Cor. 11 they were having a fellowship dinner and calling it "the Lord's Table". Paul is pointing out that getting together for a corporate meal is not what the Lord's table is all about. He pointed out that they were not even sharing their food but each was eating their own. Some had too much and some had nothing. They were not even sharing their wine. One was drunk and another had nothing. Paul was amazed and wondered how they could confuse that with the Lord's table. There were factions, divisions, selfishness and they were callous toward those who had nothing. This is the reason Paul was rebuking them and trying to set things right by this teaching. If they had come together just to eat what they brought they had better stayed home and ate it before coming to the meeting.

1CO 11:20 Therefore **when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper**, 1CO 11:21 for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. 1CO 11:22 What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God, and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you. Here Paul is saying the Lord's supper is not a fellowship dinner to satisfy hunger. It is much different from that. Then Paul explains what the Lord's supper means and what it is for.

Paul was not criticizing carry in dinners in the church as some suppose. He was pointing out that to assume that was equal to the Lord's supper or table was ignorance of what the Lord's table really is. Therefore, he begins his teaching about the significance of the Lord's table.

He says, not implies, that he received a direct revelation from the Lord concerning the Lord's table. What he said here corresponds perfectly with what the gospels report happened at the last passover. I can say "the last passover" because it was perfectly fulfilled at Calvary and never needs to be repeated. While it is true that the Jews and some Messianic groups are still trying to keep the Passover it is now just a modified ritual because the actual requirements of the original Passover feast cannot be kept. For example; They can no longer kill the Passover lamb because they have no temple or altar to offer the sacrifice. They just use a piece of charred lamb to represent the Passover lamb but no sacrifice can be offered. The New Covenant revelation is that

the Passover lamb was just a type or shadow of the true Passover Lamb which was the Lord Jesus Christ. Since the law that established Passover has been done away with in Christ there is no longer anything like a literal feast of Passover.

Now this should not be confused with another fulfillment of Passover in the Kingdom of God. LUK 22:15 And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; LUK 22:16 for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. " MAT 26:29 "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." The food and the wine part of Passover will have its final fulfillment in the Kingdom of God. This the moment when Jesus took the Nazirite vow not to drink wine again for a certain time period.

The Nazirite vow was given as a consecration to God until the time the consecration was fulfilled. This could include not to cut the hair, not to drink wine or not to touch a corpse until the time the vow was complete. MAT 2:23 and came and resided in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene." Nazareth was a city that had nothing to do with Him being a Nazirite or taking a vow. Some confuse Jesus being from Nazareth with Him being a Nazirite. This is why they say Jesus never drank wine because He was a Nazirite. This is ignorance. He is now a Nazirite but He was not a Nazirite until the last supper and He will be one until the Kingdom is established.

This part of the Lord's table will have another fulfillment in the future. Most likely at the marriage supper of the Lamb. The true reality of Passover will be evident at that time. REV 19:7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." REV 19:8 And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright {and} clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. REV 19:9 And he *said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he *said to me, "These are true words of God."

Therefore, we could say that Passover had a natural fulfillment in Israel, it had a final natural fulfillment at the last supper. It had a fulfillment when our Passover Lamb was offered at Calvary. It has an ongoing fulfillment in the church corporately and it has a spiritual fulfillment personally in our lives individually. It also has a future fulfillment in the Kingdom of God. This is also true of some of the other feasts.

Some of this background is necessary to expose certain errors that have crept into the church and also to illuminate the reality of the Lord's supper.

From 1 Cor. 11:17 to verse 22 is what the Lord's table **IS NOT**. From 1COR. 11:23 to Verse 26 is what the Lord's table **IS**. From 1Cor. 11:27 to verse 30 is a warning and from 1 COR. 11:31 to verse 34 is the summation of this teaching. What the Lord's table **IS NOT** is very important to understand because that will protect us from errors. When we understand what the Lord's table really is we should understand why it can't be otherwise.

1CO 11:23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus **in the night in which He was betrayed** took bread; 1CO 11:24 and when He had given thanks, **He broke it**, and said, "**This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.**" 1CO 11:25 In the same way {He took} **the cup** also, after supper, saying, "**This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink {it,} in remembrance of Me.**" 1CO 11:26

For as often as **you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.**

I have bolded the main points of Paul's revelation. In the night that He was betrayed sets the time. This was the end of one time period approaching with the beginning of another. Now we know it was the final curtain on the Old Covenant and the introduction to the New Covenant. This was something that the disciples had no knowledge of before. Of course they were all familiar with the Feast of Passover and had kept the feast many times. They had seen the Passover lamb slain and cut up into portions according to the families present to eat. They had seen the unleavened bread broken and distributed among the participants and they had eaten their portion. They had all drank from the common passover cup and eaten the bitter herbs. That Passover was not new to them but the revelation of what it all meant was brand new and unique. Even after they heard the explanation there is no indication that they really understood the great significance of what was about to take place when the shadow was to be fulfilled at Calvary.

When Jesus gave thanks for this bread He knew exactly what it meant to be totally broken. He knew it was a token of His own body being broken for mankind. He knew precisely what He was doing and what it really meant. He knew full well that the cup represented His own blood being poured out for the forgiveness of sins and the inauguration of the New Covenant in His blood. MAT 26:2 "You know that **after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is {to be} delivered up for crucifixion.**"

He took the bread and tore it or broke it into pieces and distributed it to His disciples and told them to eat it. When we read Isaiah 53 we see the extent that His body was broken for us. This also brings to our remembrance REV 2:26 'And he who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations; REV 2:27 and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received {authority} from My Father; .

As He broke the bread He gives the revelation of what the unleavened bread in the Passover really meant. It was a picture of His body being broken or torn as a sacrifice and as a guilt offering for us. Then He shares how each of us who have personally participated in His sacrifice are to respond to Him at the Lord's supper. He said "Do this in remembrance of Me". If we have no clear revelation of what He has done for us personally through His sacrifice and suffering, our remembrance of Him will be very shallow. If we have not personally participated in His great salvation and the New Covenant, taking the Lord's supper will be a pretense.

In Matthew, Mark and in Luke they all agree that the cup of wine associated with the Lord's table is indicating the Lord's blood that is inaugurating and activating the New Covenant. The cup represents the "blood of the Covenant". Both the Old and the New Covenant were both inaugurated with blood. HEB 9:18 **Therefore even the first {covenant} was not inaugurated without blood.** HEB 9:19 For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, HEB 9:20 saying, "**This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you.**" HEB 9:21 And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. HEB 9:22 And according to the Law, {one may} almost {say}, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

This is very simple and very clear. The bread is (a picture of) His body and the cup is (a picture of) His blood which is poured out for us as the New Covenant in His blood. In our participation in the bread and the cup we are again consecrating ourselves to God and renewing our covenant with Him. We are also remembering that He gave Himself for us and that He is coming again to receive us to Himself. JOH 14:3 “And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again, and receive you to Myself;** that where I am, {there} you may be also.

1CO 11:25 In the same way {He took} the cup also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink {it,} in remembrance of Me.” 1CO 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes. There is both a remembrance and a proclamation associated with our participation in the Lord’s supper. We are to remember Him and all that means and we are to proclaim the Lord’s death and that He is coming again. It is proclaimed that He died for us but He is not still dead. He has resurrected and ascended and He is now seated at the right hand of God and is ruling until every enemy is put under His feet then He is coming again for His saints.

He is coming again to usher in the final fulfillment in the Kingdom of God. We are to remember the Lord’s death but we are also to proclaim the resurrection and the second coming of Christ for His saints.

This can be individual as well as corporate celebration. Derek Prince said he and his wife take the Lord’s Table nearly every morning and has been a tremendous encounter with God.

The corporate aspect of the Lord’s Table is seen more clearly in 1 Cor 10: 16-17. 1CO 10:16 Is not the cup of blessing which we bless **a sharing in** (Koinonia) (Communion) the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break **a sharing in** (Koinonia) (a communion of) the body of Christ? 1CO 10:17 **Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.** This is not speaking of individuals taking the Lord’s Table as individuals but makes the Lord’s Table an emphasis of the corporate body of Christ sharing in the blessing of Calvary and His sacrifice on our behalf.

Since there is just “one bread” that is distributed to each one who participates it speaks to us that there is but one body. The “sharing in” indicates that we each hold a share of the Lord’s body. As we each receive our broken share we hold that part of the whole bread. If there are 100 present then we each hold 1% of the total. That is not difficult to understand. However, Paul says that we each also hold our share of the blood of Christ. If we have not really shared in His blood for the forgiveness of our sins and are made partakers of the New Covenant, taking the Lord’s Table is a mockery. Since we each hold a share of His blood, we have a share in His body.

If at the Lord’s Table we started out with a full loaf of bread and a full bottle of wine and we all participated until the bottle was empty and the bread was consumed we would understand that now the bread and the wine was in each of us. We each hold our share. It is still the same bread but now it is in the whole body. It is still the same wine but is now in the whole body. Now we all hold the bread and the wine in common. This is one meaning of “one body”.

If that is clear, it should be evident why Paul was rebuking the Corinthians for their ignorance. What they were doing was a contradiction of the principles of the Lord’s body and therefore was contrary to the meaning of the Lord’s Table, even though they were calling it “the Lord’s Table”. His warning was that what they were doing was taking the Lord’s Table in an unworthy manner

and mocking the blood and the body of Christ. He was showing them this could have serious consequences in their health and length of days. 1CO 11:29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he **does not judge the body rightly**. Here he puts our judging the “body rightly” as the primary requirement in order to receive the blessing rather than the curse.

If we put this in the context of the “Blood of the Covenant” from the Old Testament type it has more meaning. EXO 24:7 Then he **took the book of the covenant and read {it} in the hearing of the people; and they said, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!”** EXO 24:8 So Moses took the blood and sprinkled {it} on the people, and said, “**Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.**” We should easily see the problem the rebellious might have by taking the Lord’s Table if they have no intention of doing the will of God or to be obedient to His words. The cup of wine in the Lord’s Table is the New Covenant in His blood. If the Lord’s Table ties us to obedience to the New Covenant it places upon us serious responsibility. If this is true, we can understand Paul’s serious warning that he is giving in 1 Cor 11:27-34.

When we consider the loose and free way the church takes the Lord’s Table we wonder that there is not more catastrophe connected with it. Some years ago we heard of a church in the east that was taking the Lord’s Table with Coca-Cola and potato chips. Maybe the elements used are not that critical but the lack of respect was evident and ignorant.

Some years back I was speaking to some Amish men about the church and they ask me if the bread of the Lord’s Table should be bought or home baked? Should it be white or whole wheat?. Should the wine be red or white? Should it be home made or bought? How much should be consumed? It is easy to get stuck in the details and miss the significance of what the Lord’s Table is all about. It may be possible to get the elements exactly right and then not discern the body rightly.

What does it mean to discern or judge the body rightly? First: by judging each as a member of Christ’s body and as members of one another. If we are all members of His body that means we are members of each other. Members who are in a covenant relationship with Christ are also in a covenant relationship with each other. When a husband and wife are in a marriage covenant with each other, they are considered to be as one body. **In that same way, when the members of Christ’s body are in covenant relationship with each other, God considers them to be one body.** If we separate from a member of Christ’s body we are in effect separating from Christ. You judge yourself as being unworthy of being a member of Christ’s body.

Second: Judging each other as being joined to Christ and as one whom He has accepted. If Christ has accepted someone how can we reject them. We find we are fighting against God. If we are all holding to our faith in the one blood and the forgiveness that is inherent in that blood, we are standing on the same ground, regardless of personalities.

Third: All the members of Christ’s body edify, stabilize and strengthen each other. If we separate from the body we lose that strength and protection. We are an open target for Satan and his attack. This is why some get sick and others die. You will eat and drink judgement upon yourself.

Why then do we take the Lord’s Table if there is some danger to us physically? V24 The reason given is “In remembrance of Him”! As a memorial to Him or to activate our memory of Him in our present experience and not as a past historical event.

Then what are we to remember? (1) To remember HIM (2) The New Covenant in His blood. (3) His death for us. (4) That He is coming again for a covenant people.

Who can participate? (1) All who share in the benefits of His blood. (2) All who participate in the corporate body of Christ. (3) All who have entered into covenant with God through Jesus Christ.

Who should not participate? (1) Those who are not in covenant with God through the blood of Jesus Christ. (2) Those who are not presently in “koinonia” with the body of Christ. (3) Those who are ignorant of Christ’s body and the significance of being a member. (4) Those who are not in submission to Christ’s Lordship and His authority. In other words, those who are in rebellion. (5) Those who are acting as individuals and are separated from the body.

The Greek word “Koinonia” means communion, fellowship, partnership, participation, holding in common and suggests that we are actively participating in the action and movement of the body. In other words this is not a passive membership. All who are in covenant with Jesus Christ are by necessity in covenant with each other through Jesus Christ. Covenant is what defines the body of Jesus Christ. That puts a tremendous message into the term “the blood of the covenant”.

There are two things in view here. One is the blood and the other is the New Covenant. A convincing study of the Lord’s Table must include both. Analyzing what bread is and analyzing what wine is in the natural is of no help in understanding what Jesus was talking about. Surely He was not just speaking of common ordinary elements of bread and wine that mystically become His body and His blood. Israel ate and drank similar food and drink in the wilderness and died. Multitudes are taking the Lord’s Table (as far as the natural elements are concerned) and experience no eternal benefit. They eat and drink and still die in their sins. When unbelievers eat they still remain unbelievers.

Common sense will tell us that the Lord’s Table must be part of several other experiences if it is going to produce in us something eternal. If we put this in the context of John 6:50 we would see that taking the Lord’s Table does not guarantee us eternal life. JOH 6:50 “This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. JOH 6:51 “I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, **he shall live forever**; and the bread also which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh.” If we truly eat of this BREAD in John 6 we are guaranteed **eternal life**. Jesus contrasts this bread with the manna in the wilderness. JOH 6:49 “Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and **they died**. JOH 6:50 “This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and **not die**. It is quite possible to eat and drink of the elements of the Lord’s Table and not be hungry or thirsty. The food and drink of John 6 requires that we be both hungry and thirsty. JOH 6:35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. He satisfies both when we eat and drink of Him. It should be quite clear that the Lord’s Table and John 6 are two different things.

JOH 6:50 “This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. “The bread” here is certainly not speaking of any kind of natural bread made from grain. This bread has come down from heaven. Then we must ask ourselves exactly what it was that came down out of heaven. This is clearly shown in JOH 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. JOH 1:2 He was in the beginning with God. JOH 1:3 All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come

into being. JOH 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. JOH 1:9 There was **the true light which, coming into the world**, enlightens every man. JOH 1:14 And **the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us**, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. The “True Light” was in heaven and then came into the world. The “Word” was in heaven and then came into the world and took on the body of a man. Jesus didn’t say anything about eating “Light” but He did speak of eating “His flesh”. It was the eternal word of God that became flesh and dwelt among us. That WORD was also light and life and Truth and revelation of the Father. His flesh is directly connected to the Eternal Word. Then to eat or ingest His flesh is the same thing as ingesting His Word.

The Lord’s Table appears to be in contrast to John 6 because both are speaking about His body and His blood but the two are not equal in our experience. Since many teach these two are one and the same thing we should see how they are different.

The Lord’s Table is a remembrance of Him. It is taken corporately in the context of 1 Cor 11. (The anti-type is Passover.) It’s purpose is to remember His death until the time He comes again. It is a proclamation or a speaking forth or a witness of His death and that He is coming again. It is to proclaim that His blood was shed on our behalf personally to provide us with the New Covenant that was promised. The cup is our witness that we are sharing in the blood of Christ. The bread we break is our witness that we are sharing in the body of Christ. As often as we eat the bread and drink of the cup we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

In John 6 the anti-type is the manna in the wilderness. It is called “the bread out of heaven”. They thought Moses gave them that bread and they were looking for another prophet like Moses who would feed them. Jesus said that it was not Moses who gave them that bread but His Father. Then He said that He was the reality of that bread or He was the true bread that came down out of heaven and gives life to the world. JOH 6:35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; **he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst**. Not only is He the true bread He is also the true drink. He was recalling the manna from heaven and the water out of the rock. He is the fulfillment of both. 1CO 10:3 and all ate the same **spiritual food**; 1CO 10:4 and all drank the same **spiritual drink**, for they were drinking from a **spiritual rock** which followed them; and **the rock was Christ**. Jesus was not speaking about normal bread and normal wine that is used in the Lord’s Table. This is true spiritual food and true spiritual drink that must be participated in through the Spirit.

The Jews got troubled when He said He was the bread that came down out of heaven. They did not comprehend what He was saying and had no capacity to understand. Jesus said that no one can come to Him unless the Father draws him. Then Jesus quotes a phrase from the New Covenant. JOH 6:45 “It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ Everyone who has **heard** and **learned** from the Father, comes to Me. It is one thing to hear and it is another thing to learn. Not all hear and not all who hear actually learn after they have heard. “Heard” speaks of intellectual hearing by the hearing of the ear. Learning is the process of making real in our experience that which is heard. Those who both hear and learn will come to Jesus. That is how we know they have been “taught of God”.

It is possible to take the Lord’s Table and still die in your sins. However, if we eat of the true bread (the Lord Jesus Christ) we will live forever. This bread that Jesus gives “is His flesh” or His body for the life of the world.

JOH 6:52 The Jews therefore {began} to argue with one another, saying, “How can this man give us {His} flesh to eat?” JOH 6:53 Jesus therefore said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have **no life in yourselves**. JOH 6:54 “He who **eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life**, and I will raise him up on the last day. The one who eats and drinks of the Lord’s Table remembers His death until He comes. The one who eats of Christ according to John 6 has eternal life and participates in the resurrection.

Next we see the essence of the John 6 experience. The abiding life! JOH 6:56 “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. Nothing like this is offered in the Lord’s Table. John 6 then relates to John 15:5-7. JOH 15:5 “I am the vine, you are the branches; **he who abides in Me, and I in him**, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. JOH 15:7 “**If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you**, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. This is more than accepting Jesus as your personal Savior.

It is possible and I’m sure quite common to take the Lord’s Table and still have no desire for a perfect union with Jesus Christ as a vine and branch union. Perfect union with Christ speaks of a perfect fellowship with Christ. Either what we are experiencing of the Lord’s Table is much too shallow or John 6 is something entirely different. We may say that the John 6 and the John 15 life union experience is made possible and the provisions are given in the New Covenant in His blood that is remembered in the Lord’s Table. The Lord’s Table is remembering and proclaiming His death while John 6 and John 15 are experiencing His life and that life union with Him.

Now it appears that only those who have been drawn by God, the Father and taught by God, the Father and those who have heard from God, the Father and learned from God, the Father can participate in this life union with Christ.

The Holy Spirit is the “teacher” who has been sent to teach us all things and to take the things of Jesus and show them unto us. Therefore, let us ask the teacher to lead us into all of this truth and the experience of the New Covenant in His blood.

LEV 17:11 ‘For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.’ In God’s viewpoint the life and the blood are the same. They cannot be separated. When we speak about the blood we are speaking about the life that is inherent within the blood. Blood only makes atonement before God when the life is poured out with the blood. Blood, without the total life poured out, is not accepted as “atonement”.

LEV 17:12 “Therefore I said to the sons of Israel, ‘**No person among you may eat blood, nor may any alien who sojourns among you eat blood.**’ LEV 17:13 “So when any man from the sons of Israel, or from the aliens who sojourn among them, in hunting catches a beast or a bird which may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth. LEV 17:14 “For {as for the} life of all flesh, its blood is {identified} with its life. Therefore I said to the sons of Israel, ‘**You are not to eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood; whoever eats it shall be cut off.**’

Because of scriptures like these even taking the Lord’s Table is offensive to some “Christian” cults. We were in Christian Science for over 15 years and eating and drinking of the bread and the cup were offensive. We said” Our communion is spiritual (meditation) and not carnal” (the natural

elements).

Why, then, was Jesus so adamant about eating His Flesh and drinking His blood? First, an animal's blood is quite different than the blood of Christ. Within the animal's blood there is a lower life than the life of man. Since man was made in the image and likeness of God and God breathed His own life into man, man's life is different than that of animals. Therefore, God forbids man from drinking from a lower life than man's. Man may drink from a higher life than man's but not a lower life. The only life higher than man is the life of God, Himself, which is in Christ Jesus. This is the "Zoe" life which is eternal life. Therefore, if we don't drink of His blood in which the Zoe life is, we have no (zoe) eternal life in us.

Drinking of His life, is drinking of a much higher life than man possesses of himself. Man's natural life is "psuche" which is translated as soul. The difference between psuche and zoe is the difference between life and death. His life is (in) His blood. Blood is the manifested part of His life. We can see blood while we cannot see life. To drink His blood is to imbibe, to absorb, to assimilate the divine life of God in Christ Jesus which is "eternal Life".

This explains why we cannot drink of the cup of demons and then drink of the cup of the Lord. 1CO 10:21 **You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons;** you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. Demons are of a different kind of life that has already been condemned. It is totally the wrong kind of life.

Man may eat from "The tree of Life" (zoe). He may drink from "the river of Life" (zoe) and he may have his name written in "the Lamb's book of Life"(zoe). This all speaks of the higher Life which is His Life, Zoe. Therefore, Jesus could say "I am the bread of Life", (Zoe).

I'm sure all this is still confusing if we are still thinking in terms of natural blood rather than in terms of His Eternal Life. In John 6 we saw the manna (bread) was the type of His body, the true bread. 1CO 10:3 and all ate the same spiritual food; 1CO 10:4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. JOH 4:13 Jesus answered and said to her, "**Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again;** JOH 4:14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life." JOH 7:37 Now on the last day, the great {day} of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink." JOH 7:38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, **'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.'**" JOH 7:39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet {given,} because Jesus was not yet glorified.

While the drinking is from Jesus, what is drunk is the Spirit of Life (zoe). This "water" becomes a river of living water (water of life) in us and flows out of us. However, this Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified (crucified, killed and resurrected) and His Life was not yet poured out in the blood upon the altar of Calvary. His life was poured out in His blood. That is the same life that is available to us to drink. JOH 6:63 "**It is the Spirit who gives life;** (zoe) the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life. JOH 6:64 "**But there are some of you who do not believe.**" For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him. JOH 6:65 And He was saying, "**For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him**

from the Father.” Now it all begins to make sense. Only those who believe (exercise active faith) can be taught of God, hear and learn from the Father. The disciples, who were trying to figure it out with natural logic, left Him after that because they were unteachable because they didn’t believe. It is only the Spirit who ministers (zoe) life.

This should explain why the blood (life) of the passover lamb was poured out at the altar in the Tabernacle and the Temple while the blood (life) of our passover Lamb must be drunk because it is a higher life and eternal Life (zoe). JOH 1:4 **In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.** Without the “Life” there is no light. JOH 1:9 There was **the true light** which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. (That receives His Life). 1JO 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and {yet} walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 1JO 1:7 but if **we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship (Koinonia) with one another,** and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. Walking in His light is requisite for this cleansing to be effective for us. Walking in darkness and confessing our sin cannot apply to this verse as some say.

Let us then tabulate some of the things that apply to the Lord’s Table and compare them with what we have learned from John 6.

- (1) Type of the Lord’s Table is Passover.
- (2) Done in Remembrance of Him.
- (3) It is a remembrance of His death.
- (4) It is a proclamation that He is coming again.
- (5) It is proclaiming the end of the Old Covenant and the beginning of the New Covenant.

Comparison with John 6.

- 1) The type of John 6 is manna in the wilderness.
- (2) Not remembering His death but receiving His life.
- (3) Not a memorial but a life union with Him in the abiding Life.
- (4) Not the proclamation of a New Covenant but the experience of the New Covenant by being taught of God, hearing God and learning from God.
- (5) Passover is a picture of His body given while manna is a picture of His body (the Word made flesh) continuously feeding.
- (6) Here His body = His Word. His blood = His Life and Spirit.

The conclusion of this comparison is that if we have taken the Lord’s Table we should not be confident that we also have fulfilled John 6. Since John 6 is requisite to receive His life and the confidence of our resurrection, we should seek God for teaching, hearing and learning according to His promise. John 15 puts it all into perspective as the vine and the branch and the abiding life.

The lukewarm may take the Lord’s Table but the lukewarm will not participate in the abiding Life of John 6. Since I am accused of always preaching condemnation, I should add one verse so I won’t disappoint anyone. JOH 15:6 “If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a

branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. The lukewarm will make a good fire.

Some common doctrines concerning the Lord's Table.

The Catholic Church as well as some churches that evolved from them have mixed the Lord's Table with John 6 and developed a doctrine of "transubstantiation". They say that when the bread and the wine are consecrated in the mass, they turn into the very body, the blood, the soul and the divinity of the Lord. This takes place under and within the appearance of bread and wine. The appearance of the bread and wine are not changed but the substance is transmuted or converted into the body and the blood of the Lord. For this reason the Lord's Table and John 6 are the same thing. If we therefore take the bread and the cup we are fulfilling the requirement of John 6 and receive His life with and in the sacraments. The bread and the wine hold the divinity (His body and His blood) as long as it's substance remains and thereby provides nourishment for the faithful.

The Catholic Church has established seven sacraments that are necessary for the believer. (1) Baptism (2) Confirmation (3) The Holy Orders (4) The holy Eucharist (5) penance (6) Marriage (7) Extreme unction.

Other churches have adopted another doctrine called "Consubstantiation". Con means with. If we eat "chili con carne" we are eating chili with meat. This teaches that the actual substantial presence of Christ's body is "with" the bread and the wine. In other words, when we take the Lord's Table His bodily presence is standing with the bread and the wine.

Another doctrine of some churches is called "Impanation". This doctrine teaches that the bodily presence of the Lord is present "in" the bread and the wine but without any change to the substance of the bread and the wine.

This doctrinal confusion comes from the statement that Jesus made: This bread "**IS**" My body and this cup "**IS**" My blood. Since the bread was common Passover bread and the wine was common Passover wine, both made with men's hands, it was thought that a tremendous change must take place within them before they could become His actual body and His actual blood. If we combine that with John 6 it seems to make sense and the Lord's Table seems to fulfill John 6. JOH 6:55 "For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. JOH 6:56 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. Since this appears to speak of His literal body and His literal blood, the doctrine of "transubstantiation" seems to be the only explanation possible. If this is true our salvation, eternal life and our resurrection are tied directly to the Lord's Table. For this reason the Catholic Church as well as several others put more emphasis upon the sacraments than upon what we believe or confess.

The evangelical church puts the emphasis upon our faith and our confession of who Jesus is and our baptism into Christ and the experiences that follow. The problem is that hardly satisfies the requirements of John 6. We should ask when does His life come into us and how does it become our experience? The evangelical church says it comes when we are born again by faith. The Catholic Church says it comes at our first communion. For this reason much importance is placed upon the child's first communion because that act is connected with the child's salvation. If John 6 and the Lord's Table were the same thing that argument would be quite strong.

For the sake of argument; what evangelical experiences can be pointed to that combine the body

and the blood of Jesus being assimilated into our own body? None of the normal doctrines of the fundamental church that relate to life, salvation or resurrection can be assigned the place of John 6.

We can clearly say that not all who partake of the bread and the cup in the Lord's Table will experience the eternal benefits of John 6. However, we may say that all who participate in the reality of John 6 will experience the reality of the Lord's Table.