

The Lord's Supper

Luke 22:14-21

- I. The evening before Jesus was crucified he celebrated Passover w/ His disciples and laid the foundation for a new memorial to commemorate a greater deliverance (Luke 22:14-21).
 - A. All who diligently seek God recognize the importance of the L.S.
 1. However, disagreements arise as to the *frequency* of its observance and the precise *meaning* attached to the elements.
 2. This is particularly unfortunate, seeing that Jesus command was to *do this* as His memorial, not *argue* with each other about it.
 3. I hope this morning to set before you three valid reasons for observing the L.S. each Lord's Day
 - B. THE BIBLICAL EVIDENCE:
 1. Acts 2:42 *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the **breaking of bread** and to prayer.*
 - a. One of the Four-marks of early church are highlighted.
 - b. Is "breaking of bread" A reference to LS
 - (1) (see Lk 22:19 above)
 - (2) 1 Cor 10:16-17 *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? **The bread which we break**, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?*
 2. Acts 20:7 Says, *The disciples came together on the first day of the week to "**break bread**."*
 3. Lastly, 1Co 11:17-22 (addressing abuses)
 - a. The nature of these problems strongly suggests the Supper was held frequently. They aren't the kinds of difficulties that arise from something only done a few times a year.
 - b. the implication is that they were doing this each time they met & all the indications are that they met every Sunday.
 - C. THE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE...
 1. The earliest historical evidence outside the Bible confirms the day and frequency
 - a. The Didache (ca. 95 A.D.) indicates Christians were to come together on the first day of the week to break bread - Didache 14:1
 - b. Justin Martyr (ca. 150 A.D.) records how Christians assembled on Sunday and partook of the Supper.
 2. B. W. Johnson" *...the early church writers from Barnabas, Justin*

Martyr, Irenaeus, to Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Cyprian, all with one consent, declare that the church observed the first day of the week. They are equally agreed that the Lord's Supper was observed weekly, on the first day of the week."

II. THE BIBLICAL MEANING. For me, the reason for insisting that we observe the LS every Sunday, is not so we can *check an ordinance* off on the list of 5 *things* to be done each Sunday in order to *qualify as a legitimate service*. Rather, it is the meaning & value of the LS that would make it unthinkable for me to ever set it aside in deference to something else. *Consider four aspects of the LS that should make it a priority for Every Christian, Every Lord's day.*

A. First, it is a **commemoration**. Jesus Himself said to, *do this in memory of Me* (Luke 22:19). This memorial works in two direction:

1. Like a rainbow reminds *us & God*.
2. The Bread & Wine reminds *us & God* of the sacrifice of Him who reconciles us to God.
3. So, How often...
 - a. would you want your Son/Daughters sacrifice remembered?
 - b. do you need reminding of Jesus Mercy for you?
 - c. do you want God to be reminded of why He should put up with you?

B. Second, it is a **confession**.

1. Not a confession of sin, but a confession of our faith.
2. 1Cor. 11:26 *As often as we observe this meal, we proclaim the Lord's death.*
3. You are confessing, declaring, proclaiming to:
 - a. Principalities & Powers, Each Other, World "*I Believe Jesus Died, Buried, Resurrected, Coming Again.*"
 - b. How often do they need that declared to them?

C. Third, it is **communion**.

1. This table is a place to meet and share in the fellowship we have with Christ and each other.
2. This meal is how God *knits* us together in Christ.

D. Fourth, it is a **covenant**.

1. Jesus took the cup in the hands that, the very next day, would be pierced to make peace between Heaven & Earth & He said, "*This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.*"

2. The LS is not a part of the “legal code” that makes up the New Covenant.
3. Rather, the cup represents the entire covenant.
 - a. It is the solemn oath reminding you to be loyal to Him in everything, because in that cup He has gone *all in* for you.
 - b. How often do you need reminding not to stray from Him?

III. Should we observe the L.S. Each L.D.?

- A. Solid Biblical evidence
- B. Clear voice of Historical Evidence
- C. The Lord’s Supper is not our gift to God, but rather His gift to us. We don’t show proper gratitude by leaving His gifts unopened.

A Concluding Exhortation: When it comes to the weekly observance of the LS, along w/ other distinctive practices, I’m happy to say that I believe the NT gives us a pattern to follow, and that we should make it our aim to do so.

However, I urge all of us to be charitable in how we regard others, and remember that it isn’t *our* perfect adherence to religious ordinances that saves us, any more than it is *our* perfect adherence to moral standards that saves us.

We are saved by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Jesus always did the right thing. His moral and religious practice was flawless. He offered His perfect life as a sacrifice for sinners. That is for people who don’t come up to the mark because of their moral weakness, their imperfect knowledge and their flawed practices.

Make no mistake, It is not our perfect doing that makes us presentable to God, it is His.

So, as always. My first desire is for us to have more faith in Him and less in ourselves.