

LESSON #21

THE LORD'S SUPPER

TEXTS: Matthew 26:26-29; Luke 22-.7-20; Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-30

INTRODUCTION:

It was a most solemn occasion when Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. His earthly ministry was nearing its end. The agony of Gethsemane, His betrayal by Judas, His trial and crucifixion were all to be experienced within the next 24 hours. The weight of the world's sins lay heavy upon His heart. The shadows of the cross grew deeper and darker.

To prepare Himself for the dreadful ordeal ahead, Jesus gathered the 12 apostles about Him in the upper room to eat the Passover. When about to shed His own blood for the sins of the world, Jesus desired to establish an institution which would forever keep the memory of His sacrificial death alive. So He instituted the Lord's Supper.

There seems to be an inseparable connection between the Passover and the Lord's Supper.

A. To get the most possible good out of their connection, it is expedient that we go back and consider briefly the institution of the Passover and its history to the time of the institution of the Lord's Supper.

1. God had sent nine plagues upon Pharaoh of Egypt, and had now threatened him and his people with the tenth plague - that of destroying the firstborn among the children and animals of Egypt (Exodus 3-12).

2. About 1500 years after the Passover was instituted we find Jesus with His disciples in an upper room in Jerusalem observing the Passover (Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14-.22-26; Luke 22:19, 20).

1. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER?

A. It is a memorial service (Luke 22:19).

1. Memorials are natural and universal
2. Tombstone
3. Independence Day

B. It is a proclamation (I Corinthians 11:26).

1. Not everyone can be an oral proclaimer of the Gospel, but every man, woman, boy or girl in the church can preach a sermon in the act of observing the Lord's Supper.
2. Proclamation of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, and of His second coming.

II. WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER?

A. Bread

1. This was 'unleavened bread' (Exodus 12:15; 13:6, 7). Jesus said, 'This is my body.' Surely we cannot think of any element that would better picture to us the Son of God on the cross than pale, lifeless, unleavened bread. Bread is grain that has been harvested, crushed and baked. The life has been taken from it.

B. The cup

1. Jesus gave us a clear definition of the cup when He called it 'the fruit of the vine' and says, 'This is my blood.' Inasmuch as Christ is the vine and His disciples are the branches, certainly we cannot think of any other element that would better picture to us the blood of Christ - for the fruit of the vine is the lifeblood of the vine.

III. SHOULD THERE BE ANY FREQUENCY AND REGULARITY IN OBSERVING THE LORD'S SUPPER?

A. It is agreed that no man has the authority to regulate and control another's worship.

B. Has God, in exercising His authority, taught one group to observe it annually, another semiannually, another quarterly, another monthly and another weekly?

C. Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:20; 1 Corinthians 16:2

D. No where does the New Testament teach any other day or time than on the first day of the week.

WILL THE FREQUENCY OF COMMUNING EVERY WEEK DESTROY ITS MEANING?

CONCLUSION:

A. The Lord's Supper is the binding of the past, present, and future in the heart of the Christian.

1. Remove the heart, and you have no place to honor Christ.

2. Remove the past, and you have no sacrifice for sins.

3. Remove the present, and you have no purpose in living.

4. Remove the future, and you have no hope of glory.

5. Remove the Lord's Supper, and you have removed all. This is why it is so important to us.