

Truth and Spirit Ministries

The Lords Supper - Part I

The Substance behind the Symbolism

Before the Lord Jesus went to the Cross, he observed the last Passover with his disciples. This Passover meal was no ordinary one for it would not only be bringing an end to the Old Covenant but also the beginning of a New Covenant that would be based upon better promises. During this last Supper, the Lord introduced brand new symbols for this New Testament that would be ushered in soon thereafter through his broken body and shed blood by way of crucifixion. The bread that they shared would from that day forward be symbolic of his body and the fruit of the vine symbolic of his blood. (Matthew 26:26-29)

Later as the Lord went to the cross and was suffering in unimaginable pain he declared, "It is finished!" and died. Jesus had accomplished the work that his Father had sent him to do in the earth. After three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, He was resurrected in glory and power. Through his life, death, burial and resurrection, he had provided complete and total redemption for all mankind. (John 19:17-30)

There is great substance behind the symbolism of the Lord's Supper. As the Lord's modern day disciples, we too eat the bread (his body) and drink the wine (his blood) not only out of obedience to his divine command but also as a continual reminder of his priceless sacrificial atonement and what he has obtained for us. In the Church we are usually taught ahead of time that by participating in the Lord's Supper, we are also able to receive the wonderful blessings and benefits that his sacrifice has provided for us. Although this teaching is true, why is it that so many believers today find it so difficult to obtain the *substance* of all of those things that God has promised to them and that Jesus has already paid the price for?

In this hour, God wants to tear down the false teachings that prevent his people from receiving the powerful benefits associated with taking the Lord's Supper. He wants to take many in the Church from confusion to clarity and from lack of knowledge to *revelation* knowledge. He wants to take us into the greater depths of the substance and power behind the ultimate sacrifice of his Son. As we progressively receive this knowledge then we can start receiving by **grace** and **faith** what Jesus paid for us to have.

In this series we want to teach believers about not only the benefits and blessings that the Lord has obtained for us through his great sacrifice and how you may obtain them, we also want to tear down the false teaching, myths and ignorance concerning the Lord's Supper that would hinder you from receiving all of God's best for you.

We will learn within this series how the false mindsets that have been instilled in many believers have no scriptural basis and their doubts and fears concerning the Lord's Supper are unfounded according to the truths of God's Word. We will also learn about the real substance behind the symbols of the Lord's Supper. We will study in the word what God says concerning the Lord's Supper and begin to see it in a whole new light as we see it through his eyes. We will learn of his

great desire for us to receive the blessings and benefits that have already been provided and at great cost. We will learn how it is all received by grace and faith in Christ and Christ alone.

God's Love for You

Before I go any further in this teaching concerning the Lord's Supper I want to emphasize the unconditional, immeasurable and eternal love that God has for you as a child of God. I know we have all heard or read this scripture many times, **"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."** (John 3:16) But do we really know how much God loves us? I'm sure none of us could really comprehend the pure and endless love that God has for us because of our human limitations but one only need look to the Lord and his sacrificial atonement to realize how much God truly loves us. God is love. Our heavenly Father demonstrated that love for us in the highest way possible by sending what was most near and dear to his heart, his Son Jesus Christ. Jesus also demonstrated his love by laying down his very own life for you and me.

It is with this mindset that I would like to continue on into the subject of the Lord's Supper. Many times we as believers usually think about what the Lord's Supper means to us, but have we ever thought about what it means to the Lord? He loves us so much and suffered unimaginably on a bloody altar to redeem us from eternal death and so much more. He faced ridicule, persecution, rejection and a brutal crucifixion so that we might become true sons of God and inherit all things with him. He came not only to rescue us from our sins and death; he came that we might have life and life more abundantly in every way. If we could understand how much it cost the Lord to suffer so terribly and die for us so we could receive all of the priceless gifts and blessings from God, we might begin to understand how much he wants us to remember *him*, to love *him*, to believe *him* and receive those things that he paid so dearly for.

Do This in Remembrance of Me...

We read about what is commonly referred to as the *Last Supper* in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. This Last Supper became the final Passover of the Old Testament. On that very night, Jesus provided new symbols to represent his sacrifice under a New Testament. The bread that they ate would now be symbolic of his body and the fruit of the vine would be symbolic of his blood.

"When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the Kingdom of God. After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God comes." And he took the bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you." (Luke 22:16-20 NIV)

Shortly after this last supper, the Lord went to the cross to become the real Passover Lamb to die for the sins of the world. His body was viciously beaten and so visibly marred and his blood was poured out as a drink offering that we might receive pardon and forgiveness of all our sins and live eternally with God. Most of us as believers today understand that the Lord died so that we could be forgiven of our sins and receive eternal life but the Lord's sacrifice is so much greater than we could ever fathom.

There is so much more to our salvation than we may realize. It has often been taught on our ministry's website that there is so much more to salvation than simply being saved from hell and life

in the hereafter. When we received the Lord, we received a complete “salvation package”. There are so many things that accompany our salvation that the Lord has purchased for us through his life, death, burial and resurrection. (Hebrews 6:9) We receive all of these things by the sheer grace of God and by faith in Christ and he has paid the price **in full**. All of these things are made available to us and we can receive them freely because we are now “in him”. As we grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord we should also, through revelation knowledge of the Spirit, be growing in understanding of what the Lord has obtained for us and progressively be receiving more and more of the substance that he came to give us under the New Testament.

It is recorded in the Gospels that when Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper he told his disciples to **“do this in remembrance of me.”** The Son of God could speak volumes in one sentence and there is much more to this sentence than meets the eye. The good Lord certainly knew that we, as flesh and blood human beings, needed to have a continual reminder of his sacrifice so that we would never forget what he has done for us. He proved his eternal and unconditional love for us by coming down out of heaven’s glory and laying down his life so that we might receive eternal life and be restored back into a personal relationship with God- God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In giving us the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper, we are not only constantly reminded of what he has done for us but also receive the *perpetual* or *ongoing* benefits that he has provided through the atonement.

We must realize that there are some things that can hinder or prevent us from receiving the substance behind the symbols of the Lord’s Supper. We can no longer be hindered or prevented from receiving however, when false teaching and erroneous mindsets have been torn down and replaced with the power of the truth. (II Corinthians 10:5) Jesus said, **“The truth shall set you free.”** Free to do what? In this instance, free to receive all of the wonderful gifts that are already available to us through the sacrifice of Christ.

Unfortunately some Church leaders that preside over the Lord’s Supper make it hard for believers to receive because it is ministered with a spirit of condemnation instead of a spirit of grace. It’s also tragic that in some Churches the Lord’s Supper has been made into a religious tradition, a *mere formality*. To treat such a sacred ordinance as common is sacrilege. It is anything but common. The Communion service should be treated with the highest honor and reverence because the Lord’s presence is among us. In the last teaching in this series, we will learn of a Church from the first century that made the mistake of doing just that. We will use their story to learn great lessons on how to observe the Lord’s Supper in the right spirit and manner. We will also learn of those things that can rob us from receiving what the Lord truly wants us to have.

Jesus Is the Bread

The bread and the wine are the symbols of a New Covenant that God has made with his Son and all of those that would receive him by faith. Symbols are actually *emblems* that are chosen to represent something else. The bread that we eat during the Lord’s Supper is representative of the Lord’s body. The wine is representative of his blood. Behind these symbols is the power of salvation contained in the Gospel for us who believe. (Romans 1:16) Our salvation is within the person of Christ himself. Did you know that when we eat the Lord’s Supper we are in reality feeding on the life of the Lord himself? Jesus said:

“I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never go thirsty... I am the bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”
(John 6:35, 51) Jesus also said:

**“Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.”
(Matthew 4:4 NIV)**

Jesus is the living Word of God that we are to live by. Just as we need to eat physical bread in order to live naturally, we also need to eat spiritual bread (Jesus) in order to live spiritually and eternally. Some believe and teach that the body and blood of Jesus only provide spiritual benefits. We must know that we can receive both physical and spiritual benefits through the cross of Christ. We can receive these divine blessings not only in the life hereafter but also *now, in this life*. All that we need is found only *in him*. To receive the inheritance blessings we must not only be in him but also continually remain in him. This why Jesus admonished his followers to do this:

“Remain in me and I will remain in you.” (John 15:4)

We do this on a daily basis but also when we eat the Lord's Supper. Some believers make the mistake of placing their faith in the symbols of the bread and wine thinking that by taking these that they will miraculously receive what they believe for. ***However, the power contained in the Lord's Supper is not within the symbols themselves, but in the substance behind the symbols, which is Christ.*** When we put our faith in him and receive what he has on our behalf, we will see the manifestation of what we believe for.

Now that the Lord has purchased us by his own blood and made us God's own possessions, our lives are now in him. (Ephesians 1:14) *He is our life now*. When we observe the Lord's Supper, we are also literally having *communion or fellowship* with him and with one another. Through the atonement, we have now become “at one” with Christ and each other and because we are “in him” we are now a part of his very own body.

Our fellowship is with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. (I John 1:3) When we come together then, we are not only fellowshiping with one another but with our Father and Elder Brother as well. When we gather together as the Church, Jesus is right there among us for he has declared:

**“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.”
(Matthew 18:20)**

If we would realize how close in fellowship or communion that we actually are and that the Lord is right in our midst, we would certainly see the Lord's Supper in an entirely new light.

Why Do We Keep the Lord's Supper?

Do you know that when you keep the Lord's Supper that you are making a formal announcement? The Apostle Paul taught the Corinthians, **“For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.” (I Corinthians 11:26)** The Church proclaims that Jesus Christ is the Savior or Lamb of God that has been slain for the sins of the whole world. (*Revelation 1:8*) The Church preaches Jesus Christ and Him crucified. We are credible witnesses of the power of the cross of Christ and his resurrection. We are proclaiming His death (the atonement on the cross) and Gospel to a lost and dying world so that they too, may receive forgiveness of sin, salvation, healing and deliverance. (*Mark 16:15-16, John 1:29, Matthew 26:28, Acts 2:38, Hebrews 9:22*)

Of course those in the world are not there among us when we are observing the Lord's Supper, but when we receive by faith the reality of those benefits that we obtain from the Lord's table, our lives then become tangible proof (of what the Lord' death has done for us) when we go to those in the world. From the Lord's Table we receive the perpetual, ongoing forgiveness of sin, physical and

spiritual healing in our bodies, deliverance from every bondage, oppression, addiction and God's divine peace, provision and protection.

When we receive what Christ has provided for us in the atonement, we bring glory to God in the earth. The handiwork that God does in our lives is visible *proof* that the message that we preach is indeed true! (Mark 16:20) When we receive the substance behind the symbols we then become powerful witnesses of the Lord and can testify to others of what he has done for us. We will speak what we believe, thus the saying is true, and "We believe therefore we speak". (II Corinthians 4:13) Now we will go on to learn of the amazing benefits that the Lord has given us through the atonement.

Christ Provided Complete and Total Redemption

The Bible teaches us that man is a tri-part being. The book of John teaches us about the divinity of Jesus and that he was not only with God but was God before he came to earth and was called the Word. John said the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus, as a man, was also a tri-part being. We will find in the word that Jesus suffered within his spirit, soul and body on our behalf so that we could have complete redemption, healing and deliverance of our *spirits, souls and bodies*. (Isaiah 53:3, John 11:33, 13:21, Matthew 26:38, Mark 14:34, I Peter 4:1, Hebrews 5:8) There is much more meaning under the surface of this statement than we could imagine. The impact of the life, death, burial and resurrection of Christ upon the life of the believer goes to much greater depths than we have ever believed before or even previously been taught by others.

Although I can't get into all the specifics right now, know that through the sacrifice of Christ our spirits *have already been* redeemed (justification), our souls are *in the process* of redemption (sanctification) and our bodies *will be* redeemed at the first resurrection (glorification). Our spirits were redeemed when we received Christ and were born again by the Holy Spirit (regeneration). At this time we also entered the Kingdom of God. (John 3: 5-8, 16-18) The Spirit sanctifies us and sets us apart as purchased by the blood of the Lamb and literally seals or protects us until the day of redemption when Jesus returns at the Second Advent. (Ephesians 1:13-14)

The Lord also provided complete redemption for our souls as well. Understand that our spirits have already been redeemed, that our souls are in the process of being redeemed and that our bodies will be redeemed in the future. (Don't worry about the security of the salvation of your soul, keep your trust and faith in God, he is able to keep or preserve your spirit, soul and body until the coming of the Lord (I Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 10:39, I Corinthians 15:42-44) Although one day we will never have to suffer sickness, disease, bondage or corruption for the rest of eternity, the sacrifice of Christ has also made healing and deliverance available to us in the here and now of this present life.

Healing and deliverance will no longer be needed in the next life, it is needed *now*.

The All-Sufficient Sacrifice of Christ

In order to receive all the benefits that Jesus has provided for you through the atonement, it's important to see his sacrifice as **all-sufficient** for every need that *you may have or will ever have* throughout your entire life. The word teaches us that Jesus suffered in all things that we have as human beings so realize that any and everything that you have gone through in your life, that Jesus has suffered these things too. His sacrifice is sufficient to help you in every area of your life. He did this for you and me so that we might be redeemed from death, sin, the law, sickness, disease, bondage, poverty and so much more. He came to take these things upon himself so that we might have all the wonderful blessings of God released to us by grace.

Has that last paragraph soaked in yet? Everything that you have ever gone through, will go through *or are even going through right now*, know that Jesus has already gone through for your sake and on your behalf. He did this so that he might be a faithful High Priest for us in the House of God. He sympathizes with the feelings of our infirmities. (Hebrews 4:14-16) He's totally understands, he's already been there! Even if there was no one else on the planet who can understand what you're going through, he does. You are never alone for the Lord has said:

“Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:5)

Please know that the Lord wants to minister to you personally through the Lord's Supper. He has already paid the price in full by taking all your sins, sorrows, sickness, disease, bondage, fears and poverty upon himself when he was on the cross. His will is to dispense and restore to you the blessings and benefits of God not only throughout eternity but also in this life. Understand that he not only ministers to us when we are taking the Lord's Supper but can minister to you where you are *right now*. The power of his sacrifice is at work all the time and perpetually flows for us when we need it.

Make room for the fact that the Holy Spirit can also minister to you through those that are now in his body, the Church. The Bible tells us that there are plenty brethren around the world that are enduring similar sufferings as you do. (1 Peter 5:8-9) More people understand than you may realize. In reality, when you are suffering, they are too because we are all one body. When those in the body of Christ minister to one another, there is help, edification, encouragement and healing for us among our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Before I conclude this first teaching, please bear in mind this powerful truth: Jesus died in your stead. He literally became your personal substitute on the cross. There is a powerful truth behind this act that enables us to receive not only eternal salvation but everything that accompanies salvation even though we did not deserve it or earn it. (Grace) Because the Lord became our substitute, a divine exchange also took place. He took what we deserved, i.e. punishment and eternal death and God gave us his divine pardon and eternal life. If you will receive this divine exchange by giving the Lord your sins, sickness, diseases, sorrows, turmoil, frustration, emotional wounds, anger, hatred, bondages, addictions, poverty etc. then he will give back to you his righteousness, power, healing, joy, peace, liberty, provision and so much more. I know that this may sound too simple to some but there is a simplicity that is in Christ. Simply believe and receive. (1 Corinthians 11:3 KJV)

The fact that he became our substitute is evident in the fact that when he died on the cross, we died too, when he was buried, we were buried too and as he was resurrected in glory and power, so shall we be too. Because he lives, we do too! (Romans 6:1-11) If we truly see that Jesus was a *perfect* substitute for us and that we are now *in him*, we can also understand that when our Father in heaven looks at us, he does not see our imperfections but instead sees the perfection of his Son. This is what enables us to not only be accepted in the Beloved but also to receive all things in Christ. We will also understand that we do not obtain by what we do, *but by receiving what Christ has already done*. We will cease struggling from our own works and simply rest in his finished work and receive by grace and faith in him. (Hebrews 4:9-11) Continuing on to the next teaching, let's go on to learn specifically about the substance behind the bread that we eat at the Lord's Table and how it personally applies to our lives.

Go To Part II