

The Lord's Supper

Lesson 7: How do we actually *feed* on Christ in the Supper?

1Cor 10.16

- I. Since Christ is *spiritually* present in the Supper, our feeding on Him is *by faith*. We are to exercise our faith in the Supper as divinely appointed to be a means of *representing, sealing, and applying Christ and the benefits of the covenant of grace* to us, WSC 97. We must, *by faith receive and apply unto ourselves Christ crucified and all the benefits of His death*, WLC 171.
 - A. There are three duties incumbent upon us as communicants at the Lord's Table: humble preparation, believing meditation, and sincere practice. Humble preparation is done before we receive; believing meditation is done as we receive; and sincere practice is done after we receive.
 - B. The exercise of our faith in spiritual meditation as we receive the Supper is the best means to feed upon Christ and His benefits in the Supper.
- II. Exercising our faith in meditation during the Supper can be done with the following helps:
 - A. When the sermon is ended and the Supper is about to be administered,
 1. consider how humbling it is that Christ lovingly invites you to His holy Table, Mt 22.1-4
 2. consider how gracious it is that Christ invites you to come without money or price (Isa 55.1) and to delight your soul in His heavenly fare, His body and blood given for you, Mt 26.26-28
 3. Is there a greater honor than to be a guest at His Table? a better fare than His body broken under your curse and His blood shed for your forgiveness?
 4. If David thought it a great matter to be son-in-law to King Saul and to sit at his table, how much greater a matter is it to be a son of God and to sit at the Table of King Jesus?
 - B. When Abraham went up to the Mount with Isaac to worship God, he left his servants in the valley, so see that you lay aside all earthly thoughts and concerns and bring your soul unfettered before the Lord.
 - C. Meditate on how precious the body and blood of Jesus is. He is the eternal Son of God, the self-existent I AM, the Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He is surrounded and worshipped unceasingly by thousands and ten-thousands of angels. He will judge the quick at the dead on the last day. Before Him the devil and all his host tremble. He was crucified for your sins and now offers Himself to your soul.
 - D. Meditate on how sinful you are, how altogether unworthy of so holy a Host, how ill-deserving to eat such sacred food, having been conceived in sin, lived a sinful life, and, even as a believer, still stained with sin, bearing Christ's name but often doing the devil's work.
 1. Consider how unworthy you are to receive such a sacred meal. John the Baptist thought himself unworthy to untie Christ's sandals. The centurion thought himself unworthy to have Christ come to his house. The bleeding woman thought herself unworthy to do anything more than touch the hem of His garment. Who, then, are you to eat of His broken flesh and drink of His shed blood?
 - a) And yet, if you come to the Table humbly, in faith, repentance, and love, hating your past sins and purposing by His grace to walk in obedience henceforth, don't let your sins trouble you—for they will be forgiven and never laid to your charge; and this sacrament will seal and assure to your heart that all your sins and the judgment due for them are fully pardoned and washed away by the blood of Christ, Mt 26.26-28; Eph 1.7; 2.13-19

- b) Because no sinner is barred from this Table but he who is unwilling to repent of his sins and to resolve to walk instead in love to Christ Jesus.
- E. Meditate on the fact that Christ instituted this sacrament in His church to be the chief token and pledge of His love to you, not when we sang His Hosannas! and would have made Him King, but when Judas and the high-priests were conspiring His death—which means He instituted this sacrament, not in response to our love for Him, but wholly as a token of His love for us, sinful, helpless, hopeless us.
1. Just think what assurance this gives you that your welcome at the Table is not at all conditioned upon your love for Him, but arises wholly from His heart of love for you. He knows everything about you and still He invites, even commands, that you come and receive the token of His free love for you. Can there be any justification at all for your neglect and refrain?
- F. When the minister begins with the words of institution for the Supper, lay aside your reading and thinking and set your mind and heart on the words and actions of the minister because it has pleased God, who knows our weakness, to appoint these words and actions as a help to raise our mind and heart up to the serious consideration of Christ and His death.
1. Consider the Father's love and grace in giving up His Son to the cross for you to redeem you from sin and reconcile you to Himself.
 2. When you see the bread broken and about to be distributed to you, consider how Christ's body was broken in death under the curse and wrath of God that was turned against you and your sin. Call to mind the heinousness of your sins, that none could deliver you from it but God Himself. Call to mind the great wrath of God against them, that none could bear that wrath but God the Son. Call to mind the righteousness of God's judgment against them, that the wages of your sin is death.
 3. When you see the cup raised and about to be distributed to you, consider how Christ's blood was shed for you. Consider Him as the Lamb that was slain in your place, the atoning sacrifice whose blood alone can cleanse from sin and reconcile you to God. Consider that it was not the nails which held Him to the cross, or the soldier's threats, but only His love for you, His desire to set you free, to secure your salvation, to make atonement with you, to procure the grace and peace of God for you. Consider that He knew all your sins by name and what it would cost Him to pay that debt, and yet still paid it, in full—so great was His love for you.
- G. When the elements are given to you and you partake of them with the congregation, consider that it is Christ Himself who is given to you, who sets Himself before your soul in this visible sermon, inviting you to stretch out the hand of faith and "take and eat," "take and drink."
1. As surely as the minister gives you the signs in your hands, so Christ by His Spirit gives you the thing signified in the hands of your faith.
 2. Rest your soul upon Him. Rest your weary heart upon Him. Lay hold of Him by faith and take His gospel promises for yourself. The truth is not absent from the sign, but joined with it by God's power.
 3. Eat the bread, and rest your soul on Christ's crucifixion, where He satisfied the justice of God for all your sins. Place all your confidence and all your hope on that atonement and receive from it every peace and assurance and joy, believing, upon the very Word of God, that "His body was given *for you*."
 4. Drink the wine and believe that His blood was shed for your sins, that He was the atoning sacrifice required by God for your reconciliation, and that His resurrection by the Father was indubitable proof that His atonement was accepted on your behalf. Put all your confidence for salvation in the covenant of grace, of which His blood is the seal,

believing, upon the very Word of God, that His blood is “the blood of the covenant, which was poured out *for you*, for the forgiveness of *your* sins.”

5. Believe the Word of God, that as surely as your mouth and body have received the signs, so surely has your faith received the One signified by them. For He is really and truly present in the Supper to the believing penitent and really and truly gives Himself to him by faith.
 6. Know assuredly now, that your sins are forgiven, you are at peace with God, His Son reigns as King over all creation for you, and His Spirit indwells you to sanctify you more and more every day.
 7. Let your heart rejoice in the day’s meal and let your mouth sing the praise of Him who loved you and gave Himself for you.
- H. Having received Christ and all His benefits by faith, as the minister closes with a prayer of thanksgiving and resolution, see that you join your heart in thanking God for the gift of His Son—together with all His benefits—and resolve to go from the Table, living in the light of your communion with the Son of God there, and walking in a manner in keeping with the covenant renewed there.