

# The Lord's Supper

## Lesson 8: How should I go out from the Lord's Supper?

### Intro

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Christ eminently calculated to promote our holiness and happiness as Christians. But how do we obtain practical advantage from our observance of the Supper as we go out from it and back to the facts of life?

The state of mind fostered at the Table, the feelings excited and the blessings enjoyed, should be brought into practical application and maintained by watchfulness and prayer, 2Jn 8. In other words, it should be our aim to take the benefits of the Lord's Table into more than just that Lord's Day. We should aim much higher and better than that. We should aim to improve the ordinance so that it may be a fresh spring to a holy life.

*Haweis*: "The great end of this ordinance is that its influence may abide with us, and not that it be merely a ceremonious visit that is forgotten until administered again" In other words, the means of grace as a whole are not intended as Lord's Day duties, but rather as means of cultivating a life of communion and fellowship with our God so that we enjoy an habitual preparedness for the Supper and are never surprised by it or unfit for it because we were surprised by it."

We should retire with God and give ourselves to two things: a *review* of our place at the Table, and a *consideration* of the duties to which we were especially called.

- I. A review of our place at the Table
  - A. When we discerned the Lord's body, did it increase our penitence and sorrow for sin? Did it renew our convictions of the guilt of all sin, especially our sin, and particularly our repeated sins? When at the Table, did we feel anything like a deeper and more lively sense of our shameful ingratitude, our cold affections, and our sinful rebellions? Has this produced in us any feeling of godly sorrow and truly humbled us before our heavenly Father? Cultivate this. Go forth in the truth of this.
  - B. When Christ's dying love was set before us, did gratitude fill our hearts? Were love and warm affections stirred up in our hearts for Him? When you witnessed what He did for you, were you convinced that you have no friend like Him, so wise, so powerful, so tender, so forbearing, so loving? Unsolicited, undesired, unwelcome, He came and stood in the gap between you and eternal ruin. Can you witness that love and not be overflowing with gratitude and love in return? Cultivate this. Live in the reality of this.
  - C. When you beheld Christ's suffering as a ransom for you, did you not admire and esteem Him above all others? Rev 5.8-14. Nurture this. Walk in the light of this.
- II. The duties to which the Supper calls us. When we have gone to the Table as we ought, and wrestled with it for a blessing, we'll find that something of a holy impression has been left on us, some check was given to our love of sin, and some additional strength for holy duties. So what, now, should we render to the Lord for all His kindness to us? Ps 116.12-14
  - A. Abound more in acts of devotion.
    1. There will always be a remarkable contrast between God's blessings and our return. However, let us come from our communion at the Table with a more lively sense of His goodness to us and our dependence upon Him. Let us give ourselves more fervently and regularly to prayer, for the grace to walk in the way of our resolutions. Let us be more diligent in the study of Scripture, looking to it as a lamp to our feet, our light to our paths.
  - B. Remember your greater obligations to obedience.

1. At the Table we made and renews vows of obedience to the Lord. Let us not forget this, and let us remember the great sin of breaking those vows, Dt 23.21-23. Let us recollect the purchase made of us, the purchase price, and the merciful Purchaser, all to set before our heart that we are not our own, but the Lord's, in both life and in death. We can no longer halt between two opinions. When a temptation comes, we must put it off, saying, "Is such an action in keeping with what you recently promised at the Lord's Table?" Let us remember that our vows are not temporary, but engage our whole lives. They do not set with the day's sun, and are still upon us with each day's sunrise.
  2. We must practice as we profess. How can I commit this great wickedness against my Lord, especially after I just recently solemnly renewed my covenant with Him at His Table?
- C. Contend more vigorously with your spiritual enemies.
1. Everytime we receive the Supper, we renew our baptismal vow and renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, to be the Lord's. How can we in good conscience go back to them? Let us take up the whole armor of God and wage the good warfare, Eph 6.10-18
- D. Cultivate a spirit of sincere love
1. Let us frequently and sincerely delight in the company of the pious. Let the communion meal teach us self-sacrificing, fervent, pure, self-denying, sincere love to the brethren.
  2. Let the significance of what Christ at His Table has done for you manifest itself in the change of your character, until you're humble, compassionate, loving, forbearing, gentle, and kind.
- E. Adorn the religion of your Saviour
1. Your tempers and dispositions should set forth the excellence of Christ to a lost world.
  2. We confess that there is a life-changing power in following Jesus that cannot be replicated by the world. The power of this truth must be seen in our conversations. We must exercise self-control over our passions, over our anger, and over our tongues. It's hypocritical to profess to be a sheep at the Shepherd's Table and then to be a bear at work and a lion at home.
- F. Go forth into the world professing Christ's name
1. We professed Christ at the Table, so we should go from it speaking for His honor and glorying in His cross, Gal 6.14. This will cultivate the happiness of our communion and fellowship with Him.
  2. We declared that we were not of the world, so we should daily walk contrary to it in our priorities, values, and uses of its blessings, 1Cor 7.31. We must go out into the world speaking as a Christian, professing our views, and living for Christ.
  3. We vowed to take up our cross and follow Christ, so we should do just that, Mk 8.34. The cross is the very evidence and proof of our Christian pedigree.
- G. Keep the covenant you renewed:
1. Bayly: "Seeing thou hast now reconciled thyself to God, and renewed thy covenant, and vowed newness and amendment of life, thou must therefore have a special care, that thou dost not yield to commit thy former sins any more. Be ye not therefore like the dog, that returns to his vomit, or the washed sow that walloweth in the mire again. But when either the devil or thy flesh shall offer to tempt and move thee to relapse into thy former sins, answer them as the spouse doth in the Canticles, "I have put off my coat" (of my former corruptions), "how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them again?" (Cant. 5.3)."
- H. Look forward to the next opportunity to commune with Christ at His Table again.
1. "If ever thou hast found either joy or comfort in receiving the holy sacrament, let it appear by thy eager desire of receiving it often again. For the body of Christ, as it was

anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows, so doth it yield a sweeter savor than all the ointments of the world; the fragrant smell of which allureth all souls who have once tasted its sweetness ever after to desire oftener to taste of it again.

2. “And let this be the chief end to which both thy receiving and living tends — that thou mayest be a holy Christian, zealous of good works, purged from sin, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; that thou mayest be acceptable to God, profitable to thy brethren, and comfortable unto thine own soul.”

Finis.

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## A prayer to be said after receiving the Lord's Supper, Lewis Bayly

What shall I render unto thee, O blessed Saviour, for all these blessings which thou hast so graciously bestowed upon my soul? How can I sufficiently thank thee when I can scarce express them? Where thou might have made me a beast, thou made me a man after thine own image. When by sin I had lost both thine image and myself, thou didst renew in me thine image by thy Spirit, and didst redeem my soul again by thy blood; and now thou hast given unto me the seal and pledge of my redemption, nay, thou hast given thyself unto me, O blessed Redeemer. O what an inestimable treasure of riches, and overflowing fountain of grace hath he got who hath gained thee! No man ever touched thee by faith but thou didst heal him by grace; for thou art the author of salvation, the remedy of all evils, the medicine of the sick, the life of the quick, and the resurrection of the dead. Seemed it a small matter unto thee to appoint thy holy angels to attend upon so vile a creature as I am; but that thou shouldst enter thyself into my soul, there to preserve, nourish, and cherish me unto life everlasting?

If the carcass of the dead prophet could revive a dead man that touched it [2Kgs 13.21], how much more shall the living body of the Lord of all prophets quicken the faithful, in whose heart he dwells? And if thou wilt raise my body at the last day out of the dust, how much more wilt thou now revive my soul which thou hast sanctified with thy Spirit, and purified with thy blood [1Pet 1.2]? O Lord, what could I more desire, or what couldst thou more bestow upon me than to give me thy body for meat, thy blood for drink, and to lay down thy soul for the price of my redemption? Thou, Lord, endured the pain, and I do reap the profit; I received pardon, and thou didst bear the punishment. Thy tears were my bath, thy wounds my healing, and the injustice done to thee, satisfied for the judgment which was due to me. Thus by thy birth thou art become my brother, by thy death my ransom, by thy mercy my reward, and by thy sacrament my nourishment.

O divine food, by which the sons of men are transformed into the sons of God; so that man's nature dies, and God's nature lives and rules in us! Indeed all creatures wondered that the Creator would be enclosed nine months in the virgin's womb. But that thou should thus humble thyself to dwell for ever in my heart, which thou found more unclean than a dung-hill, it is able to make all the creatures in Heaven and earth to stand amazed. But seeing it is thy free grace and mere pleasure thus to enter and to dwell in my heart, I would to God that I had so pure a heart as my heart could wish to entertain thee. And who is fit to entertain Christ? Or who, though invited, would not choose with Mary rather to kneel at thy feet, than presume to sit with thee at thy table? Though I lack a pure heart for thee to dwell in, yet weeping eyes shall never be lacking to wash thy blessed feet, and to lament my filthy sins.

And, albeit, I cannot weep so many tears as may suffice to wash thy holy feet; yet, Lord, it is sufficient that thou hast shed blood enough to cleanse my sinful soul. And I am fully assured, O Lord, that all the dainty fare wherewith the disdainful Pharisee entertained thee at his table, did not so much please thee as those tears which penitent Mary poured under the table. I would therefore wish with Jeremiah, that "my head were a fountain of tears;" that seeing I can by no means yield sufficient thanks for thy love to me, yet I might by continual tears testify my love unto thee. And though no man is worthy of so infinite a grace, yet this is my comfort, that he is worthy whom thou in favour accounts worthy.

And seeing that now of thy mere grace thou hast counted me among others, thy chosen, worthy of this unspeakable favour, and sealed by thy sacrament, the assurance of thy love and the forgiveness of my sins, O Lord, confirm thy favour unto thy servant, and say of me as Isaac did of Jacob, "I have blessed him, therefore he shall be blessed." And that I may say unto thee with David, "Thou, O Lord, hast blessed my soul, and made it thy house, and it shall be blessed for ever." And seeing it pleased thee to bless the house of Obed-edom and all his household, while the ark of the Lord remained in his house, I doubt not but thou wilt much more bless my soul and body, and all that do belong unto me,

now that it has pleased thy majesty of thine own good will to enter under my roof, and to dwell for ever in my poor cottage. Bless me, O Lord, so that my sins may wholly be remitted by thy blood, my conscience sanctified by thy Spirit, my mind enlightened by thy truth, my heart guided by thy Spirit, and my will, in all things, subdued to thy blessed will and pleasure. Bless me with all graces which I lack, and increase in me those good gifts which thou hast already bestowed upon me. And seeing that I hold thee not by the arms outwardly, as Jacob wrestling, but inwardly dwelling by faith within me, surely, Lord, I will never let thee go except thou bless me, and give me a new name, a new heart, a new spirit, and strength by the power of God to prevail over sin and Satan.

And I beseech thee, O Lord, desire not to depart from me, as thou didst from Jacob, because the day breaks, and thy grace begins to dawn and appear; but I, from my soul, humbly, with the disciples at Emmaus, entreat thee, O sweet Jesus, to abide with me because it draws toward night; for the night of temptation, the night of tribulation, yea, my last long night of death approaches. O blessed Saviour, stay with me therefore now and ever. And if thy presence go not home with me, carry me not from hence. Go with me and live with me; and let neither death nor life separate me from thee. Drive me from myself; draw me unto thee. Let me be sick, but sound in thee; and in my weakness let thy strength appear. Let me seem as dead, that thou alone mayest be seen to live in me, so that all my members may be but instruments to carry out thy motions. Set me as a seal upon thine heart and let thy zeal be settled upon mine, that I may be out of all love with all, that I may be only in love with thee.

And grant, O Lord, that as thou now vouchsafes me this favour to sit at thy table, to receive this sacrament in thy house of grace, so I may hereafter, through thy mercy, be received to eat and drink at thy table in thy kingdom of glory. And for thy mercy I do here, with the four beasts and twenty-four elders, cast myself down before thy throne of grace, acknowledging that it is thou that hast redeemed me with thy blood, and that salvation comes only from thee. And therefore unto thee I do yield all praise, and glory, and wisdom, and thanks, and honour, and power, and might, and majesty, O my Lord and my God, for evermore. Amen.