

The Visible Gospel

The Lord's Supper Instituted

Matthew 26:26-30

Morning reading: Exodus 24:1-8; Psalm 22 or John 6:48-51

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Main point: Jesus interprets His death and establishes the new Supper that was to replace the old Passover.

Introduction:

Charles Spurgeon once said that "the preacher's calling is to woo for Christ." I would like to begin this morning's message with a pop quiz, which may not woo you, but I believe it will help you to think with me about the importance of the Lord's Supper. Here we go. Multiple choice.

1. The Bible instructs us to partake of communion:
 - a. Frequently
 - b. Occasionally
 - c. Monthly
 - d. No time schedule given
2. The meaning of the Lord's Supper is agreed upon by:
 - a. Catholics and Protestants
 - b. Reformers and Puritans
 - c. Baptists and Presbyterians
 - d. None of the above
3. The Lord's Supper is to be received while:
 - a. Seated
 - b. Coming forward
 - c. Kneeling
 - d. From tables
 - e. No instruction given
4. The cup of Lord Supper is to be shared in:
 - a. A single cup
 - b. Multiple cups
 - c. No instruction given

5. The bread of the Lord Supper—
 - a. Must be leavened
 - b. Must be unleavened
 - c. A hostess twinkle will do
 - d. Must be bread
6. The Lord's Supper is to be administered by:
 - a. A pastor at a pulpit
 - b. A priest on an altar
 - c. Any person in a small group
 - d. The church wherever it is gathered
7. The intended/biblical meaning of the Lord's Supper is:
 - a. It becomes the real body and blood of Jesus Christ
 - b. Christ's blood and body are added/united to it.
 - c. It is only a memorial of His death.
 - d. It is a memorial with the promise of His spiritual presence.
8. The controversy of the Lord's Supper resulted in:
 - a. Churches being split
 - b. Movements being hindered
 - c. People being killed
 - d. All the above

In 1555, Mary Tudor became Queen of England. She launched what is one of the bloodiest regimes in civilization. She became known as "Bloody Mary" because she persecuted and burned at the stake 288 Protestants. These were the finest people that England had to offer. In some cases, they were the best educated in the land. They were bishops and archbishops, pastors and even women and children. They were not people who rose up against the throne in some sort of political rebellion. They were not people who resisted the regime out of some sort of dissatisfaction over taxes.

In a period of four years, these people were burned, hanged, and martyred because of their firm stand on what they believed these verses (*Matt.26:26-30*) taught. In his book, *"Light From Old Times,"* Bishop J.C. Ryle asked and answered the question, "Why were the Marian Martyrs burned at the stake?" This is what he said:

"The principal reason why the English Reformers were burned was because they refused one of the peculiar doctrines of the Romish church. On that doctrine in almost every case, hinged their life or death. If they admitted it, they might live. If they refused it, they must die. The doctrine in question was, 'Is the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the consecrated elements of bread and wine at the Lord's Supper? Did they or did they not believe that the body and blood of Christ are really, corporally, and literal and materially, present under the forms of bread and wine after the words of consecration [by the priests] pronounced? Did they or did they not believe that the real body and blood of Christ...was present on the so-called altar so soon as the mystical words had passed the lips of the priest? Did they or did they not? That was the simple question. If they did not believe in it, they were burned."

The subject that we are dealing with in these verses is not a *secondary* matter in the things of the faith. They are *primary*. This truth is really at the epic-center of your faith if you are a Christian. Everything else revolves around the circumference, but His death, His cross, and what we believe about it is at the center.

To believe wrongly about the Lord's Supper is to deny the Gospel. Why? Because if you reject what the Bible teaches about communion and you adopt another teaching other than what Christ intended, then you are saying His work on Calvary is not finished. You suggest that His death and resurrection were insufficient. You suggest that there is something still lacking that you must do to wash away your sins.

We are a cross-centered people. We are saved by Christ's work on the cross (*Rom.5:9-10*). We are sanctified by the truth of the cross (*1 Cor.1:18*). We will one day be glorified because of the cross (*Rev.7:14*). We preach Christ and Him crucified (*1 Cor.2:2*). We must give strict attention to understanding what Jesus means by what He says and what it calls for in our lives today.

There are only two rules, rituals, practices, or ordinances that Jesus gave to the church. They are **believer's baptism** and **the Lord's Supper**. Baptism is to take place after one enters the kingdom of God by faith and is born again (*Acts 2:38*). It only needs to happen once in obedience to the Lord's command (*Matt.28:18-20*). But the Lord's Supper happens again and again and again and again.

These verses contain Matthew's account of the institution of that event that we've all come to know as the Lord's Supper. The Greeks call the sacrament, which is a visible sign of a sacred thing, "a mystery." And in the Lord's Supper, we have both *a mystery of wonder* and *a mystery of mercy*. "*The celebration of the Lord's Supper,*" said Chrysostom, "*is the commemoration of the greatest blessing that the world has ever enjoyed.*" We might call it the feast of the cross.

Now some people wonder why such an ordinance or institution is even needed in the first place. They say, "Isn't it enough to have the Word of God preached to us and the way of salvation made plain? Why is something else needed?"

And the answer is that in this ordinance, the Lord condescends to our weakness. We know that "*Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ*" (*Rom.10:17*), yet in love, God not only gives us an audible word, but a visible sign. The Lord's Supper is, in fact, a visible sermon. Something we can see, taste, smell, and touch. You can think of it this way: the Word preached is a trumpet to proclaim Christ, but the Supper shared is a picture to represent Him. The Word brings us to Christ, but the Supper builds us up in Him. The Passover pointed *forward* to the cross, the Lord's Supper points *back* to it. The Word is used by the Holy Spirit to engraft us into the faith, but the Supper is used by the Spirit to confirm us in the faith. The Lord's Supper is all about the cross.

Now there is much distortion concerning this simple institution. And we know that Satan often seeks to cast a cloud over that which brings the greatest light and benefit to the church. It has been corrupted by false explanations and distorted by superstitious additions. And therefore, our understanding of this ordinance will no doubt take on *a defensive tone*. But before we pull out the sword of the Spirit, let us come to the text with a desire to feed our own souls on the truth we find here. Here in our text, I want to unfold for you three clear truths concerning the Lord's Supper:

- A. The Divine Author of the Supper (*v.26a*)
- B. The Spiritual Meaning of the Supper (*vv.26b-28*)
- C. The Future Promise of the Supper (*vv.29-30*)

Context:

It is Thursday of Passion week. The weight of these words is felt as they come to us on the night before His crucifixion. On Friday, Jesus will be suspended between heaven and earth for six hours! Before being lifted up, He would be scourged and literally beaten almost beyond recognition. Humiliated. Forsaken. Abandoned. And He would do this all, alone. By Himself, He would bear shame and scoffing rude, and in our place, condemned He stood, in order to seal our pardon with His blood. Pay attention now. This is His hour.

Exposition:

- ²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took *some* bread, and after a blessing, He broke *it* and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²⁷ And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave *it* to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; ²⁸ for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. ²⁹ But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."
³⁰ After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Let us observe, in the first place...

A. The Divine Author of the Supper (v.26a)

- ²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took *some* bread,

Notice, when it happened—"While they were eating..." that is, while they were going through the 15 stages of the Passover meal (26:17-19). At some point, we don't know when exactly, but at some stage in the Passover meal, the head of the household would stand and explain the meaning of each of the elements on what is now called the Seder plate.

The Maror—or the **bitter herbs**—reminded them of the bitterness of slavery their forefathers endured in Egypt. The Z'roa—which is the **roasted lamb**—represented the lamb that was sacrificed the night the Jews left Egypt. The Charoset—a sweet, dark-colored paste made from **fruit and nuts**—was meant to resemble the mortar and brick made by the Jews when they were slaves in Egypt. The Chazeret—which in some homes is **romaine lettuce**—symbolized the fact that the Jewish stay in Egypt began soft and ended hard and bitter. The Karpas—typically represented **by parsley or boiled potatoes**—symbolized spring and new beginnings. And finally, the Beitzah—which is a **hard-boiled egg**—also represented the cycle of life or hope.

Imagine them now as they were reclined on cushions on the floor in a U-shaped formation. Usually, the head of the household would take up various elements of the meal and use them as a symbolic reenactment of the story. He would take the unleavened bread which his wife had cooked the day before, and say in front of his children, "*This is the bread of affliction our ancestors ate in the land of Egypt. Let all who are hungry come eat...*" but instead of continuing with the traditional saying, Jesus shifted the focus, and transforms it. He changes the words.

This is the Last Passover. The old is being replaced by the new.

- ²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took *some* bread,

Next, we observe Who instituted this change. It should go without saying, nevertheless it must be asserted, that *Jesus Himself* is the founder of this institution. Watson called it "the flower of His crown." It is not owned by the *Pope*, the *preacher*, the *church*, nor any *religious denomination*. Christ is the Founder

and Author of the Lord's Supper, and what this means for us is that HOW we come to it is of utmost importance.

- ²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took *some* bread, and after a blessing...

This "**blessing**" is not a blessing of the elements, but a giving of thanks to God the Father. *Eulogeo* is the Greek word here, which means *to speak well of*. When we bless God, it means *we speak well of Him*. When God blesses us, it means that *He acts on our behalf by doing what is good for us*. Jesus blesses God for the provision of salvation that He has made by sending Him and strengthening Him. After the prayer of thanksgiving, let us now see, in the second place...

B. The Spiritual Meaning of the Lord's Supper (vv.26b-28)

- ²⁶ ... took *some* bread, and after a blessing, He broke *it* and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²⁷ And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave *it* to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; ²⁸ for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, and 1 Corinthians 11 are the passages which unfold the doctrine (teaching) of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament. The meaning of the Lord's Supper is made plain to us in what Jesus DOES and SAYS.

In verse 26 we notice that there are two things that Christ did:

- *He took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and explained it.*
- *He took the cup, gave thanks, and explained it.*

Why is He doing all of this for them and us? He is interpreting His death. He is taking one of the elements of the Passover meal and He is transforming its interpretation. He is taking them from that redemptive Old Testament event, and now showing the disciples and us, how it is superseded by a NEW event that is to be accomplished through His death. This is a new teaching! The disciples have never heard anything like it. He is directing them and us to the most important event in redemption. There is to be ONE commemorative event in the life of the church. It is *a remembrance of His death*.

What this means for us is that there is only one event that we are truly authorized to commemorate as His people, and that is *His death*. Although we celebrate *His birth* at Christmas, we are never told to commemorate it. It is not an ordinance; it's a cultural tradition. Although we celebrate *His resurrection at Easter*, we are not told to commemorate it. There is no command to do it or ordinance given for it. But there is one event that we as His people are told to commemorate again, and again, and again, and it is not *His miracles*, it is not *His birth*, it is not *His resurrection*, IT IS HIS DEATH—we are always to commemorate HIS CROSS! Luke 22:19b—He said, "*...do this in remembrance of Me.*"

P.T. Forsyth, the English Congregationalist underscored its importance when he said,

"Christ is to us just what His cross is. All that Christ was in heaven or on earth was put into what He did there...Christ, I repeat, is to us just what His cross is. You do not understand Christ, till you understand His cross."¹

¹ P.T. Forsyth, *The Cruciality of the Christ*, 1909, pp.44-45

1. **Why bread?** Now what is meant by this phrase, "*Jesus took some bread...*"? The significance is seen in that fact that He took *common bread* and separated it for *an uncommon use*. Now, why bread? Why not fruit, a piece of tree bark, or an olive branch?

The reason that Jesus took bread is that it was a type or analogy of Himself. "*This is My body...*" He did not mean that the bread was His body *literally*, but *symbolically*. He is speaking *metaphorically* or *representatively*. It is figurative language. Jesus used many metaphors of Himself (*John 8:12, 10:7, 9; 15:1*).

In the Temple of Israel, the bread was called "*the bread of the Presence*" (*1 Kings 7:48*). When Jesus appeared He declared that "*I am the Bread of life*" (*John 6:48*). The bread is intended to bring to our recollection the body of Christ. "...*Take, eat; this is My body.*"

Now the church loves to sing about ***the blood***, and rightly so. "*For without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins*" (*Heb.7:22*). But, without *the body*, there would be *no blood*. Without the body, there is *no death* (*Heb.2:9*). The body or the incarnation was absolutely crucial to the entire Gospel! It was necessary for our salvation. Without the incarnation and the sinless life of Jesus, there would be no good news.

- It was in His body that He actively kept the Law. (*Heb.7:26*)
- It was in His body that He lived a perfect life. (*Heb.4:15*)
- It is in His body that He would be lifted up and crucified. (*John 12:32*)
- It would be in His body that our sins were transferred to Him. (*2 Cor.5:21*)

Look at a few verses with me that affirmed the importance of His body.

- **1 John 1:1-2**—What was from the beginning, what we have heard [*audible*], what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at [*visible*] and touched with our hands, [*tangible*] concerning the Word of Life—² and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us—
- **1 John 4:2**—By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God;

This is why the author of Hebrews quotes Psalm 40:6 in...

- **Hebrews 10:5**—Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says,
"SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED,
BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME;"
- **Galatians 4:4-5**—But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵ so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.
- **Colossian 2:9**—For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

So, the bread represents His body...but notice *what He did with the bread*...

- ²⁶ ... took *some* bread, and after a blessing, He broke *it* and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."

Notice carefully, after taking the bread and blessing it, "**He broke it.**" What does this action represent?

This represents His suffering. The breaking of His body tells us what kind of death He would die. He did not die in *His sleep*. He did not die of *a heart attack*. He did not die from *a disease*. He died by way of crucifixion. His body was broken...but not a bone broken (*Ps.34:20; John 19:36*), and as we shall see in a moment, His blood would be "*poured out*" which speaks of the violence that He would suffer. Out of this act, springs the doctrine of the substitutionary atonement.

So, we can say that the Lord's Supper was founded on the Passover meal, but the Passover looked forward in anticipation of His sufferings and death. The Lord's Supper looks *back*.

2. Why the cup?

- ²⁷ And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you;

In the cup was a fruit of the vine (fermented wine) and there was one cup which was passed around. "**He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all for you;"**" that is to say, no one was permitted to refrain from partaking. They were all believers. Judas had left. It was only believers now. But ordering "*all*" of the disciples to drink it, Jesus is stressing *the unity of believers*. And now Jesus explains to them the meaning of the cup.

- ²⁸ for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

We have already proven that Jesus is speaking *metaphorically* or *symbolically*, so when He says, "**For this is My blood,**" it is a representative statement. You could translate it, "This *represents* My blood," "this wine *pictures* My blood." And now, as Jesus anticipates His death the next day, He speaks of it as "**My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.**"

This is a very significant statement! In a perfect economy of words, Jesus interprets His death for us. Before we zoom in on the keywords which open up this tremendous revelation, we need to ask the question, what did the disciples think of when they heard these words?

We can be sure that they thought of two passages from the Old Testament.

- **Exodus 24:7-8**—Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!" ⁸ So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."
- **Jeremiah 31:31-34**—"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. ³³ "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

The way Israel was brought into covenantal relationship with God was solemnly ratified by the blood. Now Jesus is unpacking its fulfillment. Instead of a lamb's throat being slit and its blood sprinkled, Jesus is saying, "My body will be broken and My blood will be poured out." The representative symbols are clear. There is no thought of cannibalism here, for that was forbidden under the law. There is no thought of hocus pocus magical, mystical transforming of the body and wine into the body and blood of Christ. Jesus is fulfilling the promise of Scripture.

Now let's ask the Holy Spirit to drop some light on the text so that we might see and feel and act on its meaning. Notice, there are six brief but powerful insights.

- a. First, we see the phrase, "**My blood...**" There are two things about the blood that we ought to know, and that is 1) life is in the blood—"For the life of the flesh is in the blood." (Lev.17:11) and, 2) "Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins" (Heb.9:22).

Applied: When a little Jewish boy or girl or anyone participating in that day, witnessed the lamb's blood being shed, they understood that God was serious about sin. They understood that sin was costly and forgiveness and reconciliation to God required sacrifice!

- b. Second, we see the word "**covenant**," (*diatheke*). It means a *contractual arrangement*. It is an agreement by two parties in which one or both make promises to *perform* or *refrain* from certain actions. It is an agreement with a relationship.

The covenant that Jesus speaks of here is *the New Covenant*. Notice, the definite article "*the*" covenant ("*My blood of the covenant.*"). It is the covenant of salvation. It is the only saving arrangement that God has made that will reconcile sinners to Himself. It is the terms by which God will save sinners (Acts 4:12). And this agreement was not between God and us, but between God the Father and God the Son for us. In other words, the covenant is guaranteed by Christ with the Father; it benefits us (Heb.7:22).

Applied: What this reveals to us is that sinners cannot *design* nor devise their own covenant with God. There is no use of trying to "cut a deal" with God. The only way for sinners to have a right relationship with God is for man to accept *the terms of the covenant* or contract or *agreement* that has been prescribed by God in infinite grace. This covenant, again, is the New Covenant. It is "*new*" because it is in contrast to the Old Covenant given to Moses in the Old Testament.

The Old Covenant was non-saving. There was no salvation in it. It only showed pictures of things to come. It gave promises of the One who was to come. The Old Covenant pointed man to his need of a Savior, but it gave no power to save (Gal.3:19-21). The Old Covenant was like a "picture pop-up book" which gave *symbols, types, sacrifices, the Levitical priesthood, and previews* of what was to come. The Old Covenant was like a "dress rehearsal" of what we see here in the New Covenant.

Were people saved in the Old Testament? Absolutely! But it was not by anything they did. It was only by what *they believed that God would provide for them in the coming of Christ*. They were saved on credit, believing that when the Messiah came, He would pay the debt in full! And He did (Cf. Rom.3:24-26; Heb.10:1-4).

In the New Covenant, God provides *a sin-bearing Savior* who is a sacrifice for sinners. In the New Covenant, Jesus Christ our Savior provides *a better hope* (Heb.7:19) and He is the guarantee of a *better covenant* (Heb.7:22). He is also the mediator of a *better covenant* which has been enacted on *better promises* (Heb.8:6; Cf. 10:1-4).

Hebrews 8:10-12 spells out the terms of the New Covenant.

- "FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL
AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD:
I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, *[new life/inner power]*
AND I WILL WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS. *[new nature]*
AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD,
AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. *[new relationship]*
¹¹ "AND THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN,
AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,'
FOR ALL WILL KNOW ME,
FROM THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. *[new personal knowledge]*
¹² "FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES,
AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE." *[new pardon]*

There is a promise of *new power* and a *new inner nature* given at regeneration. There is a *new promise of relationship*. There is a *new promise of personal, saving knowledge*. There is a *new promise of pardon*, not that God would never remember our sins—for He is omniscient and knows all things—but rather, that He will never hold them against us in judgment.

Now the question we must answer here is...**how does a sinner get into this covenant? How can the benefits become yours and mine?** And there is only *one way*—it is through *repentance from sin* and *faith in Christ alone*. There is nothing you can do to *earn it*. What can you ever do to remove the stain of guilt and sin from your soul?

Baptism will not do it. *Membership* will not do it. *Service* will not do it. *Good works* will not do it. There is only one way to have our record expunged, our status changed, and our heart cleansed—and that is through *the merits and perfection of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ who is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world* (John 1:29). This is a glorious covenant or arrangement that God has made for the salvation of our souls!

The reality of this transaction is realized when the sinner calls upon Jesus for salvation.

- **Romans 10:9-10, 13**—that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as Lord*, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; ¹⁰ for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation...¹³ for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."

There are *no righteous acts* we can perform. There are no *religious duties* that can be performed. There is *no money* that can be given. There is nothing that the sinner can do except receive from God as a free gift the forgiveness of God. These are the terms of the covenant (John 1:12-13).

This is the greatest, most life-transforming, soul changing, eternity securing good news in all of the world! You can have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ if you turn from your sins and believe in the Person and work of Jesus, and by faith, accept the terms of the agreement.

- c. Third, see the words, "...**poured out**." This describes dear friends, *the violent shedding of His blood for us*. Jesus did not spill His blood for us, but His blood was "*poured out...*" intentionally for us. He voluntarily, and vicariously (He paid the price so that we would experience the benefits) gave Himself for our sins. He said in John 10:18, "*No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative.*"
- d. Fourth, see the word, "**for**..." "*...this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many...*" "*For*" means *on behalf of*, or *in the place of*. He speaks of substitutionary death. He did not die FOR His own sin—for He had none!

Bearing shame and scoffing rude,
In my place condemned He stood.

He died *in our place*...but notice,

- e. The fifth insight, Jesus says His blood would be, "...**poured out for many**..." The word "*many*" represents the vast number for whom He died. The contrast is with the ONE who is making the sacrifice and the MANY that will be forgiven.

ONE will die; MANY will receive the benefit. ONE will die; MANY will come under the cleansing flow of His blood. ONE will die; MANY will come into the covenant. One will die; MANY will be made sons and daughters of God. The word "*many*" (*pollon*) does not mean "*all*," for Jesus did not die for all—or all would be saved. But "*all*" for whom Jesus died, *will hear His call, will repent of their sins, and will believe and call upon His name, and those who do will not be cast out (John 6:37).*

The word "*many*" speaks to the real, actual atonement that Jesus made for His elect. He did not die so that some may *potentially* be saved, but His death *actually* made an atonement for sins. For Jesus to die for someone's sins and them not to be ultimately saved would be like paying the bail bond for someone to get out of jail, and then leaving them in clinger. No, no dear friend—Jesus accomplished all that He needed to at the cross! All for whom He died *will be saved (John 6:39-40)*. All for whom Jesus died *will have their sins purged* and removed and *will be brought into the New Covenant* and will be brought safely home.

- f. And finally, this last phrase, "**for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins**." Oh, do you know what it looks like, feels like, and results in....to be forgiven of sin?!
- Forgiveness is the wiping out of an offense from memory.
 - Forgiveness is the releasing of a sinner from a debt.
 - Forgiveness is the discharge from a bond.
 - Forgiveness is the removal of guilt resulting from wrongdoing.
 - Forgiveness is the sending away of sin's guilt.

Sin not only defiles us, but it also defeats us—but when God forgives us our sins, He removes the guilt and also the grip of our sins. He sends our sins to a place of no remembrance (*Is.38:17*). He sends our sins to a place of no recovery (*Mic.7:19*). He sends our sins to the place of no return (*Ps.103:12*). The point of East and West is that they can never meet! Sin has its stains, and also its chains. But “He,” that is, Jesus...

*Breaks the power of canceled sin, He sets the prisoner free;
His blood can make the foulest clean; His blood availed for me.*²

- **Hebrews 9:22**—And according to the Law, *one may* almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.
- **1 Peter 1:18-19**—knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood* of Christ.
- **Ephesians 1:7**—In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace
- **Revelation 1:5b**—To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood
- **Revelation 7:13-14**—Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where have they come from?” ¹⁴ I said to him, “My lord, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

There is **no sin** that has ever been committed on this planet that the blood of Christ cannot cleanse! There are some of you who have not been washed from your sins! You hesitate to come into the agreement with Christ, because you think *you have gone too far or sinned too often*. There is **no life** that is *too broken* and *too bound*, no sin that is *too sinful* and no past *too checkered* that Christ’s blood cannot cleanse!

Do not wonder any longer my friend! His blood is able! Come ye sinner, poor and needed, weak and wounded, sick and sore. Jesus ready stands to save you, full of pity, love, and power!³

Here is the way of salvation! Here is the Gospel! Here is God’s plan to reconcile sinners to Himself. The cross! By His perfect life and perfect death and resurrection, Jesus is able to save all who come to Him by faith.

Finally, we see...

² Charles Wesley, “O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing”

³ Joseph Hart, “Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy”

C. The Future Promise of the Supper (vv.29-30)

- ²⁹ But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." ³⁰ After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

What does Jesus mean by these words? "***But I say to you...***" introduces this solemn announcement.

Now we have heard Jesus speak of this future banquet before (*Luke 14:15; 22:30*). Look back at Matthew 8 beginning at verse 10, where Jesus marveled at the faith of a Gentile centurion.

- **Matthew 8:11-12**—I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; ¹² but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Here Jesus is saying that the kingdom is not a Jewish right, but a world-wide privilege given to both Jews and Gentiles who meet the criteria of faith in Him. In fact, some who think that the kingdom is their right, will find themselves excluded from the Messianic banquet.

Why does Jesus say, "*But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.*"? There are two reasons.

1. **To affirm**—that all who are in this new, saving, eternal covenant will be in the kingdom. They will never be cut off, removed, nor lifted out of the covenant. Their names are in the Lamb's Book of Life and they will never be severed from Christ.
2. **To announce**—that beyond death lies life. Jesus' words over the bread and the cup have focused on death. But the statement, "***...from now on until the day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom,***" marks a point in time which separates two situations of "now" and "one day" or "that day."

It anticipates His future reign! Why will Christ not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on? Because He is going to be resurrected after His crucifixion. He is going to ascend to the Father. He will no longer be with them physically. He will not be there with them to visibly see, but then He tells them, "don't think it will be the last time!" There will be a great reunion in the kingdom of God and He will bring them all who believe in Him there, so that we celebrate it together again!

- **John 14:2-3**—In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³ If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, *there* you may be also.

The Lord Jesus will be the host! The angels will be in the servants-in-waiting. And all the saints will be the guests of honor enjoying sweet fellowship with Him both spiritually and personally for eternity. We feel this same sense of anticipation as we wait for our loved one to come "home for the holidays." We can imagine the heart of our King waiting for the ingathering of His entire family.

Here, my friends, is the promise of future glory that we will share with Him. Just as these men had shared in His earthly life, He promises that they will someday enjoy the sweet fellowship of His presence in heaven. In other words, what He was telling them and us is that the Lord's Supper is an unfinished meal! This is why every time we partake of it; "*we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes*" (1 Cor. 11:26)!

*Where can we find Thee, Lord so near
So real, so gracious, so divine,
As at the table set with love
By those who know themselves as Thine?*

*Where may we Thy salvation know
In fullest gladdest certainty,
As with the emblems of Thy grace
Spread out for sinful man to see?*

*Where may we know the liberty
Of those whom Thou thro faith hast freed,
As gathered in Thy blessed name,
We own thee Host and Friend indeed?*

*Thus to Thy table would we come,
Remembering Thee with bread and wine,
Rejoicing most of all to know
That here we nourish life divine.*

Conclusion:

- For the person who is dead spiritually...come and see; hear and live.
- For the person who is dry spiritually...come and sit; drink and be satisfied.
- For the person who is distant spiritually...come and survey.
- For the person who is discouraged spiritually...come and submit...embrace...believe!

Beneath the cross of Jesus
I fain would take my stand,
The shadow of a mighty Rock
Within a weary land;
A home within the wilderness,
A rest upon the way,
From the burning of the noontide heat,
And the burden of the day.

There lies beneath its shadow,
But on the farther side,
The darkness of an awful grave
That gapes both deep and wide;
And there between us stands the cross,
Two arms outstretched to save,
Like a watchman set to guard the way
From that eternal grave.

Upon that cross of Jesus
Mine eye at times can see
The very dying form of One,
Who suffered there for me;
And from my smitten heart, with tears,
Two wonders I confess,
The wonders of His glorious love,
And my own worthlessness.

I take, O cross, thy shadow
For my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than
The sunshine of His face;
Content to let the world go by,
To know no gain nor loss,
My sinful self my only shame,
My glory all the cross.⁴

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⁴ Elizabeth C. Clephane, *"Beneath the Cross of Jesus"*