

I. The Purpose for the Lord's Table

1. Remembering the Lord

Scripture Reading

1 Corinthians 11:23–24 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

When we come together to break bread, it is not for prayer to seek grace, nor for hearing the Word to receive edification, but to remember the Lord. Therefore, the nature of the bread-breaking gathering differs from that of all other gatherings. All other gatherings center on prayer, the hearing of the Word, exhortation, or testimony, all for our own gain. The bread-breaking gathering centers on remembering the Lord, that the Lord may gain something.

Thus in the bread-breaking meeting, whether through hymns, prayer—whether prayers of thanksgiving or praise—the reading of Scripture, or words inspired by the Spirit, all should be Christ-centered. They should speak of the Lord's person and work, His loving kindness and virtues, His life and sufferings on earth, or His dignity and glory in heaven. This stirs our hearts to behold and reflect on all these things, that we may remember the Lord Himself.

All our activities in the bread-breaking gathering ought to turn our thoughts and affections toward the Lord, causing us to behold Him, and to offer up thanksgiving, praise, worship, and love unto Him. In such a gathering, we ought not to do anything that distracts the mind and heart, hindering our inward drawing near to the Lord and keeping our thoughts and affections from being fixed upon Him.

In this gathering, we should inwardly ponder and behold the Lord, gaining spiritual inspiration toward Him, and then express it outwardly through hymns, prayer, Scripture reading, or spiritual utterance. In this way, the entire atmosphere of the meeting is lifted unto the Lord, causing all to sense the Lord or some aspect of His being, that they may remember Him.

In the bread-breaking gathering, as we behold and receive the loaf which we break, we ought to reflect on how the Lord became flesh for us, how He suffered death in the flesh on our behalf, and how His body was broken for us and given to us, that we might receive His life.

Scripture Reading

1 Corinthians 11:25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Hebrews 2:14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil.

In the bread-breaking gathering, we ought to remember the Lord and all He has done for us not only when we behold and receive the bread that is broken, but likewise when we behold and receive the cup that we drink.

As we look upon the cup and take it to drink, we should consider how the Lord “became flesh and blood” for us. He not only gave up His body that we might receive His life, but also shed His blood that we might obtain the incomparable blessing—being delivered from sin and gaining God and all that is His.

We should reflect that the cup we drink is made from grapes that have been pressed, causing their juice to flow forth. According to this symbolic meaning, we ought to contemplate how the Lord was bruised and pressed by God on our behalf,

how He bore our sins, was made sin for us, endured judgment and curse in our place, and shed His blood to become our cup of blessing and our eternal portion.

We should also ponder how the Lord's blood has procured our redemption and forgiveness, sanctified us, justified us, reconciled us to God, and made us acceptable before Him; how it cleanses our sins and purifies our conscience, freeing our conscience from condemnation and enabling us to draw near to God with boldness; how it pleads a better case for us before God and speaks a better word on our behalf; how it resists the assaults of evil spirits and causes us to overcome Satan the accuser. Before the Lord's cup, we ought only to dwell upon the love that moved the Lord to shed His blood for us, the sufferings He endured in shedding it, and all that His blood has accomplished on our behalf. We should not dwell upon our failures and shortcomings; for when we behold the Lord's blood—as signified by the cup we drink—we ought no longer to fix our thoughts on our own sins. The cup we drink is meant to remind us of the Lord and all His blood has accomplished for us, not to remind us of our sins, shortcomings, and transgressions.

2. The Enjoyment of Lord

Though the central focus of the breaking of bread is to remember the Lord, this remembrance is not merely to think of the Lord and all He has done for us; it is rather to enjoy the Lord and all He has accomplished for us. The Lord said that when we eat His bread and drink His cup, we remember Him. His bread and His cup signify His body and His blood. Therefore, to eat His bread and drink His cup is to eat His body and drink His blood. His body and His blood are Himself given for us, and also the means by which He has accomplished all things on our behalf. Moreover, eating and drinking are not only to receive, but also to enjoy. Hence, when we partake of the Lord's body and drink His blood, we not only receive, but also enjoy the Lord Himself and all that He has accomplished through giving His body and shedding His blood for us. Such receiving and enjoying the Lord and His finished work is to remember the Lord. For this reason, the remembrance in breaking of bread is not

outward and objective, but inward and subjective. It is not merely remembering a Lord outside us and far away, but remembering the Lord whom we have received into us to be our enjoyment.

When the world remembers a person, they only recall that one's kindness, virtue, or great deeds. But when we remember the Lord, we do not merely think of Him—His lovingkindness, virtues, dignity, glory, and wonderful works—we also receive and enjoy Him and all that He is. The world can only remember someone distant from them; they cannot take the one they remember into themselves to be their enjoyment. But we can do more than remember a Lord who departed; we can receive Him into our inner being to be our life supply and spiritual enjoyment.

Therefore, every time we break bread to remember the Lord, we should not only quietly ponder His person and work, offering Him praise and thanksgiving, but also with an open spirit receive the Lord and all He is to be our inward enjoyment. The more we enjoy the Lord, the more we truly remember Him. The real meaning of remembering the Lord is to enjoy Him. When we break bread and inwardly receive the Lord and all He is as our enjoyment, this is the true remembrance of the Lord.