

Name: _____



Advanced Bible Correspondence Course

Lesson 30: The Lord's Supper

LORD'S DAY 30

Q.80. WHAT ELSE DOES THE LORD'S SUPPER TEACH US?

ANSWER: THE LORD'S SUPPER TESTIFIES TO US THAT WE HAVE A FULL PARDON OF ALL SIN BY THE ONLY SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST, WHICH HE HIMSELF HAS ONCE ACCOMPLISHED ON THE CROSS (A); AND, THAT WE BY THE HOLY GHOST ARE INGRAFTED INTO CHRIST (B), WHO, ACCORDING TO HIS HUMAN NATURE IS NOW NOT ON EARTH, BUT IN HEAVEN, AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD HIS FATHER (C), AND WILL THERE BE WORSHIPPED BY US (D).

(A) HEBREWS 10:10&12, 7:26&27, 9:12&25, JOHN 19:30, MATTHEW 26:28, LUKE 22:19; (B) I CORINTHIANS 10:16&17, 6:17; (C) JOHN 20:17, COLOSSIANS 3:1, HEBREWS 1:3, 8:1; (D) MATTHEW 6:20&21, JOHN 4:21, LUKE 24:52, ACTS 7:55, COLOSSIANS 3:1, PHILIPPIANS 3:20, I THESS. 1:10

One sacrifice is sufficient

The answer to question 80 stresses the Biblical truth that the *one* sacrifice on the cross is sufficient for the forgiveness of all the sins of God's children. No other offer can or may be added, because this would be a denial, a negation of the power of that *one* sacrifice on Golgotha. And in His human nature, Christ is now in heaven, and we must worship Him only *there*.

Paul wrote, *"But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God...For by one offering He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified"* (Hebrews 10:12&14). *"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God"* (Colossians 3:1).

No cooperation of the church with Christ's sacrifice is necessary for the application of the salvation merited by this sacrifice. It is not a church which provides for the application in the hearts of the believers, but it is the Holy Spirit who does this. He incorporates into the body of Christ, effecting spiritual communion with Christ. The Bible teaches us clearly that it is God Who starts the work of salvation in man's soul, maintains and finishes it. Therefore He must receive all the honour for it. Man cannot add anything to it. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God"* (Ephesians 2:8).

Q.81. FOR WHOM IS THE LORD'S SUPPER INSTITUTED?

ANSWER: FOR THOSE WHO ARE TRULY SORROWFUL FOR THEIR SINS, AND YET TRUST THAT THESE ARE FORGIVEN THEM FOR THE SAKE OF CHRIST; AND THAT THEIR REMAINING INFIRMITIES ARE COVERED BY HIS PASSION AND DEATH; AND WHO ALSO EARNESTLY DESIRE TO HAVE THEIR FAITH MORE AND MORE STRENGTHENED, AND THEIR LIVES MORE HOLY; BUT HYPOCRITES, AND SUCH AS TURN NOT TO GOD WITH SINCERE HEARTS, EAT AND DRINK JUDGMENT TO THEMSELVES (A).

(A) I CORINTHIANS 11:28, 10:19-22

The marks of a true partaker of the Lord's Supper

After it has been discussed what the Lord's Supper *is* and *is not* on the basis of Scripture, there is the question for whom the Lord's Supper has been instituted by Christ.

Three marks are mentioned in the answer: to condemn oneself because of sin, to trust in Christ and His accomplished work, and to desire to live a more holy life. All three of these must be present in all true partakers. Only then will they really receive what the Lord has promised to give in the Lord's Supper.

First, an abhorring of ourselves because of our sins. If we have not, by grace, received a new heart, we usually only take delight in ourselves. Then, despite all our shortcomings, we think that we are basically good, or at least mean to do well.

Abhorring ourselves consists in having a great sorrow for all our sins, condemning ourselves as persons who are not good, but who are totally corrupt to the very core of our heart. Then we experience and confess that by nature we are prone to hate God and our neighbour and that we are wholly incapable of doing any good, and inclined to all wickedness.

We of ourselves cannot arouse this abhorring, because it is in conflict with our self-love. It is the work of the Holy Spirit. He makes persons, who are good in their own eyes, to acknowledge that they are lost because of their sins. And He leads such lost people to Christ. The prophet Ezekiel said, referring to the people of Israel who came to themselves in exile: *"A new heart also will I (that is: God) give you, and a new spirit will I put within you ... And I will put My Spirit within you ... Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations"* (Ezekiel 36:26-31).

Next, the confidence is mentioned that all our sins, even those sinful weaknesses yet remaining after conversion (which prevent us from always doing God's will perfectly) are forgiven for the sake of Christ's suffering and death. This trust is also worked in the heart by the Holy Spirit. Then such a sinner, only feels guilty and condemnable because of all his sins. But at the same time, he believes that God is willing to forgive his sins. Then he believes that it is true, also for himself, what the Lord says: *"For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more"* (Jeremiah 31:34). This trust is not just worked in the heart of the sinner who has already bettered his life. No, He works this in the heart of the sinner who is

disheartened because of his sins, when through the working of the Holy Spirit, he takes refuge with Christ in faith.

This confidence must be there, although it can be strong or weak. Time and again, this trust is attacked within, because of the remaining weaknesses. But time and again this trust also turns to Christ and His grace again. It can be like the father of that seriously sick child. He came to ask for the recovery of his child. Jesus said to him: *“If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.”* And straightway the father cried out: *“Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief”* (Mark 9:23&24). Faith is not always sure of itself, but it is sure of the promises of God, who for Christ’s sake is willing to forgive all sins. One does not need to have a great, strong, assured faith to be allowed to partake of the Lord’s Supper. The Lord’s Supper is especially meant to strengthen faith. But he who partakes of the Lord’s Supper must have a genuine, living faith indeed.

The third mark mentioned is the desire to have one’s faith strengthened (also by the use of the Sacrament) and to be more holy. He who knows the seriousness of sin *and* the wonder of forgiveness *cannot* desire anything else. This is also worked by the Holy Spirit: *“And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them”* (Ezekiel 36:27).

Self-examination required

Alas, there are always hypocrites in the Christian church. They are hypocrites who do *say* (and sometimes think it for themselves) that they abhor themselves because of their sins, and believe that they have been forgiven, and that they desire to live more holily, but for whom in reality it is not true. They have not been delivered from their self-love and the love of sin. They have not returned to God with upright hearts, but they act as if they have.

When such hypocrites partake of the Lord’s Supper, they eat and drink judgment to themselves. This is the judgment of hardening: they are increasingly more convinced of their opinion about themselves, and they become less and less receptive to the biblical admonition to examine themselves to see *if* they are truly children of God. This judgment is not *the* judgment: such hypocrites can also still be converted unto God, just like Paul, in his self-conceit, was exposed by Christ (Acts 9).

The Lord’s Supper always summons to self-examination: *“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup”* (I Corinthians 11:28).

Q.82. ARE THEY ALSO TO BE ADMITTED TO THIS SUPPER, WHO, BY CONFESSION AND LIFE, DECLARE THEMSELVES UNBELIEVING AND UNGODLY?

ANSWER: NO; FOR BY THIS, THE COVENANT OF GOD WOULD BE PROFANED AND HIS WRATH KINDLED AGAINST THE WHOLE CONGREGATION (A); THEREFORE IT IS THE DUTY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, ACCORDING TO THE APPOINTMENT OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES TO EXCLUDE SUCH PERSONS, BY THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN TILL THEY SHOW AMENDMENT OF LIFE.

(A) I CORINTHIANS 11:20&30, ISAIAH 1:11, 66:3, JEREMIAH 7:21, PSALM 50:16

The unbelievers and ungodly excluded

The believer must examine himself if he can partake of the Lord's Supper worthily. But may the *church* also examine the persons who desire to partake of the Lord's Supper? And may the church also exclude people from the Lord's Supper? May persons be excluded who either in doctrine *or* in conduct are not genuine Christians, but who are unbelieving and ungodly?

The church must not judge the uprightness of the heart in self-examination. Judging in love they must admit anyone who appears to be a genuine Christian.

However, the church may judge according to what the mouth says and what one's life reveals. He, who, in doctrine or conduct, clearly acts contrary to the confession of being a genuine Christian, *must* be excluded from Holy Supper. He or she must be excluded through the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Christ gave these keys to Peter and in him to the church. (Matthew 16:19).

The desecration of the covenant

By the admission of unbelieving and ungodly people, the holy covenant of God will be desecrated. The Holy Spirit then withdraws His blessed workings. Then a spiritual darkness, backsliding, and error will come into the congregation, and then the wrath of God will also come upon the congregation. Schisms, heresies, and the unworthy use of the Lord's Supper were tolerated in Corinth. Paul then wrote to the congregation: "*For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep*" (I Corinthians 11:30).

What the keys consist of is explained in the next Lord's Day of the Catechism.

Questions:

1. *What does the Lord's Supper testify?*

2. *What three marks does the true partaker of the Lord's Supper have?*

3. *Why is trust in the Lord's promises necessary?*

4. *What are hypocrites?*

5. *Why must "Christians" who teach an unbiblical doctrine or live an ungodly life not be allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper?*

Evaluator: _____