

What are you Expecting to Happen at the Lord's Supper?

Class VI

Introduction/Review

1. We are now entering the closing stages of our study on the Lord's Supper.
2. When we do these Bible classes it is good to stress several lines that we can carry away with us.
3. First, it is helpful to state concisely what the Lord's Supper is:
 - a. The appearance of the bread and the cup on the Table is a visible expression (token) of the fact that the flesh and blood Son of God has come among us and died for our sins.
 - b. Second, in some way at the Table we are saying that in the process of recital of the Passion account in word and prayer, the breaking of bread and the pouring of the cup, and our participation, this material food is transcended. Spiritually we receive and appropriate the benefit of Jesus' sacrificed life – forgiveness of sins and spiritual renewal and growth. This is *not* mere memorial.
4. We noted last time that there can be a downside to participation. As with the OT prophets observing Israel's sacrifices there is no absolute guarantee that Jesus will show up to bless. We know this because of what Paul says in 1 Cor 11. There the promotion of factionalism and shaming by some invites their judgment.
5. So what is involved in fostering spiritual growth through the meal? In this study we have noted several points of focus that may enhance our participation in the Lord's meal.
 - a. We can see the Supper as a place to renew our pledge to keep covenant commitments (Mk).
 - b. We can see it as an anticipation of the Messianic banquet (Lk).
 - c. We can view it as the place where we express thanks that Christ became the sin offering, or ransom on our behalf (Matt).

Question: What suggestions do you have to foster spiritual growth through participation in the Lord's meal?

Sensing the “Real Presence” of Christ --
What is Going on the Gospel of John?

1. The Gospel of John does not openly discuss either baptism or the Lord’s Supper as rites in and of themselves. Yet I am one of those who presume that there are certain passages in John that presume the existence of these rites.
2. Bread of Life Discourse in John 6:31-58.
 - a. Jesus is explaining the meaning of the feeding of the 5,000. There is a comparison going on between the feeding in the wilderness under Moses and Jesus’ feeding.
 - b. The Jews were fed by the manna in the wilderness, which they later interpreted as God’s law and wisdom.
 - c. Jesus explains that the bread he offers is his life. That is the benefit of the life-giving relationship he has with his father will be made available through his death (Jn 6:47-51).
 - d. Jesus accents this in John 6:53-58. It is the life-giving bread from heaven (the relationship between father and son) made available by the incarnation.
3. Jesus washes the Disciples feet in 13:2-20 in the Upper Room.
 - a. There is no mention of the bread and the cup.
 - b. Instead, in the dialogue with Peter (13:8-10), Jesus calls for him to be washed (a metaphor for receiving the benefits of his life offered up in love.)
4. In John 14:1-23 Jesus tells the disciples he will go away but he will come again to make a home (14:23) with us through his spiritual presence as the Comforter.
5. Then as the transformed Comforter in John 21:9-19, Jesus, in a meal of bread and fish, reconciles with Peter and the others. He is the living presence, the Counselor or Paraclete that continues to animate the life of the church.

Questions:

1. Is it any accident that the reconciliation with the disciples takes place in a meal?
2. What about foot washing? Do we need to observe it?