

Philosophy of the Elements for the Lord's Supper

Christ Fellowship Bible Church

Christ Fellowship Bible Church affirms the importance, priority, and meaning of the Lord's Supper as the Lord Jesus instituted it on the night that he was betrayed. The following are points that CFBC adheres to regarding the taking of Communion.

1. The Lord's Supper Symbolizes the New Covenant.

Just as the New Covenant would bring about a new heart (Jer 31; Ezek 36) where one would be spiritually cleansed from sin and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, so the Lord's Supper pictures that New Covenant reality as having taken place in the sinner who has received a new heart (2 Cor 5:17), who has been cleansed from sin (1 John 1:9), and who is eternally sealed by God the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13-14). Thus, the partaking of the Lord's Supper reminds and pictures the individual of his incorporation into the New Covenant by the sovereign and gracious working of God.

2. The Lord's Supper Is Only a Memorial.

The Scriptures declare that Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke that bread, and declared that it is his body given for believers. Believers are then to take the bread and partake of it together in remembrance of Him. There is no hint of a special means of grace that a believer receives in taking this Supper. There is no biblical instance of a spiritual or mystical presence of Jesus Christ as being present during the Supper. The supper represents the life and substitutionary death of Jesus Christ in the place of sinners. It is certainly not a re-crucifying of Jesus, nor is He physically present in the elements. He is not even spiritually or mystically present in (or on, under, beside) the elements. The bread and the cup merely serve as a memorial of the life and death of Jesus Christ in the place of sinners.

3. The Lord's Supper Uses Bread and Grape Juice as Symbols Picturing the Body and Blood.

In following with the preceding statement that the Communion Supper is a memorial to remember the work of Christ on behalf of His elect, the elements used can include bread and grape juice. Though wine was used during the Passover meal with Jesus and his disciples, the regulative principle does not demand that one must use these same elements in our communion today. The wine we have today is different than the heavily-diluted wine in the first-century Israel. Even more specifically, we do not know the specifics about the bread or wine that Jesus and His disciples used. Therefore, because the supper is merely a memorial, the elements of bread and grape juice can certainly be used to rightly picture the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

4. The Lord's Supper is a Picture and Visible Demonstration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Lord's Supper should show the gospel of Christ. As a believer examines himself, confesses sin, remembers the spotless life of Jesus — the Lamb without blemish — and then partakes the bread while giving thanks for the sacrifice of Jesus, the gospel is demonstrated. As a believer examines himself, repents of sin, and remembers the blood that makes atonement for sin that cleanses sinners before the holy judgment seat of Christ, the gospel is demonstrated. So then, the Lord's Supper pictures the gospel of Jesus Christ visibly for all to see.

5. The Lord's Supper Must Be Regularly Taken Until Jesus' Messianic Kingdom Dawns.

Jesus said that he would not again eat of the Supper until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God (Luke 22:16). Therefore, believers should take the elements and remember the work of Christ on the cross and also remember the future Messianic Kingdom that will soon dawn when the New Covenant promises will be finally and fully fulfilled.

6. The Lord's Supper Proclaims the Lord's Death Until He Comes Back.

The Word of God declares that as often as believers eat the bread and drink the cup, the Lord's Death is proclaimed until he comes. So then, the taking of the bread and the cup serve to regularly proclaim the soon-coming of Jesus when the Messianic Kingdom of prosperity and joy will finally dawn on the earth. The consuming of the Lord's Supper proclaims the Lord's finished and sufficient work on the cross until His coming.

7. The Lord's Supper is a Solemn Time of Self-Reflection, Repentance of Sin, and Restoration to Christ.

Everyone who eats the bread and drinks the cup must do so in a worthy manner so that he is not guilty of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus (1 Cor 11:27). Thus, a man must examine himself so that he does not eat and drink judgment to himself (1 Cor 11:28-29). If he does not rightly reflect, he will not judge the body of Christ rightly and will be disciplined by the Lord (1 Cor 11:29-32). But a purpose of communion is to examine oneself and confess known sin and repent of it so he can then find restoration to Christ. Then he can take the elements in a worthy manner without eating and drinking judgment upon himself.