



PRAYER AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

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As Jesus instituted His Supper He took unleavened bread (Ex. 12:14-20; Luke 22:1) and "gave thanks, saying, "This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). Because Jesus loved us, He gave Himself for us (Gal. 2:20, John 1:14; Heb.10:5) so that He could "...redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14).

In like manner Jesus took the cup, gave thanks and said, "Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:27-28). The beauty of forgiveness that comes from the power of the blood of Jesus is highlighted throughout the Scriptures (Rom.5:9; Col.1:20; 1 Pet. 1:18; Rev. 1:5). Such is the significance of the blood that without it there can be no remission of sins (Hebrews 9:22). Our peace treaty with God is written in the blood of Jesus Christ (Col. 1:20).

Human beings are infinitely skilled at missing the point, particularly in our religious observances. In reference to the Lord's Supper, some will emphasize everything but the death of Christ, others will focus on the cup rather than the contents and still others will partake with little or no understanding what any of it means! If we do not understand what we are doing it is impossible to word an appropriate prayer. When we go to our Father in prayer it is important that we pray according to His will (1 John 5:14). It is His will that in the Lord's Supper we remember Christ's death till He comes (1

Cor. 11:23-34, particularly verse 26). Yet so often the one leading the congregation in prayer during the Lord's Supper says something like "As we partake of this bread may we remember our Lord's death, burial and resurrection." Some will even mention His birth, His life or His ministry. If we will consider carefully the accounts of the establishment of the Lord's Supper we will notice that, while they are significant Biblical subjects, it is not His birth, resurrection or ministry that is to be shown in the Lord's Supper but His death!

By partaking of the unleavened bread each first day of the week we commemorate the Lord's death (1 Cor. 11:26). The prayers offered should draw our minds back to the body of Christ which was offered for us (1 Cor. 11:24) and the blood that was shed for our sins (1 Cor. 11:25). Also included should be our sorrow for our sin and our thankfulness to God for the redemption He has made possible through Christ's death (1 Pet. 2:21-24). Individually, when we bow our heads in prayer before partaking of the Lord's Supper our minds ought to be focused on Christ's death.

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