

LESSON 15

CHAPTER 30. “Of the Lord’s Supper”

A fellowship ordinance

Transubstantiation- Roman Catholic

Consubstantiation- Lutheran

Open communion, semi-open communion, closed communion

“Fencing the table”

I. Paragraph 1: What it is

- A. The Lord’s Supper was ordained by Jesus Christ as a memorial for His sacrifice of Himself for His Church.
- B. The Lord’s Supper symbolizes our continued communion with Christ and reminds us all of our duties responsibilities commensurate with being in Christ.

II. Paragraph 2: What it is not

- A. The Lord’s Supper is in no way an actual sacrifice to God, but a memorial only.
- B. The Roman Catholic mass, being considered as offering the actual body of Christ, is an abomination because it suggests that Jesus’ work on the cross was insufficient.

III. Paragraph 3: How it should be consecrated?

- A. It should be administered by ministers of the Word.
- B. A blessing should be asked over the elements of the Lord’s Supper.

IV. Paragraph 4: Abuses of the Lord’s Supper

- A. The cup shall not be denied to the people.
- B. The elements themselves shall not be worshiped.

V. Paragraphs 5 & 6: Further abuses of the Lord’s Supper

- A. Although the elements are referred to as the blood and body of Christ, they are only such in a symbolic sense.
- B. The Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, where in it is taught that the elements actually become the blood and body of Christ upon eating, is false teaching.

VI. Paragraph 7: Spiritual manna

- A. Baptized believers are by faith fed spiritually by partaking of the Lord’s Supper. Thus, the supper has a real spiritual effect on the communicant.

VII. Paragraph 8: Unbelievers must not partake.

A. Unbelievers should not partake of the Lord's Supper.

B. Unbelievers who partake of the Lord's Supper bring judgment on themselves.

(I would have added that it is the responsibility of the administrator(s) to warn unbelievers not to partake.)

The Baptist Faith and Message goes further to suggest that membership in the local church is requisite for partaking in the Lord's Supper. The BF&M states that only baptized believers should be admitted to the Supper. The famous Baptist, John Bunyan, argued that differences in the mode of water baptism (i.e., sprinkling vs. immersion) should not be a bar to communion.

While the 1689 does not explicitly state that persons must be baptized to partake of the supper, I am confident that the "worthy receivers" were baptized believers. In their view, a truly regenerate person would want to be baptized immediately, as was seen so often in conversions in Scripture. Baptism is the first ordinance and should be a prerequisite to partaking the Lord's Supper.

Discussion Questions:

Is there a relationship between the extent of the atonement and the openness of communion?

Is wine or grape juice the proper element for the Lord's Supper?

Should baptism be a prerequisite for admission to the Lord's Supper?

Should the Lord's Supper be suspended due to "sin in the camp?"

Book Suggestion:

Various Puritan authors, *The Puritans on the Lord's Supper* (Soli Deo Gloria Publishers)