

The Lord's Supper

1 Corinthians 11¹⁷⁻³⁴

The preciousness & the perversion



When is the Lord's Supper not the Lord's Supper?

Do we believe in the real presence?

What are the problems on either side?

Are we committed to this?

What about "a bond & a pledge"?

Who should be partaking of this?

What about our children?

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Westminster Confession of Faith Ch 29

The Lord's Supper

1. The Lord's Supper – institution & purpose

- Institution** Our Lord Jesus, on the night when He was betrayed, instituted the sacrament of His body and blood, called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in His Church to the end of the age.
- Purpose** It is
- for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of Himself in His death,
 - for the sealing of all the benefits of that sacrifice to true believers,
 - for their spiritual nourishment and growth in Him,
 - for their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe to Him; and,
 - to be a bond and pledge of their communion with Him and with each other, as members of His mystical body.

2. The Lord's Supper – a commemoration, not a sacrifice

- Not a sacrifice** In this sacrament, ● Christ is not offered up to His Father; ● nor is any real sacrifice made at all for the forgiveness of sins of the living or the dead.
- Commemoration** Rather, this sacrament is ● only a commemoration of Christ's one offering up of Himself, by Himself, on the cross, once for all, and ● a spiritual offering of all possible praise to God for this.
- Not the mass** Therefore, the Roman Catholic sacrifice of the mass (as they call it) is most abominably insulting to Christ's one and only sacrifice, which is the only propitiation for all the sins of His elect.

3. The Lord's Supper - administration

- Minister's role** In this ordinance, the Lord Jesus has appointed His ministers:
- to declare His word of institution to the people,
- Setting apart**
- to pray, and bless the elements of bread and wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to a holy use,
- Dispensing**
- to take and break the bread, and to take the cup, and to give both to the communicants (they themselves also partaking), but not to anyone who is not then present in the congregation.

4. The Lord's Supper - abuses

- Contrary to intent** The following are all contrary to the nature of this sacrament, and to the institution of Christ:
- Partaking alone**
- private masses, or receiving this sacrament alone from a priest or anyone else;
 - denial of the cup to the people,
- Worshipping elements**
- worshipping the elements, lifting them up or carrying them about for adoration, and reserving them for any supposed religious use.

5. The Lord's Supper – relationship between elements & Christ

- Bread & wine called body & blood** The visible elements in this sacrament, when they are properly set apart for the uses ordained by Christ, have such a relation to Christ crucified, that they are sometimes called (truly, but only sacramentally) by the names of the things they represent, namely, the body & blood of Christ. Nevertheless, in substance and nature, they still remain truly and only bread and wine, as they were before.

6. The Lord's Supper – no change of substance

- Transubstantiation** The doctrine of transubstantiation, which teaches a change of the substance of bread and wine into the substance of Christ's body and blood through consecration by a priest, or in any other way, is repugnant not only to Scripture, but even to common sense and reason. It overthrows the nature of the sacrament, and has been and still is the cause of many superstitions and gross idolatries.

7. The Lord's Supper – Christ's real presence

- Feed on Christ** When worthy recipients outwardly partake of the visible elements in this sacrament, they also inwardly receive and feed on Christ crucified and all the benefits of His death.
- Spiritually** They do this really and truly, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually by faith.
- Spiritually present** The body and blood of Christ are not corporally or carnally in, with, or under, the bread and wine; yet they are spiritually present in the ordinance to the faith of believers, as really as the elements are to their outward senses.

8. The Lord's Supper – unworthy partakers

- No benefit** Although ignorant and wicked persons receive the visible elements in this sacrament, yet they do not receive the reality signified by them.
- Condemnation** By their unworthy partaking, they are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, to their own condemnation.
- Shouldn't partake** Therefore, all ignorant and ungodly persons, being unfit to enjoy communion with Christ, are also unworthy of coming to the Lord's table.
- Shouldn't admit** While they remain as such, they cannot partake of these holy mysteries, or be admitted to them, without great sin against Christ.