

PART III.



THE LORD'S SUPPER.

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The Center for Theological Research  
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary  
Fort Worth, Texas  
Malcolm B. Yarnell, III, Director

“What, then, is the scriptural doctrine of the Lord’s Supper? The question is now **the great question** of our epoch; it will be the great question of the closing years of this century. Deprecate controversy around this precious feast of a Savior’s love as much as we may, we can not escape the responsibility of the discussion. **We must set forth clearly and strongly the true nature of the Lord’s Supper,** as set forth in the Scriptures—teach from the pulpit and by the press, in Bible-classes and in Sabbath-schools—so that the minds of our people shall be fortified against the entrance of grievous error.”

BISHOP CUMMINGS.

## CHAPTER I.

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### THE LORD'S SUPPER.

*The Inspired Accounts of the Institution of the Lord's Supper Synchronized and Harmonized, and the question of the connection of Judas with the Lord's Supper determined.*

BEFORE entering upon the discussion of the Lord's Supper, it will be proper to copy the inspired account of its institution.

1. Institution.
2. The circumstances attending it.
3. The directions concerning its observance.

It must be understood by the reader, that, under the especial guidance of the Holy Spirit, the evangelists wrote each a different narrative of the life, teachings, and actions of the Messiah. No one writer related **all** that was said or done by Christ, in consecutive order, as would seem to us most fitting to be done; but one evangelist records a part, while another adds other occurrences. It is noticeable that the account given by John, written some time after the rest, contains very little that is found in the other three, and was evidently written to supply what was lacking, so that their united records might make a full and rounded life of Christ.

Then the evangelists manifestly differ more or less in their attention to the **order** of events. Says Dr. E. Robinson:

“On the one hand, it appears that Mark and John, who have little in common, follow, with few exceptions, the regular and true order of events and transactions recorded by them; on the other hand, Matthew and Luke manifestly have sometimes not so much regard to chronological order, as they have been guided by the principle of association, so that in them transactions having certain relations to each other are not seldom grouped together, though they may have happened at different times, and in various places.”

This being the case, it follows that, in order to obtain a full and consecutive account of any particular transaction, we should take the most extended account given by the evangelist who most strictly observes chronological order, and the relation of events to each other, and fill up, **what it lacks in completeness**, from the relations of the others. Without such a procedure, our knowledge of all the great events of the life of Christ will be but fragmentary and partial.

The vast importance of the subject under consideration demands that we pursue such a course in order to obtain a clear comprehension of all that Jesus said and did in connection with the institution of the sacred Supper; the observance of which, as he appointed it, is so solemnly enjoined upon his churches until he comes, and the misobservance of which he threatens with such fearful consequences. Surely we may not dare to add aught to this ordinance with impunity, nor can we modify in the least, with respect to its form or symbolism, without perverting and profaning it.

It is conceded by all scholars that John, “the disciple whom Jesus loved,” paid more attention to the **order** of events which he related than do the other evangelists. It is true, he does not relate the facts in connection with the institution and administration of the Lord’s Supper, because, perhaps, so minutely described by the other evangelists; yet, by describing the Paschal Supper, that preceded it, the washing of feet, and the exposure and expulsion of the traitor Judas, preparatory to the Supper, he furnishes the needed initial data to guide our investigations. I have, for this reason, adopted his narrative for the order of the text; and shall supply what is wanting for the full history from the statements of the other writers.

## **HISTORY OF THE INSTITUTION.**

THE TIME.—The even of the fourteenth day of Nisan, introducing Friday, corresponding to our Thursday eve, A. D. 30.

“Now, before the feast [*i.e.*, festival, which commenced the day after the Paschal Supper was eaten, and lasted seven days], Jesus, knowing that his hour had come that he should depart out of this world, having loved his own, he loved them to the end. The Supper [*i.e.*, Paschal Supper] being prepared [the devil having put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, that he should betray him], Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands”—(John xiii:1-3)—

“He sat down, and the twelve apostles with him,—and there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? But I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me: that ye may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”—(Luke xxii: 14, 24-50).

“He riseth from supper [*i.e.*, a table, not having yet eaten], and laid aside his garments, and took a towel and girded himself. After that, he poureth water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter; and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered, and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith unto him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore, said he, Ye are not all clean. So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, he that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spoke. Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus’ breast

saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it.”—(John xiii: 4-25.)

“The Son of man goeth as it is written of him; but owe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.”—(Matt. xxvi: 24, 25.)

[Matthew does not mention the giving of the sop].

“And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then, having received the sop, went immediately out; and it was night. Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go ye can not come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goes thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but why can not I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.”—(John xiii: 26-38.)

“And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors; for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.”—(Luke xxii: 35-38.)

“And taking a loaf, (*i.e.*, one of the loaves of unleavened bread used at the Paschal Supper), he gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after Supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you. (Luke xxii: 19, 20.)

“And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”—(Luke xxvi: 27-29.)

Let the reader here turn and read the whole of the fourteenth chapter of John.

At the close, they all rose from the Supper, and, while standing, Jesus continued his discourse, as given by John in the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> chapters, at the close of which they went out to the garden of Gethsemane, where he was arrested by a mob headed by Judas.

#### **CONCLUSION FROM THE FOREGOING NARRATIVE.**

From this harmony of the evangelists, we learn several important **facts** intimately connected with the institution of the Supper, about which there is no little difference of opinion.

**First Fact.**—That the Supper here referred to by John and the other evangelists was, without question, the Paschal Supper, and it was at the close of the **Paschal Supper** that Christ

instituted the Supper we call the Lord's Supper. Not a few deny this, for the want of the correct harmony of the accounts. It is held by many that the Lord's Supper comes in place of the Passover, the **antitype** and fulfillment of it, but this is to mistake the Supper. This Passover was a type of the **sacrifice** of Christ for us, "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." (1 Cor. v:7). The Lord's Supper is purely **commemorative** of his sufferings and death. The Passover was **typical**. The Lord's Supper **emblematic** and symbolical. There are points of striking likeness in the form and symbolism of the two, which Paul points out, but no physical rite in the old is ever employed as a type of a physical rite in the new dispensation. The Supper was a new ordinance, instituted at the **close** of the Passover Supper—"Because the Passover night immediately preceding his sufferings was the best and fittest time for its institution."—*Dr. G. W. Clark, Notes on Mark.*

**Second Fact.**—We learn that Christ ate the Paschal lamb with his disciples upon the very night it was appointed by the law to be eaten, namely, on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month, Nisan, at even, *i.e.*, Thursday evening, and that he was betrayed that night, and crucified on the day following, expiring at three o'clock in the afternoon, and that evening buried, and arose from the dead on the first day of the week, corresponding to the Monday of the Jews. He, therefore, rose on the **third day**, according to the Scriptures.

**Third Fact.**—That the Supper referred to by John ch. xiii, Luke xxii: 14, was the **Paschal** Supper, and not the Lord's Supper, which was instituted at the **close** of the former.

**Fourth Fact.**—We learn that the washing of the disciples' feet was in no sense whatever connected with the observance of the Lord's Supper, either as introducing or concluding it. That occurrence took place before the eating of the Paschal Supper, and most clearly to my mind as a reproof to the apostles, who, having failed to provide a servant to wash their soiled feet as they came in from the street, were unwilling each to volunteer to perform this menial act for the other, or even for the Master, since it might be construed into a confession of inferiority, for "a strife having arisen among them who should be the greatest." Christ did not institute the washing of feet here nor while on earth. It had been observed as a necessary act of hospitality from the days of Abraham, and was of universal observance in all Eastern countries where sandals were worn instead of close shoes and boots as now. The feet were soiled by traveling; and upon coming into a house, and especially reclining upon cushions to eat, it was not only cleanly, but **needful**, that the feet should be washed.

The apostles did not understand, as some of our brethren of this age do, that Christ intended washing to be observed as a church or religious ordinance in connection with his churches, for **they never enjoined it upon any church**; they never rebuked any church for not observing it; they never praised any church for having observed it; they nowhere intimate that any church ever did observe it; nor can we find in church history any account of its observance by a church or by Christians, as a religious exercise, for seventeen hundred years after Christ. The most that can be made of the words of our Savior is that the apostles, who were ambitious for superiority, should wash each other's feet, or do what was equivalent to it—be the servants of each other—"in honor preferring one another." We have not the slightest intimation that they ever after that washed each other's feet; but, **provided** they did, **we** have nothing to do with it, since secret things belong to God, but things that are revealed along belong to us and to our children. If the apostles did not wash each other's feet **literally**, they did what was equivalent to it – ministered to one another.

**Fifth Fact.**—That the Supper alluded to in John (xiii: 1), being the Paschal and not the Lord's Supper, it should not read "**ended**" as in our version; for,—

I. The context forbids this, for they continued to eat after this, and indeed, had not eaten before this (see v. 26 and Mark xiv: 18-21), for it was contrary to established usage to eat any meal, much less the sacred feast, without a bath, and washing the feet after the bath.

It should read—**Supper** being “**prepared**” or “**ready**”—*i.e.*, the Paschal Supper being prepared. All critics are agreed on this reading.

**Sixth Fact.**—That Judas went out at the command of Christ before the Paschal Supper was finished, even **before the lamb was eaten**.

This was the order of the Supper in the time of Christ—I. A blessing; 2. Wine (first cup); 3. Washing of hands; 4. Eating bitter herbs; 5. Wine (second cup); 6. The Feast explained; 7. Singing Ps. 113, 114; 8. Eating unleavened bread; 9. Eating the lamb; 10. Wine (third cup of blessing); 11. Singing Ps. 115, 118; 12. Wine (fourth cup); 13. Singing Ps. 120, 138.

They prepared a sauce of dates, figs, and seasoning, which was of brick color, representing the clay and brick of Egypt. Into this they dipped their bread and bitter herbs. This was the sop referred to in John xiii:26. The reader can see it was at the very first part of the Supper (No. 4), while eating the bitter herbs, that Christ sent Judas away. But it was not until the close of the Passover Supper that Jesus took one of the loaves of unleavened bread prepared for the Paschal Supper, and instituted the new ordinance, which we call The Lord’s Supper. Judas was not for a moment therefore, at the Lord’s Supper.

But had Judas remained and partaken of the Lord’s Supper, the act would not have violated the letter of the laws governing the Supper; for, 1. Judas had been immersed; 2. He was in full fellowship with this **family** of Christ, this church of the apostles, as some call it, for he had committed no overt act of sin known to them. But Christ knew what was in his heart—knew him to be a **thief**—knew of his secret conference with the High Priests (Mark xiv: 10, 11), and, therefore, knew him to be in heart a **murderer**, and so he purged him out as “leaven” for an example to his churches in all future time, to put all improper persons away from the sacred feast.

#### **OTHER ACCOUNTS OF ITS INSTITUTION.**

**Matthew.**—“And as they were eating [the Paschal Supper at its close], Jesus took the loaf, and giving praise [*i.e.*, to God] he broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And taking the cup, and giving thanks, he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all out of this; for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”—xxvi: 26-29.

**Mark.**—“And as they did eat—[*i.e.*, of the Paschal Supper], Jesus took a loaf, and giving praise [*i.e.*, God] he broke it, and gave it to them, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And taking the cup, when he had given thanks [*i.e.*, to God], he gave it to them: and they all drank out of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”—xiv: 22-25.

**Luke.**—“And taking a loaf, and having given thanks, **he** broke it and gave it to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner [*i.e.*, after giving thanks] the cup, after the Supper, saying, This cup is the New Covenant in my blood, which on your behalf is being poured out.”—xxii: 19, 20.

**Paul’s Account.**—“For I received from the Lord, what I also delivered unto you. That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed, took a loaf; and when he had given

thanks he broke it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup after the supper [*i.e.*, the Paschal Supper], saying, This cup is the New Covenant in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.”

#### CONCLUSIONS FROM THESE NARRATIVES.

**First Fact.**—That Jesus took but **one** loaf—ἓἰς ἄρτος—**one wheaten loaf**, with which to celebrate the Supper. His example is a command to his churches; they should use but **one** loaf.

**Second Fact.**—Christ took one loaf of **unleavened** bread for the observance of his Supper. There can be no doubt about this, for he took one of the loaves left from the Passover Supper, and no leavened bread, on pain of death, could be used in that Supper. Christ’s example should be considered law unto us. It is a sad fact that a **plurality** of loaves and **leavened** bread is generally used by the churches on this continent. Why should the churches be so thoughtless and indifferent to the bread used at the Supper, while they are so particular to use water as the element in which to immerse? Has Christ anywhere commanded his churches to use water rather than any other liquid? What have we but the **examples** of John and of Christ to guide us in this?

**Third Fact.**—Christ did not **tran**-substantiate, nor **con**-substantiate, nor **consecrate**, nor **bless** the bread or the wine, as Romanists and Protestants affect to do; but he simply **gave thanks**, and his example should govern us, not that of Ritualists.

**Fourth Fact.**—Christ used the fruit of the vine—*i.e.*, “the blood of Grapes”—pure wine. In these days of fanaticism and infidelity, it is boldly asserted by the professed **friends**, but actually the worst **foes** of Temperance, that Christ never made, never drank, or warranted his disciples to drink the fermented juice of the grapes—*i.e.*, **wine**—any thing that would intoxicate. I shall discuss this question when I treat of the Symbolism of the Cup in a future chapter. Suffice it to say here, that the church at Corinth doubtless used the element that Paul taught them to use when he instituted the Supper, and that did intoxicate. (See 1 Cor. xi: 21.) Paul did not tell them they used the **wrong element**, but that they **drank too much**.

**Fifth Fact.**—We learn that Christ did not institute his Supper to be observed as a **sacrament** of remission of sins, or of regeneration, or sanctification, or salvation, but simply as a feast in **commemoration** of himself. His words are without the least ambiguity—“This do ye in **remembrance of me.**” To use the Supper as a **sacrament**, as Catholics and all Protestants do, is to utterly pervert and profane it, to eat and drink unworthily, not discerning the Lord’s body.

**Sixth Fact.**—We see that it was not designed that we should remember each other as friends or as Christians, when we partake of this feast, nor to extend it to our brethren through amity or **courtesy**, or as a mark of our **Christian** regard or fellowship for them. To use it for these selfish purposes is to disregard its grand design, and do violence to its whole spirit.

It is not a feast of communion with each other, but a feast in commemoration of Christ.

It is with Christ, his broken body and shed blood—as our Sin-bearer and Redeemer—that we are to commune, and not with each other. The specific symbolism of the elements used, and what is implied in the joint act of participation of but one loaf, will be considered, but let it be kept in mind that the grand end for which Christ appointed this Supper was for an “Holy Ordinance of Commemoration.”