

Communion

Lesson 9

I. How The True Presence of Christ is Manifest in the Communion Ordinance

a. Christ indwells every believer

Rom 8:9-12 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. KJV

b. As we gather together in His name to contemplate His death, burial and resurrection and the significance of these things to us personally, He is in our midst. *Matt 18:20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. KJV*

c. He manifests Himself in the act of our private self-examination

1. Sensitivity to one's own sin is evidence of the Holy Spirit's indwelling. The Lord points out the duty of self-examination for those who come to the Lord's Table. The words He used mean to "try and then approve" ourselves. *1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. KJV*
2. As we do so, we consider the sacred intention of Communion, its nature, and use, and then compare our own souls with God's holy standard that we may say along with the Apostle Paul: *Acts 24:16 I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man. NIV*
3. When we have approved our own conscience in the sight of God, then, and only then, let us partake. Such self-examination is necessary if we are to rightly engage in the practice of this holy ordinance.
4. In the act of self-examination we are declaring ourselves to be one with Christ; seeing with His eyes, judging ourselves with His judgment and hearing His voice, declaring what He would declare. This is a solemn responsibility. *John 18:37 Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. KJV*
5. When we thoroughly search and examine ourselves, and condemn and correct what we find amiss, we prevent divine judgments and manifest the life of Christ within.. *1 Cor 11:27 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. KJV*

d. He manifests Himself in our honest confession

1. Confession is another proof of our being united with Christ. It is his Spirit within us which convicts us of truth and of righteousness. *John 16:13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. NIV*
2. Those who are indwelt by His Spirit hunger and thirst after righteousness and this too manifests the presence of Christ. *Matt 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. KJV*
3. Being indwelt by His Spirit enables us to earnestly desire true holiness in our lives which above all other measures proves Christ in us. *Ps 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. KJV*
Ps 51:1-10 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. KJV
4. By virtue of our confession we are demonstrating our absolute trust in the mercy and forgiveness of God and that the atonement of Christ has fully and completely satisfied God's just demands. We are one with Christ and with the Father. *Ps 130:3-5 If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. KJV*
1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. KJV
Isa 53:11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. KJV

e. He manifests Himself in our utter dependence upon Christ

1. We admit that He is our Bread of Life

- a. As the bread of life, he is the food of our souls. And like food, though it may be ever so wholesome or nutritious, it will yield no nourishment without being eaten. As communicants by drawing our life from Him, we take and eat.
 - b. This means that we receive Christ; all that He is we lay hold on. By our faith we feed upon him. We are nourished in the spirit by his grace and the eternal benefits which he lavishes upon us.
 - c. It is by the faith which he has given us that we convert his benefits into nourishment for our souls. *Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: KJV*
2. He is the True Vine and His is the only blood that cleanses us from sin.
 - a. Jesus tells us plainly that he was the true vine, and that his blood was the real wine that is to give strength to the soul. *John 15:11 am the true vine, KJV*

Communion

Lesson 9

- b. The word "true," here, is used in the sense of real, genuine. He really and truly gives what is emblematically represented by a vine.
 - c. The point of the comparison or the meaning of the figure is this: A vine yields proper moisture and nourishment to all the branches, large or small. Every living branch abides in the Vine.
 - d. So Jesus is the source of all real strength and grace to his disciples. He is our leader and teacher, and imparts to us, according to our need, He gives grace and strength to bear the fruits of holiness. *John 15:4-5 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. KJV*
3. He is our righteousness
- a. In the Communion ordinance we are once again attesting to the fact that we believe that he clothes us in His righteousness and justifies us completely before the bar of God's justice. *Rom 3:22-26 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. NIV*
 - b. In so doing, He has clothed us in His righteousness that we might be accepted into the throne room of God as true worshippers. *Rev 7:9-12 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. KJV*
4. He is our eternal life
- a. We take him as our Lord and life. We yield ourselves up to him, and live upon him. He is our life. *Col 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. KJV*
 - b. As believers, we acknowledge that there is no other hope than Christ and that there is no other guarantee which ensures eternal life. *Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." NIV*
 - c. In our partaking of communion, we once again acknowledge that Christ has manifested himself to us; he has healed our backslidings and iniquities and has saved us. *John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. KJV*
 - d. We once again affirm that he has come into us and he sups with us and we hold communion with him, as he feeds us the bread of life. *Rev 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. KJV*

II. Summary

- a. In all these ways:
 1. His indwelling
 2. His conviction of sin in us
 3. His showing us Truth
 4. His giving us a genuine hunger for righteousness
 5. His showing us our utter dependence upon Him
 6. His provision for us
 7. His promise of eternal life in us
- b. And, in many others ways, Christ lives in us and manifests His presence in the Communion Ordinance.
- c. It is not by the natural elements of bread and wine that we experience Christ but by the presence of His indwelling, life-giving spirit that we live and experience Him in Communion.

III. Distribution of the Elements