

THE LORD'S SUPPER  
PRESENTED BY  
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GREEN LAWN CHURCH OF CHRIST  
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FOR THE NEXT TWO LESSONS, WE ARE GOING TO BE LOOKING AT THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH, SPECIFICALLY, TWO ACTS OF WORSHIP IN WHICH WE ENGAGE. THE REASON WE PICKED THESE TWO IS BECAUSE THESE ARE THE TWO IN WHICH THERE IS PERHAPS THE GREATEST NUMBER OF DIFFERING OPINIONS AMONG RELIGIOUS PEOPLE. THEREFORE, THESE ARE THE AREAS IN WHICH THERE NEEDS TO BE SET FORTH MORE CLEARLY THE TEACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD. THIS EVENING, WE ARE LOOKING AT THE LORD'S SUPPER AND NEXT LORD'S DAY EVENING WE ARE GOING TO LOOK AT THE MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP. THERE ARE FOUR ACCOUNTS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER FOUND IN THE N.T. THE FIRST IS FOUND IN MATTHEW 26. THE SECOND IS FOUND IN MARK 14. THE THIRD IS FOUND IN LUKE 22. THE FOURTH IS FOUND IN THE I CORINTHIAN LETTER AND THE 11TH CHAPTER. IT IS THE ACCOUNT OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE SUPPER AS IT IS RECORDED BY PAUL IN HIS WRITING TO THE BRETHREN AT CORINTH THAT I WISH TO READ THIS EVENING. WE ARE READING FROM THE 11TH CHAPTER BEGINNING IN THE 23RD VERSE. "FOR I HAVE RECEIVED OF THE LORD THAT WHICH ALSO I DELIVERED UNTO YOU. THAT THE LORD JESUS, THE SAME NIGHT IN WHICH HE WAS BETRAYED, TOOK BREAD: AND WHEN HE HAD GIVEN THANKS, HE BRAKE 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, WHEN HE HAD SUPPED, SAYING, THIS CUP IS THE NEW TESTAMENT IN MY BLOOD: THIS DO YE, AS OFT AS YE DRINK IT, IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. FOR AS OFTEN AS YE EAT THIS BREAD, AND DRINK THIS CUP, YE DO SHEW THE LORD'S DEATH TILL HE COME." WE'VE READ THROUGH THE 26TH VERSE. WE STOP THERE, THOUGH WE SHALL BE NOTICING SOME OTHER VERSES IN THIS CONTEXT AS OUR LESSON PROGRESSES.

WE SUGGESTED A MOMENT AGO THAT WE STUDY THE LORD'S SUPPER BECAUSE IT IS ONE OF THE AREAS IN WHICH THERE IS SOME DEGREE OF DIFFERENCE IN THE THINKING OF RELIGIOUS PEOPLE. AND YET TO MAKE THAT STATEMENT SEEMS TO FLY IN THE FACE OF OUR COMMON EXPERIENCE, FOR AS WE OBSERVE THE RELIGIOUS WORLD IN GENERAL, IT WOULD SEEM THAT IF THERE IS ANY AREA OF AGREEMENT, IT IS TO BE FOUND IN THE LORD'S SUPPER. MOST RELIGIOUS PEOPLE, OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER. MOST RELIGIOUS PEOPLE WOULD AGREE THAT THE LORD'S SUPPER IS A SYMBOLICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE LORD'S DEATH. I THINK THAT MOST RELIGIOUS PEOPLE WOULD AGREE THAT THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER SYMBOLIZES THE BELIEVER'S PARTICIPATION IN THE CRUCIFIED CHRIST. I THINK THAT MOST RELIGIOUS PEOPLE WOULD AGREE THAT THE LORD'S SUPPER IS THE SYMBOL OF THE UNION OF BELIEVERS WITH ONE ANOTHER, AND NOT ONLY WITH ONE ANOTHER, BUT, BEYOND THAT, SYMBOLICAL OF THEIR UNION WITH THE CRUCIFIED AND RISEN CHRIST. I THINK, IN FACT, THIS IS WHAT PAUL STATED IN I CORINTHIANS 10:17. WHEN HE SAID, "FOR WE, BEING MANY, ARE ONE BREAD, AND ONE BODY; FOR WE ARE ALL PARTAKERS OF THAT ONE BREAD."

BUT, WHILE WE MAY LOOK AT THESE GENERAL AREAS AND SAY THERE IS, FOR THE MOST, AGREEMENT, THERE ARE SOME AREAS WHERE WE FIND SOME SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES. ONE OF THESE AREAS WHERE WE FIND A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE IS IN THE DETERMINING THE RELATIONSHIP THAT THE BODY AND THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST SUSTAINS TO THE ELEMENTS OF THE SUPPER, THAT IS TO SAY THE RELATIONSHIP THAT THE BODY OF CHRIST SUSTAINS TO THE BREAD, AND THE RELATIONSHIP THAT THE FRUIT OF THE VINE SUSTAINS TO THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST. THERE ARE SEVERAL DIFFERENT OPINIONS AS TO THIS RELATIONSHIP. ONE IS THE ANSWER OF ROMANISM. THE ANSWER OF ROMANISM IS COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS THE DOCTRINE OF TRANS-SUBSTANTIATION. THIS DOCTRINE SAYS THAT THE BODY AND THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST ARE PRESENT IN A PHYSICAL, LITERAL SENSE IN THE BREAD AND THE FRUIT OF THE VINE. WHEN, IN THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (OR AS THEY CALL IT, THE HOLY COMMUNION OR THE EUCHARIST), THE PRIEST UTTERS THE MAGIC FORMULA "THIS IS MY BODY," THERE IS A CHANGE IN THE SUBSTANCE OF THE BREAD AND IT BECOMES THE BODY OF CHRIST. THERE IS A CHANGE IN SUBSTANCE OF THE FRUIT OF THE VINE, AND IT BECOMES LITERALLY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST. THIS POSITION IS BASED UPON A LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF THE LANGUAGE OF JESUS IN

THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER WHEN HE SAID, "THIS IS MY BODY." IT HAS BEEN POINTED OUT THAT, EVEN AFTER THIS MAGICAL CHANGE HAS SUPPOSEDLY TAKEN PLACE, THE BREAD STILL LOOKS LIKE BREAD, IT STILL FEELS LIKE BREAD, AND WHEN ONE PARTAKES OF IT, IT STILL TASTES LIKE BREAD. THE SAME IS TRUE OF THE FRUIT OF THE VINE. EVEN AFTER THE MAGIC FORMULA, "THIS IS MY BLOOD," HAS BE UTTERED THAT WHICH IS IN THE CUP STILL LOOKS LIKE, FEELS LIKE, AND TASTES LIKE THE FRUIT OF THE VINE. IN REPLY TO THIS OBJECTION, ROMANISM ANSWERS THAT WHILE THE SUBSTANCE OF THE BREAD AND THE WINE ARE CHANGED, THEIR ATTRIBUTES REMAIN EXACTLY THE SAME. NOW, LET ME RUN THAT SENTENCE BY YOU AGAIN. I DON'T KNOW IF YOU CAN UNDERSTAND IT. IF YOU CAN, YOU ARE DOING BETTER THAN I AM. BUT THIS IS THEIR ANSWER--THAT WHILE THE SUBSTANCE OF THE BREAD AND THE FRUIT OF THE VINE REMAINS THE SAME, THEIR ATTRIBUTES ARE CHANGED. BUT THIS REALLY DOES NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM. THERE ARE AT LEAST FOUR OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF TRANS-SUBSTANTIATION. ONE OF THEM IS THE FACT THAT, WHEN JESUS STOOD BEFORE THE DISCIPLES AND INSTITUTED THE LORD'S SUPPER, WHEN HE SAID, "THIS IS MY BODY," HE WAS IN THEIR PRESENCE. AND IT IS HARD FOR US TO IMAGINE THAT STANDING THERE IN THEIR PRESENCE, HE HELD HIS BODY IN HIS HAND AND SAID, "TAKE, EAT; THIS IS MY BODY." SECOND, SCRIPTURE ITSELF DOES NOT SEEM TO BEAR THIS INTERPRETATION. IN I CORINTHIANS, PARTICULARLY IN CHAPTERS 10 AND 11 WHERE PAUL IS DISCUSSING THE SUPPER, HE SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT THE BREAD IS STILL REFERRED TO AS BREAD, EVEN AFTER THE SUPPOSED CHANGE HAS TAKEN PLACE. LOOK AGAIN AT I CORINTHIANS 10:17. "FOR WE, BEING MANY, ARE ONE BREAD, AND ONE BODY; FOR WE ARE ALL PARTAKERS OF THAT ONE BREAD." IT IS REFERRED TO AS BREAD AT THE TIME OF PARTAKING, AND NOT AS THE LITERAL BODY OF THE SON OF GOD. COME TO THE 11TH CHAPTER VERSES 26-28. "FOR AS OFTEN AS YE EAT THIS BREAD, AND DRINK THIS CUP, YE DO SHEW THE LORD'S DEATH TILL HE COME. WHEREFORE, WHOSOEVER SHALL EAT THIS BREAD, (IT IS BREAD AT THE TIME OF THE EATING) AND DRINK THIS CUP OF THE LORD, UNWORTHILY, SHALL BE GUILTY OF THE BODY AND BLOOD OF THE LORD. BUT LET A MAN EXAMINE HIMSELF, AND SO LET HIM EAT OF THAT BREAD, AND DRINK OF THAT CUP." IT IS THE BREAD, IT IS THE CUP AT THE TIME OF THE PARTAKING. THIRDLY, A CHANGE OF THE SUBSTANCE OF A THING WITHOUT A CORRESPONDING CHANGE OF THE ATTRIBUTES IS ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE. NOW THAT IS WHY I DON'T THINK ANY INTELLIGENT PERSON COULD BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THE STATEMENT THAT I MADE AWHILE AGO--THAT WHILE THE SUBSTANCE MAY REMAIN THE SAME, THE ATTRIBUTES ARE CHANGED BECAUSE THIS IS AN UTTER IMPOSSIBILITY. WHENEVER THERE IS A CHANGE IN SUBSTANCE THERE MUST OF NECESSITY BE A CHANGE IN THE ATTRIBUTES, AND WHEN THERE IS A CHANGE IN THE ATTRIBUTES THERE MUST OF NECESSITY BE A CHANGE IN THE SUBSTANCE. THIS IS WHY GOD IS ETERNAL. BECAUSE HIS ATTRIBUTES DO NOT CHANGE. IF THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD WERE TO CHANGE, THIS WOULD INDICATE THAT THERE HAD BEEN A SIMILAR CHANGE IN THE SUBSTANCE OF GOD. FOURTHLY, IT IS CONTRARY TO COMMON SENSE TO BELIEVE THAT WHAT LOOKS LIKE, WHAT SMELLS LIKE, AND WHAT TASTES LIKE BREAD AND FRUIT OF THE VINE ARE ANYTHING OTHER THAN THE BREAD AND THE FRUIT OF THE VINE WHICH IT PURPORTS TO BE.

WHEN THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION CAME ALONG, SOME OF THE REFORMERS, MANY OF THEM IN FACT, SAW THE WEAKNESS IN THE DOCTRINE OF TRANS-SUBSTANTIATION AND THEY CAME UP WITH A NEW DOCTRINE WHICH PURPORTED TO SHOW THE PROPER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BODY AND THE BLOOD OF CHRIST AND THE BREAD AND THE FRUIT OF THE VINE. INSTEAD OF REFERRING TO IT AS "TRANS-SUBSTANTIATION," THEY REFERRED TO IT AS "CON-SUBSTANTIATION." TRANS-SUBSTANTIATION SAYS THAT THE BREAD AND THE FRUIT OF THE VINE LITERALLY BECOME THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST. "CON-SUBSTANTIATION" SAYS THAT WHILE THE BREAD AND THE FRUIT OF THE VINE REMAIN EXACTLY WHAT THEY ARE, THE WHOLE BODY AND BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST ARE PRESENT IN AND UNDER AND WITH THIS BREAD AND FRUIT OF THE VINE. THEY SUGGEST THAT THIS IS A POSSIBLE INTERPRETATION, BECAUSE WHEN JESUS HELD THE BREAD TO HIS DISCIPLES AND SAID, "TAKE EAT, THIS IS MY BODY," HE HELD IT IN HIS HAND AND THEREFORE HELD HIS BODY OUT TO THE APOSTLES. I DO NOT BELIEVE THIS GETS AROUND THE PROBLEM. TO GIVE IT THIS INTERPRETATION MAKES THE WORDS OF JESUS SAY, "THIS ACCOMPANIES MY BODY," INSTEAD OF "THIS IS MY BODY," WHICH IS AN UNNATURAL INTERPRETATION OF THE LANGUAGE INVOLVED. IN ESSENCE, ALL THE DOCTRINE OF CON-SUBSTANTIATION AMOUNTS TO IS A RATHER STRAINED EFFORT TO GET AROUND THE FALSE ROMAN DOCTRINE OF TRANS-SUBSTANTIATION. BOTH OF THEM WIND UP WITH UNSCRIPTURAL AND UNBIBLICAL IDEAS CONCERNING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BODY AND THE BLOOD OF CHRIST TO THE BREAD AND THE FRUIT OF THE VINE ON THE LORD'S TABLE.

BUT IF THESE DOCTRINES ARE NOT VALID, WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST AND THE BREAD AND THE FRUIT OF THE VINE? MAY I READ I CORINTHIANS 11:29. "FOR HE THAT EATETH AND DRINKETH UNWORTHILY, EATETH AND DRINKETH DAMNATION TO HIMSELF, NOT DISCERNING THE LORD'S BODY." THE AMERICAN STANDARD SAYS, "IF HE DISCERN NOT THE LORD'S BODY." WHAT THEN, BASED UPON THIS PASSAGE, IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE BODY OF CHRIST TO THE BREAD AND THE BLOOD OF CHRIST TO THE FRUIT OF THE VINE? FIRST, THIS VERSE DOES NOT INDICATE THAT WE ARE TO DISCERN LITERALLY THE BODY AND THE BLOOD IN THE BREAD AND THE CUP. THE PROCESS OF DISCERNING IS A MENTAL PROCESS. THE PROCESS OF DISCERNING IS SOMETHING THAT TAKES PLACE IN THE MIND OF HIM WHO IS DOING THE DISCERNING. WHEN I DISCERN SOMETHING, IT DOES NOT CHANGE AT ALL THE SUBSTANCE OR THE ATTRIBUTES OF THAT WHICH IS BEING DISCERNED. THIS IS WHAT IT DOESN'T MEAN. NOW WHAT DOES IT MEAN? IT MEANS THAT WHEN I SEE THE BREAD I, IN MY MIND, SEE THE BODY OF CHRIST ON CALVARY. IT MEANS THAT WHEN I SEE THE FRUIT OF THE VINE, I SEE THE BLOOD THAT JESUS CHRIST SHED ON CALVARY. THESE THINGS STAND SYMBOLICAL OF, REPRESENTATIVE OF, IF YOU PLEASE, THE BODY AND THE BLOOD. THERE IS NO CHANGE IN THEM. WERE THEY TO CHANGE LITERALLY INTO, OR WERE THEY TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE BODY AND THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, THEN TO EAT THEM WOULD BE NOTHING SHORT OF CANNIBALISTIC. BUT ONE CAN EAT THE BREAD AND ONE CAN DRINK THE CUP, AND IN DOING SO HE CAN REMEMBER THE SACRIFICE THAT JESUS MADE FOR OUR SINS UPON CALVARY'S CROSS. THIS IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BODY AND THE BREAD AND THE BLOOD AND THE CUP.

MOST RELIGIOUS PEOPLE AGREE UPON THE CONTENTS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER. THERE ARE VERY FEW PEOPLE WHO SEEK TO MAKE ANY CHANGES IN THEM THOUGH SOME WOULD SUBSTITUTE WATER FOR THE FRUIT OF THE VINE. HOWEVER, THEY ARE SO FEW IN NUMBER THAT I THINK WE DO NOT EVEN NEED TO GIVE ANY ATTENTION TO THESE PARTICULAR CHANGES.

BUT WHILE MOST AGREE UPON THE CONTENTS, MOST PEOPLE DO NOT AGREE ON THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH THE LORD'S SUPPER IS TO BE OBSERVED. ALL AGREE THAT IT IS TO BE OBSERVED WITH SOME ESTABLISHED, REGULAR FREQUENCY. BUT JUST EXACTLY WHAT THAT ESTABLISHED, REGULATED FREQUENCY OF OBSERVANCE IS, IS THE SUBJECT OF MUCH DISAGREEMENT. NOW, IF ALL RELIGIOUS PEOPLE AGREE THAT IT IS TO BE OBSERVED ON AN ESTABLISHED SCHEDULE, THEN THIS SAYS THAT ALL RELIGIOUS PEOPLE AGREE THAT THERE IS A STANDARD OF AUTHORITY BY WHICH THAT FREQUENCY IS TO BE DETERMINED. MY POSITION IS THAT THIS AUTHORITY BY WHICH THE FREQUENCY OF THE OBSERVANCE IS TO BE DETERMINED IS THE WORD OF GOD, FOR IF THE FREQUENCY OF THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SUPPER IS NOT TO BE DETERMINED BY THE WORD OF GOD, THEN THE MAN WHO OBSERVES IT ONCE IN A LIFETIME IS JUST AS SCRIPTURAL AS THE MAN WHO OBSERVES IT ONCE A WEEK, FOR IN OBSERVING IT ONCE IN A LIFETIME HE HAS NOT VIOLATED ANY SCRIPTURE AT ALL IF THERE IS NO SCRIPTURE THAT SAYS HOW OFTEN THE CHILD OF GOD IS TO OBSERVE IT. THEREFORE, ASSUMING THAT WE ACCEPT IT AS OUR AUTHORITY, LET US TURN TO THE WORD OF GOD. THEN, HAVING HEARD WHAT THE WORD HAS TO SAY; LET US SUBMIT OURSELVES TO ITS DIVINE AUTHORITY. FIRST OF ALL, WE TURN TO ACTS 2:42. "AND THEY (SPEAKING OF THE JERUSALEM CHURCH) CONTINUED STEADFASTLY IN THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE AND FELLOWSHIP, AND IN BREAKING OF BREAD, AND IN PRAYERS." HERE WE FIND THE WORD "STEADFASTLY," WHICH INDICATES THAT THERE WAS A REGULARITY OF OBSERVANCE. IT INDICATES THAT THIS REGULARITY WAS RATHER FREQUENT, BUT STILL WE CANNOT IDENTIFY SPECIFICALLY WHEN THEY OBSERVED IT. SECOND, TURN TO I CORINTHIANS 11:25. "...THIS DO YE, AS OFT AS YE DRINK IT, IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME. FOR AS OFTEN AS YE EAT THIS BREAD, AND DRINK THIS CUP, YE DO SHEW THE LORD'S DEATH TILL HE COME." WE HAVE LEARNED TWO THINGS. WE HAVE LEARNED THAT THE N.T. CHURCH OBSERVED THE LORD'S SUPPER "STEADFASTLY." WE HAVE LEARNED THAT THEY DID THIS WITH A FREQUENCY WHICH MIGHT BE REFERRED TO AS "OFT," OR "OFTEN." THIRD, TURN TO ACTS 20:7, "UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK WHEN THE DISCIPLES CAME TOGETHER TO BREAK BREAD, PAUL PREACHED UNTO THEM, READY TO DEPART ON THE MORROW; AND CONTINUED HIS SPEECH UNTIL MIDNIGHT." THIS IDENTIFIES WHAT "STEADFASTLY" MEANS. THIS IDENTIFIES, PARTICULARIZES, WHAT IS MEANT BY THE EXPRESSION "OFTEN," WHEN IT SAYS OF THE BRETHREN IN TROAS THAT "UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK" THEY CAME TOGETHER TO BREAK BREAD. NOW, THE QUESTION IS, "DOES THIS MEAN EVERY FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK?" AND THE ANSWER IS, IT DOESN'T SAY THAT. IT JUST SAYS, "UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK." IT DOESN'T SAY UPON EVERY FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK. ARE WE THEREFORE PROPER, ARE WE CORRECT IN

CONCLUDING THAT IT MEANS ON EVERY FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK? LET'S GO TO THE O.T. TO THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AND LOOK AT A SIMILAR STATEMENT FROM DIETY. "REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY." I DON'T READ ANYWHERE IN MY O.T. WHERE THE JEWS EVER DESECRATED THE SABBATH DAY AND WENT TO THE LORD AND SAID, "NOW, LORD, IT DOESN'T SAY EVERY SABBATH DAY." THEY HAD ENOUGH GOOD COMMON SENSE TO KNOW THAT EVERY WEEK HAD A SABBATH AND SINCE GOD HAD SAID, "REMEMBER THE SABBATH," WHEN THE SABBATH CAME IT WAS TO BE KEPT HOLY. THE SAME RULES OF COMMON SENSE CAN BE APPLIED TO ACTS 20:7. WHILE IT DOES NOT SAY EVERY FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, EVERY WEEK HAS A FIRST DAY, AND SINCE EVERY WEEK HAS A FIRST DAY, EVERY TIME THE FIRST DAY COMES, THE DISCIPLES ARE TO COME TOGETHER TO BREAK BREAD. ACCORDING TO THIS VERSE, THEIR MEETING TOGETHER ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK AND THEIR BREAKING OF BREAD CAME WITH THE SAME REGULARITY. "UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, THE DISCIPLES CAME TOGETHER TO BREAK BREAD." THEIR MEETING ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK AND THEIR BREAKING OF BREAD CAME WITH THE SAME REGULARITY AND THAT MEANS THAT IF THEY JUST CAME TO BREAK BREAD QUARTERLY OR SEMI-ANNUALLY, OR ANNUALLY, THEY ONLY MET ON ONE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK QUARTERLY OR SEMI-ANNUALLY, OR ANNUALLY. THIS THE LANGUAGE WILL NOT BEAR. IN I CORINTHIANS 11:20 THE APOSTLE SAID, "WHEN YE COME TOGETHER THEREFORE INTO ONE PLACE, THIS IS NOT TO EAT THE LORD'S SUPPER." THIS IS READING FROM THE KING JAMES. THE AMERICAN STANDARD RENDERS IT BETTER, "WHEN YE COME TOGETHER THEREFORE INTO ONE PLACE, IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO EAT THE LORD'S SUPPER." IN OTHER WORDS, THEY HAD COME TOGETHER FOR THE PURPOSE OF OBSERVING THE LORD'S SUPPER, BUT THEY HAD SO CORRUPTED THE OBSERVANCE OF IT, CHANGING IT INTO A REGULAR MEAL WHEREIN SOME EVEN BECAME DRUNKEN THAT IN THIS SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES IT WASN'T POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO DO WHAT THEY HAD COME TOGETHER TO DO. IN I CORINTHIANS 16 WE FIND WHEN THEY CAME TOGETHER "UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK LET EVERY ONE OF YOU LAY BY HIM IN STORE, AS GOD HATH PROSPERED HIM, THAT THERE BE NO GATHERINGS WHEN I COME." THEY CAME TOGETHER UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK TO OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER, BUT DUE TO THEIR CORRUPTIONS OF THE SUPPER THEY COULD NOT OBSERVE IT, DID NOT OBSERVE IT PROPERLY.

IN EVERY OTHER AREA, WHERE WE HAVE ANY REFERENCE TO THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, MY RELIGIOUS NEIGHBORS WHO DO NOT OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER WEEKLY, KNOW JUST EXACTLY WHAT THE LANGUAGE MEANS. FOR INSTANCE, IN SOME CHURCHES WHERE IT IS OBSERVED QUARTERLY, ONCE EVERY THREE MONTHS, I NOTICE THAT THEY FAIL TO PASS THE COLLECTION BASKET EVERY WEEK, AND YET THE SAME LANGUAGE THAT REFERS TO THE PASSING OF THE COLLECTION PLATE IS USED IN REFERENCE TO THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER. "ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, THE DISCIPLES CAME TOGETHER TO BREAK BREAD." ACTS 20:7. "UPON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, LET EVERY ONE OF YOU LAY BY HIM IN STORE." NOW WHY ARE THESE NOT TO BE OBEYED WITH THE SAME FREQUENCY? THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON AT ALL WHICH CAN BE FOUND IN REASON OR IN THE WORD OF GOD WHICH LENDS ANY SUPPORT TO THE IDEA THAT THE CHRISTIAN OUGHT TO COMMEMORATE THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST WEEKLY, BUT THE DEATH OF CHRIST ONLY ANNUALLY. THERE IS NEITHER RHYME NOR REASON TO RAISING HIM 52 TIMES WHEN YOU ONLY BURY HIM ONCE.

BUT THERE IS ANOTHER IMPORTANT QUESTION, "IS THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK THE ONLY DAY ON WHICH WE CAN OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER? CAN WE OBSERVE IT ON MONDAY EVENING? CAN WE OBSERVE IT ON THURSDAY? CAN WE OBSERVE IT AT A WEDDING? IS THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK THE ONLY DAY THAT WE CAN OBSERVE THE SUPPER? THE ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION IS NO. BUT IT IS QUALIFIED. LISTEN CAREFULLY. NO, BUT IT IS THE ONLY DAY THAT WE CAN OBSERVE THE SUPPER WITH ANY APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY. SURE, WE CAN OBSERVE IT ANY TIME WE WANT TO. AT LEAST IT IS POSSIBLE. THE LORD IS NOT GOING TO STRIKE US DEAD BEFORE WE CAN GET IT DONE. BUT THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK IS THE ONLY DAY THAT WE CAN OBSERVE THE SUPPER WITH ANY APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY OR EXAMPLE. AND I FOR ONE BELIEVE THAT IT IS AN ILL SIGN IN OUR BROTHERHOOD WHEN THOSE WHO ARE SEEKING TO RESTORE N.T. CHRISTIANITY, WHO ARE SAYING, "LET US SPEAK AS THE BIBLE SPEAKS AND WHERE THE BIBLE SPEAKS," TURN AROUND IN THE FACE OF THAT AND REFUSE TO FOLLOW APOSTOLIC EXAMPLE IN THE FREQUENCY OF THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SUPPER. I BELIEVE THAT SUCH CHANGES COME WITH ILL-GRACE FROM THOSE WHO ARE SEEKING TO RESTORE WITHOUT CHANGE THE WORSHIP AND THE FAITH OF THE N.T. SOME MAY ASK, "BUT IF WE CAN ENGAGE IN OTHER ACTS OF WORSHIP ON DAYS OF THE WEEK OTHER THAN THE FIRST, WHY CAN WE NOT OBSERVE

THE LORD'S SUPPER ON DAYS OTHER THAN THE FIRST?" I BELIEVE THIS QUESTION COULD BE ASKED ONLY BY ONE WHO HAS NOT READ HIS BIBLE VERY CAREFULLY. WE HAVE APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY FOR SOME ACTS OF WORSHIP ON DAYS OTHER THAN THE FIRST: SINGING, ACTS 16:25, JAS. 5:13, PRAYING, ACTS 12:12, ACTS 16:25, JAMES 5:13, TEACHING AND PREACHING, ACTS 5:42, GIVING ACTS 4,5,6. (THESE CHAPTERS PUT THE EMPHASIS ON DAILY NEEDS AND DAILY MINISTRATIONS), GALATIANS 6:10 (DEMANDS RESPONSE AS OFTEN AS WE HAVE OPPORTUNITY). THERE IS NO SUCH EXAMPLE, EITHER EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, OF WEEK-DAY OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THERE ARE SEVERAL OBJECTIONS WHICH COME FROM OUR RELIGIOUS NEIGHBORS WHEN WE SUGGEST THAT THE N.T. TEACHES THAT THERE IS TO BE A WEEKLY OBSERVANCE OF THE SUPPER. SOME ASK THE QUESTION, "WILL NOT THE FREQUENCY OF THE OBSERVANCE DESTROY ITS SOLEMNITY?" IN OTHER WORDS, IT IS TO BE A VERY SOLEMN OCCASION WHEN ONE GATHERS AROUND THE TABLE OF THE LORD, AND I HAVE NO ARGUMENT WITH THAT. I HAVE ONLY PRAISE AND ENCOURAGEMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO WANT TO MAKE GATHERING AROUND THE TABLE OF MY SAVIOR, A SOLEMN, SIGNIFICANT OCCASION. BUT GATHERING AROUND THE TABLE EVERY WEEK NO MORE DESTROYS THE SOLEMNITY OF THE SUPPER THAN GATHERING IN WORSHIP DESTROYS THE SOLEMNITY OF WORSHIP. THE SOLEMNITY OF SINGING, THE SOLEMNITY OF PRAYER, THE SOLEMNITY OF STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD, AND THE SOLEMNITY OF LAYING BY IN STORE IS TO BE JUST AS GREAT AND DONE WITH JUST AS MUCH REVERENCE AS IS MY OBSERVANCE OF THE SUPPER. I AM NOT AT LIBERTY TO DO THINGS DURING OTHER PARTS OF WORSHIP THAT I AM NOT AT LIBERTY TO DO DURING THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SUPPER. NOT ALL OF US BELIEVE IT, AT LEAST NOT JUDGING BY OUR PRACTICE. IN WORSHIP, WE HAVE PICKED OUT PARTICULAR PARTS WHICH ARE WORTHY OF MORE RESPECT THAN OTHERS, WITH NO SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR DOING SO. DURING THE SINGING WE TALK AND POKE AND WE DO OTHER THINGS. WE MAY BE TALKING TO A NEIGHBOR WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN SOMEBODY SAYS, "LET US PRAY," AND WE CUT IT OFF QUICKLY AND BOW OUR HEADS. WE TALK TO THE CHILDREN DURING THE SINGING, BUT WE PINCH THEIR LITTLE NOSES OFF IF THEY DARE SAY ANYTHING DURING THE PRAYER. IT IS ALRIGHT FOR US TO DO ONE THING IN THE SINGING, BUT WE DON'T WANT TO DO THAT DURING THE LORD'S SUPPER. I BELIEVE THIS IS A MISUNDERSTANDING OF ALL OF WORSHIP. IT IS NOT AN EXALTING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, IT IS A DEGRADATION OF THE OTHER ACTS OF WORSHIP. OBSERVING THE LORD'S SUPPER WEEKLY WILL NO MORE DESTROY ITS SOLEMNITY THAN WILL WEEKLY WORSHIP DESTROY THE SOLEMNITY OF SAID WORSHIP.

OTHERS ASK, "WILL IT NOT DESTROY THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER IF YOU OBSERVE IT WEEKLY AS OPPOSED TO QUARTERLY OR SEMI-ANNUALLY?" I BELIEVE THE ANSWER IS NO. YOU CAN'T DESTROY THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER IN THE HEART OF ONE WHO LOVES HIS LORD. I HAVE SUGGESTED TO SOME WHO HAVE MADE THIS STATEMENT THAT THEY GO TO THEIR WIVES AND SAY TO THEIR WIVES, "NOW, HONEY, I LOVE YOU, AND THERE IS GREAT MEANING IN THE EXPRESSION OF OUR LOVE AS I KISS YOU. I DON'T WANT TO DESTROY THAT MEANING SO I'M JUST GOING TO KISS YOU ONCE A YEAR FROM NOW ON." I BELIEVE THE WIFE WOULD PROPERLY CONCLUDE THAT THERE IS NOT MUCH LOVE. EVEN SO, I BELIEVE IT IS JUST AS RIDICULOUS FOR AN INDIVIDUAL TO SAY, "I'M NOT GOING TO REMEMBER MY LORD'S DEATH IN THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER EVERY WEEK BECAUSE IT WILL DESTROY ITS MEANING." WHEN I LOVE MY LORD, THE MEANING CANNOT BE DESTROYED.

OTHERS SUGGEST, "WEEKLY OBSERVANCE WILL MAKE IT COMMONPLACE." IF WEEKLY OBSERVANCE OF THE SUPPER OF THE LORD CAN MAKE THAT OBSERVANCE COMMONPLACE SO CAN BIBLE READING BECOME COMMONPLACE AND SO CAN PRAYER BECOME COMMONPLACE. I NEVER HEAR SUCH OBJECTIONS LEVELED AT BIBLE READING AND BIBLE STUDY AND PRAYER. THESE EXCUSES ARE NOTHING MORE THAN EFFORTS TO JUSTIFY A POSITION WHICH HAS ALREADY BEEN TAKEN RATHER THAN, HAVING DISCOVERED THE TEACHING OF THE WORD OF GOD--CLEAR, PLAIN, AND SIMPLE--TO SUBMIT ONESELF THEREUNTO.

OUR PLEA IS TO PUT AWAY THOSE THINGS THAT CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED BY GOD'S ETERNAL WORD AND FOR US TO JOIN TOGETHER UPON THE BASIS OF THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE, TO DO BIBLE THINGS IN BIBLE WAYS, TO CALL BIBLE THINGS BY BIBLE NAMES. IF WE WOULD DO THIS IN REGARD TO THE SUPPER OF THE LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST, IMMEDIATELY ALL DIFFERENCES WOULD DISAPPEAR. THAT THIS IS SO CAN BE SEEN FROM THE FACT THAT, WHEN YOU OBSERVE IT WEEKLY, NO MAN HAS ANY ARGUMENT WITH YOU. I VE NEVER HEARD A MAN SAY, "WELL, THAT'S WRONG, YOU OUGHT NOT TO DO IT. I'VE FOUND A PASSAGE HERE WHICH

SAYS IT IS SIN TO OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER WEEKLY. " BUT WHILE THEY WILL NOT DO THAT, THEY WILL GO BEYOND AND SUGGEST THAT, WHILE THAT IS ALL RIGHT, THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE THAT IS JUST AS WELL. BUT, WHEN YOU HAVE CHANGED FROM THE N.T. PATTERN, THEN IMMEDIATELY THE DOOR TO RELIGIOUS DIVISION HAS BEEN OPENED AND THERE IS NO STANDARD OF AUTHORITY BY WHICH TO BE GOVERNED. WE PLEAD WITH YOU TONIGHT TO TAKE YOUR STAND UPON THE BIBLE. WE PLEAD WITH YOU TONIGHT TO LAY YOUR LIFE AND YOUR WORSHIP ALONG SIDE THE PATTERN THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN IN THE N.T., FOR WHEN YOU WORSHIP AND WHEN YOU WORK AND WHEN YOU LIVE ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTIONS OF THE N.T., YOU CAN KNOW THAT WITH THESE THINGS NO MAN WILL QUARREL. BUT IF HE SHOULD, SUCH IS NOT IMPORTANT, FOR WHEN WE FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS OF JESUS, WITH THAT HE WILL NOT QUARREL IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT. THIS IS THE THING WHICH IS ALL-IMPORTANT, WHICH IS SUPREME, AND SHOULD BE SUPREME IN THE INTEREST OF US ALL. THERE ARE THOSE HERE TONIGHT WHO ARE SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF JESUS. WOULD YOU RECEIVE HIM? WOULD YOU COME WHILE WE STAND AND WHILE WE SING?