

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. - 1 Peter 2:2

# THE SINCERE MILK OF GOD'S WORD

The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword... - Hebrews 4:12

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## The Lord's Supper

In **Matthew 26**, Jesus and His disciples observed the Passover meal. Jesus used this time to institute the Lord's Supper.

He took two elements of the Passover meal - unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine - and assigned meaning to them that have significance to God's children under the new covenant.

Jesus first took the unleavened "*bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body'*" (**verse 26**).

Jesus next "*took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to [His disciples], saying, 'Drink ye all of it'*" (**verse 27**).

While the bread represents Christ's body (**verse 26**), the cup ("*fruit of the vine*" - **verse 29**) represents Christ's blood, which was shed for us (**verse 28**).

This memorial is sometimes called the "*breaking of bread*" (**Acts 2:42**), "*communion*" (**1 Corinthians 10:16**), or "*the Lord's Supper*" (**1 Corinthians 11:20**).

Soon after the church was established, Christians steadfastly observed this memorial (**Acts 2:42**). The disciples at Troas specifically "*came together to break bread*" (**Acts 20:7**).

The phrase "*breaking bread*" is an idiom used at times in the New Testament to refer to a common meal (**Acts 2:46**; cf. **20:11**).

Sometimes, this phrase refers specifically to partaking of the Lord's Supper. The context of **Acts 20:7** indicates that this

definition is the meaning for this verse.

Notice who partook of the Lord's Supper - "*the disciples*" at Troas. The Lord's Supper is a memorial for *all Christians* to observe, in remembrance of what Christ has done for us (cf. **1 Corinthians 11:24-25**).

God's children have long struggled with forgetfulness (cf. **Jeremiah 2:32**). God instructed the Israelites to observe the Passover to remember what He did for them when He led them out of Egyptian bondage (**Exodus 12:14**).

Similarly, Jesus instructed His disciples to observe the Lord's Supper to remember what He has done for us.

The Lord's Supper is a time to remember what Jesus did, why He did what He did, and what this means. It is a reminder of the new covenant God has made for us, which was sealed with Jesus' blood (cf. **1 Corinthians 11:25**).

The Lord's Supper is a proclamation to the world of Christ's death. Notice **1 Corinthians 11:26**: *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come.*

The Lord's Supper is also a time of fellowship with Christ and with fellow brethren.

Notice **1 Corinthians 10:16-17**: *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.*

Jesus promised to (spiritually) be with His disciples when we partake of the Lord's Supper (**Matthew 26:29**).

Christians should observe this memorial as the New Testament instructs and shows.

Part of the pattern shown in the New Testament is the day the Lord's Supper is to be observed.

Notice the phrase "*upon the first day of the week*" in **Acts 20:7**. This is the only instance where God's Word specifies *when* early Christians partook of the Lord's Supper. This thus establishes the pattern for when all Christians should observe.

There is significance to the first day of the week for Christians. This is the day Jesus was raised from the dead (**Luke 24:1-3**). It is the day we first read about people being added to the church (**Acts 2:1,41**; cf. **Leviticus 23:15-16**).

While much of God's will for us is the same every day of the week, both the Lord's Supper and the "*collection for the saints*" (**1 Corinthians 16:1-2**) are to be done "*upon the first day of the week*."

The church at Corinth provided an example of perverting Christ's design of the Lord's Supper.

As they came together, it is said that they came "*together not for the better, but for the worse*" (**1 Corinthians 11:17**). They had twisted the Lord's Supper so much that what they observed really wasn't even the Lord's Supper (**verse 20**).

Two key problems brought out in their observance of the Lord's Supper were (1) a divisive spirit (**verse 21**), and (2) turning the memorial into a common meal (**verse 22**).

They were exhorted to have a spirit of unity (cf. **verse 33**), and they were told that

the time they assembled to carry out the work of the church was not the time to be eating a common meal. Notice **verse 34**: *And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation.*

The Corinthians were told to examine how they partook of the Lord's Supper (**verse 28**). Christians today should do the same.

Notice in this passage that it is possible to partake of the Lord's Supper "*unworthily*" (**verses 27,29**).

Partaking unworthily leads one to "*be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*" (**verse 27**). It shows disrespect toward the One whose body and blood the emblems represent.

Partaking unworthily also leads one to bring condemnation on him or herself (**verse 29**) It leads to spiritual weakness, spiritual sickness, and spiritual death (**verse 30**).

Partaking unworthily does not refer to one partaking who is not deserving of Christ's sacrifice. If this were the case, no one could partake worthily.

Rather, partaking unworthily refers to the *manner* in which we partake.

We must not pervert the Lord's Supper. We must remember what the memorial is all about.

If we follow God's pattern for why, how, and when we partake, the Lord's Supper will be a great blessing that helps us devote ourselves to Christ.

May all Christians take the Lord's Supper seriously, follow the divine pattern, and never forget what this memorial is all about.

**-Michael Hickox**