

The Mind of Christ

The Memorial of Love

Part Two

INTRODUCTION:

- I. For some time now we've been taking a close look at the FINAL WEEK in the life of Jesus leading up to His CRUCIFIXION. And in our LAST lesson, we moved forward to specifically focus our attention on THURSDAY of that week.
 - A. It is on this day that Jesus asked His disciples to make preparation to celebrate the greatest of all Jewish religious observances – the great Passover.
 1. But what makes THIS Passover meal so important, what came FROM this meal.
 2. During the Passover meal – while the Lord's disciples gathered around Him in the quietness of an upper room – Jesus took two elements commonly used in observing the Passover, and gave them an entirely new meaning.
 - a. These two elements would be part of a SACRED MEMORIAL established by the Lord which would be observed by His disciples from that time forward – until the Lord returns.

- b. Those two elements are the UNLEAVENED BREAD and the FRUIT OF THE VINE.
3. In THIS lesson, we want to focus on the UNLEAVENED BREAD.
 - a. We want to understand what the unleavened bread meant to the JEWS celebrating Passover, and THEN see the NEW MEANING Jesus gave to unleavened bread in the memorial feast the Lord commanded HIS disciples to celebrate in remembrance of HIM.
 4. Then, in future lesson, we will examine the FRUIT OF THE VINE and attempt to fully understand what it should represent to each of us.

BODY:

- I. According to Jewish traditions, the unleavened bread that was used during the Passover meal had a very important meaning.
 - A. In a previous lesson we learned that God raised up Moses to deliver the Hebrew people from their Egyptian slavery.
 1. When Pharaoh refused, God brought a series of terrible plagues on the land of Egypt, ending with the 10th and final plague – the death of all firstborn of both men and cattle in the land of Egypt.

2. To spare the children of Israel from this terrible plague, the Lord commanded the children of Israel to slay a lamb and smear the blood on the door posts and lintel of every Hebrew home.
3. On that night when the Lord would take the life of every firstborn, the Lord would PASS OVER every house where He saw the blood, and would spare everyone inside.
 - a. Also on that night, the Israelites were to eat the lamb by roasting it whole in fire, and serve bitter herbs with the meal to remind them of the bitterness of their slavery.
 - b. But there was one other thing the Lord commanded to be eaten – UNLEAVENED BREAD.
4. Since Pharaoh became so grief-stricken over the death of his OWN firstborn son, God knew Pharaoh would release the children of Israel the next morning.
 - a. Therefore, the Jews needed to prepare bread in haste – without having time to allow it to rise before baking. Rather than NORMAL bread, this would be UNLEAVENED bread – bread without leavening (yeast).
5. From that night in Egypt to the days of Jesus over 2,000 years ago, and even until today, Jews everywhere celebrate the Passover every year – and one of the KEY INGREDIENTS in every Passover meal is UNLEAVENED BREAD.

a. In **Deuteronomy 16:3** the Lord called this bread, "THE BREAD OF AFFLICTION (*for you came out of the land of Egypt in haste*), *that you may remember the day in which you came out of the land of Egypt all the days of your life.*"

B. But on the night Jesus observed the Passover with his disciples the Lord took the unleavened bread and told His disciples that from now on, this bread would represent something else.

1. Let's go back to the gospel accounts and see for ourselves what Jesus said the unleavened bread would mean to His disciples. It's recorded in all three Synoptic gospels – Matthew, Mark and Luke.

a. **Matthew 26:26** – *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."*

b. **Mark 14:22** – *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."*

c. **Luke 22:19** – *And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."*

2. This event is ALSO recorded in the book of **1st Corinthians**. However, on THIS occasion the apostle Paul was attempting to correct some misunderstandings about the NATURE and

PURPOSE of the Lord's Supper among the Corinthian Christians, and so he wrote the following:

a. **1 Corinthians 11:23-24** – *For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."*

3. From the Passover Jesus celebrated with His disciples to today, the disciple's of Christ – you and I as Christians – use unleavened bread to remember the Lord's great sacrifice on Calvary.

a. To US the unleavened bread no longer represents bread prepared in haste – *"the bread of affliction."*

b. To US the unleavened bread represents the Lord's body that was given for us.

C. But there are TWO QUESTIONS we want to consider about THIS item used in the observance of the Lord's Supper:

1. First, in what way does the bread REPRESENT the BODY of Christ (in other words, what did Jesus actually mean when He said, *"This is My BODY"*).

2. And, second, how should we observe the eating of the unleavened bread in the Lord's Supper today?

- II. So, let's consider the first question – how does unleavened bread represent the BODY of Christ? To answer this question we need to consider something the Lord Himself said.
- A. Both Matthew and Mark have the Lord simply saying, *"This is My body."*
1. But Luke's account provides more information. Luke says the Lord said, *"This is My body which is GIVEN for you; do this in remembrance of Me."*
- B. There are two key points here we need to understand.
1. First, when Jesus said, *"This is My body. . . "* He was using a figure of speech known as a **METAPHOR**, which is *"a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them."* (Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition)
- a. In using this figure of speech Jesus was saying the unleavened bread in some way REPRESENTED or was a SYMBOL or a LIKENESS of His body.
- (1). The false doctrine of TRANSSUBSTANTIATION – which says the bread somehow becomes the LITERAL BODY of Christ is just that – a FALSE doctrine.

- (2). The unleavened bread is NOT the literal BODY of Christ, but REPRESENTS or SYMBOLIZES the body of Christ in some unique way.
- b. There are numerous passages in Scripture where this figure of speech is used. Here are TWO of these occasions that are ALSO taken from the teachings of Jesus.
 - (1). *I am the BREAD OF LIFE.* **(John 6:48)**
 - (2). *Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the DOOR of the sheep." (John 10:7)*
- c. Jesus was NOT saying He is literally BREAD (made up of flour and water that has been baked) nor was He saying He is a literally a DOOR, but rather He is the source of all spiritual life, and He is the way through which His disciples enter the church.
- d. We use METAPHORS all the time. We might say "*that guy is a rock,*" or "*she's a real gem.*"
 - (1). We understand people aren't literally made up of rocks or gems.
- e. Therefore, when Jesus said of the bread, "*This is my body,*" He was NOT saying the bread BECOMES His body, but merely REPRESENTS His body – or SYMBOLIZES His body.

2. Second, according to Luke's account (**Luke 22:19**), Jesus said, *"This is My body which is GIVEN for you."* However, when the apostle Paul wrote about this same event in **1 Corinthians 11:24** he records the Lord saying, *"Take, eat; this is My body which is BROKEN for you."* But there are some very important things we need to understand here.
 - a. One thing we need to understand is that the word *"broken"* in **1 Corinthians 11:24** does **NOT** appear in any of the other accepted English translations of the Bible – only the KJV and the NKJV.
 - (1). That's because early manuscript copies of the New Testament do NOT contain the word *"broken"* in this verse.
 - b. Another thing we need to understand is that just as none of the bones of the Passover lamb were broken, we know that NOT ONE BONE of the body of Jesus was broken – from both the gospel accounts and from Old Testament prophecies.
 - c. Therefore, **1 Corinthians 11:24** LITERALLY reads, *"Take, eat; this is My body which IS... for you."*

- (1). The body of Jesus was GIVEN for us because it was INTENDED for us – God intended the body of Jesus to benefit us by His body being GIVEN.
- e. To help us understand WHY His body was GIVEN for us, we need to look at a few verses.
 - (1). **Hebrew 10:1-14** – *For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. Therefore, when He came into the world, He said [quoting from Psalm 40:6-8] "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You had no pleasure. Then I said, 'Behold, I have come – In the volume of the book it is written of Me – To do Your will, O God.'" Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire,*

nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second. By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. [Now verse 11] And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

- (2). **John 1:29** – When John the Baptist saw Jesus coming to him, he said, "*Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*" Jesus became OUR Passover Lamb by giving HIS body up to be crucified, and HIS blood to be shed in the process.
- (3). **Isaiah 53:3-7** – Isaiah prophesied about the suffering and death of Jesus by saying: *He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He*

was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.

- (4). **1 Peter 2:21-24** – Writing of this same prophecy, the apostle Peter said, *For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: "Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth"; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed.*

3. Therefore, when Jesus said, (**Luke 22:19**), "*This is My body which is **GIVEN** for you,*" and when Paul wrote (**1 Corinthians 11:24**) that the Lord said, "*Take, eat; this is My body which **IS** for you,*" we understand two key points:
- a. First, the unleavened bread we use in the Lord's Supper REPRESENTS the Lord's body – it SYMBOLIZES the Lord's body.
 - b. Second, the unleavened bread represents, or is a symbol of, the Lord's body BECAUSE the Lord's body was GIVEN for US.
 - (1). The Lord bore OUR sins in HIS body on the cross, *the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter.*
 - (2). **1 Corinthians 5:7** – The apostle Paul put it this way:
Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.
 - (3). There's another METAPHOR. Paul said, Christ is OUR PASSOVER – our Passover LAMB that was SACRIFICED FOR US!

- c. Therefore, Jesus wanted His disciples to understand that the unleavened bread would no longer represent the bread of suffering. Rather, from that moment until the end of time, the unleavened bread would represent THE BODY of Christ – our PASSOVER LAMB, who gave HIS body on the cross for YOU and ME.

III. Now, that we understand how the unleavened bread REPRESENTS the Lord's body, let's consider the second question: How should we OBSERVE or KEEP the eating of the unleavened bread in the Lord's Supper today?

A. First, Jesus said there are some things we need to **DO** when we eat the unleavened bread in the Lord's Supper.

1. **Luke 22:19** – Luke writes, *And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; **do this in remembrance of Me.**"* There are two things we want to notice here.

- a. First, notice Jesus told His disciples, **"DO THIS in remembrance of Me."**

- (1). Do WHAT? Simple! The Lord had just told His disciples, *"Take, eat"* (**Matthew 26:26**). The words *"Take, eat"* do not appear in the early manuscript copies of Mark and Luke, nor in 1 Corinthians 11. But they DO

appear in the early manuscript copies of MATTHEW'S record.

(2). THAT'S what the Lord wants His disciples to DO – to TAKE the unleavened bread and EAT it. That's what we are to **DO!**

b. And second, notice that Jesus told His disciples, "*Do this **in REMEMBRANCE of Me.***"

(1). The word "*remembrance*" means, "*to recall, to bring to mind, to remember.*"

(2). Therefore, when the disciples took unleavened bread and ate it, they were to do so recalling, bringing to mind, or remembering Jesus.

2. To understand WHY Jesus wanted His disciples to take the bread and eat it in remembrance of Him, we need to go back to Paul's letter to the Corinthians.

a. **1 Corinthians 11:26** -- *For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you **proclaim** the Lord's death till He comes.*

b. Thayer defines the word "*proclaim*" as: "to announce, to declare, to promulgate, to make known; to proclaim publicly, to publish. . . ." But adds, "with the included idea of

celebrating, commending, openly praising." (Thayer's Greek Lexicon)

- c. Therefore, the reason we need to do this in REMEMBRANCE of Christ is because we proclaim, declare, openly praise the Lord's death until He comes.
- d. When we eat of that bread, we are proclaiming to each other, to the world, and, more importantly proclaiming to Jesus Christ, that the death of Christ means EVERYTHING to us. Therefore, we HONOR and PRAISE the Lord by REMEMBERING OUR Passover – by REMEMBERING the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world, including our own.

B. But the apostle Paul said there are some things we should **NOT DO**

when we eat the unleavened bread in the Lord's Supper

- 1. **1 Corinthians 11:27-29** – *Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord **in an unworthy manner** will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks **in an unworthy manner** eats and drinks judgment to himself, **not discerning the Lord's body.***

2. The apostle Paul warns against our eating of the bread in an *"unworthy manner"* (**v 27**). And the way we eat the bread in an unworthy manner is by *"not discerning the Lord's body"* (**v 29**).
 - a. Thayer defines the word *"unworthy"* as "irreverently," while Vine defines the word as: "treating it [the Lord's Supper] as a common meal, the bread and cup as common things, not apprehending their solemn symbolic import." (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, and Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)
 - b. One of the problems Paul had to address was the manner in which the Corinthians had perverted the Lord's Supper from a solemn memorial into a common meal – they had turned the Lord's Supper into a banquet or potluck.
 - c. But we can ALSO be guilty of partaking of the unleavened bread in an *"unworthy manner"* when we fail to understand the SOLEMN SYMBOLIC MEANING of the act.
 - d. This is why Paul added we eat of the bread in an unworthy manner when we are *"not discerning the Lord's body"* (**v 29**).
 - e. The word *"discerning"* means, "to separate, make a distinction, discriminate" (Thayer's Greek Lexicon).
Therefore, when we fail to make a distinction regarding the

true symbolic meaning of eating the bread, we are likewise eating it in *"an unworthy manner."*

CONCLUSION:

- I. So what should we REALLY understand about the unleavened bread in our observance of the Lord's Supper?
 - A. Jesus made it clear that He wanted His disciples to fully understand that the bread represents His body that was given for us.
 1. The bread is not His LITERAL body, nor does it somehow BECOME His literal body. Therefore, the doctrine of Transubstantiation – the belief that the bread and fruit of the vine change in substance and become the literal body and blood of Christ – is totally false.
 2. Rather, Jesus used a common figure of speech to say the bread symbolically represented His body.
 - B. But we also need to understand **HOW and WHY** the bread represents the body of Christ.
 1. When Jesus gave His disciples the unleavened bread He said, *"This is My body which is **given** for you."* (Luke 22:19)

- a. In Hebrews chapter 10, the apostle Paul reminds us that animal sacrifices offered under the Old Covenant could never take away sins permanently. **(Hebrews 10:1-4)**
 - b. Furthermore, in this same 10th chapter of Hebrews, Paul reminds us Jesus came in the flesh in the fulfillment of Psalm 40 to be the sacrifice God prepared, and that *"we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."* **(Hebrews 10:5-10)**
 - c. Therefore, Jesus came as the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world. **(John 1:29)**
 - d. In offering Himself on the cross, Jesus became OUR Passover Lamb – because according to **Isaiah 53:6**, *"the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."*
 - e. That's **HOW** the unleavened bread represents the body of Christ.
 - g. We could also add to all this the fact that leaven was always symbolically associated with sin in the Bible – and Jesus lived a sinless life, which qualified Him to be our SINLESS SACRIFICE, without spot or blemish.
2. And to answer the question **WHY** the Lord gave His disciples the unleavened bread as a representation of His sacrifice in the flesh,

the Scriptures tell us there are really two main reasons for the Lord doing this.

- a. Jesus told His disciples "*do this in remembrance of Me.*"
(Luke 22:19) The apostle Paul also repeated this in his letter to the Corinthians. **(1 Corinthians 11:26)**
 - (1). Every time we partake of the unleavened bread, it's an opportunity for us to remember Jesus Christ and the terrible sacrifice He paid for our sins on the cross.
- b. And, the apostle Paul told his readers that as often as we eat that bread we "*proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*" **(1 Corinthians 11:26)**
 - (1). When we partake of the unleavened bread WE PROCLAIM.
 - (2). It's an opportunity for us to proclaim, declare, and openly praise the Lord's death until He comes.
- c. But, the Lord's Supper serves as a reminder and a proclamation as long as we do not partake of it unworthily by "*not discerning the Lord's body.*" **(1 Corinthians 11:29)**
 - (1). To discern means to simply make a distinction or to separate.
 - (2). When we partake of the unleavened bread we need to separate and make a distinction between the TRUE

meaning and purpose of the unleavened bread from its common use.

(3). To the disciples of the Lord, the unleavened bread will always represent the Lord's body. And if we FAIL to understand its true meaning and purpose, we eat that bread in an unworthy manner, and bring judgment to ourselves.

(4). To keep from eating of the unleavened bread in an unworthy and irreverent manner we need to ALWAYS think seriously about what we are doing – we need to solemnly and reverently remember the sacrifice of the Lord and what this unleavened bread actually represents.

II. What does the unleavened bread mean to you? Do you see it as a symbol of the body of Christ – the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world?

A. Do you remember the sacrifice He paid for YOUR sins by giving Himself to be crucified?

1. Do you solemnly and reverently take your mind back over two thousand years ago and try to visualize the agony and suffering He went through for you?

2. If you do, then God is pleased with your worship.
3. If not, the apostle Paul says you're eating judgment to yourself by not discerning the Lord's body.
 - a. You will be guilty of taking something that solemnly represents the Lord's body and treating it as a common piece of bread.
 - b. You're worship will simply be in vain – empty and worthless.

II. How do you feel about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ?

- A. Does it move you to want to give your heart and soul to the Lord in thanksgiving for such a priceless gift?
 1. If you're faithful to the Lord, it DOES move you.
 - a. And when you observe the Lord's Supper and remember that terrible sacrifice, the Lord's Supper becomes a time when you pour out your heart in adoration, praise and thanksgiving for God's indescribable gift.
 2. But if you've never given your heart and soul to the Lord, or if you've a Christian who is still harboring sin and rebellion in your heart, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ HASN'T moved you. But it's our prayer that it will this very day.

B. Whatever you do, don't let pride, rebellion or a stubborn will keep you from heaven. The Lord stands at this very moment with His arms open wide to receive you.

1. Won't you come?