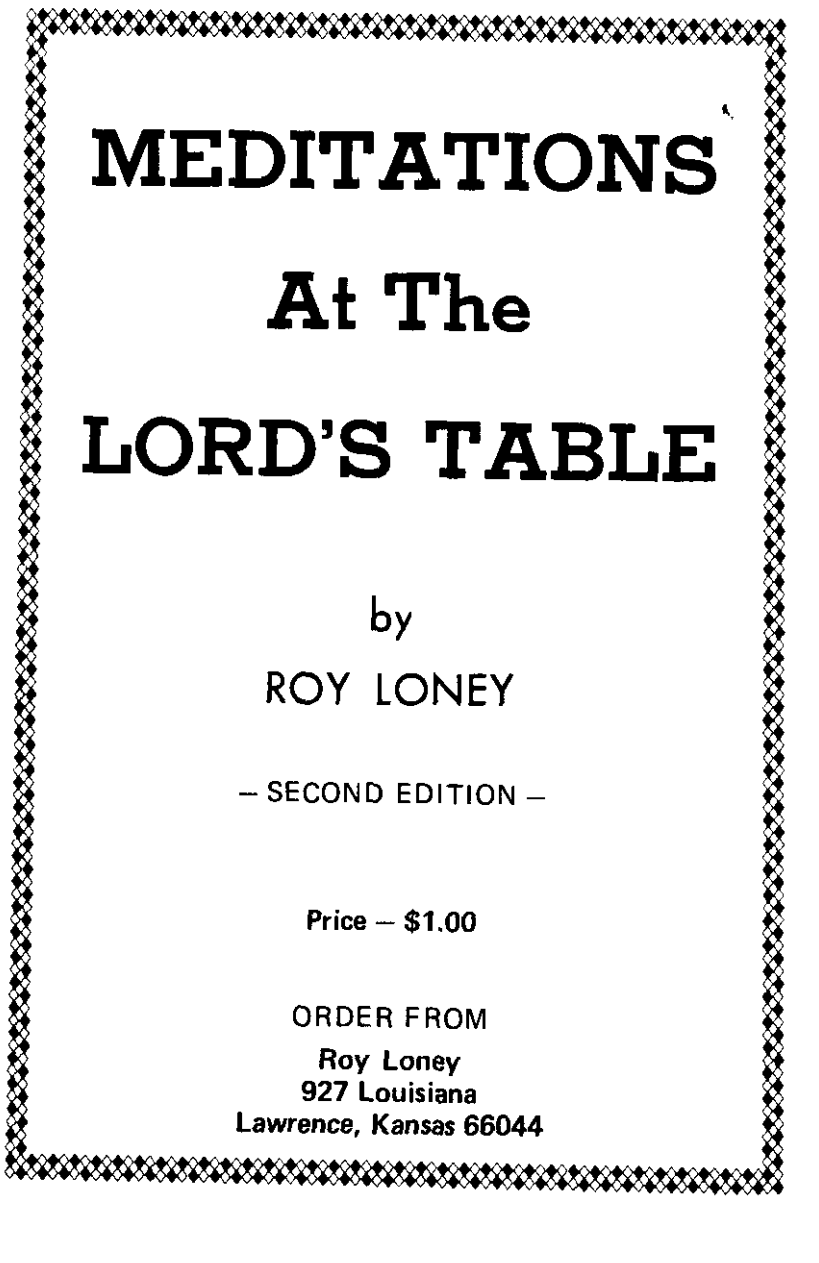


MEDITATIONS

At The

LORD'S TABLE

by
ROY LONEY



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ROY LONEY

— SECOND EDITION —

Price — \$1.00

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Roy Loney
927 Louisiana
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INTRODUCTION

In issuing another book, we are reminded of the statement, "Of the making of books there is no end", and some may ask, Why another book? In view of the millions of books already printed, the author feels that with his limited knowledge and ability, it might be considered presumptuous to inflict upon the public another volume; but for many years I have felt the need of more variety and spirituality in the talks made at the Lord's Table. Too often the same things are said over and over again without any edification to the listeners. There is a poverty of mind manifested by many who preside at the Lord's Table, and little effort is made to give something new or refreshing in spiritual edification. Hoping to stimulate our brethren to greater mental activity in preparing their talks, we have prepared these few outlines with the humble prayer in our heart that we may, in a small measure, be helpful to a better understanding of the full meaning of the Lord's Supper.

In a work of this kind it is expected that there will be some repetition, for many thoughts and scriptures need to be emphasized often that we might be grounded in the faith. However, in each outline there is a new thought considered and a new lesson taught that may lead us closer to God.

Some of these outlines are prepared with reference to a certain date. No. 1 may well be used on the first Lord's day of the year. No. 15 for the Sunday nearest to Memorial day, No. 19 deals with thoughts that center around Independence day—July 4th, while No. 46 may be used near thanksgiving day.

We wish to make it plain that we do not expect nor desire that these outlines should be read at the Table. We wish only that you should study these thoughts and then present them in your own words to the edification of the hearers.

Roy Loney

LOOKING FORWARD AND BACKWARD

We are facing a new year with all its possibilities and its probable disappointments and sorrows. The first month of the year, January, is named for the mythical god Janus, who reputedly had two faces, one looking forward and the other backward. It is well that every Christian should take a double look at his life. Make an appraisal of the past year to see what progress we have made and wherein we have failed to live up to our possibilities and look forward to the coming year with a steadfast resolve to make it the best of all years the Lord has put into our keeping. We should look back that we may profit by the mistakes of the past, and look forward to greater accomplishments in the year that awaits us.

The Lord's Supper is, in a sense, like the god Janus, for it points both forward and backward. It takes us to the greatest event of the past, and points forward to the greatest event promised for the future. Paul writing to the Corinthians regarding the Lord's Supper, said, "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26). Two great events are therein mentioned. The death of Christ, which belongs to the past, and the second coming of our Lord which will be the greatest event of the future. We prepare for the future, by utilizing the blessings that have come to us from the past. No human tongue can adequately describe the wonderful blessings brought to mankind through the death of Christ. He died that we might live! "God made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). Through His death, He has redeemed our souls from sin. At His coming He will redeem our bodies from the grave. "Who shall change our vile body, that it might be fashioned like unto his glorious body according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21). What a glorious thought!

GAIN THROUGH LOSS

"He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. 10:39). The above statement seems like a contradiction of terms. Our life is saved by losing it! How can that be? Christ was speaking of life in a double sense, contrasting the relative value of the physical and spiritual life, or the present life as compared with the eternal life. Thousands of early Christians suffered martyrdom as a demonstration of their faith in Christ. Their physical life was

sacrificed for the spiritual. They died on earth that they might live in heaven. Time was sacrificed for eternity. The price was not too great, for Christ asked, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26). In other words, the value of the soul outweighs all other values. The rich man saved his wealth, but lost everything else, even his soul, and in losing his soul he lost that which all his wealth could not buy, because he had lived only for himself.

When Christ spoke of losing one's life, He did not necessarily mean martyrdom. He meant that life was not to be lived for self, but for something more important than self. Only a life given to God is a saved life. Sacrificing ourselves for Christ's service is our only means of enrichment. This is putting money in the bank of heaven which pays eternal dividends. A life "hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3) can never be lost. Christ "lost" his life at Calvary but He gains it back in every life that is saved through Calvary's cross. In the Lord's Supper, we honor Him for the sacrifice he made, but do we realize that we must sacrifice self in order to be blest by his atoning death? The blessings of Calvary cannot be received by those whose thoughts are solely of self. They must live for Christ because Christ died for them (2 Cor. 5:14, 15). There is a greater One to live for instead of self.

A MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Saul, the first king of Israel, was rejected for disobedience, and David, whom God described as "a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will" (Acts 13:22), was selected to take Saul's place. Being a man after God's own heart did not mean that David was perfect, for he committed many sins, some of a horrible and inexcusable nature. Yet whenever he was rebuked by the Lord, he never excused himself, but always showed a humble and contrite spirit and prostrated himself before the Lord in sincere penitence, seeking forgiveness. This was especially true when David caused another man to be killed in order that he might have his wife. God's anger because of this crime was great, but David's repentance was of a nature to appease God's wrath. Afterwards David declared, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise" (Ps. 51:17). No greater gift can one possess than the consciousness of his own weakness and frailties. Self-justification is the unerring mark of an unregenerated heart, and a proud and haughty spirit is something which the Lord hates (Prov. 6:16, 17). Christ teaches

us that self-exaltation leads to debasement, while true humility leads to exaltation (Matt. 23:12).

The Lord's Supper reveals the solemn fact that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), and that before our sins could be remitted, it was necessary for Christ to suffer the shame and humiliation of the cross. This one fact alone is sufficient to purge our hearts of all self-righteousness and bring us with contrite hearts to the feet of Christ, crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13). "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and that trembleth at my word" (Isa. 66:2). If we personally make a proper approach to this sacred service we will be in solemn meditation as to our unworthiness.

JUSTIFICATION

"Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). The above statement is made with reference to Christ, in whom alone can we find justification or reconciliation. In Biblical usage the person justified has been vindicated or cleared from a charge. The doctrine developed by Paul is essentially that of reconciliation between sinful men and God. Pardon is gratuitously offered or granted as an act of grace irrespective of the deserts of the offender. The sole means of justification is the death of Christ upon the cross. "All we like sheep had gone astray ... and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23), and as all of mankind had sinned, all were under condemnation. But Christ took the burden of our sins on himself and paid our debt to God.

When we accept Christ as our Savior through the proper acts of obedience to his will, then "all that believe are justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:39) for atonement under that law was limited to the blood of animals. A greater offering than animals was required to effectuate our salvation, and so Christ "offered himself without spot to God" to purge us from all our sins (Heb. 9:14). All who seek to justify themselves through their own righteousness (Luke 10:29) are doomed to eternal disappointment. Justification must be in Christ, and Christ alone. Paul declares that we are justified by faith (Rom. 5:1) but that faith is not mere belief in Christ, but it must be the "obedience of faith" (Rom. 16:26) by yielding our hearts to his will. In this Supper, we have revealed to us the Lord's only means of justification—the shedding of a Savior's blood as an atonement for our sins. "The Lord has not dealt

with us according to our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities" (Psa. 103:10), and for this may we be profoundly thankful to Christ whose death brought us reconciliation to God.

"I DID NOT LOSE IT; I GAVE IT."

An American soldier wounded in Korea, lay on the operating table and, as he regained consciousness, the doctor bent over him saying, "You will do all right now my son, but I'm sorry to tell you that you lost your arm." Quickly the boy replied, "No, I didn't lose it, I gave it."

On the cross of Calvary, a life was sacrificed. It was not lost, but was a life freely and willingly given for all mankind. Untold thousands of lives have been and will be saved eternally because of the sacrifice of that one. Paul said to the Ephesians (5:2) "And walk in love, as Christ also loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor." "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13) A soldier who will cheerfully give an arm for his country is honored and rewarded in various ways by his grateful government. How much more should we honor and adore Him who through deep love "gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity" (Titus 2:14).

On this day we meet to honor Him who made the greatest sacrifice of all time. We can only honor him through obedience to his word, and his dying request to all who profess to love him was with reference to the spiritual feast we call the Lord's Supper: "This do in remembrance of me." What a small thing he asks of us as compared to the great sacrifice he made in our behalf! To ignore his dying prayer to remember his death is, to say the least, an act of ingratitude that is hard to understand. When we contemplate the fearful doom we have escaped through Christ's sufferings, it should be the greatest pleasure of our lives to show honor, love and gratitude to Him whose willing sacrifice has brought to us the vast riches of heaven. And in us should be fulfilled John's statement "We love him because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

AN OBSCURED CHRIST

A talented artist once painted a picture of Christ, who was pointing to the lilies of the field as an illustration of our Father's care for his children. When the picture was placed on display, to the dismay of the

artist, many of the people showed more interest in the beauty of the painted lilies than they did of the Lord. Seizing a brush, the artist dipped it in paint and with one quick motion painted out the lilies saying, "I did not intend that the beauty of those flowers should obscure the face of my Lord."

To a redeemed soul, there is only one thing that should be of interest, and that is the Lord whose blood paid for our redemption. But the greatest fault of the average Christian is that material, unimportant things are permitted to obscure the face of the Lord. Even the wonderful things of his creation are unimportant as compared to Him. The Laodiceans forgot their Lord while engrossed with their own "perfections" (Rev. 3:17). They were looking at self rather than Christ. A sinful life may appear beautiful until it is compared with Christ's. Paul admonishes us to "look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:2), and if our eyes are ever focused on Him, and in Him alone, the unimportant things of life will be forgotten, so that "we with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18). Man's greatest task is to be conformed unto the likeness of Christ.

The Lord's Supper is composed of material things which are intended to teach us of Christ's most important act — his death for our redemption. We must not lose sight of Him in his sufferings by thinking only of the bread and cup, for they represent to us the greatest fact of all history, the sacrifice of God's holy Son. In the observance of this sacred feast, self and all material things must be forgotten as we honor Christ.

TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?

John 6:68; 14:6

Christ once taught a very strong lesson to his wavering and unstable disciples, and when he declared himself the "Bread of Life" of which each individual must partake in order to obtain eternal life, many of these shallow disciples "went back and walked with him no more." Jesus did not modify his teaching in order to hold his unspiritual disciples. Turning to the twelve, who remained with him, he asked, "Will you also go away?" Peter spoke up questioningly, "Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ the son of the living God." It is well that we should constantly ponder Peter's question and answer.

Christ said of himself, "I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6).

Every day, in so many ways, the evil one seeks to engross our minds and heart with the material things of time at the expense of the spiritual and eternal, and doubtless many times we may be inclined to heed the "song of the siren" and turn away from Him whose life is life's greatest blessing. If such a time should come, when through forgetfulness or indifference we grow cold toward Christ, God grant that we should be reminded of Peter's urgent question, "Lord to whom shall we go?"

Christ came that we might have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10), but that life is in him and through him; and when the days of life are rapidly slipping into the eternal past and we draw near to the portals of death through which all must sometime pass, may we in that hour realize that only in Christ can we find life, security and happiness in that unseen world of the spirit. The Lord's Supper most impressively reveals the price Christ paid in order that we might be made the heirs of eternal life. He died that we might live. There is no other Savior!

THE CITY OF REFUGE Numbers 35:10-34

Under the Jewish law provisions were made for selecting six "cities of refuge" where one who unintentionally slew another might flee for protection from the "avenger of blood" and find safety until all the facts concerning the case were made known when "he shall stand before the congregation in judgment." This was a wise provision and prevented hasty and unjust action against one who may have accidentally killed another. These cities were for "protection both for the children of Israel, and for the sojourner among them that killeth any person unawares" (Numbers 35:15). Even a deliberate murderer could flee here till calm and deliberate arrangements could be made for a fair and legal trial. The slayer could not be taken from any of those cities without "due process of law" as we term it today. But when a slayer was proven guilty of murder "with malice afore-thought" then the slayer was to be delivered up to the proper persons for execution.

All of this is interesting and impressive in that it reveals the justice and mercy of God, and it turns our minds toward our Lord Jesus Christ who is the sinner's refuge and shield. The vilest sinner may flee to him for refuge and find in the shelter of his love refuge, protection and

safety from every sin. The blood shed on Calvary can remove every stain of sin and cleanse every heart from all evil.

The Lord's Supper, which we observe today is a constant reminder of God's concern for our eternal well-being and of the wonderful provisions he has made that we, the guilty, might receive justice and obtain pardon for all our transgressions. How thankful we should be that the Father's love leaves nothing undone in order that we might escape the terrors of hell. May love and deep gratitude fill our hearts as we partake of these emblems that represent our Savior's body and blood.

"I AM THE DOOR"

Jesus said of himself, "I am the door, by me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture" (John 10:9). A door is a means of entrance or exit. Christ is the door by which we gain an entrance unto God (Eph. 2:18) and the exit by which we leave the domain of Satan. He is the door to eternal life (John 17:2) and the exit from which we escape the terrors of death. Entrance through that door gives us the assurance of salvation and of the resurrection from the dead (John 11:25). He is the door by which we enter into a state of redemption from all our past sins (Eph. 1:7) and thus of reunion with our God. He is not "a" door, but the one and only door to eternal security. For without him we "could do nothing" (John 15:5). He did not say he "will be a door" but now is THE door, and is ever willing and anxious to save us from all the terrors of hell or the consequences of sins. He is the door to the narrow way (Matt. 7:14) yet this door is sufficiently wide that all of Adam's lost race could find entrance thereto, for "Whosoever will, let him come" and "him that cometh to me will in no wise be cast out" (John 6:37).

The Lord's Supper is one means by which we are taught how Christ became "The Door" to forgiveness, to life and all eternal blessing. He had to die as a ransom for all before he could accomplish our salvation. In his death he made atonement for our sins. By the blood of the cross he can remove all stains of sin. His death, as a substitute for ours, saves us from the guilt of sin and makes us fit for an entrance into heaven. May we in observing this spiritual feast be led to a deeper appreciation of all the blessings he bestows upon us as creatures of His love. And as the night of death approaches, may we with confidence and joy, look through this door and see the glories that await all the people of God. And may we be able to find in His loving service our greatest happiness and peace.

THE POOR IN SPIRIT

One of the most beautiful of the Beatitudes is, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3). The word poor as used here does not imply financial poverty or destitution, yet the Greek word used by Jesus does mean a beggar, and is the same word as used in Luke 16:20 "A certain beggar named Lazarus." In this beatitude Christ applies it to spiritual destitution. Christ once said, "Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). Only when a man is made to realize his own inadequacy, his spiritual destitution, his own unworthiness and worthlessness, is he in the right attitude of mind and heart to walk with God. Glorification of self blinds man to the glory of Christ's holy nature, and hence, such a man cannot see God. There is too much tendency to compare ourselves with others (2 Cor. 10:12), to our own spiritual detriment, as did the Pharisee (Luke 18:11) whose vision reached no higher than his own hypocritical heart, with the result that he had no realization of his need of God. Unless the cross of Christ has broken a man's spirit, unless Calvary has crushed a man's heart, and brought him to a realization of his utter helplessness and dependence on God, he will ever be unfit to enter God's holy presence. Until we can sing with the spirit and with the understanding, "I need thee every hour" there can be no vision of God in our hearts. The poor in spirit are those to whom Christ has become their "all and in all" (Col. 3:11) and are made to realize that without him they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor and blind and naked" (Rev. 3:17). The Lord's Supper is a revelation of our utter dependence on God and Christ, for no one could pay his debt to God and receive atonement. "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23) and only Christ could pay that debt and obtain for us the forgiveness of sins. In this service we learn that Christ died, the just for the unjust, that he might reconcile us to God. Lost, ruined and condemned, how great was our need of him!

A SOLDIER'S PLEASURE 2 Timothy 2:4

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (2 Tim. 2:4).

When a soldier is called into the armed service of his country, he must leave all personal and business matters behind and devote full time to being a good soldier. He is to be constantly at the call of his superior

officers and obey without question their command, even to facing of the possibility of death on the battlefield. He is perfected as a soldier through full obedience.

We are soldiers in the army of heaven, with Christ as the "Captain of our salvation", and as the Commander in chief of the army of heaven, he requires implicit obedience on the part of every soldier. He became the "author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:9). And in this obedience we are to render unto Christ, we are only imitating Him who gave unquestioned obedience to His Father. Christ once said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34). That work was not finished until after enduring the agonies of the cross, he cried, "It is finished" (John 19:30). Truly we can say that his only pleasure was to do his Father's will, and when we as his followers gather to observe the Lord's Supper, we see in the bread and the cup a reminder of his complete subjection to his Father's will. He became "obedient unto death, even unto the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8), and when we consider the nature of his obedience and what that obedience cost him in suffering and shame, how grateful we should be that all he asks of us is loving service and obedience to his holy commands! If we truly appreciate his sacrifice in our behalf, how easy it should be for us to submit to all His wishes. When he said of this Supper, "This do in remembrance of me" we should regard obedience to that request our greatest pleasure in life.

THE WOUNDS OF CHRIST

"And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then shall he answer Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zech. 13:6). The above verse is a prophetic statement made with reference to Christ and should be considered in connection with Psalms 41:9, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." Judas was the friend who betrayed him, and was thus responsible in part for the wounds inflicted upon Christ. His nail pierced hands and feet, the thorn prints on his brow and the sword-pierced side — who can adequately describe and understand them!

After Christ arose from the dead, those still visible wounds were the means by which he was identified. Thomas stated that he would not believe Christ had risen unless he could see those wounds, so when Christ later appeared unto him and showed his nail pierced hands and sword pierced side, Thomas cried out, "My Lord and my God" (John

20:24-28). And we identify Christ as our Savior by means of those same wounds! Without those wounds, he could not be a Savior. In Rev. 5:6, John saw Christ as a Lamb "as it had been slain." In prophetic vision, he still bore the marks of his suffering. But those wounds are even more than that: They are the *proof marks of sin*. May we never forget — *He died for our sins*. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquity, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him" (Isa. 53:5). Our own sins inflicted those wounds upon the Lord! "Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:24). Those wounds will ever be visible evidence that we were sinners! And so when we assemble on Lord's day to "break bread" in memory of the One who bore our sins, may sorrow fill our hearts as we are made to realize that those wounds were inflicted for us.

THE PASSOVER

(Read carefully Exodus chapter 12 for full information regarding Israel's Passover which was instituted in Egypt and first observed on the night when God slew the first born and thus brought deliverance to his people who had been held in cruel bondage for several centuries.)

In observing this feast, a lamb was to be slain, its body roasted with fire and its flesh eaten in the place God would select, which later was Jerusalem (Deut. 16:1-12). God gave command that this feast was to be observed yearly, on the 14th day of the first month, and it was to be a perpetual memorial of Israel's deliverance from their cruel taskmasters, and a reminder of God's love for them. This became the most prominent of Israel's feasts, and it was followed by a seven day feast of unleavened bread as a reminder of Israel's journey from Egypt under conditions which prevented the housewives from baking the leavened bread.

Paul in 1 Cor. 5:7 makes it plain that this Passover feast was a type of Christ, our paschal lamb who was slain for our redemption. No bone of the paschal lamb was to be broken (Exod. 12:46) and this was fulfilled in Christ (John 19:13-36). John the Baptist spoke of Christ as "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). The blood of the paschal lamb was smeared on the door posts by Israel and this blood saved those within from the angel of death who smote the firstborn (Exod. 12:7-13).

Christ observed this Passover the night he was betrayed (Luke 22:13-16), at which time he instituted the Lord's Supper as a memorial of his death for our redemption, and which we are to observe each Lord's day (Acts 20:7, Heb. 10:25) as an act of gratitude for his wonderful grace. The yearly observance of the Passover was always a great day for the children of Israel — a national holiday of happy memories. And so the Lord's Supper should ever be to us a solemn yet happy feast as a reminder of a Savior's infinite love.

THE PROOF OF FRIENDSHIP

Jesus said, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14). What is life without friendship? There is nothing that compares with the satisfaction of being able to unburden ourselves of our troubles and sorrows to one in whom we have implicit trust and confidence — one whom we know will sympathize and understand. And frequent association with one who is congenial, cheerful and interesting makes for a happy and pleasant life. By nature man is a social being, and unless we are social misfits, the companionship of others is essential to our happiness. The hermit who lives by himself is abnormal, and can never accomplish anything toward making the world brighter for others.

We truly need friends, and in Christ we have a friend that "sticketh closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24) — one who has said "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5). He also said to his disciples, "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you" (John 15:15). His friendship was proven by the sacrifice he made in our behalf. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). The willingness to sacrifice all for another is the highest test of our friendship, and Christ met that test when he died for us on Calvary's tree. His love was expressed not just in words, but in deeds. And he has a right to expect the same from us. Just before his death he instituted the Lord's Supper, saying, "This do in remembrance of me" and observing this feast in gratitude and love is the proof of our love for him. A profession of Christianity without obedience to Christ, is a sham and pretense. "Why call ye me Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). "Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father" (Matt. 7:21).

THE WORLD'S GREATEST MEMORIAL

“This do in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19). Paul quotes this command of Christ in 1 Cor. 11:24. There is no characteristic of man more pronounced than the universal desire to be remembered. The whole world is a vast forest of monuments erected in memory of those gone before. On the Gettysburg battlefield, there are 845 monuments to perpetuate the names of those who took part in that memorable struggle. The monument that attracts the greatest attention is the one erected on the spot where President Lincoln made his immortal dedicatory address.

Memorials are of various kinds. Some are monuments, erected in some prominent spot where the passing traveler may pause and refresh his memory with thoughts of some great one whose deeds blessed his nation. Of such is the great Washington monument, built of stones collected from all states of the Union and paid for with donations from all classes of citizens. Other memorials are holidays like May 30th, made a memorial to the brave men who gave their lives for the Union, but is now a nationally sacred day in behalf of all those who have served their country in the wars of the past. Then we have institutions of various kinds such as colleges and schools dedicated to the memory of some one who, in life, served to bless his fellowmen. But the greatest memorial of all is that which we call the Lord's Supper, observed in memory of the world's redeemer who gave his life a ransom for all. At a stated time, on a particular day, millions throughout the entire world lay aside their tools of trade and pause in their various occupations, to observe this sacred feast in homage to our greatest friend who died that we might live. Reverently, solemnly and gratefully we should partake of these simple emblems chosen by our Savior himself as an eternal memorial of the love that led Him to offer himself without spot to God to purge us from our sins.

A NEW CALENDAR AND A NEW LIFE

“This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: It shall be the first month of the year to you” (Exodus 12:2). The long centuries of cruel slavery were ending and a new life in a new homeland awaited them. It was fitting and proper that such a great change should be marked by a new calendar. The brick kilns of Egypt, where they had endured untold miseries, belonged to the calendar of the past. The day

of the first Passover marked the end of centuries of evil and brought the wonderful promise of freedom, prosperity and security. On that day Israel forever turned their backs to all the evils of the past, and faced the future with joy and rapture. When safely through the waters of the Red sea, they joyfully sang the song of deliverance. All servitude to Pharaoh was forever ended.

Paul said, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). Servitude to Satan ends when the heart is fully given to God. Our obedience to the gospel frees us from the bondage to sin, and hence a new life begins. Israel's freedom required the death of the paschal lamb, the shedding of its blood, before they could be freed from Pharaoh's iron control. Our freedom was purchased with the blood of Christ, the lamb slain from the foundation of the world. When we pass through the waters of baptism, we then can sing the song of deliverance and rejoice in the hope of an eternal home of unfading joys. Observance of the Lord's Supper recalls to our minds the means by which we are saved from the thralldom of sin, and made new creatures in Christ. May our gratitude and thankfulness be as abundant as the grace of God that accomplished our salvation.

LEST WE FORGET

"Then beware lest thou forget the Lord which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage" (Deut. 6:12).

A million slaves had been delivered from the cruel bondage of Egypt, where for many generations their lives had been made bitter by hard bondage. They were not only freed from the serfdom of Egypt, but had also received the wonderful promise of a national home in a land that "flowed with milk and honey". Comfortable houses, productive vineyards and abundant wells awaited them, and all these things were gifts from an all-loving Father. But the Lord realized the natural weakness of man, that he has a fatal proneness to forget the blessings of the past, and so the Lord warned Israel that in the coming time of prosperity they must not forget the Lord who had saved them from the cruelties of Egypt.

We, as Christians, have also been saved from a terrible bondage, the bondage to sin and Satan. "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants (slaves) ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness" (Rom. 6:16). Satan is a hard taskmaster, he demands all and gives

nothing that will endure. "The wages (rewards) of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). Christ, by his death upon the cross, has freed us from a servitude that offered nothing but eternal sorrow and misery. Not only has he saved us from the guilt of all past sins, but promises us a home of eternal joys where there are pleasures forevermore. It is of the utmost importance that we should never become indifferent, not forgetful of Christ's most gracious blessings. At the Lord's Supper, we are forcefully and impressively reminded again and again of His great sacrifice made for our redemption. Observance of this spiritual feast will ever fill our hearts with grateful remembrance of Him who died that we might live.

THE GLORY OF THE CROSS

"But God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14).

Paul had just mentioned the fact that there were false teachers and perverters of the gospel who insisted that all Gentile Christians accept the Jewish rite of circumcision "that they may glory in your flesh", but Paul sought no such personal advantage. His interest was only in the salvation of precious immortal souls, and he realized that all hopes of salvation were centered in the cross of Christ where the Lord's blood was shed for the remission of sins. His words indicate clearly that there is nothing of real value to spiritual man except the cross of Christ, for through it and it alone is there any hope of salvation. The Lord's crucifixion was the one outstanding event of all time when Christ, as the Son of God, gladly and willingly paid the debt man owed to God. He who was without sin, became sin for us that we might attain to righteousness through him.

The Lord's supper is a continual reminder of that cross of the Savior's suffering in our behalf, and when we meet to observe this sacred Feast, the worth of that cross and the nature of the Savior's love should be indelibly impressed on our minds. God's hatred of sin as well as his intense love for the sinner found its most impressive expression in the sufferings of our Lord on Calvary's tree of shame and suffering. He who had once been the most exalted Being in heaven under God, came to earth and suffered the world's greatest shame and humiliation in order that he might demonstrate in the most impressive way, God's hatred of sin and his love for the sinner. The poet in Christ I glory towering o'er the wrecks of time; All the spiritual song has expressed

this thought "In the cross of light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime."

THE PRICE OF OUR REDEMPTION

Under the law of Moses every man of Israel was required to pay half a shekel yearly into the treasury of the Sanctuary. "The rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the Lord to make an atonement for your souls" (Exod. 30:12-15). This half shekel was called the shekel of the Sanctuary, and was the tribute money mentioned in Matthew 17:24. It was similar to the so-called poll tax required of all voters in most of the southern states. The law said that this shekel was for the ransom of their souls, and it indicated that every soul, whether rich or poor, had the same value in the eyes of the Lord. This pertained entirely to the Old Covenant, but the same principle applies to the New Covenant.

The ransom paid for us was the blood of Christ, which "was shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28), and Peter said, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold ... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:18, 19). In the Lord's Supper we have the fruit of the vine which is the emblem of Christ's blood, which reveals most impressively our value in God's sight. Silver and gold could not redeem us because all the silver and gold in the world cannot equal the value of one soul. This is why Jesus asked the unanswered question: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matt. 16:26). If Christ can value our souls so highly that He would give himself for our redemption, then we should be more than willing to give up the pleasures of sin in order to receive the full value of Christ's redeeming blood. In observing the Lord's Supper as a memorial of His death, may we ever be made to appreciate the great price of our redemption.

A BILLIONAIRE PAUPER

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:9). The creator and owner of the universe became so poor that he had not where to lay his head (Luke 9:58). This

is the world's most wonderful story — the story of redeeming love! Man was entirely bankrupt in sin, and no one could pay his debts except the sinless Son of God. "Who his own self bare our sin in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness." (1 Peter 2:24). It is very difficult to contrast the Lord's riches with his poverty. Who can make an accurate appraisal of the wealth of the universe? A million diamonds, thousands of times larger than this earth, sparkle and glow in the vault of heaven. Heavenly mansions of incorruptible splendor, and the royal diadem of eternal glory, all were sacrificed by the Savior of men to save us from the eternal poverty of sin! A malefactor's death and a borrowed grave were the earthly end of the Prince of heaven who came to seek and to save the lost. God was made flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:4) and in that body of flesh he endured every temptation and trial that we are subject to. He knew the meaning of hunger and thirst, and his wearied, exhausted body often sought rest and repose under the open skies of heaven. Great as were these sacrifices, yet the greatest of all, was when he offered himself without spot to God (Heb. 9:14). We have met today to honor Him who gave up the glory-circled throne of God for our sakes and became poverty-stricken, homeless with no place to lay his royal head. These emblems before us impressively retell the story of this billionaire pauper who offers to us all the unfading splendors of a home in that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. May the dear Lord help us to be fully appreciative of His Most gracious blessings!

THE SCAPEGOAT

Under the Jewish law there was a Day of Atonement which came on the tenth day of the seventh month of each year. Various sacrifices were offered on that day. After a bullock and a goat had been offered with their blood sprinkled before the Ark of the Covenant, and their bodies burned without the camp, another goat was brought before assembled Israel. The high priest and the elders of Israel were to lay their hands on the head of this goat confessing the sins of the entire nation, then the goat was driven away into the wilderness. "And the goat shall bear upon him all the iniquities unto a land not inhabited; and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness" (Leviticus 16:22). Thus the goat was called a "scape-goat" because it carried away the sins of others. This scapegoat was distinctively a type of Christ, who upon the cross carried away the sins of the world. God "made him to be sin for

us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:21). Had Christ not borne the burden of our sins, the guilt of these sins would still be on our hearts. "For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Rom. 5:10). Saved by substitution! The Scapegoat of God was His only begotten Son! Upon him was laid the iniquity of us all. Wicked Caiaphas as High Priest considered it expedient that one man should die for the people, "that the whole nation perish not" (John 11:50), thus without full understanding of the consequences of his act, he made Christ the "Scapegoat", not for the Jewish nation only, but for the sins of the whole world.

In the Lord's Supper, we are impressively reminded of the fact our eternal salvation depended on another bearing away our sins. With the weight of all the world's sins upon him, no wonder Christ in Gethsemane said, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful unto death."

THE ATONEMENT

"And not only so but we also joy in God, through the Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have now received the atonement" (Romans 5:11).

The word atonement means to make satisfaction for wrongs done. It is paying the debt of sin. Man, by violating the laws of God, offended his Maker and merited the penalty assessed against him. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God; and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear" (Isa. 59:2). Man, in sin, was estranged or alienated from his Father, "having no hope and without God in the world." Before man could be restored to God's favor satisfaction had to be made for the wrongs done. God had decreed, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4), and "the wages (penalty) of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). From that dreadful decree there was no escape. Man was lost, ruined and doomed!

But Christ interceded in man's behalf when he offered himself without spot to God to purge us from our sins. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree; that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye are healed" (1 Peter 2:24). Christ paid our debt to God and thus made satisfaction for the wrongs we had done. John says that Christ is "the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only but for the sins of the whole world." Christ died, the just for the unjust, that he might reconcile man unto God. Christ's death was a substitute for ours. "He was wounded for our trans-

gressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him (Isaiah 53:5).

When man accepts the merits of Christ's death through obedience to the gospel, then the offence is removed, and full satisfaction is made for all the wrongs done. God accepts the death of his beloved Son as a substitute for ours. The purpose of the Lord's Supper is to remind us constantly of our debt to our Lord.

EXALTATION THROUGH SUFFERING

"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even unto the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name" (Phillipians 2: 8-9).

Crucifixion was the most shameful death that could be inflicted and was probably the most cruel form of torture conceived by the mind of man. Christ endured the cross willingly for the sake of doomed humanity. The shameful treatment accorded Christ while he was on the cross was never exceeded in all history. The vilest malefactor could not have received more humiliating treatment than was inflicted upon the pure and holy Son of God. But he was made perfect through sufferings (Heb. 2:10) and he has now received the greatest exaltation within the power of God to give, for he is now seated at the right hand of God as supreme ruler of the universe. The experience of Christ must be duplicated by us, for we too have a cross to bear before we can hope to be exalted by our Father. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24-26). We have to lose our life for Christ's sake in order to find it eternally. Unless we crucify self with its affections and lusts there is no hope for us at the Judgment.

The Lord's supper is a constant reminder that our salvation was effected only through great suffering. Each time we partake of the bread and fruit of the vine, we should re-consecrate ourselves to the service of Christ who suffered so much for us, and if we are to be lifted up to set in heavenly places with Christ, we must give up the world for him. "If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him. If we suffer we shall also reign with him. If we deny him, he also will deny us" (2Tim. 2:11-12).

THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM

“Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:2). Crucifixion was a terrible punishment, and the sufferings were beyond our power to contemplate or describe. It was a form of execution that was generally inflicted only on the worst malefactors or depraved criminals. Let it be remembered for all time that Christ could have saved himself from the cross, but instead, he endured it willingly. When Peter sought to defend the Lord with his sword, Christ rebuked him saying, “Put up the sword ... Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt. 26:53). Rather than be saved by the angels, he chose to suffer the indescribable agonies of the cross.

Paul tells us there was a motive back of his willingness to suffer, which he describes as “the joy set before him.” One would justifiably assume that this particular joy was something to be intensively desired. It would need to be a most unusual joy to outweigh the shame and torture of the cross, and so we may well inquire as to the nature of that joy. After telling the parable of the lost coin that was found, Jesus declared, “there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth” (Luke 15:10). That joy, the joy of saving the lost, was the motivating power that led Jesus to the cross. He sought nothing for himself, for he “came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many” (Matt. 20:28).

The observance of the Lord's Supper is a continual reminder of the utter unselfishness of our blessed Lord. In the broken bread and poured out wine, may we ever see the manifestation of the greatest sacrifice of all time for the good of others, and deeply appreciate the Savior's suffering in our behalf.

OUR EXEMPLAR

“For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you” (John 13:15).

Often during Christ's ministry there had been strife among the apostles as to who should be the greatest. This unholy ambition sorely grieved the heart of our Lord, so as he neared the end of his earthly life, he did a very unusual thing. He, the Lord and Master, performed a task that was generally assigned to the lowest of the servants — he washed

his disciples' feet. Their surprise was very great, but Jesus explained his act as being an example for them, not to seek personal exaltation and glory, but to serve one another. True greatness is not in personal exaltation to positions of fame and power, but in the service that can be rendered to others, "even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). In his service for lost humanity, he performed the greatest act of all time when he died "the just for the unjust that he might reconcile man to God." The path to eternal glory is not gained by self-seeking, but is the path of love that leads us to serve one another. Only by bearing one another's burdens can we fulfill the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2), and the incentive for so doing is revealed in Christ's revelation that "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:40).

Christ's greatest service was when he "humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even unto the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8). This kind of punishment was generally reserved for the worst malefactors, but Christ willingly accepted the shame of the cross in order that we, through Him, might be saved. When we meet together around the Lord's Table to commemorate Jesus' death by partaking of the broken bread and the poured out wine, may we ever be reminded of His words, "I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done unto you."

THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

"Ye are bought with a price, be ye not the servants of men" (1 Cor. 7:23). Human slavery has perhaps been the world's greatest curse. The enslavement of one race by another has led to innumerable wars, for it is a denial of the equality of man. America's greatest document avers that all men have the right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." There is no stronger trait of the human heart than the universal desire for freedom. Today there is great unrest over vast areas of the world because of the desire of "natives" to be free from foreign control. A naturalized Roman once said to Paul, "With a great sum obtained I this freedom" (Acts 22:28), and that very statement reveals the universal fact that the price of freedom is high. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty" is as true today as when uttered long ago. Satan once declared, "All that a man hath will he give for his life" (Job 2:4) and every normal man feels that life is not worth living unless freedom is an essential part of it. No day is more precious to Americans than

Independence day, July 4th, for on that day we give honor to our brave forefathers who took their lives in their hands to declare this nation "free and independent." The price they were willing to pay was great, but the result obtained was greater.

But there is a slavery worse in its ultimate effects than the slavery of the body, and that is the slavery of the spirit. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant (slave) of sin" (John 8:34). The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life bring men into bondage from which there is no escape by their own power. Man, helpless in Satan's chains, was without hope in this world; but the most glorious story of the world is the story of One who paid the price of our redemption. The Lord's Supper retells that story — how that Christ paid the price with his own life's blood. "This is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28).

LIFE THROUGH DEATH

"Verily I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24). In the above quotation, Christ referred to a well known law of nature. Germination of a seed requires its death as a seed. Before there can be spiritual life, there must also be death. We must die to sin before we can be alive unto God (Rom. 6:11). Thus, the natural law operates in the spiritual world, and this is the lesson Christ was teaching in his reference to the grain of wheat. A new life can be produced only through the death of the old grain. No death, no life! He that lives for self can never produce fruit for Christ, and in living for self, he loses all that is worthwhile. The ungerminated seed "abideth alone" in that no other life nor fruit is produced. One grain of wheat, through death by germination, may produce a dozen or more grains, thus the multiplication of seed blesses mankind.

Christ gave his life as a loving sacrifice in order to bring life to us. "He died that we might live." In him was life, and the life was the light (salvation) of men (John 1:4). This is the great lesson taught us through the Lord's Supper. Christ had to die in order that we might be made alive in God and this reveals our great debt to God. He who died for us expects us to die to our own selfish desires in order that we might live unto him. Paul says we are no longer to live unto ourselves, but unto him which died for us and rose again (2 Cor. 5:14, 15). The mother suffers the travails or pains of birth in order that her child might live. And she gives the milk of her breast, of her time, strength and loving

care that the child might grow into healthful youth. A life spent entirely on self not only loses eternal life, but brings no blessings whatever to others. It is only in a life that is hid with Christ in God (Col. 3:3) that accomplishes these things. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:11).

THE CLEANSING FOUNTAIN

"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness (Zech. 13:1). The above verse was prophetic of Christ. The day referred to here was the day of his death, and the fountain "was filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins; and sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains."

In the stores today one may buy many varieties of soaps, detergents, and emulsions to be used in all manner of cleansings and for healthful sanitation. But the scientists in their laboratories have never discovered a chemical that will remove the stain of sin from the soul of man. There is only one cleanser that will accomplish that work — the blood of Christ! "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Under the Jewish law the blood of animals and the ashes of an heifer, when sprinkled according to the ceremonial rites of that law, sanctified to the purifying of the flesh. And Paul asks, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:13, 14). "O now I see the crimson stream; the fountain deep and wide. Jesus my Lord, mighty to save, points to his wounded side."

It matters not as to the nature of the stain of sin. It may be horribly repulsive and penetrate to the very core of the heart, yet God states with absolute assurance, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18). In this service the crimson juice is ever a reminder to us of that great fountain, the Lord of glory, opened for us, when on the cross, his blood was shed for our redemption and cleansing.

"WHAT MEAN YE BY THIS FEAST?"

The Lord instituted the Passover feast in Egypt to be observed yearly on the 14th day of the first month, at which time a lamb was slain, its body cooked and eaten in the place where the tabernacle later where the temple, was located (Deut. 16:1-12). This feast was first observed the night Israel was delivered from Egyptian bondage. The Lord knew that in the generations to come the children would ask, "What mean ye by this feast? ", and it was to be explained to them that this feast was a memorial of that night when God's people obtained their freedom. (Read Exodus 12: 24-27). Each time they observed that feast, they were reminded of God's love and power that wrought such a great deliverance for that enslaved people.

Christ instituted the Lord's Supper the night he was betrayed, as a memorial of the death he suffered on Calvary for our spiritual freedom, and we are to observe this spiritual feast each Lord's day (Acts 20:7). In that observance we should ask ourselves the question, "What do we mean by this feast? " There is but one answer. In observing this feast we acknowledge that we were sinners, lost and ruined, and separated from our Father; and that it required the horrible death of our Savior on the cross to deliver us from the eternal consequence of our sins. In breaking the bread, we are reminded that Christ's body was broken for us, and in partaking of the fruit of the vine, we are reminded of the blood that was shed for our redemption — the great price that was paid for our salvation (1 Peter 1:18, 19). In so doing our hearts should be filled with the deepest appreciation to God for our deliverance from the bondage of sin. This feast is a perpetual reminder of man's lost and ruined condition, and of the mercy and love that caused our Lord to come to earth and give Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time (1 Tim. 2:6). May we ever be deeply thankful to God for his infinite grace.

SAVED BY BLOOD

"And when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13). Israel had been told to kill a lamb for the Passover feast, and its blood was to be saved and put on the door posts and on the lintel over the door (verse 22). The angel of death was to pass over the whole land of Egypt that fateful night to slay the firstborn; but the blood upon the door saved those within. Be it ever remembered; Only blood could save them! At the midnight hour the angel of death entered every home

that was unmarked by blood and there the firstborn grew cold in death's embrace.

Christ is our Paschal Lamb (1 Cor. 5:7), and through his blood we receive the remission of sins. "In whom we have redemption, through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). In the act of baptism, we are "baptized into his death" (Rom. 6:3). It is at his death where his blood was shed, and through baptism in water we spiritually come in contact with his blood and receive salvation from our past sins. "If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son cleanseth us from all sins" (1 John 1:7).

When Christ instituted the Lord's Supper, he took the cup, 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" (Matt. 26:27, 28). This is one very important feature of the Lord's Supper: it keeps before our minds the memory of Him whose blood atoned for our sins. May the Lord help us also to remember that his offering was made freely, through his infinite grace because of his unbounded love for us. May we have the deepest gratitude in our hearts for this wondrous love shown toward us in offering himself for our redemption. We should regard this as a great privilege to thus honor our Lord through this spiritual service.

CHRIST, ALL AND IN ALL

Paul spoke of Christ as "all, and in all" (Col. 3:11), which we understand to mean that He is to be everything to all Christians. In Him "dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" and we are "complete in Him" (Col. 2:9, 10). Every spiritual desire of the human heart, every longing after perfection, can find fulfillment in Him. He is the "first and the last", the beginning of the creation of God, the creator of the world and the author of man's being. He has been made the head of the church and the savior of the body (Eph. 5:23). He is the "King of kings and Lord of Lords" with all authority in heaven and in earth, ruling with the rod of love all those who have committed their souls into His keeping. He demands first place in our hearts — that we love him with all our strength and all our soul. Our bodies and spirits belong to Him (1 Cor. 6:19, 20), and they are to be kept pure for His spiritual service. When necessity requires, He demands that we leave all loved ones in order to follow Him (Matt. 10:37), and we are required to serve Him with an eye single to God's glory.

We may well ask why all these demands are made upon us. The answer is not difficult to find, for He gave up all for us. The glory-circled throne of God, the treasures of heaven, the associations of all the celestial beings in that fair land of fadeless joys, were forsaken for our redemption, and he became so poor that He had not where to lay His head. On Calvary's cross He "bore our sins in his own body on the tree" that we might be saved from the wrath of our offended God. No wonder Paul teaches us that we are no longer to live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again (2 Cor. 5:14, 15). The Lord's Supper teaches us of the supreme sacrifice He made in our behalf. May He ever be our "all and in all."

HUMILITY IN WORSHIP

In Luke 18:10-14 is the story of the Pharisee and the publican who went into the temple to pray. The proud and haughty Pharisee was loud in praise of his own virtues. He needed nothing from the Lord, except that the Lord would hear his thanks for being so superior to the publican. The publican, fully realizing his evident shortcomings, stood with bowed head and humbled heart, pleading "God, forgive me a sinner." Jesus said, "I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Long ago God said, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isaiah 66:2).

Worship is an act based upon the fact that man is utterly dependent upon God for all things, and that we are indebted to him for all that we have, and especially for the hope of eternal life. In this act of worship which we call the Lord's Supper, we acknowledge the fact that Christ died for our sins. How can anyone partake of these sacred emblems with a proud or even a thoughtless heart? This Supper ever stands as a monument to man's sins, as well as of Christ's death. His death was accomplished because we had sinned. The bloody cross of Christ is the finger of God pointing to all humanity, saying, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Merely partaking of these emblems is not sufficient to constitute a real spiritual act of worship. Our hearts must be humbled in acknowledgment of our own unworthiness. Were it not for Christ's great sacrifice, we would be those "having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12). Surely it must be a humbling fact to realize that the horrifying sufferings of Christ upon the cross were imperative to save us from the tortures of hell! God help us when

we approach this solemn act of worship, to be humble in the acknowledgment of our sinfulness before God! May the penitent cry come from every heart, "God forgive me a sinner."

OUR DEBT TO GOD

"How much owest thou unto my Lord?" (Luke 16:5). This question is a part of the parable of the unjust steward, and it is well that we apply it to ourselves. That we are under obligations to God is evidenced by Jesus' reply to his critics: "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God, the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21). The Lord is the owner of heaven and earth (Deut. 10:14), and the giver of life (Acts 17:25) and all its blessings (James 1:17); hence, daily thanksgiving should be offered to Him for his abundant gift (Col. 3:15).

We can never repay our debt to him as far as returning equal value for what has been received is concerned, but we must show gratitude for our Father's most gracious gifts. The greatest gift of all is the gift of salvation. "For God hath not appointed us to wrath but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:9). Man, in sin, is a doomed creature. "The soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4), and "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). But God, who is rich in mercy, would not permit man to die without making efforts to save him. God is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9) so he gave us the gift of his Son (John 3:16) and the Son gave us the gift of his life. May we never forget that this gift saves us from the horrors of an eternal death! And that death places us under the greatest of obligations to Christ. "The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:14, 15).

The Lord's Supper is a constant reminder that we owe Christ everything, for without him we would lose everything! "But drops of grief can ne'er repay the debt of love I owe. Here Lord, I give myself away 'tis all that I can do." In partaking of these sacred emblems, may we continually ask ourselves, "How much owest thou unto my Lord?"

THE FLESH versus THE SPIRIT

"If ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye through the spirit do mortify (crucify) the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8:13). Man is a dual being, composed of two diverse parts, the flesh and the

spirit. There is an inner man and an outward man (2 Cor. 4:16, Rom. 7:22). The inner man is the spirit that came from God (Eccl. 12:7) while the outward man, the flesh is of the ground. In every life there is a conflict between the flesh and the spirit: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17). Paul said, "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27). Thus we learn that the body is to be the servant of the spirit, with the spirit under God's guidance, always the master of the life, ever living above the mere material and physical desires of the flesh. This is what it means to live for God.

Christ, by his death, showed the superiority of the spirit over the flesh, when he sacrificed his physical body to save the spirit of man. God sent his own Son "in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). The Lord's Supper most graphically pictures to us the sacrifice Jesus made of the physical man, in order to save the spiritual. His physical death accomplished our spiritual salvation. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness" (1 Peter 2:24). So now we are to "put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provisions for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14). Now that we are redeemed from sin, our bodies are to be offered "a living sacrifice unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1,2).

THE BRAZEN SERPENT AND CHRIST

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:14, 15).

Rebellious Israel had murmured against the Lord and Moses. Their perpetual complaining and dissatisfaction with the Lord's provisions provoked the Lord to anger (Numbers 21:4-9) so that serpents were sent among them and "much people of Israel died." Humbled by their chastisement, they confessed their sins and prayed for relief from the serpents. The Lord instructed Moses to make a serpent of brass and put it on a pole, and "it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." Jesus teaches us that this was a type of the salvation he would provide for man.

Man, afflicted by the poison of sin, was doomed to die (Rom. 6:23) but God who is rich in his love and mercy, provided a remedy whereby poor sinful man might live. The death of the Son of God upon the uplifted Cross is an adequate remedy for every sinful child of Adam. The sting of the serpent's bite was healed only when Israel looked to the brazen serpent, and the sting of sin is removed only when sinful man looks to Christ. In him and in him alone do we have hope. "I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). How important that we should ever be looking to Christ as our one and only hope. When we observe the Lord's Supper, we thereby acknowledge Christ as our only hope of redemption from sin, and in partaking of the sacred emblems that represent His body and blood, we are looking to Him who gave himself as a sin offering unto salvation (Heb. 12:2).

A REASON FOR OUR LOVE

"We love him because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). The above verse conveys a world of meaning in a few simple, plain words. Paul declares that love is the greatest thing in the world (1 Cor. 13:13). Christ plainly taught that the greatest commandment was to love the Lord with all our heart (Matt. 22:35-38). But this command to love God is not based on the authority of God to require absolute and unquestioned obedience on the part of man. It is based on the heart-warming fact that God loved us first.

His love was not revealed by mere words, but in deeds that awaken the heart to its fullest capabilities of emotions and aspirations. God so loved the world that he gave — gave the one object that was nearest to his heart, his Son, the Son of his love. And his giving was for a high and holy purpose — to save man from the eternal consequences of his sins. The Son, in his own giving, made the greatest sacrifice within the power of a God to give — his own life. He did not merely sacrifice his life, but gave it under the most painful and humiliating conditions of all time! His was no common crucifixion; it was the offering of the kindest, gentlest, and most lovable character the world has ever known. They took this meek and holy one whose whole life had been spent in bestowing blessings on all whom he could reach, and they spit on him, insulted him, mocked him and beat him as if he was a vile, depraved criminal who had forfeited all rights to human consideration, then they nailed him to the cross where for six long, agonizing hours he suffered,

not mere physical suffering, but the suffering of one whose heart throbbed with the tenderest love even for those who crucified him. In this Supper we are again and again reminded of the nature and beauty of Christ's love! He died, the just for the unjust that he might reconcile man unto God (1 Peter 3:18).

THE BREAD OF LIFE

Jesus once said, "I am the bread of life: Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die" (John 6:48-50).

The physical body of man is sustained by physical food. In the beginning God said, "I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat" (Gen. 1:29). Later God gave this information: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb, have I given you all things" (Gen. 9:3). Thus a variety of all necessary foods was supplied man for the sustenance of his physical body. Our daily intake of food is vitally necessary to replenish the body cells worn out through the normal activities of life.

But man is more than a physical being. God "formed the spirit of man within him" (Zech. 12:1) and that spirit needs food even as does the body. "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). When man fell into sin, some special food was necessary to repair the damage done to his soul. That vital need was supplied by our Savior when he gave himself for our redemption. His body, crucified on Calvary's tree, supplied the means by which the dying soul of man might live again. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). Physically we do not eat of his flesh nor drink of his blood. In accepting Christ as our Redeemer, we partake spiritually of the provisions he supplied through his death. The loaf in the Lord's Supper represents his body which was broken for us (Matt. 26:26). The "Bread of Life" is not the Loaf, but that which the Loaf represents — the body of Christ. We can live spiritually, only by partaking of the spiritual provisions Christ has made for us.

THE MEMORIAL STONES OF JORDAN

When Israel was ready to cross Jordan into the promised land, the Lord gave instructions to Joshua to choose twelve men, one from each of the twelve tribes, and each man was to take a stone from the river bed and carry it to the western bank of the river. These twelve stones were to be built into a memorial of their crossing into that land which the Lord had promised them so long before. Read Joshua 4:1-24. The children of future generations, not knowing the circumstances of the building of that memorial would ask, "What mean ye by these stones?" They were to be told that it was through the goodness and power of the Lord that the waters of Jordan were cut off so that Israel with their wives and children, their flocks and herds, walked over that river on dry ground, and the Lord wished them to remember this with thanksgiving and gratitude. It was a memorial of a great and notable event.

But the Lord's Supper is a memorial of a much greater event — the death of the holy Son of God, who gave himself for our redemption by willingly dying in shame and agony upon Calvary's cross. It is His desire that we should ever remember that greatest of all events by partaking of the bread and wine which represent his body and his blood. When he instituted that Supper, He said, "This do in remembrance of me." The memorial stones of Jordan even stood as a reminder of God's care for Israel and of the provisions he made for them, and even so the Lord's Supper ever stands as a perpetual memorial of the most beautiful sacrifice ever made in all the annals of time. How happy we should be that once a week we can, as God's happy children, gather together to observe this solemn feast in memory of Him who died that we might live. May we feelingly thank the Lord for this beautiful memorial of His wonderful grace.

A SUBMISSIVE HEART

"And he that sent me is with me; The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (John 8:29). Paul tells us that Christ being in the form of God "thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (Phil. 2:6), which means that he possessed the same *divine attributes as the divine Father. Yet he was submissive in every respect to his Father, and lived only to please him.* Christ said of himself "I seek not my own will but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5:30). What a wonderful lesson in obedience! A God living in the highest heaven, yet coming on earth as a mere man,

enduring privation, poverty, persecution and finally death in order to please his Father! Most children who have a loving, affectionate father, find it a pleasure to yield to their father's will, for ordinarily a father will require nothing of a child that is unpleasant or painful. Yet in the case of Christ the Father asked him to perform a task that called for the greatest sacrifice and suffering conceivable, and Christ willingly obeyed. "He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8).

When Christ was in Gethsemane with the shadow of that awful cross over his heart, he prayed in an agony of tears, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me". How completely resigned he was to his Father's desire, however, when he said, "Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done" (Matt. 26:39, Luke 22:42). It was the Father's will that Christ should die upon the cross as an atoning sacrifice for all of mankind, and so he bravely and willingly marched up the rocky path to Calvary, and there gave his life for our redemption. How pitifully little it is he asks of us compared to what the Father asked of him! His dying request to us was that we should ever remember what it cost him to purchase our redemption, "This do in remembrance of me". God grant that our willingness to obey him may ever equal his willingness to and so when he instituted the Lord's Supper, he pleaded obey his Father.

THE PURPOSE OF CREATION

"Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. 4:11).

Millions of stars twinkle in the blue canopy of heaven so far above us that they appear only as pin-points of light; yet many of them are thousands of times larger than the gigantic world upon which man lives. With one united voice they sing "The hand that made us is divine", for "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork; day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge" (Psalms 19:1,2). The great universe with its thousands of suns, moons and stars, is like a delicate watch with its perfectly meshed gears that move with precision and perfection. All of this is to the honor and glory of God, but the honor given to God by the material universe involves no intelligent obedience. As lifeless, inanimate things they cannot do otherwise than obey the laws controlling them. But man, a tiny speck upon a tiny planet, can of his own will praise Him from whom all blessings flow.

Thus man is the greatest of all created things, in that he alone can render willing, intelligent obedience unto God. This was the purpose of his creation and, on man's part, God is honored through willing, consecrated service to him. Sin defiled man, and dishonored his Maker. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23) but God has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18:32), and so Christ's purpose was to bring man back to God, that man once more might honor and glorify his Maker. Christ paid man's debt to God — He died that we might live. When we commemorate Christ's death through the Lord's Supper, may we ever remember the divine purpose of our existence, and glorify our Father in heaven through a consecrated life — a life wholly used for His pleasure.

THE POWER OF THE CROSS

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12:32). The above statement made by Christ is followed by John's explanation: “This he said, signifying what death he should die.” Those cruel men who crucified Christ did not realize that the act they performed was the one thing that would perpetuate Christ's name forever. They crucified him in order to destroy his influence among men, but Christ's death upon the uplifted cross is the one thing that has made his name immortal. The magic of his name is not in his wonderful teaching, nor the remarkable miracles he performed. The deathless fame of Christ is in his death. It is through death that he lives! *He died that we might live!* “I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore” (Rev. 1:18).

To reveal the divine purpose of his death is to use the one and only means of turning men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. The story of the uplifted cross turns men from the foulness and filthiness of sin into the purity and holiness of God's grace. The story of the cross will sober the drunkard, made the thief honest and purify the heart of the vile. That story is the greatest moral power in the world. No wonder Paul declared, “I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto Salvation” (Rom. 1:16). When we gather around the Lord's Table to partake of the sacred emblems representing Christ's body and blood, this repetition of the story of the cross should turn our hearts from material things to the spiritual — from the things of time to the things of eternity. It should quicken our hearts to more zeal and activity in our Master's work. This is the real purpose of the Lord's Supper: To re-enact the story of the Cross and thus lead each other into a higher and purer life.

A DIVINE APPOINTMENT

The night before Christ died he plainly foretold his death to his disciples, but stated that on the third day he would rise again, and then he said, "But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee" (Matt. 16:32). On the morning of his resurrection, when the women came to the tomb, they were greeted by an angel, who revealed the fact that Jesus had risen from the dead, and then gave this command to them: "Go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him" (Matt. 18:5-7). Shortly thereafter the women met Jesus himself, who told them to tell the apostles to meet him in Galilee (verse 10) and then in verse 16 we learn that the disciples did keep this appointment to meet Christ in Galilee. We can be quite sure that if these disciples had failed to keep this appointment, the Lord would have been both disappointed and displeased. But they did meet their Lord as he appointed them and there they worshipped him.

We too have a weekly appointment with our Lord, for when he instituted the sacred feast — the Lord's Supper — he made this request, "This do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). In Acts 20:7 we learn that the church at Troas, under inspired guidance, met together on the first day of the week "to break bread." 1 Cor. 10:16 shows so clearly that the "breaking bread" refers to the Lord's Supper; and in Heb. 10:25 we are admonished "not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." These scriptures make it plain that all Christians have a weekly appointment with the Lord, to meet with him in these sacred acts of divine worship ordained by Him for our spiritual blessings.

Always he is there, in spirit, for he says "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20). May we never fail our Lord in this holy appointment.

THE DRAWING POWER OF GOD

"And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me" (John 12:32).

The above statement made by our Lord shortly before his death, had reference to the nature of the death he would die (verse 33). Death by crucifixion was a horrible death, inflicted only on the worst malefactors. Christ endured that death, gladly and willingly, in order to effectuate man's salvation. Paul tells us that the gospel consists of three

facts — the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4) and that gospel is the “power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16). To preach the gospel is to tell the story of Christ’s death upon the uplifted cross, and this story is the only means by which the sinner’s heart can be turned from the love of sin to a thirst for righteousness. For we know that it was love, pure unselfish love, that caused Christ to leave the courts of heaven and come to earth that He might give himself in sacrifice for the sins of all mankind.

We have in material nature the laws of gravity, and it is that law which always draws things to the earth. Just as sure as you throw an object in the air, the law of gravity will draw it back to the earth. But the drawing power of God draws men, not downward, but upward to higher living, nobler aspirations and greater happiness. Love is the strongest force in the world, and as it was love that led Christ to die in our behalf, so it is love that leads us to him.

When we meet to observe the Lord’s Supper that is our constant reminder of Christ’s death through love for us, we are ever conscious of that uplifted cross and the love that nailed Christ to that cross. In this sacred service we re-enact the scene of Calvary, and each time we eat of the bread and drink of the cup, let us bow our hearts in sincere gratitude to Him who died that we might live.

TO WHAT ARE WE APPOINTED?

“For God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Thess. 5:9).

God is truly a God of love, but he is also a God of wrath. “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom. 1:18). God cannot love purity without abhorring uncleanness. He cannot require righteousness without condemning unrighteousness. The more one loves that which is beautiful, the more one will despise the ugly and filthy. God cannot hate man, but he does despise the evil in men’s hearts. His love can lift man up out of the filth and degradations of sin, but only through the willingness of man. Unless man will cooperate with God in cleansing himself from the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, he must face the certainty of God’s wrath. But man was not ordained to wrath, and if God’s wrath is inflicted upon him, it is not because there is a deficiency of love in God’s heart, but because of man’s perversity and hardness of heart. Through the sufferings of Christ upon the cross, full provisions have

been made for man's salvation, for Christ came to seek and to save the lost. God is truly longsuffering and forbearing toward man, but he will not contend with man forever. The day of salvation is here now, and God's offers of mercy and pardon are extended to every one, for "whosoever will, let him come", and "him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

The Lord's Supper reveals most impressively the lengths to which God and Christ have gone to save man from the wrath which is to come, for in the death of Christ, all provisions were made for man's escape from the eternal consequences of his sins. As we partake of these sacred emblems may we realize how sincere have been the Lord's efforts to save man from the folly of his own wicked heart.

A WILLING SACRIFICE John 10:18; 19:11

Jesus said to the Jews, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again". In the garden of Gethsemane, he told his disciples, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:53). When he stood before Pilate who, astonished by Christ's silence, asked "Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee and have power to release thee? He answered, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given to thee from above".

These scriptures, and others that could be quoted, make it plain that when Christ died, he died a willing sacrifice for man's redemption. It was not the power of the Roman army that accomplished his death. It was the love in his heart for ruined man. The determination of the Jews and all the power of the Roman legions would have been powerless to have accomplished Jesus' death, had it not been for his willingness to offer himself a sacrifice for all. This is one of the most impressive facts connected with Christ's death. Let us never forget that he did not suffer death through the hatred and strength of his enemies. These men unknowingly to themselves merely accomplished the real purpose Christ had in coming into the world. And when we commemorate Christ's death in the observance of the Lord's Supper, let it be

impressed upon the hearts of all who participate that all the powers of hell could not have slain the Son of God; but that his death was prearranged from the beginning of time. Christ was a "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8) thus proving that it was love, divine love, that led him to Calvary, and not the anger of that bloodthirsty mob.

BE YE THANKFUL Col. 3:15

The apostle enjoins upon us the command "Be ye thankful". I am sure there is no duty binding upon man that is more universally neglected than the simple duty of thankfulness. How few there are who realize that "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of light" (James 1:17) who has given to us "life and breath and all things" (Acts 17:25). How slow we are to realize that all the numerous things of our daily life which bring to us such pleasure, and make life meaningful are the Father's gracious gifts. The lovely flowers with their sweet fragrance, our daily food, the cooling drink, the love and companionship of those most dear to us together with the health and strength whereby we are able to perform our necessary daily tasks, are all gifts from Him who is the "Bountiful Giver of all good things."

But the greatest gift of all is that of the promised life in a world that is free from all that makes us sad and unhappy here. Paul declares, "The gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). That life comes only through the sufferings and death of God's holy and beloved Son, for He died that we might live! "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:9). This means that we can be saved from the eternal consequence of our sins only through the offering of the body of Christ. He paid our debt to God! "God made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). Christ's death was the world's most notable gift — his life given for ours, given gladly and willingly; and how thankful we should be! How happy we should be to thus express our deep sense of gratitude, by granting his last request — "This do in remembrance of me."

THE REAL CROSS THAT CHRIST CARRIED John 19:17—Matt. 27:32

A beaten, haggard man staggered along a rocky pathway, bearing on his shoulders a heavy wooden cross. The marks of terrible suffering were vividly pictured on his face. Circling his brow was a crown of thorns that had pin-pointed the tender flesh, bringing the red blood dripping down his face. The coat he wore was also splotted with blood, for he had been cruelly beaten with a scourge by a Roman soldier at the command of the Governor. The cross was heavy and he, being weakened by the long hours of his trial, the sleepless night and the brutal beatings, fell under the weight of his burden. Another man was drafted to carry the cross to the summit of the hill where the Son of God was crucified. If we think that the cross he carried was heavy, it is well that we understand that the oft-forgotten truth that his heavy cross was light indeed compared to the real cross he carried. Had it not been for a greater burden on his heart, there would have been no crown of thorns, no brutal scourging, no insults nor barbed darts of hatred. He was hated, despised and forsaken because he had chosen to carry on his own heart the burden of the sins of the whole world. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, and with his stripes we were healed — the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah.53: 5,6).

When we meet to observe the Lord's Supper, which commemorates His death, it is well that we pause and contemplate the solemn fact that it was our sins that crucified the Lord. He died not just a martyr to a good cause, but he died "the just for the unjust that he might reconcile us to God." If you could have seen with your own eyes the terrible suffering Christ endured at his death, only then could you be made to realize the horrible nature of sin in God's sight. May the Father help us to be more conscious of our unworthiness so that we will strive harder to please Him.

A FATHER'S PITY

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (Psalms 103:13,14). A mother's love is the strongest of all human emotions, yet many mothers forget their offspring; but the divine Father's love and compassion toward man are as abiding as eternity itself. The difference between the eternal God and sinful man is too

great for expression or understanding, yet God loves man! Man may fall to the lowest depths of moral degradation, yet God's love and pity reaches down to lift him up and restore him to his former estate. Man, at his best, is a woe of the dust as compared to Almighty God. A mere speck on a gigantic planet that is only a speck in the universe, man occupies a prominent place in the heart of God. Lost in sin, and doomed to eternal destruction, man is pitied by God who provides a way of salvation. Paul, in considering all this, cried out in amazement, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God!" (Rom. 11:33). A man can view without the slightest flicker of emotion or pity the death of a tiny insect. But the divine Father's concern over the certain destruction of the finite creature man, led him to take the greatest step even a God could take to save man from the consequence of his own folly. He sent into the world the Son of his love, to save and redeem man.

The observance of the Lord's Supper recalls to our minds the greatest act of love and compassion of all recorded history. A being, who was both God and man, died, the just for the unjust that he might reconcile man unto God. A Father's pity could go no further than this! God had nothing greater to give than the gift of his Son, who willingly and gladly gave himself for our redemption. A thousand tongues are needed to describe the horrors of the eternal destruction and of the terrible malignancy of sin. Only the death of the sinless Son of God could reveal these facts.

THE GREAT BURDEN BEARER

"Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

Man, at his best, is a weak and helpless creature laden with the burden of his infirmities and the manifold cares and trials of daily existence, and is ever faced with the terrors of the uncertain future. "We know not what a day may bring forth" and "whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow" (James 4:14). Disease afflicts the body, death takes away loved ones and economic insecurity gives daily concern. Truly man has need of a friend whose power is greater than his own. Many times the burdens of life seem beyond our power to bear. The heavenly Father who knows and understands all our problems, ever stands ready and anxious to share our burdens and refresh our fainting hearts. Paul exhorts us to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need" (Heb. 4:16). No burden is too great for our Lord's shoulders: He who fell

under the physical weight of his own cross is able to bear the burdens of the entire world. Christ's invitation to "come unto me ... and ye shall find rest for your souls" (Matt. 11:28,29) reflects his willingness and power to give relief to every fainting heart. With full trust in Him, the dark days of the present are lighted by the sunshine of his love and the future can hold no terror for a soul placed in God's keeping.

But the greatest burden that Christ carried was not the daily care of a worried heart, but the burden of sin that is upon every soul. The cross of Calvary was heavy, but the burden of the world's sin was heavier; and Christ willingly took upon his own heart "the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). He hath "borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" through his infinite love, compassion and mercy. The Lord's Supper is impressive in its revelation of Christ's willingness and power to carry the burdens of all mankind. May our gratitude for his unspeakable gift ever be expressed in acts of consecration.

THE LORD'S DAY

John speaks of being "in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (Rev. 1:10) and there is almost universal agreement among Bible scholars that this refers to the first day of the week, called Sunday. It is well that we consider all the important facts of Biblical history connected with this day. It is indisputable that Christ rose from the dead on this day (Luke 24:1; John 20:1) and that his first appearances to his disciples occurred upon this day (John 20:19; Luke 24:13-30). The first Pentecost after the resurrection came on the first day of the week, for the Jews were to count from the first sabbath (seventh day) after the Passover, seven sabbaths complete, which would be seven weeks, and the next day after the seventh sabbath was Pentecost (Leviticus 23:15,16) which always came on the first day of the week. It was upon the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection when the Holy Spirit came upon the twelve apostles. Also it was on this day that Peter first used the keys of the kingdom to open the door of faith to the Jews (Matt. 16:19) by preaching the first gospel sermon revealing the terms of admission into Christ (Acts 2:38), and it was upon this day that people were first added to the church (Acts 2:47). Furthermore, it was upon the first day of the week when the early disciples assembled together to "break bread" in memory of their crucified but risen Redeemer (Acts 20:7). This is the only day mentioned in the New Testament where Christians assembled together for the purpose of divine worship. Hence, it must be "the Lord's day" of Rev. 1:10. By assembling on that day and

partaking of the Lord's Supper, we commemorate the two greatest events of all time — the death and resurrection of Christ. How very fitting and proper that these two historic events should be commemorated together! And this is according to apostolic example (Acts 20:7). This act of assembling is a divine command (Heb. 10:25) and cannot be ignored without grave danger to our souls. May the Lord help us to be more obedient to his word.

THE GRACE OF GOD

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8).

Perhaps there is no religious subject more misunderstood than salvation by grace. In the original, the word grace simply means favor, or more definitely defined, “to bend down or stoop to an inferior.” Man by sin forfeited his standing with God. “Your sins have separated between you and your God; and your iniquities have hid his face that he will not hear” (Isaiah 59:2). Thus man is under the penalty of sin, which is death (Rom. 6:23). But God is unwilling that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9) and so he “stopped down” to save man. God would not set aside the laws which man had violated in order to save him. The just demands of God's law must be met. So God, in infinite kindness and mercy, sent his only Son to pay our debt to God. Under no conditions could man win or merit God's favor. All provisions for man's salvation were gifts from God. The gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23). The Lord's Supper reveals the nature of the gift, for salvation required the death of our Lord in order that we might live through him. This was Christ's part in our salvation. But there is another part to the plan of redemption, and that is our part, which requires our full obedience to all the Lord's commands. Christ became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him (Heb. 5:9), and when Christ instituted this Supper we were placed under the command to “do this in remembrance of me.” We are not saved alone by what God and Christ have done. Jesus said to the Jews, “Ye will not come to me that ye might have life” (John 5:40). On Pentecost Peter told the people to “save yourselves from this untoward generation” (Acts 2:40) which is positive proof that in order to receive God's grace, we must yield ourselves to him in his appointed acts of obedience. God's grace alone cannot save without man's co-operation in full obedience to God's laws.

SPIRITUAL WORSHIP

Jesus said, "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

Many and varied are the forms of worship offered in the numerous churches today, and this is a striking contrast to the simple, spiritual worship of the days of the apostles. Paul taught that "God dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is he worshipped with men's hands" (Acts 17:24,25). Pompous, ritualistic, mechanical music and intoned prayers offered amidst the material splendor of imposing cathedrals are not the means the Lord gave to bring the souls of men closer to him. Paul spoke of the danger of Christians being "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3), and this warning is especially important to consider in connection with the Lord's day service. Luke spoke of the church assembling on the first day of the week to "break bread" (Acts 20:7), and in that service every Christian, as a common priest, offered "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5). This did not require a robed choir, a golden altar, the burning of incense or the lighting of candles. It required only the obedience of a consecrated heart to the simple commands of an all-loving Father. Singing with melody in our hearts the beautiful songs of Zion, offering heartfelt prayers before the throne of grace, learning with humbled hearts the lessons of truth from the Book of God and observing the Lord's Supper in grateful remembrance of our Savior's death upon the cross, together with the material offerings we make for the advancement of the gospel, constitute the only acts of worship of the early church. Worship is "homage paid — reverence rendered" to God as the bountiful Giver of all good things. Let us make every possible effort to make our worship more spiritual in order that we might draw nigh unto God, in closer relationship with him.