

1. Mark 14:22

2. Mark 14:22-24

3. Mark 14:22

whose name we were baptised. With the conversion of the heart, must go the confession of the tongue, Luke xii. 8. 'Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God;' Peter openly confessed Christ crucified, Acts iv. 10. Cyprian, a man of a brave spirit was like a rock, whom no waves could shake; like an adamant, whom no sword could cut: he confessed Christ before the proconsul, and suffered himself to be proscribed; yea, chose death, rather than he would betray the truths of Christ. He that dares not confess the holy Trinity, shames his baptism, and God will be ashamed to own him at the day of judgment.

Ult. use. See the fearfulness of the sin of apostacy! 'Tis a renouncing of our baptism, 'Tis damnable perjury to go away from God after a solemn vow, 2 Tim. iv. 10. 'Demas hath forsaken me.' He turned renegado, and afterwards became a priest in an idol-temple, saith Dorotheus. Julian the apostate (Gregory Nazianzen observes) bathed himself in the blood of beasts offered in sacrifice to heathen-gods; and so, as much as in him lay, washed off his former baptism. The case of such as fall away after baptism, is dreadful, Heb. x. 38. 'If any man draw back.' The Greek word, to draw back, alludes to a soldier that steals away from his colours; so, if any man steal away from Christ, and run over to the devil's side, 'my soul shall have no pleasure in him;' that is, I will be severely avenged on him; I will make my arrows drunk with his blood. If all the plagues in the Bible can make that man miserable, he shall be so.

II. The second sacrament wherein Jesus Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption, is the Lord's supper.

OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

MARK xiv. 22. *And as they did eat, Jesus took Bread, &c.*

II. HAVING spoken to the sacrament of baptism, I come now to the sacrament of the Lord's supper. The Lord's supper is the most spiritual and sweet ordinance that ever was instituted: here we have to do more immediately with the person of Christ. In prayer, we draw nigh to God; in the sacrament we become one with him. In prayer we look up to Christ; in the sacrament, by faith, we touch him. In the word preached, we hear Christ's voice: in the sacrament we feed on him.

Qu. 1. *What names and titles in scripture are given to the sacrament?*

Ans. 1. It is called, (1.) *Mensa Domini*, 'The Lord's table,' 1 Cor. x. 21. The papists call it an altar, not a table. The reason is, because they turn the sacrament into a sacrifice, and pretend to offer up Christ corporally in the mass. It being the Lord's table, shews with what reverence and solemn devotion we should approach to these holy mysteries: the Lord takes notice of the frame of our hearts when we come to his table, Matth. xxii. 11. 'the king came in to see the guests.' We dress ourselves when we come to the table of some great monarch; we should think with ourselves, we are going to the table of the Lord, therefore should dress ourselves by holy meditation and heart-consideration. Many think it is enough to come to the sacraments, but mind not whether they come in 'due order,' 1 Chron. xv. 13. Perhaps they had scarce a serious thought before, whether they were going: all their dressing was by the glass, not by the Bible. Chrysostom calls it, "The dreadful table of the Lord:" so it is to such as come unworthily. (2.) The sacrament is called, *Cena Domini*, the Lord's supper, 1 Cor. xi. 20. to import it is a spiritual feast. It is indeed a royal feast; God is in this cheer: Christ, in both natures, God and man, is the matter of this supper. (3.) The sacrament is called a 'communion,' 1 Cor. x. 16. 'The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?' The sacrament being called a communion, shews,

1st, That this ordinance is only for believers, because none else can have communion with Christ in these holy mysteries. — *Communio fundatur in unione*: faith only gives us union with Christ, and by virtue of this we have communion with him in his body and blood. None but the spouse communicates with her husband; a stranger may drink of his cup, but she only hath his heart, and communicates with him in a conjugal manner; so strangers may have the sign, drink of the cup, but only believers drink of Christ's blood, and have communion with him in his privileges.

2^{dly}, The sacrament being a communion, shews, that it is *symbolum amoris*, a bond of that unity and charity which should be among Christians, 1 Cor. x. 17. 'We being many are one body.' As many grains make one bread, so many Christians are one body. A sacrament is a love-feast. The primitive Christians (as Justin Martyr notes) had their holy salutations at the blessed supper, in token of that dearness of affection which they did bear to each other. It is a communion, therefore there must be love and union. The Israelites did eat the passover with bitter herbs; so must we eat the sacrament with bitter herbs of repentance, but not with bitter hearts of wrath and malice. The hearts of the communicants should be knit together with the bond of love. "Thou braggest of thy faith (faith

Austin) but shew me thy faith by thy love to the faints." For, as in the sun, light and heat are inseparable; so faith and love are twisted together inseparably. Where there are divisions, the Lord's supper is not properly a communion, but a disunion.

Qu. 2. *What is the Lord's supper?*

Ans. It is a visible sermon, wherein Christ crucified is set before us; or, it is a sacrament of the New Testament, wherein, by receiving the holy elements of bread and wine, our communion with Christ is signified and sealed up to us. Or thus, it is a sacrament divinely instituted; wherein by giving and receiving bread and wine, Christ's death is shewed forth, and the worthy receivers are, by faith made partakers of his body and blood, and all the benefits flowing from thence.

For the further explaining of the nature of the Lord's supper, I shall look back to the institution.

1. 'Jesus] took bread.' Here is the master of the feast, or the Instituter of the sacrament. The Lord Jesus he took bread. He only is fit to institute a sacrament, who is able to give virtue and blessing to it.

2. 'He took bread.'] Christ's taking of the bread was one part of his consecration of the elements, and setting them apart for an holy use. And as Christ did consecrate the elements, so we must labour to have our hearts consecrated before we receive these holy mysteries in the Lord's supper. How unseemly a sight is it to see any come to these holy elements, having hearts leavened with pride, covetousness, envy! These do, with Judas, receive the devil in the sop, and are no better than crucifiers of the Lord of glory.

3. 'And blessed it.'] This is another part of the consecration of the element, Christ blessed it; he blesteth, and it shall be blessed, viz. he looked up to heaven for a benediction upon this ordinance newly founded.

4. 'And brake it.'] The bread broken, and the wine poured out, was to signify to us the agony and ignominy of Christ's sufferings, the rending of Christ's body on the cross, and that effusion of blood which was distilled from his blessed sides.

5. 'And gave it] to them.' Christ's giving the bread, denotes Christ's giving of himself and all his benefits to us freely. Tho' Christ was sold, yet given: Judas did sell Christ, but Christ gave himself to us.

6. 'He gave it to them.'] viz. The disciples. This is the children's bread; Christ doth not cast these pearls before swine. Whether Judas was present at the supper, is controverted: I rather incline to think he was not; for Christ said to the disciples, 'This is my blood, which is shed for you,' Luke xxii. 20. Christ knew his blood was never shed effectually and intentionally for Judas. In eating the passover, Christ gave Ju-

das a sop, which was a bit of unleavened bread dipt in a sauce made with bitter herbs; Judas having received the sop, went immediately out, John xiii. But, suppose Judas were there, though he received the elements, yet not the blessing.

7. 'Take, eat.'] This expression of eating denotes four things: (1.) The near mystical union between Christ and his saints. As the meat which is eaten incorporates with the body, and becomes one with it: so, by eating Christ's flesh, and drinking his blood spiritually, we partake of his merits and graces, and are mystically 'One with him,' John xvii. 23. 'I in them.' (2.) 'Take, eat.' Eating shews the infinite delight the believing soul hath in Christ. Eating is greatful and pleasing to the palate: so feeding on Christ by a lively faith is delicious. *Nulas anime suavior cibus*, Lanctantius. No such sweet feeding as on Christ crucified. This is a 'feast of fat things, and wines on the lees well refined.' (3.) 'Take, eat.' Eating denotes nourishment. Meat, as it is delicious to the palate, so it is nourishing to the body: so eating Christ's flesh, and drinking his blood, is nutritive to the soul. The new creature is nourished at the table of the Lord, to everlasting life, John vi. 54. 'Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life.' (4.) 'Take, eat,' shews the wisdom of God, who restores us by the same means by which we fell. We fell by taking and eating the forbidden fruit, and we are recovered again by taking and eating of Christ's flesh: we died by eating the tree of knowledge, and we live by eating the tree of life.

8. 'This is my body.'] These words, *Hoc est corpus meum*, have been much controverted between us and the papists. 'This is my body:' that is, by a metonymy: it is a sign and figure of my body. The papists hold transubstantiation, that the bread is, after consecration, turned into the very substance of Christ's body. We say, we receive Christ's body spiritually: they say, they receive Christ's body carnally; which is contrary to scripture. The scripture affirms, that the 'heavens must receive Christ's body, until the times of the resititution of all things,' Acts iii. 21. Christ's body cannot be at the same time in heaven and in the host. Aquinas saith, "It is not possible by any miracle, that a body should be locally in two places at once." Besides, it is absurd to imagine, that the bread in the sacrament should be turned into Christ's flesh, and that his body, which was hung before, should be made again of bread. So that, 'This is my body,' is, as if Christ had said, This is a sign and representation of my body.

9. 'And he took the cup.'] The cup is put by metonymy of the subject for the adjunct, for the wine in the cup; it signifies the blood of Christ shed for our sins. The taking of the cup denotes the redundancy of merit in Christ, and the fulness of our redemption by him. He not only took the bread, but the cup.

10. 'And when he had given thanks.'] Christ gave thanks that God had given these elements of bread and wine to be signs and seals of man's redemption by Christ. Christ's giving of thanks, shews his philanthropy, or love to mankind, who did so rejoice and bless God, that lost man was now in a way of recovery, and that he should be raised higher in Christ than ever he was in innocency.

11. 'He gave the cup to them.'] Why then dare any withhold the cup? this is to pollute and curtail the ordinance, and alter it from its primitive institution. Christ and his apostles administered the sacrament in both kinds, the bread and the cup, 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. And the cup was received in the ancient church for the space of 1400 years, as is confessed by two popish councils. Christ saith expressly, 'Drink ye all of this.' He doth not say, eat ye all of this; but, 'Drink ye all;' as foreseeing the sacrilegious impiety of the church of Rome in keeping back the cup from the people. The popish counsel of Constance speaks plainly but impudently, "That although Christ instituted and administered the sacrament in both kinds, the bread and the wine; yet the authority of the holy canons, and the custom of the mother-church, think good to deny the cup to the laity." Thus, as the popish priests make Christ but half a Saviour, so they administer to the people but half a sacrament. The sacrament is Christ's last-will and testament: in the text 'This is my blood of the new testament.' Now to alter or take away any thing from a man's will and testament, is a great impiety: What is it to alter and mangle Christ's last will and testament? Sure it is an high affront to Christ.

Qu. 3. *What are the ends of the Lord's supper?*

Ans. It is an ordinance appointed to confirm our faith, John iv. 48. 'Except ye see signs ye will not believe.' Christ sets the elements before us, that by these signs our faith may be strengthened. As faith cometh by hearing, so it is confirmed by seeing Christ crucified. The sacrament is not only a sign to represent Christ, but a seal to confirm our interest in him.

Qu. *But it is the Spirit confirms faith, therefore not the sacrament.*

Ans. 1. This is not good logic. The Spirit confirms faith, therefore not the sacrament, is, as if one should say, God feeds our bodies, therefore bread doth not feed us; whereas God feeds us by bread; so the Spirit confirms our faith by the use of the sacrament.

2. The end of the sacrament is, to keep up the, 'memory of Christ's death.' 1 Cor. xi. 25. 'This do ye in remembrance of me.' If a friend give us a ring at his death, we wear it to keep up the memory of our friend; much more then ought we

to keep up the memorial of Christ's death in the sacrament : Christ's death lays a foundation for all the magnificent blessings which we receive from Christ. The covenant of grace was agreed on in heaven, but sealed upon the cross. Christ hath sealed all the articles of peace in his blood. Remission of sin flows from Christ's death, Matth. xxvi. 28. ' This is my blood of the new testament shed for many, for the remission of sins.' Consecration or making us holy, in the fruit of Christ's death, Heb. ix. 14. ' How much more shall the blood of Christ, purge your conscience !' Christ's intercession is made available to us by virtue of his death ; Christ could not have been admitted an advocate, if he had not been first a sacrifice. Our entering into heaven is the fruit of Christ's blood, Heb. x. 19. Christ could not have prepared mansions for us, if he had not first purchased them by his death : so that we have a great deal of cause to commemorate Christ's death in the sacrament.

Qu. In what manner are we to remember the Lord's death in the sacrament ?

Ans. It is not only an historical remembrance of Christ's death and passion ; thus Judas remembers Christ's death, and how he betrayed him ; and Pilate remembers Christ's death, and how he crucified him : but our remembering Christ's death in the sacrament must be,

(1.) A mournful remembrance. We must not be able to look on Christ crucified with dry eyes, Zech. xii. 10. ' They shall look on him whom they have pierced and mourn over him.' O Christian, when thou lookest on Christ in the sacrament, remember how oft thou hast crucified him ! The Jews did it but once, thou often. Every oath is a nail with which thou piercest his hands : every unjust, sinful action is a spear with which thou woundest his heart. O remember Christ with sorrow, to think thou shouldest make his wounds bleed afresh !

MARK xiv. 22, 23, 24. *Jesus took Bread.*

(2.) It must be a ' joyful remembrance,' John viii. 56. ' Abraham saw my day, and rejoiced.' When a Christian sees a sacrament-day approach, he should rejoice. This ordinance of the supper is an earnest of heaven ; 'tis the glass, in which we see him whom our souls love ; it is the chariot by which we are carried up to Christ : ' When Jacob saw the waggons and the chariots which were to carry him to his son Joseph, his spirit revived,' Gen. xlv. 27. God hath appointed the sacrament, on purpose to cheer and revive a sad heart. When we

look on our sins, we have cause to mourn ; but when we see Christ's blood shed for our sins, this may make us rejoice. In the sacrament our wants are supplied, our strength is renewed : here we meet with Christ, and doth not this call for joy ? A woman that hath been long debarred from the society of her husband, how glad is she of his presence ! At the sacrament the believing spouse meets with Christ : he saith to her, All I have is thine ; my love is thine to pity thee ; my mercy is thine, to save thee. How can we think in the sacrament on Christ's blood shed, and not rejoice ; *Sanguis Christi clavis paradisi* ; Christ's blood is the key which opens heaven, else we had been all shut out.

3. End of the sacrament is, to work in us an endeared love to Christ. When Christ bleeds over us, well may we say, Behold how he loved us ! Who can see Christ die, and not be ' sick of love ? ' This is an heart of stone, whom Christ's love will not melt.

4. End of the sacrament, the mortifying of corruption. To see Christ crucified for us, is a means to crucify sin in us. Christ's death (like the water of jealousy) makes the ' thigh of sin to rot,' Numb. v. 27. How can a wife endure to see that spear which killed her husband ? how can we endure those sins which made Christ veil his glory, and lose his blood ? When the people of Rome saw Cæsar's bloody robe, they were incensed against them that slew him. Sin hath rent the white robe of Christ's flesh, and dy'd it of a crimson colour : the thoughts of this will make us seek to be avenged on our sins.

5. End, the augmentation and increase of all the graces, hope, zeal, patience. The word preached begets grace, the Lord's supper nourisheth it : the body by feeding increaseth strength ; so doth the soul by feeding on Christ sacramentally. *Cum defecerit virtus mea calicem sultarem accipiam*, Bern. " When my spiritual strength begins to fail, I know a remedy (saith Bernard) I will go to the table of the Lord ; there will I drink and recover my decayed strength." There is difference between dead stones and living plants. The wicked, who are stones, receive no spiritual increase ; but the godly, who are plants of righteousness, being watered with Christ's blood, grow more fruitful in grace.

Qu. 4. *Why are we to receive this holy supper ?*

Ans. Because it is a duty incumbent. ' Take, Eat.' And observe, it is a command of love. If Christ had commanded us some great matter would not we have done it ? 2 Kings v. 13. ' If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing wouldst thou not have done it ? ' If Christ had enjoined us to have given him thousands of rams, or to have parted with the fruit of our bodies, would we not have done it ? Much more when he only saith,

'Take,' and 'Eat:' Let my broken body feed you, let my blood poured out, save you. 'Take and Eat.' This is a command of love, and shall we not readily obey?

2. We are to celebrate the Lord's supper, because it is a provoking of Christ, to stay away. Prov. ix. 2. 'Wisdom hath furnished her table.' So Christ hath furnished his table, set bread and wine (representing his body and blood) before his guests, and when they wilfully turn their backs upon the ordinance, Christ looks upon it as a slighting of his love, and that makes the fury rise up in his face, Luke xiv. 24. 'For I say unto you, that none of those that were bidden shall taste of my supper.' I will shut them out of my kingdom, I will provide them a black banquet, where weeping shall be the first course, and gnashing of teeth the second.

Qu. 5. *Whether the Lord's supper be oft to be administered?*

Ans. Yes: 1 Cor. xi. 26. 'As oft as ye eat of this bread.' The ordinance is not to be celebrated once in a year, or once in our lives, but often. A Christian's own necessities may make him come often hither. His corruptions are strong, therefore he had need come often hither for an antidote to expel the poison of sin; and his graces are weak. Grace is like a lamp, Rev. iii. 2. if it be not often fed with oil, it is apt to go out. How therefore do they sin against God, who come but very seldom to this ordinance! Can they thrive, who for a long time forbear their food: and others there are who do wholly forbear: this is a great contempt offered to Christ's ordinance. Men do as it were tacitly said, let Christ keep his feast to himself. What a cross-grained piece is man! he will eat when he should not, and he will not eat when he should. When God said, 'Eat not of this forbidden fruit;' then he will be sure to eat: when God saith, 'Eat of this bread, and drink of this cup;' then he refuseth to eat.

Qu. 6. *Are all to come promiscuously to this holy ordinance?*

Ans. No; that were to make the Lord's table an ordinary. Christ forbids to 'cast pearls before swine,' Mat. vii. 6. The sacramental bread is children's bread, and it is not to be cast to the profane. As, at the giving of the law, God set bounds about the mount that none might touch it, Exod. xix. 12. So God's table should be guarded, that the profane should not come near. In the primitive times, after sermon done, and they were going to celebrate the Lord's supper, an officer stood up and cried, "Holy things for holy men:" and then several of the congregation were to depart. "I would have my hand cut off (saith Chryloston) rather than I would give Christ's body and blood to the profane." The wicked do not eat Christ's flesh, but tear it; they do not drink his blood, but spill it. These holy mysteries in the sacraments are *tremenda mysteria*, mysteries

that the soul is to tremble at. Sinners defile the holy things of God, they poison the sacramental cup: We read that the wicked are to be set at Christ's feet, Pf. cx. not at his table.

Qu. 7. *How may we receive the supper of the Lord worthily, that so it may become effectual to us?*

Ans. That we may receive it worthily, and it may become efficacious.

(1.) We must solemnly prepare ourselves before we come: we must not rush upon the ordinance rudely and irreverently, but come in due order. There was a great deal of preparation to the passover, 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19. and the sacrament comes in the room of it.

Qu. *Wherein doth this solemn preparing for the ordinance consist?*

Ans. (1.) In examining ourselves. (2.) In dressing our souls before we come, which is by washing in the water of repentance. (3.) By exciting the habit of grace into exercise. (4.) In begging a blessing upon the ordinance.

(1.) Solemn preparing for the sacrament consists in self-examining, 1 Cor. xi. 28. 'But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat.' It is not only a counsel, but a charge: 'Let him examine himself.' As if a king should say, "Let it be enacted." Jesus Christ having by his institution consecrated these elements in the supper to an high mystery, they represent his 'body and blood:' therefore there must be preparation; and if preparation, then there must be first examining ourselves, without which there can be no preparation. Let us be serious in this examining ourselves, our salvation depends upon it. We are curious in examining other things; we will not take gold, till we examine it by the touch-stone; we will not take land, but we will examine the title: and shall not we be as exact and curious in examining the state of our souls?

Qu. 1. *What is required to this self-examining?*

Ans. There must be a solemn retiring of the soul. We must set ourselves apart, and retire for some time from all secular employment, that we may be more serious in this work. There is no casting up of accounts in a crowd; nor can we examine ourselves when we are in a crowd of worldly business. We read, a man that was in a 'journey might not come to the passover,' Numb. ix. 13. because his mind was full of secular cares, and his thoughts were taken up about his journey. When we are upon self-examining work, we had not need to be in hurry, or have any distracting thoughts, but to retire and lock ourselves up in our closet, that we may be more intent in the work.

Qu. 2. *What is self-examination?*

Ans. It is a setting up a court of conscience, and keeping a

register there, that by a strict scrutiny a man may see how matters stand between God and his soul. Self-examination is a spiritual inquisition, an heart-anatomy, whereby a man takes his heart as a watch, all in pieces, and sees what is defective there. It is a dialogue with one's self, Pl. lxxvii. 7. 'I commune with my own heart.' David called himself to account, and put interrogatories to his own heart. Self-examining is a critical descent or search: as the woman in the parable did light a candle, and 'search for her lost groat,' Luke xv. 8. so conscience is the candle of the Lord; search with this candle what thou canst find wrought by the Spirit in thee.

Qu. 3. *What is the rule by which we are to examine ourselves?*

Ans. The rule or measure we must examine ourselves by, is, the holy scripture. We must not make fancy, or the good opinion which others have of us, the rule of which we judge of ourselves. But as the goldsmith brings his gold to the touchstone, so must we bring our hearts to a scripture touchstone; 'To the law, to the testimony,' Isa. viii. 20. What saith the word? Are we divorced from sin? are we renewed by the Spirit? Let the word decide whether we are fit communicants or not. We judge of colours by the sun, so we must judge of the state of our souls by the sun-light of scripture.

Qu. 4. *What are the cogent reasons why we must examine ourselves before we approach to the Lord's Supper?*

Ans. 1. It is a duty imposed; 'let him examine himself.' The passover was not to be eaten raw, Exod. xii. 19. To come to such an ordinance slightly, without examination, is to come in an undue manner, and is like eating the passover raw.

2. We must examine ourselves before we come, because it is not only a duty imposed, but opposed. There is nothing the heart naturally is more averse from, than self-examination: we may know that duty is good which the heart opposeth. But why doth the heart so oppose it? Because it doth cross the tide of corrupt nature; 'tis contrary to flesh and blood. The heart is guilty; and doth a guilty person love to be examined? The heart opposeth it, therefore the rather set upon it: that duty is good which the heart opposeth.

3. Because self-examining is so needful a work; as appears, (1.) Without self-examination, a man can never tell how it is with him, whether he hath grace or not; and this must needs be very uncomfortable. He knows not if he should die presently, what will become of him, or to what coast he shall sail, whether to hell or heaven; as Socrates said, "I am about to die, and the gods know whether I shall be happy or miserable." How needful therefore is self-examination, that a man by search may come to know the true state of his soul, and may guess how it will go with him to eternity?

(2.) Self-examination is needful, in respect of the excellency of the sacrament. Let him eat *de illo pane*, 'of that bread,' I Cor. xi. 28. that excellent bread, that consecrated bread, that bread which is not only the bread of the Lord, but the bread the Lord. Let him drink *de illo poculo*, 'of that cup;' that precious cup which is perfumed and spiced with Christ's love; that cup which holds the blood of God sacramentally. Cleopatra put a jewel in a cup, which contained the price of a kingdom: this sacred cup we are to drink of, enriched with the blood of God, is above the price of a kingdom; it is more worth than heaven: Therefore coming to such a royal feast, having whole Christ, his divine and human nature to feed on, how should we examine ourselves before hand, that we may be fit guests for such a magnificent banquet.

(3.) Self-examining is needful, because God will examine us. That was a sad question, Matth. xxii. 12. 'Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding-garment?' Men are lothe to ask themselves the question, "O my soul, are thou a fit guest for the Lord's table? are there not some sins thou hast to bewail? are there not some evidences for heaven that thou hast to get?" Now, when persons will not ask themselves the question, then God will bring such a question as this to them, how came ye in hither to my table not prepared? how came ye in hither with an unbelieving or profane heart? It shall be such a question as will cause an heart-trembling. God will examine a man as the chief captain did Paul, with scourging, Acts xxii. 25. 'Tis true, the best saint, if God should weigh him in the balance, would be found defective: but, when a Christian hath made an impartial search, and hath laboured to deal uprightly between God and his own soul, Christ's merits will cast in some grains of allowance into the scales.

(4.) Self-examining is needful, because of that secret corruption in the heart, which will not be found out without searching. There are in the heart *plangendæ tenebrae*, Aug. hidden pollutions. It is with a Christian, as with Joseph's brethren, when the steward accused them of having the cup, they were ready to swear they had not the cup in their sack, but upon search it was found there; little doth a Christian think what pride, atheism, uncleanness is in his heart till he searcheth. Therefore, if there be such hidden wickedness, like a spring that runs under ground, we had need examine ourselves, that finding out our secret sin, we may be humbled and repent. Hidden sins, if not searched out, defile the soul. If corn lie long in the chaff, the chaff defiles the corn; hidden sins lain long in, defile our duties. Needful therefore it is, before we come to the holy supper, to search out these hidden sins, as Israel searched for leaven before they came to the passover.

(5.) Self-examining is needful, because without it we may easily have a cheat put upon us, Jer. xvii. 9. 'The heart is deceitful above all things.' Many a man's heart will tell him, he is fit for the Lord's table. As when Christ asked the sons of Zebedee, Mat. xx. 22. 'Are ye able to drink of the cup I shall drink of?' can ye drink such a bloody cup of suffering? 'they say unto him, we are able.' So the heart will suggest to a man, he is fit to drink of the sacramental cup, he hath on the wedding-garment. *Grande profundum est homo*, Aug. "The heart is a grand impostor." It is like a cheating tradesman, which will put one off with bad wares; the heart will put a man off with seeming grace, instead of saving. A tear or two shed is repentance, a few lazy desires is faith: blue and red flowers that grow among the corn, look like good flowers, but they are but beautiful weeds. 'The foolish virgins' lamps looked as if they had had oil in them, but they had none. Therefore, to prevent a cheat, that we may not take false grace instead of true, we had need make a thorough disquisition and search of our hearts before we come to the Lord's table.

(6.) Self-examining is needful, because of those false fears the godly are apt to nourish in their hearts, which make them go sad to the sacrament. As they who have no grace, for want of examining, presume; so they who have grace, for want of examining, are ready to despair. Many of God's children look upon themselves through the black spectacles of fear: they fear Christ is not formed in them, they fear they have no right to the promise; and these fears in the heart cause tears in the eye: whereas, would they but search and examine, they might find they had grace. Are not their hearts humbled for sin? and what is this but the bruised reed? do they not weep after the Lord? and what are these tears but seeds of faith? do they not thirst after Christ in an ordinance; what is this but the new creature crying for the breast? Here are, you see, seeds of grace; and, would Christians examine their hearts, they might see there is something of God in them, and so their false fears would be prevented, and they might approach with comfort to these holy mysteries in the eucharist.

MARK xiv. 22. *Jesus took Bread, &c.*

(7.) SELF-EXAMINING is needful, in respect of the danger in coming unworthily without examination, 1 Cor. xi. 27. 'He shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.' *Par facit quasi Christian trucidaret*, Grotius.—i. e. 'God reckons with him as with a crucifier of the Lord Jesus.' He doth not

drink Christ's blood, but sheds it; and so brings that curse upon him, as the Jews, 'his blood be upon us and our children.' The virtue of Christ's blood, nothing more comfortable, the guilt of it nothing more formidable.

4. We must examine ourselves before the sacrament, in respect of the difficulty of self-examining work. Difficulty raiseth a noble spirit. Self-examining is difficult, (1.) Because it is an inward work, it lies most with the heart. External acts of devotion are easy; to lift up the eye, to bow the knee, to read over a few prayers; this is as easy, as for the papists to tell over a few beads: but to examine a man's self, to take the heart as a watch all in pieces, to make a scripture-trial of our fitness for the Lord's supper, this is not easy. Reflexive acts are hardest: the eye cannot see itself but by a glass; we must have the glass of the word and conscience to see our own hearts: it is easy to spy the faults of others, but it is hard to find out our own. (2.) Self-examination is difficult, in regard of self-love. As ignorance blinds, so self-love flatters: what Solomon saith of love, Prov. x. 12. 'Love covereth all sins,' is most true of self-love: a man looking upon himself in the glass of self-love (that flattering glass) his virtues appear greater than they are, and his sins lesser. Self-love makes a man rather excuse himself, than examine himself; self-love makes one think the best of himself; and he who hath a good opinion of himself, doth not suspect himself; and not suspecting himself, he is not forward to examine himself. The work therefore of self-examination being so difficult, it requires the more impartiality and industry; difficulty should be a spur to diligence.

(5.) We must examine ourselves before we come, because of the beneficialness of self-examination. The benefit is great, which way soever things turn; if, upon examination, we find that we have no grace in truth, then the mistake is discovered, and the danger prevented; if we find that we have grace, we may take the comfort of it. He who, upon search, finds that he hath the *minimum quod sit*, the least degree of grace, he is like one that hath found his box of evidences, he is an happy man, he is a fit guest at the Lord's table, he is heir to all the promises, he is as sure to go to heaven, as if he were in heaven already. These are the reasons why we must examine ourselves before we approach to the Lord's table.

Qu. 5. *What must we examine?*

Ans. (1.) Our sins. (2.) Our graces.

First, our sins. Search if any dead fly might spoil this sweet ointment. When we come to the sacrament, we should do as the Jews did before the passover; they searched for leaven, and having found it did burn it. 1. Let us search for the leaven of pride; this sowers our holy things: we are born with a spiritual

tympany. Will an humble Christ be received into a proud heart? Pride keeps Christ out—*Intus existens prohibet alienum*.—Pride swells the heart; and Christ cannot come into the heart if it be full already. To a proud man Christ's blood hath no virtue: 'tis like *discordium* put into a dead man's mouth, which loseth its virtue. Let us search for this leaven of pride, and cast it away. 2. Let us search for the leaven of avarice. The Lord's supper is a spiritual mystery, it represents Christ's body and blood; what should an earthly heart do here? The earth puts out the fire; earthliness quencheth the fire of holy love. The earth is *elementum gravissimum*, it cannot ascend. A soul belimed with earth cannot ascend to heavenly cogitation, Col. iii. 5. 'Covetousness which is idolatry.' Will Christ come into that heart where there is an idol? Search for this leaven before you come to this ordinance. How can an earthly heart converse with that God which is a spirit? can a clod of earth kiss the sun? 3. Search for the leaven of hypocrisy, Luke xii. 1. 'Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy.' Aquinas describes it *simulatio virtutis*: hypocrisy is a counterfeiting of virtue. The hypocrite is a living pageant, he only makes a shew of religion: he gives God his knee, but no heart; and God gives him bread and wine in the sacrament but no Christ. Oh let us search for this leaven of hypocrisy, and burn it?

Secondly, We must examine our graces. I shall instance only in one, our knowledge.

1. Whether we have knowledge.

2. Whether it be rightly qualified.

(1.) We are to examine whether we have knowledge, else we cannot give God a reasonable service, Rom. xii. 1. Knowledge is a necessary requisite in a communicant: without knowledge there can be no fitness for the sacrament: a person cannot be fit to come to the Lord's table who hath no goodness, but without knowledge the mind is not good, Prov. xix. 2. Some say they have good hearts though they want knowledge; as if one should say, his eye is good, but it wants sight. Under the law when the plague of leprosy was in a man's head, the priest was to pronounce him unclean. The ignorant person hath the plague in his head, he is unclean: ignorance is the womb of lust, 1 Pet. i. 14. Therefore it is requisite, before we come, to examine ourselves what knowledge we have in the main fundamentals of religion. Let it not be said of us, that 'to this day the veil is upon our hearts,' 2 Cor. iii. 15. But sure in this intelligent age, we cannot but have some insight into the mysteries of the gospel. I rather fear, we are like Rachel, who was fair and well-fighted, but barren: therefore,

{2.) Let us examine whether our knowledge be rightly qualified. 1. Is it influential? doth our knowledge warm our heart: *Claritas intellectu parit, ardorem in effectu.* Saving knowledge doth not only direct, but quicken: 'tis the light of life, John viii. 12. 2. Is our knowledge practical? We hear much; do we love the truths we know? That is the right knowledge which doth not only adorn the mind, but reform the life.

Secondly, This solemn preparing for the sacrament, as it consists in examining ourselves, so in dressing our souls before we come. And this soul-dress is in two things;

1. Washing in the laver of repenting tears; to come to this ordinance with the guilt of any sin unrepented of, makes way for the further hardening of our heart, and giving Satan fuller possession of us, Zech. xii. 10. 'They shall look on him whom they have pierced and shall mourn for him.' The cloud of sorrow must drop into tears. We must grieve as for the pollution, so for the unkindness in every sin. To sin against Christ's love who died for us. When Peter thought of Christ's love, who called him out of his unregeneracy, made him an apostle, and carried him up to the mount of transfiguration, where he saw the glory of heaven in a vision; and then, to think of his denying Christ, it broke his heart, 'he wept bitterly,' Mat. xxvi. 75. To think, before we come to a sacrament, of the sins against the bowels-mercies of God the Father, the bleeding wounds of God the Son, the blessed inspirations of God the Holy Ghost; it is enough to broach our eyes with tears, and put us into an holy agony of grief and compunction. And we must be so distressed for sin, as to be divorced from sin. The serpent, before he drinks, casts up his poison: in this, we must be wise as serpents; before we drink of the sacramental cup, we must cast up the poison of sin by repentance. *Ill vere plangit commissa, qui non committit plangenda.* Aug.—He doth truly bewail the sins he hath committed, who doth not commit the sins he hath bewailed. And this is the dressing our souls before we come, washing in the waters of true repentance.

2. The soul-dress is the exciting and stirring up the habit of grace into a lively exercise, 2 Tim. i. 6. 'I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee,' *i. e.* the gifts and graces of the Spirit. The Greek word to stir up signifies to blow up grace into a flame. Grace is oft like fire in the embers, which needs blowing up; it is possible that even a good man may not come so well disposed to this ordinance, because he hath not before taken pains with his heart to come in due order, he hath not stirred up grace into its vigorous exercise; and so, though he doth not eat and drink damnation,

yet he doth not receive consolation in the sacrament. Thus you see what this dressing of our souls is, before we come.

Thirdly. This solemn preparing for the sacrament is, in begging a blessing upon the ordinance. The sacrament is not like physic, which hath an inherent operative virtue: no, but the efficacy of the sacrament depends upon the co-operation of the Spirit, and a word of blessing, in the institution, Christ blessed the elements; 'Jesus took bread and blessed it,' in the text. The sacrament will no further do us good, than as it is blessed to us. We ought then, before we come, to pray for a blessing on the ordinance, that the sacrament may be not only a sign to represent, but a seal to conform, and an instrument to convey Christ and all his benefits to us. We are to pray, that this great ordinance may be poison to our sins, and food to our graces. That, as it was with Jonathan, when he had tasted the honey-comb, his 'eyes were enlightened,' 1 Sam. xiv. 27. so that by our receiving this holy eucharist, our eyes may be so enlightened, as to 'discern the Lord's body.' Thus should we implore a blessing upon the ordinance, before we come. The sacrament is like a tree hung full of fruit; but none of this fruit will fall, unless shaken by the hand of prayer.

(2.) That the sacrament may be effectual to us, as there must be a due preparing for it, so a right partaking of it: which right participation of the sacrament is in three things.

1. When we draw nigh to God's table in an humble sense of our unworthiness. We do not deserve one crumb of the bread of life; we are poor indigent creatures, who have lost our glory and are like a vessel that is ship-wrecked; we smite on our breasts, as the publican, 'God be merciful to us sinners.' This is a right partaking of the ordinance: 'tis part of our worthiness to see our unworthiness.

2. We rightly partake of the sacrament, when at the Lord's table we are filled with anhelations of soul, and enflamed desires after Christ, and nothing can quench our thirst but his blood, Matth. v. 6. 'Blessed are they that thirst.' They are blessed not only when they are filled, but while they are thirsting.

3. A right participation of the supper is, when we receive in faith. Without faith we get no good: what is said of the word preached, 'It profiteth not, not being mixed with faith,' Heb. iv. 2. is as true of the sacrament. Christ turned stones into bread; unbelief turns the bread into stones, that it doth not nourish. Then we partake aright when we come in faith: faith hath a two-fold act, an adhering, and an applying: by the first act we go over to Christ, by the second act we bring Christ over to us, Gal. ii. 20. This is the great grace we must set a-work, Acts x. 43. Philo calls it, *fides oculata*: faith is

the eagle-eye that discerns the Lord's body ; faith causeth a virtual contact, it toucheth Christ. Christ said to Mary, ' Touch me not,' &c. John xv. 17. She was not to touch him with the hands of her body ; but he saith to us, ' Touch me,' touch me with the hand of your faith. Faith makes Christ present to the soul ; the believer hath a real presence in the sacrament. The body of the sun is in the firmament, but the light of the sun is in the eye : Christ's essence is in heaven, but he is in a believer's heart by his light and influence, Eph. iii. 17. ' That Christ may dwell in your heart by faith.' Faith is the palate which tastes Christ, 1 Pet. ii. 3. Faith makes a concoction ; it causeth the bread of life to nourish. *Crede et manucafa*, Aug. Faith causeth a coalition, it makes us one with Christ, Eph. i. 23. Other graces make us like Christ, faith makes us members of Christ.

Fourthly, Then we partake aright of the sacrament, when we receive in love.

(1.) Love to Christ. Who can see Christ pierced with a crown of thorns, sweating in his agony, bleeding on the cross, but his heart must needs be endeared in love to him ? " How can we but love him who hath given his life a ransom for us ?" Love is the spiced wine and juice of the pomegranate which we must give Christ, Cant. viii. 2. Our love to this superior and blessed Jesus must exceed our love to other things ; as the oil runs above the water. Tho' we cannot with Mary bring our costly ointment to anoint Christ's body, yet we do more than this, when we bring him our love, which is sweeter to him than all ointments and perfumes.

(2.) Love to the saints. This is a love-feast : though we must eat this supper with the bitter herbs of repentance yet not with the bitter-herbs of malice. Were it not sad, if all the meat one eats should turn to bad humours ? He who comes in malice to the Lord's table, all he eats is to his hurt : ' He eats and drinks damnation to himself,' 1 Cor. xi. 29--' Come in love.' It is with love as it is with fire ; you keep fire all the day upon the hearth, but upon special occasions you draw out the fire larger ; so, though we must have love to all, yet to the saints, who are our fellow-members, here we must draw out the fire of our love larger : and we must show the largeness of our affections to them, by prizing their persons, by chusing their company, by doing all offices of love to them, counselling them in their doubts, comforting them in their fears, supplying them in their wants. Thus one Christian may be an Ebenezer to another, and as an angel of God to him : the sacrament cannot be effectual to him who doth not receive in love. If a man drinks poison, and then takes a cordial, the cordial will do him little good ; he who hath the poison of malice in his soul, the cordial of

Christ's blood will do him no good ; come therefore in love and charity. And thus we see how we may receive the supper of the Lord, that it may be effectual to our salvation.

Use 1. From the whole doctrine of the sacrament, learn, how precious should a sacrament be to us. It is a sealed deed to make over the blessings of the new covenant to us, [justification, sanctification, glory.] A small piece of wax put to a parchment is made the instrument to confirm a rich conveyance or lordship to another ; so these elements in the sacrament of bread and wine, though in themselves of no great value, yet being consecrated to be seals to confirm the covenant of grace to us, so they are of more value than all the riches of the Indies.

Use 2. The sacrament being such an holy mystery, let us come to this holy mystery with holy hearts. There is no receiving a crucified Christ, but into a consecrated heart : Christ, in his conception, lay in a pure virgin's womb, and, at his death, his body was wrapped in clean linen, and put into a new virgin-tomb, never yet defiled with rottenness. If Christ would not lie in an unclean grave, sure he will not be received into an unclean heart, Isa. lii. 11. ' Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.' If they who did carry the vessels of the Lord were to be holy, then they who are to be the vessels of the Lord, and are to hold Christ's body and blood, ought to be holy.

Use 3. Consolation. Christ's body and blood in the sacrament is a most sovereign elixir, or, comfort to a distressed soul. Christ having poured out his blood, now God's justice is fully satisfied. There is in the death of Christ enough to answer all doubts. What if sin is the poison, here is the flesh of Christ an antidote against it? what if sin be red as scarlet, is not Christ's blood of a deeper colour, and can wash away sin? If Satan strikes us with his darts of temptation, here is a precious balm comes out of Christ's wounds to heal us, Isa. liii. 5. What though we feed upon the bread of affliction, as long as in the sacrament we feed upon the bread of life? So that Christ received aright sacramentally, is an universal medicine for the healing, and an universal cordial for the cheering of our distressed souls.

III. The benefits of our redemption are applied to us by prayer.