

## Reactions to the Lord's Supper Doug Hamilton

How do we act throughout the week after partaking of the Lord's Supper? Paul writes in *1 Cor 11:27-28* "*Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.*" (NKJ). We are told to examine ourselves during the Lord's Supper, putting ourselves on the backdrop of the Almighty Savior Jesus Christ. This is because there are many different lives that can be lived Monday through Saturday. We are to examine ourselves or we could end up eating and drinking to our damnation. Let us examine from John 13 and 14 this very thing so as to learn and apply "examination" and reflection before we partake.

John chapter 13 begins stating that Jesus knew "His hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father". The devil had already entered Judas' heart for the purpose of betrayal that would very shortly occur. With that in mind, Jesus is joined by the disciples for the feast of the Passover. This feast is the same meal we read about in Matthew 26; Mark and Luke 22 where He instituted His supper. *Matt 26:26-28* "*And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it; and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins.*"

John does not go into as great detail as the other three gospel writers concerning this account, but focuses in on what follows after. Jesus washes the feet of the disciples and explains the need to be cleansed. Upon sitting back down, Jesus elaborates to the disciples the importance of following the example and announces that one will betray him. Keep in mind that the disciples only moments before partook in a sweet communion with the Lord. We will find with this as the setting a series of reactions that parallel the possible reactions that every Christian today can have after partaking in the Lord's Supper.

### **D) A Devoted reaction (13:22-25)**

John 13:21-25 When Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me." 22 The disciples {began} looking at one another, at a loss {to know} of which one He was speaking. 23 There was reclining on Jesus' breast one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. 24 Simon Peter therefore gestured to him, and said to him, "Tell {us} who it is of whom He is speaking." 25 He, leaning back thus on Jesus' breast, said to Him, "Lord, who is it?"

You have to love John. With all that is about to happen, here we find him reclining in the bosom of Jesus. This is the devoted reaction that Jesus wants us to have. Having a devoted reaction to Jesus carries the meaning that one finds comfort in Him. What would partaking in the Lord's supper mean if we were leaning on Jesus throughout the week? Matt 11:28-30 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Being devoted to Jesus means we will lean on Him through all the good times and all the bad times throughout the week. Being devoted to Jesus means that we will be praying and singing songs of praise to Him Monday through Saturday and worship on Sunday is a beautiful culmination of a week long joy. Being devoted means that we will gather

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together at every opportunity afforded the Church. Being devoted to Jesus means that we will stick to Him like glue regardless of what comes up through the week. John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, has the proper reaction after the Lord's Supper. When we examine ourselves following the Lord's Supper, are we able to say that we are devoted?

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms #589

What a fellowship, what a joy divine, leaning on the everlasting arms; What a blessedness, what a peace is mine; Leaning on the everlasting arms. Leaning on Jesus, Leaning on Jesus, Safe and secure from all alarms; Leaning on Jesus, Leaning on Jesus, Leaning on the everlasting arms.

**II) A Deadly Reaction (13:26-30)**

John 13:26-30 Jesus therefore answered, "That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him." So when He had dipped the morsel, He took and gave it to Judas, {the son} of Simon Iscariot. 27 And after the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Jesus therefore said to him, "What you do, do quickly." 28 Now no one of those reclining {at the table} knew for what purpose He had said this to him. 29 For some were supposing, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus was saying to him, "Buy the things we have need of for the feast"; or else, that he should give something to the poor. 30 And so after receiving the morsel he went out immediately; and it was night.

Judas was also present with the other disciples when Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, yet he is having a different reaction from the previous. Judas experienced a deadly reaction for he is going out to betray Christ unto death. He was with the rest of the disciples a moment ago, but look at the path taken now?

The more things change, the more they look the same. Are we not capable of the same treachery today? One does not have to send Christ to the cross to have a deadly reaction throughout the week after partaking of the Lord's Supper. Some one might say "I do not have a deadly reaction to Christ!" Whenever we take the Lord's Supper and attack brothers and sisters Christ, we are having the same deadly reaction.

Notice what Jesus explains in continuation of the text. John 13:31-35 "When therefore he was gone out Jesus said. Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him; 32 and God shall glorify him in himself, and straightway shall he glorify him. 33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say unto you. 34 A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." We may not sell Christ out for thirty pieces of silver, but when we sell our brother or sister out for our own gain, we have done the same. When we plot evil against another in the Church, we are having a deadly reaction.

Did any of us have a deadly reaction to our brother or sister this week? Did Jesus not say in Matt 25:45 "Verily I say unto you. Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me."? Were we a quickening agent in their lives or the battering-ram attempting to spiritually kill a saint? Did anyone lash out behind a brother's back this week? Did anyone hasten to angrily confront a church member this week? This is called

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self-examination. It does not mean that you cannot partake in the Lord's Supper, what it does mean is that one must reflect with repentance.

Love One Another #719

Angry words! O let them never From my tongue un-bridled slip;  
May the heart's best impulse ever Check them ere they soil the lip.  
Love one another, thus saith the Savior;  
Children, obey the Father's blest command.

III) A Denying Reaction (13:36-38)

John 13:36-38 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered, "Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you shall follow later." 37 Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You." 38 Jesus answered, "Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, a cock shall not crow, until you deny Me three times.

Here we have Peter, an individual who also partook of the Lord's Supper and boldly desired to follow the Lord anywhere, yet denying Him three times. This is called the denying reaction.

Three Denials

- John 18:17 The slave-girl therefore who kept the door said to Peter, "You are not also {one} of this man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not."
- John 18:25 Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They said therefore to him, "You are not also {one} of His disciples, are you?" He denied {it} and said, "I am not."
- John 18:26-27 One of the slaves of the high priest, being a relative of the one whose ear Peter cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?" 27 Peter therefore denied {it} again; and immediately a cock crowed.

He boldly proclaimed that he would lay down his life for the Lord. He was there with the rest of the disciples taking the same supper with the same Lord, yet by the end of the passage, he is in complete denial of Christ.

Can we not also deny Christ in the same way? How do we deny Christ? When Jesus sends someone our way for the spreading of the gospel and we deny Him through our lives. Paul writes concerning the false teachers at Crete in Titus 1:16 "They profess that they know God; but by their works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient and unto every good work reprobate." How many times did we deny Christ when the opportunity to take a Christian stand was blown? How many times this week did we back down from the heathen when faced with this gospel opportunity? Jesus said in Matt 10:33 "But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." We need to single ourselves out for change in our lifestyle if this is the case. We are all guilty of pulling a Peter or two, but will we pick this up during the examination process or ignore and deny it?

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To Christ Be True #736

To Christ be loyal and be true; His banner be unfurled,  
And borne aloft till is secured The conquest of the world.  
To Christ the Lord be true, For He will go with you,  
And help you all your conflicts thro'; To Christ the Lord be true.

**IV) A Doubting Reaction (14:1-5)**

John 14:1-5 "Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, {there} you may be also. 4 "And you know the way where I am going." 5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?"

Here we find the apostle names Thomas participating in the conversation with Jesus. Remember, he also partook of the same Lord's Supper with all the others, yet we find him living up to His name "Doubting Thomas". Jesus said "let not your heart be troubled" and Thomas reacted "How will we know the way?". This is called the doubting reaction. This is when we doubt in light of all the evidence. Do you remember in John 20 when Thomas said "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."? Do you remember when Jesus rescued him from his unbelief by saying "Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach (hither) thy hand, and put it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing."? Do you remember when Thomas answered "My Lord and my God."? Thomas was a doubter at times. It certainly is good that we never do that. This passage in 14 seems to be the forerunner to this. He doubts the Lord will be doing what it is what He says He will do.

Did we at anytime doubt Jesus this week? Did we worry and fret about something that caused us to take our eyes off of Jesus? Jesus said that He prepared a place for us, do we trust Him? Do we trust Jesus when He said that everything would be all right? Having a doubting reaction is to doubt that Jesus will keep His word to us. We have every reason to believe in Him and on Him, but have we been doing this? This seems to be a very common reaction for many following the Lord's Supper, living in doubt six days a week. We must stop doubting Christ and enlist our full trust in the program called Christianity.

Thomas' Song #269

Jesus you were all to me, Why did You die on Calvary?  
O Lamb of God I fail to see How this could be part of the plan?  
They say that You're alive again, but I saw death and every sin  
Reach out to claim their darkest win. How could this be part of the plan?  
Holy presence, holy face; A vision filling time and space.  
Your nearness makes my spirit race. Could this be part of the plan?  
I see the wounds that caused the cry, From heaven, ocean, earth and sky.  
When people watched the Savior die. Could this be part of the plan?

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**V) A Demanding Reaction (14:6-8)**

John 14:6-8 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me. 7 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." 8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."

Did Phillip not also partake of the same meal with the Lord? Yet we find him having a demanding reaction. With all that Phillip has seen and heard from Jesus, we still find him demanding of Christ "show us the Father, and we'll be satisfied." He is naming conditions for Jesus to meet for his satisfaction to be met.

The demanding reaction is when we start testing Jesus when there is no test required. Jesus died on the cross to pay the price, what else could we demand of Him? Yet, what do we do at times? "Lord, please help me get this job. If you do, then I will devote myself to you". "Jesus jump through this fiery hoop so I can see what you're made of. Lord, I would be strengthened in my belief if you would just give me this or that." "Jesus, my faith would be stronger and my walk better if I only had a little more money, a nicer car and a better job."

We can be terribly demanding on our Savior and that is okay, as long as it does not cross the line and turn into testing. Matt 4:7 "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." This is unbelief that the Lord does not want us to have. Have we been picking this up on the examination of the Lord's Supper?

The Lord gave us the evidence called the Bible and that should suffice. That is not saying that we are not to throw the fleeces out, but make sure that we are not having a demanding reaction with the Lord.

*'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus #679* "Tis so sweet to trust in  
Jesus, Just to take Him at His word, Just to rest upon His promise,  
Just to know "Thus saith the Lord." Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him!  
How I've proved Him o'er and o'er! Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus! O  
for grace to trust Him more!

We looked at some of the possible reactions that people can have when we fail to thoroughly examine ourselves. We can either be:

- 1) Devoted like John
- 2) Deadly like Judas
- 3) Denying like Peter
- 4) Doubting like Thomas
- 5) Demanding like Phillip

Give yourself a thorough examination today while partaking in the Lord's Supper. Don't let these reactions slip by unnoticed, for in doing so, one may eat and drink to his own damnation.