

Why Be Interested in the Lord's Supper?

By: Keith R. Keyser

The modern landscape in Christendom presents a wide variety of churches. Some of them bear little resemblance to the character or teachings of the biblical Christ. Many others, however, hold to the major “fundamentals of the faith,” believing that Christ is God, the only Savior, & that He will return one day. It is not difficult in North America to find congregations that believe in the saving power of the Lord Jesus by grace through faith alone. Many of these groups aggressively evangelize by a variety of methods. Furthermore, the majority of them believe in imparting sound principles for Christian living, the family, and other ethical issues. They are morally and doctrinally conservative, and genuinely praise God for their standing in Christ. Given that so many of these fundamental churches are similar in doctrine and practice, how is one to choose where they should attend?

While many churches preach the true Gospel and uphold the major doctrines of biblical Christianity, very few hold to the New Testament pattern for government and weekly function. The one-pastor system, absence of biblically operating elders, lack of opportunity for the functioning of the gifts within the church and other nonscriptural innovations all contribute to the local meeting of saints falling short of God's intention for it. Often times, believers who meet in local churches that try to follow the New Testament way of gathering find themselves on the defensive when conversing with brothers and sisters in more mainstream congregations. Rather than major on modern, unscriptural corruptions of the biblical blueprint, it would be more constructive to focus on the beauty of New Testament principles themselves. Chief among these distinctives must be the remembrance feast, known by the biblical name “the Lord's Supper.”

Unfortunately, many believers today who regularly attend New Testament assemblies do not themselves think that the Lord's Supper is important—let alone the “chief meeting of the Church,” as someone once described it. They indicate this by their failure to be present at the meeting. This is disturbing! The Lord Jesus plainly told His followers on the night in which He was betrayed: “Do this in remembrance of Me.” What does our absence say about the Lord's authority and importance in our lives? Surely it indicates that other things take precedence over the Lord Jesus' wishes. Extra sleep, recreation, business, family concerns all pale in importance when compared with our Savior's devotion to us and what He has done for us. Of God it is said: “He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all...”; therefore, believers owe Him an immense debt of gratitude. Moreover, eternal life itself is defined by knowing Christ (not just momentary conversion, but also relationship to Him.) John 17:3 shows this clearly: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” 1 John 1:2 and 3 adds: “For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us; That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” The Father seeks those who will worship Him “in spirit and in truth.”

(Jn.4:22) Worship is something that God both deserves and desires. The fact that it is not a priority among many believers does not speak well for their spiritual condition.