

Bible Basics Conference 2011: “Christ the Lord, Christ the Head, Christ the King”

Part 5

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Place	Catford
Date	12.11.2011
Duration	00:25:05
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/cbb005/bible-basics-conference-2011-christ-the-lord-christ-the-head-christ-the-king

Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:01] The subject that we have before us now is the Lord's Table and the Lord's Supper and I'm convinced that there is a great deal of woolly thinking in connection with this subject. Many use these terms interchangeably. How often have we seen a letter of commendation and it says that we such-and-such a brother or sister are in fellowship with us at the Lord's Table. Where is such an expression in the scriptures? The most that is said is that we are partakers of the Lord's Table and in its strict literality it would mean partaking of the bread because we partake of the [00:01:03] cup in verse 21 of chapter 10 as we shall see and then it carries on after partaking of the cup it goes on to say you cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table in its strict literality then partaking of the Lord's Table is actually partaking of the bread. So I want to say first of all that the emphasis is distinct the bearing of the subject is distinct in chapter 10 from that which is in chapter 11. Chapter 10 deals with the Lord's Table and chapter 11 deals with the Lord's Supper. Now of course it's the same cup and the same bread or the same loaf that's in view as a brother once said Paul was not setting a theological conundrum when he mentioned these things as if he was talking [00:02:05] about something different in chapter 10 and in chapter 11 but nevertheless the significance is somewhat different. We have this statement here we need to apprehend the true character of the table before we can properly enter into the blessing of the supper. Well worth considering and just in case anybody is wondering where it comes from it was something that Harry Ironside wrote. So first Corinthians 10 I would suggest that this is not the actual meeting for the breaking of bread. Why? Because in chapter 10 the cup comes before the loaf. First Corinthians 10 [00:03:09] and verse 16 it's a reverse order to what we practice when we come together. When we come together on a Lord's Day we don't give thanks or bless the cup before we break the bread. It's the other way around in our actual assembly meetings and also in chapter 10 the assembly is not yet come together. The meeting of the assembly as such comes in in chapter 11 and verse 20 where it says when ye come together therefore into one place and we have it earlier in verse 18 when you come together in the assembly. So I think that's an important thing to notice that there's the reverse order the blood is put first surely there's a reason there's a significance for that in chapter [00:04:03] 10 and it's not the natural order when we come to the actual breaking of bread and also a the view in chapter 10 is much wider because the assembly is not yet come together so that there are contrasts in the way in which the Lord's Table and the Lord's Supper is

presented and we've referred to those and we're going to look now at the assembly not as come together in first Corinthians 10 and the assembly has come together and first Corinthians 11. One gives the outward look the other is the inward look. One has the context of the world in view the other has to do with what we are occupied with when together and that is the Lord. One is external and the other is internal. I'll explain a [00:05:01] little bit what what I mean by that. In chapter 10 we have three spheres of fellowship. Three classes of association living association here in this world. I think verse 32 brings that into view give none offense neither to the Jews nor to the Gentiles nor to the Church of God or the assembly of God. There we have Jews, Gentiles or Greeks and the assembly of God. The three classes of mankind which are found side by side here in this world today. In connection with the Jews we're told in verse 18 behold Israel after the flesh are not they which eat of the sacrifices [00:06:06] partakers of the altar. Now Israel were not always literally at the altar and Israel were not always literally partaking of probably in this instance the peace offering in which they but their living association their fellowship was determined by that particular act. At certain times yes they ate of the altar and yet this is said as something which characterized them. That was their association the Jewish altar. In regard to the Gentiles or the nations their association was [00:07:05] really with demons with devils and the things they sacrificed to in verse 20 they sacrificed to these demons and not to God. Therefore their living associations were bound up with the character of demon worship which was what they did when they came together at their temple. What they did in their temple determined their lifestyle and their living associations. So it is in regard to the Christian company it says that we partake of the Lord's table. We do indeed partake of the loaf. We do indeed give thanks or bless the cup and we do indeed give thanks for the loaf. Those [00:08:08] are done on those particular occasions when we are together. But what we are doing when we come together is an indication or an expression of the fellowship to which we belong. That's why I say in chapter 10 with the outward look we've got the contrast of what should characterize the Christian company with that which characterizes Judaism and heathenism. In chapter 10 it's outward. In chapter 11 it's inward. In chapter 10 it's really our bearing our place here in the world. In chapter 11 it's what we do when we come into the Lord's presence this do in remembrance of me. And it is [00:09:01] the Lord's Supper. One speaks of what is external the other of what is internal. In regard to this expression the Lord's Supper and the Lord's table there is a slight difference in the word and happily it's given for us in the note. You'll see that under the section on the Lord's Supper it says Kyriakos verse 20. There is a particular word that is used here in regard to the Lord's Supper which is different from the adjective that comes from the name Lord. It's not the usual word for Lords which is found elsewhere. It means that which is peculiarly the possession of the Lord or what belongs in a special way to him. It's the Dominical Supper. Some have said the Lordly Supper that may not even give the proper sense but it's a word here that is only used for the [00:10:05] Lord's Supper. It's the only time that it is used by the Apostle Paul. And I believe the other mention of it is by John in the Revelation. In Revelation 1 verse 10 where he speaks of the Lord's Day. The Dominical Day and the Dominical Supper. This day that is pre-eminently and particularly the Lord's in a special sense and what do we do on that day on the first day of the week the disciples came together to break bread. So there is a special term, a special Greek adjective that is used in regard to the Supper and that is used in regard to the Lord's Day which is not used anywhere else in the scriptures and not used in regard to the Lord's table. And the subject we're considering this morning is the Lordship of Christ. And just as an aside we've heard about the Lord's authority over us individually but it's also very important [00:11:12] to understand the claims of Christ's Lordship collectively in the local assembly. First Corinthians is the epistle dealing with local assembly matters. Dealing with the assembly coming together in a particular place. And the very definition of a Christian given in it is one that calls on the name of the Lord. That's what a Christian is. Someone who calls on the name of the Lord. With all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Indeed the fellowship that we're called to is known as the fellowship of

his son Jesus Christ [00:12:01] our Lord. The Lordship of Christ is brought in I believe in every chapter to regulate difficulties and dissension and division. In regard to putting away someone and often we talk about putting away from the Lord's table or receiving at the Lord's table. Whereas that expression in scripture it says to put away from among yourselves that wicked person. And the authority to receive into fellowship and the authority to put away from fellowship is an authority that is vested in the local assembly. It's not a matter for a committee or for a national brothers meeting or for a collectivity of brethren. The Lord has placed his authority in the local assembly where the two or three are gathered together onto his name. They have authority to bind and loose. And here it speaks in chapter five of the power of the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ in the matter [00:13:03] not here of reception but in the matter of putting away of the matter of discipline. So once again the Lordship is seen in chapter seven in regard to the domestic sphere as we've heard and in regard to marriage. In regard to the upbringing of our children they have to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. When we come to Corinthians chapter eight there's very important truth about the person of Christ because it tells us there is none other God but one. One God in three persons. But in regard to this one God then we're told there's one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ by whom are all things and we by him. In regard to this one God there's God the Father the one God and there's the one Lord Jesus Christ. He's put there on an absolute equality with the Father as we've been hearing from Philippians chapter two. He felt it not [00:14:06] robbery to be on an equality with God. And so we could go on through these chapters. Chapter 10 the Lord's Table. Chapter 11 the Lord's Supper. In regard to spiritual manifestations there are differences of administrations but the same Lord or distinctions of services and they all come under the same Lordship of Christ. That's chapters 12 through to 40. So in the local assembly the Lordship of Christ is paramount and we often say he's not Lord of the assembly but he is Lord in the assembly. And we see that in connection with the Lord's Table and the Lord's Supper. And we've been pointing out these contrasts the difference of emphasis shall we say in each chapter and how [00:15:01] in the Lord's Table we're thought of what is bound up with our living associations and the fact in chapter 10 is that the blood comes first as the very basis of the fellowship that we have together with one another. The very spear that pierced his side drew forth the blood to save. Where should we be? Where would we be brethren without the precious blood of Christ? We're redeemed not with corruptible things such as silver and gold but with the precious blood of Christ. And in regard to the fellowship the blood of Christ is placed first in chapter 10. So the Lord's Table then stresses fellowship and responsibility. Whereas in the Lord's Supper we think of remembrance and we think of privilege. I know brethren sometimes we put these things the wrong [00:16:04] way around and sometimes we seek to have the one without the other. We like the privilege of being together of remembering the Lord Jesus of giving place to him but we don't think of the corresponding responsibility as to the matter of our fellowship. And that comes out in what we have here in your notes. It says you cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table and the tables of demons. Physically it might have been possible but what Paul is saying it's a moral impossibility. If you understand the truth of the Lord's Table there are things that you will not be happy and that you will not be prepared to do. And so the Lord's Table then is the responsibility of the bread breakers and it's a truth which should [00:17:07] govern our behavior every day of the week. Whereas in the Lord's Supper we come together on the first day of the week. And so where is the question? Are we being true to the claims of the fellowship, of the blood of Christ, of the body of the Christ? It's been raised already in regard to what we see on our computers. I've known brethren from non-television households and they've got all the latest movie blockbusters and all the latest television series pirated and loaded illegally on their computers. You know if you're watching the football or whatever else it might be on the Saturday night [00:18:06] you're not going to have much appetite for the things of the Lord to remember the Lord on the Lord's Day. If things domestically in your household are in a state of chaos in relationships you're not going to be in a suited you know that's not going to help you to be

in a suited state to come out and remember the Lord. And there's so many aspects of this in our everyday lives. We need to think about the claims of Christ upon us because I referred to chapter one, the fellowship of his son Jesus Christ our Lord, that's the person. But here it's the fellowship of his death. He died to redeem us. He died to deliver us from this present evil world. He died in order to take us out if we were Jews from Judaism and as Gentiles from all the idolatry and all the worldly surroundings in which we were formerly [00:19:07] found. Because John's exhortation in his epistle was little children keep yourselves from idols. And I don't think he had in view stocks and stones and things that we carve out with our hands. An idol is anything and everything that displaces Christ in our hearts. In all things he should have the preeminence and if he is not Lord of all he is not Lord at all. We had it very nicely not so Lord one or the other or as someone else as it was said elsewhere in the gospels even so Lord for it seemed good in thy side. So this question of participation in the death of Christ in the blood of Christ and in the body of the Christ [00:20:02] when we come together and break bread on a Lord's day it's a wonderful privilege but we should also be thinking of the responsibility that devolves on us to be true to the fellowship. As the old brothers used to say you know we take the brothers with us where we go through the week. And then here's another question arising from chapter 11.

Do you remember the Lord in the breaking of bread? Is there anyone here who has not availed themselves of this privilege? On the first day of the week the disciples came together to break bread. This is something that we do in remembrance of the Lord. This is an announcement we make. We announce the Lord's death until he comes. And then something from an old letter of Belet of Dublin.

[00:21:08] And this I find very challenging. The Lord's Supper is the thing for the Lord's day.

And if we abandon the supper for a sermon or a large congregation with its singing and its other activities and attractions we have apostatized so far.

Belet was one of the sweetest writers. Very mild. Mild writer. Mild temperament. Beloved brother to those who knew him. And after he was called home someone said to Wink Wigger what are you going to do now that your sweet singing bird is gone? And yet in regard to this matter he used strong language. [00:22:01] He says if you abandon the Lord's Supper for a sermon or a family service or a large congregation with its singing and other activities and attractions we have apostatized so far. We have apostatized so far. We have deserted the house of God in its divinely appointed order and service. Well it's been my privilege to maybe suggest some thoughts that might help us think a little bit more. Think through this matter of the Lord's Table and the Lord's Supper in their distinct bearings.

And the title of the session was Lordship in Connection with the Lord's Table [00:23:06] and Supper. I want to pose a question in closing. Does the truth of headship come in in connection with the Lord's Supper? I know we're dealing with the Lordship of Christ and we'll be moving on to the headship of Christ and then the kingship of Christ. And I know that there was great disorder at Corinth and therefore the Lordship of Christ was emphasized. And it is the Lord's Supper and we own his authority and when we view him as Lord we're looking outside of ourselves. We're looking from the manward side Godwards and we're thinking of him as the object before us. No doubt the object of worship. Thomas in the upper room bowed down in the upper room bowed down before him in an assembly setting and he directed worship [00:24:01] immediately to the Lord. He said my Lord and my God. So in that sense he is before us as Lord and he is before us as the object of our worship and I would not lay that aside for one moment. But does the truth of headship have a bearing on us when

we come together at the Lord's Supper? Are there occasions when he takes his place so to speak as man? He takes his place on our side and directs and leads our hearts out and worship and praise and thanksgiving to his God and Father. Is there a proper occasion for that? Are there moments when he would be in our midst and be active in that sense in directing our worship to his God and Father? I leave that with you as a consideration also. Is there the matter of headship also in connection with the Lord's Supper?