

# THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE BODY OF CHRIST (PART I)

Peter Hay, prepared for word ministry, 11 October 2020  
Transcription of recording, slightly edited

## Introduction

Today, we are going to take some time to focus on the communion.

A few weeks ago, we looked at the foundation of 'the breaking of bread', and we were particularly considering how we eat and drink in a worthy manner.

Now we are going to take a couple of weeks to look at the communion itself, and what it means to partake of the bread and the wine, and how it is to be when we gather together for the communion.

This teaching will be quite fresh for us, so we need to take some time with it.

I am going to give an overview today and, in the coming weeks, I will fill in the details of these points and elaborate with illustrations.

We are particularly building from the communion word from last week, which was titled 'The good confession'.

When this word was ministered, there was some clarification or some specific foundations were laid, to do with how we eat and drink the elements of the communion.

This is where we are building from, and we are writing on this at the moment. When those notes are ready, we will make them available to support the teaching that we are doing.

## 'Communion' means 'fellowship' and 'participation'

Let us start with a passage that will be quite familiar to us, and we will be building from this passage as we consider our communion, 'house to house'.

The apostle Paul made the point that he received instructions regarding the communion, or 'the breaking of bread', directly from Christ Himself.

'For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

'In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

'For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.'" 1Co 11:23-26.

The word for 'communion' that is used in the Scriptures is the Greek word *koinonia*. This word can equally be translated 'fellowship' and 'participation'.

So, the one word, '*koinonia*', means 'communion', 'fellowship' and 'participation'. This means that 'communion' means 'fellowship' and 'participation'.

'The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the *communion* [That word is *koinoni*!'] of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the *communion* [the *koinonia*] of the body of Christ? 1Co 10:16.

This is the exact word that the apostle John used when he opened his first epistle.

'That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have *fellowship* [*koinonia*] with us; and truly our *fellowship* [*koinonia*] is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.' 1Jn 1:3.

Or, we could read, 'That you also may have *communion* with us, and truly our *communion* is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ'.

## The fellowship of the body of Christ

The key point is that communion – the eating and drinking of the body and blood of Jesus Christ – is the *fellowship* of the body of Christ.

There is not anything special about the bread and the wine; the communion is the fellowship of the body of Christ.

We participate in the communion meal from house to house by *giving thanks to God through prayer*, and by *expressing faith* through confession and testimony in relation to *the word of present truth*.

We *participate* in the communion meal – there has to be a meal.

Jesus has set a table and He has invited us to eat and drink with Him, but the communion is not the elements themselves – it is not the elements of the bread and wine.

The elements of the bread and wine are the point of our *participation*.

What are we participating in?

We are *giving thanks* to God through prayer, and are *expressing faith* through confession and testimony in relation to the word of present truth.

### **The four dimensions of fellowship are essential to communion**

The four dimensions of fellowship are ‘the word of present truth’, ‘the fellowship of offering’, ‘breaking bread’ and ‘prayer’. Together, they are *foundational* to participation in communion.

In other words, if we don’t have those four elements, it is *not* ‘communion’.

It doesn’t matter whether there is special bread and special wine; it doesn’t matter what you are eating and drinking.

If it doesn’t have those elements, it is *not* the communion. This is an important point.

### **Christ Himself is our great High Priest**

This means that our participation in communion is not because of something supernatural that is added to the bread and wine; it is not turning into something else.

No-one is blessing it and making it anything other than a piece of bread and a cup of wine, which is our point of *participation*.

We understand that point because we don’t believe in ‘transubstantiation’.

Possibly, though, we have held on to this next point of understanding.

We may not have believed that the bread and wine turn into Christ’s body and blood, but we might have thought or presumed that we could only participate in the communion if a ‘leader’ ministers it to us.

The communion is *not* ‘priested’ to us by a clergy-style leader.

Even presuming that means that ‘what they do’ to the bread and wine *makes* it ‘something else’ for us – the communion is *not* that.

The bread and wine does not change into anything else.

And we are not ‘having communion’ because someone who is a leadership figure – a priest, pastor or whatever designation you give to that figure – is ministering it to us, as though, when it is in their hands, it ‘becomes’ the communion.

As Paul explained in the book of Hebrews, Christ Himself is the great High Priest of our confession. Heb 3:1.

No-one else is ‘priesting’ the communion elements to us, because *Christ Himself is the only great High Priest*.

He is the One who is ‘priesting’ to us the communion, which is ‘a fellowship’; it is ‘a participation’.

Communion involves gathering as a church and having *agape* meals with other households

What does this practically mean for our engagement, or participation, in communion?

Households of faith are to meet ‘house to house’ for *fellowship* as members of Christ’s body.

This will involve gathering as a church for communion meetings; and also having *agape* meals with other households who are part of the church community in which the Father has placed us.

Now, that is quite a clarification.

The communion is going to be both a service, or a meeting, that we gather to – to a church – to eat and drink together; *and* a meal – an *agape* meal – when we meet from house to house as fellow households in a *community* called ‘a church’, not in a church building.

We are communities *because* we are households who are part of a church. The Scriptures bear this out quite readily.

We will develop this with examples in the coming weeks. I will give you some obvious examples, and you will be able to consider it further.

### **The Lord’s supper – no division among us**

When Paul addressed the Corinthians, he highlighted the fact that they came together to a church building for their communion meal.

‘For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.’ 1Co 11:18.

'Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's supper.' 1Co 11:20.

We can see, immediately, that this highlights the fact that the Lord's supper is not that they were eating and drinking something.

The Lord's supper has to do with the fact that there was *no division among them*.

'When you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you'. So, 'when you come together, you are not partaking of the Lord's supper'.

Paul wrote this even though they were probably eating a piece of bread and drinking 'the cup'.

This lifts our understanding of the communion from being simply the practice of eating and drinking, even though we do eat and drink.

Paul wrote that, even if you do that, if there are divisions among you, when you gather to a church, you are *not* partaking of the communion.

### **Participation in the communion - receiving the word and being in one Spirit with one another**

Another dimension of this communion activity is highlighted in Chapter 2 of the book of Acts.

'So continuing daily with one accord *in the temple*, and breaking bread *from house to house*, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people.' Act 2:46-47.

There are two elements here.

One is that they were 'continuing daily with one accord in the temple'. Now, they were not having communion in the temple. The apostles were *proclaiming the word of present truth in the temple*.

Then, from house to house, daily, they were *participating in the communion*. This is a key for us.

Our participation in the communion, from house to house, depends upon *receiving that word and being in one Spirit with one another*.

It also means that we are not having communion only when we gather at church. We are also having communion when we meet from house to house.

We will take some time to develop this point and to demonstrate how that is the reality for us, what it 'looks like'; and what the obedience of faith – the

activity – is going to 'look like' when we meet together in our houses.

The first realisation that we should be coming to is that *communion does not happen only on Sunday*.

When we consider it from some of these examples, we will say, 'Of course!'

We will see that the communion actually has nothing to do with the venue that we are meeting in.

### **The four foundations are foundational to the communion meal**

The communion has to do with these four foundations being evident.

I will demonstrate that in relation to the very first communion meal – in that which happened a day after Jesus rose from the dead.

Cleopas and his friend were travelling from Jerusalem to Emmaus, and were really sad because their expectations of the gospel, and their expectations of who Jesus was, or who they thought He was, were unfulfilled.

### **The apostles' doctrine – the word of present truth**

Then Jesus came alongside them and asked, in effect, 'Look, why are you both sad?' Luk 24:17.

Cleopas said, in effect, 'Where have You been?' Luk 24:18.

A traumatic event had happened, and this was where Jesus began to speak to them.

'Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets [He was speaking from the Scriptures – this was the word of present truth.], He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.' Luk 24:25-27.

This exemplifies the first foundational dimension – the apostles' doctrine; the word of present truth.

### **The apostles' fellowship**

'Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the

day is far spent.” And He went in to stay with them.’ Luk 24:28-29.

This was their desire to *abide with Christ*. This was a *commitment* by Cleopas and his friend to abide in Christ.

This was a commitment to the fellowship that belongs to the apostles – the fellowship that belongs to Christ.

They wanted to abide with Him, and for Him to abide with them.

That is the second foundation.

### **The breaking of bread and prayers**

‘Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, and blessed [That is the *prayer* element.] and broke it [the *‘breaking of bread’* element], and gave it to them.’ Luk 24:30.

### **The communion is knowing Christ and our membership in Him as part of His body**

So, that was all four dimensions of communion.

And what happened?

‘Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.’ Luk 24:31.

This was the knowing of Christ and their membership in Him as part of His body.

*That is the communion!*

This did not happen on the Sabbath; it happened following a journey to Emmaus.

This is house to house fellowship and ‘the breaking of bread’, which is the communion.

### **Paul’s example - a communion service on a boat in a storm**

The next example that I want to study is the example of Paul when he was making his way to Rome in a boat during a storm.

The boat was at risk; they were in imminent danger. The boat was about to break up, and everyone was afraid that they were going to die.

‘And as the day was about to dawn [Note the beautiful imagery.], Paul implored them all to take food.’ Act 27:33.

Paul was ‘standing up’ – he was a messenger to them in the midst of this darkness and, as the day was about to dawn, he began to proclaim a word to them. It was not a theological word.

‘Today is the fourteenth day you have waited and continued without food, and eaten nothing. Therefore I urge you to take nourishment, for this is for your survival, since not a hair will fall from the head of any of you.’ Act 27:33-34.

That was a good message to proclaim in the midst of a storm!

So, this was ‘the apostles’ doctrine’, if you like. It was the word of present truth, which was dawning like a light.

‘And when he had said these things, he took break and gave thanks to God [He gathered them to himself.]’ Act 27:35.

Paul established this fellowship; he gathered them to himself and he said ‘grace’.

‘[He] gave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken it [He broke the bread.] he began to eat.’ Act 27:35.

He was engaging in a communion service, specifically with his companions who were travelling with him.

When the *unbelievers* saw Paul and his companions – obviously Luke was with Paul at this time – communing together, the Scripture records that ‘they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves’. Act 27:36.

There were two communion services, which were very different from meeting for communion in the church. On a broken down ship, in the middle of the storm, is a fairly unique communion service – or unique in relation to what we have come to expect.

### **Prayer sanctifies each element of fellowship**

We will probably talk more about the apostles’ doctrine in relation to the breaking of bread next week.

I want to talk about saying ‘grace’, because saying ‘grace’, when we eat and drink, is the dimension of *prayer*.

And we all need to lift our understanding or, at least, cry out for understanding in relation to this, because ‘grace’ is much more than I imagine many of us have understood in the past.

So, *prayer is foundational to the communion meal*. It *sanctifies* prayer itself and sanctifies each element of fellowship.

'For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.'  
1Ti 4:5.

### **Giving thanks for the fellowship of Christ in which we abide**

This sanctification, not only of the food, but also of our *fellowship* together as we eat the food, is the reason for 'grace'.

Now, I don't know about you, but I grew up either saying grace or singing grace at meal times, and mostly it was to do with being thankful for the food that was nourishment for my natural body.

And we *are* to give thanks to God for His provision to us, but that is not the only reason for saying grace.

In fact, that is only the *first part* of it.

Grace commences our fellowship as we eat and drink, and *continues* throughout the whole meal.

So, saying grace before a meal is more than simply giving thanks to God for the food that sustains our natural body.

We are also to acknowledge and to give thanks to Him *for the fellowship of Christ* in which we abide.

This is the connection to the account of the disciples on the Emmaus road – they wanted to *abide* with Christ.

And *prayer is thanksgiving for the capacity to abide with Him, together.*

We are to acknowledge and to give thanks to Him for the fellowship of Christ in which we abide, and to bless this fellowship to one another.

### **The conversation of prayer – grace on our lips**

Now, grace at mealtimes is prayer; it is a conversation.

And this conversation of prayer, which is in one Spirit, should continue throughout the whole meal, because 'grace is on our lips'. Psa 45:2-3.

We made this point about grace being on our lips in relation to family devotions, didn't we?

This is fundamental to the communion meal and to our participation in it – prayer being a foundation to this fellowship activity.

So, we are saying grace to commence the meal, but grace is not merely a ritual.

Grace now becomes the basis of our conversation as we eat and drink together.

And you will note that there is a connection between 'grace on our lips' and 'a sword', which is 'the sword of the word that is on our hip', ready as part of our proclamation, if you like, of the word.

In terms of this principle of saying grace being an ongoing reality of our prayer and our eating and drinking as houses together, I am literally talking about having another family over to your house for communion, perhaps on a Friday night.

Saying grace is moving beyond simple thankfulness for provision to our natural body; it is recognising that grace itself is *thanksgiving* and *blessing* and *participation* in this *fellowship*.

### **Continuing our conversation of grace by the Spirit**

'Let your speech [or conversation] always be with grace [the four dimensions of grace, or the four aspects of incense.], seasoned with salt.' Col 4:6.

This means that the *conversation* is *in the Spirit*.

So, when you say grace, you are committing, as a household and as houses together, your speech to be in the Spirit.

Now, that does not mean that you need to take five minutes to pray in tongues before you eat. It is not as though you are 'in' the Spirit and 'out' of the Spirit.

It is a commitment to *continue to speak in the Spirit*, so that our lips and our speech are sanctified. It is a commitment to joining a spiritual conversation by the Spirit.

'Let your speech be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one [or, converse with one another].' Col 4:6.

Now, this enhances our understanding of saying grace before our meal, doesn't it?

By praying together in one Spirit – that is, continuing our conversation of grace throughout the meal – we are joined, in fellowship, to the offering of Christ.

### **Christ ministers to us our particular participation in His finished offering**

As we eat from house to house, our praying is joining us to *the communion of the Father and Son*. Have you ever thought of that?

We have always said that we do not know how to pray as we ought, and the Spirit is helping us in our

weaknesses to join Christ, who is making intercession for us. [What is He doing? He is praying to the Father.] Rom 8:26.

This is the fellowship of the Father and His Son.

Praying together in one Spirit joins our conversation to the fellowship of that offering.

That is communion, isn't it? They are communing together, and we are now joining that communion.

As we meet and converse with one another by the Spirit – prayer as a conversation – the Son, who is our High Priest, searches our hearts, for He knows what the Spirit is saying. Rom 8:27.

So, when we speak together in our houses, by the Spirit, with 'grace on our lips', the Son is searching the hearts of each person around our tables.

He is our great High Priest; He is not searching our hearts to judge us.

He is searching our hearts to make intercession to the Father, so that *the Father's word will be ministered to each one* for edification, for encouragement, for admonition, for comfort, for whatever is needed.

Christ makes intercession for us according to the will of God. Rom 8:27.

'Making intercession for us according to the will of God' means that He ministers to us our particular participation in His finished offering.

This is an important point. We will register it here, and then take some time later to expand it.

This point to do with Christ's finished offering was ministered to us last week – this is what Jesus is 'priesting', or ministering, to us.

He is ministering from His finished offering, in which He has *finished the judgement* that belongs to us – He has commuted it to chastening.

### **Engaging in the works that Christ has already done**

Christ has also *finished all of our works*.

So, we are obtaining, or engaging in, works that He has *already* done. That is why He is the Pioneer of our pathway.

The pathway, which are the works that we are to do, is already finished – we now simply have to 'walk them out'.

And we can be confident in that, because they are already done.

This is taken from the paper from last Sunday, 'The good confession'.

'Christ, through His Melchizedek priesthood, has already lived the life of each of us. And, through His death, He has accomplished our righteousness.

That is, He has already atoned for our sins, and He has already finished the works that belong to our sonship.'

This is the one offering, once for all. Heb 7:27.

'The Lord has done this by doing the works that the Father gave Him to do on our account.

These are the works that the Father prepared for us to do in Christ. Eph 2:10.'

The life of God was in Christ's blood – it was given to become the life of every son of God

Christ's blood was shed as a consequence of the wounds that He received in the course of His offering journey.

He finished this offering, and this offering involved seven wounding events. As He was being wounded, His blood was being shed.

*Christ's blood contains the life of God.*

So, as Christ's blood was being shed, that life was being given and multiplied to become our life, as long as we are in fellowship with Him.

Through the shedding of His blood, the life of God that was in His blood was multiplied and *given* to become *the life of every son of God*.

### **Communing together - ministering Jesus' testimony to one another**

We are able to give and to receive this life – this is the communion – as we fellowship together as members of the body of Christ.

Why? It is because *we have the testimony of Jesus*. This is a wonderful point, isn't it!

If we are joined to Christ's offering body and He is making intercession for us, joining us to His body, then *we have Jesus' own testimony*, which we are able to minister to one another.

The book of Revelation teaches us that the testimony of Jesus, which we have if we are part of His body and are journeying with Him, is the spirit of prophecy. Rev 19:10.

'And I fell at his feet to worship him [John fell at the feet of one of his brethren, one of the *aggelos*.]

‘But he said to me, “See that you do not do that! [Do not worship me like this.] I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For *the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*.”’ Rev 19:10.

So, as we are in the Spirit – we have said grace and are eating our meal, conversing with ‘grace on our lips’, ‘seasoned with salt’, speaking to one another – we are joining the fellowship of Christ’s offering, and we have the testimony of Jesus.

### **Prophecy – edification, exhortation and comfort**

This means that we are able to speak, from His one offering, to one another. Our words are having this prophetic effect.

And what is that prophetic effect?

It does not mean that, once we get to ‘the second course’, someone is going to stand up and say, ‘Thus says the Lord!’

Paul described what prophecy will ‘look like’ when we are eating in our houses. This is an amazing passage. 1Co 14:3.

Paul was specifically talking about this in his instructions on how to commune together – on how the Corinthians were to meet for communion.

Paul explained that ‘he who prophesies, speaks edification’.

Exhortation! This is encouragement, or direction, by the Spirit to one another, in the way of sanctification. It is exhorting others to the truth, and it is comfort to many.

Our conversation around our table is to have these elements of edification, exhortation and comfort, as we are having our meal together. As we are devoting together, this is a reality of grace.

### **Prophetic ministry in the context of a communion meal**

I will now give some examples of what this conversation, or this prophetic ministry to one another, in the context of a communion meal will look like. It may not look like the extreme of this; in fact, it probably won’t.

It will be far more words of edification and comfort, but there will be times when we will need to exhort one another to the truth.

This is the example of Peter and Paul. They had an interaction in Antioch, and Paul wrote about this in his letter to the Galatians.

‘Now when Peter [this is the apostle Peter] had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision.’ Gal 2:11.

This ‘withstanding to the face’ of Peter, by Paul, was directly associated with a meal, and where Peter was eating, or communing, with his fellow brethren in Christ. This is amazing.

Paul spoke about how we are to come together to eat and drink!

He was addressing Peter, because Peter would eat and drink, or commune, or have fellowship, with the Gentiles when the Jews weren’t there. However, when the Jews came, he was concerned about the appearance of eating with the Gentiles, which was contrary to the Jewish laws. He was partial, wasn’t he?

In front of the whole community of believers, Paul said to Peter, ‘A man is not justified by the works of the Law but by faith in Jesus Christ.’ Gal 2:16.

The works of the Law would have been Peter not interacting with the Gentiles, so he was reticent to be seen by the other Jews to be engaging with the Gentiles.

He was saying, ‘No-one, Peter, is justified by that.’

They are justified by faith in Jesus Christ!

‘Even we have believed in Christ Jesus that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; for by the works of the Law no flesh shall be justified.’

This is establishing the *truth*, isn’t it?

He was addressing Peter, and this is a prophetic exhortation. It is quite an exhortation, isn’t it?

### **Testimony – crucified with Christ**

Paul gave a testimony proclaiming the Lord’s death

What did Paul then do? Did he keep ‘hammering away’ on the point?

No, he gave a *testimony*.

He said to Peter, 'I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by [the] faith [that should be the faith of the Son of God], who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died in vain.' Gal 2:20-21.

What was Paul doing to Peter here?

He was proclaiming the Lord's death. 'I have been *crucified* with Christ.' Isn't that the very first Scripture that we read?

'For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death.'

How were Paul and Peter eating the bread and drinking the wine? By Paul, speaking to Peter, 'I have been crucified with Christ. I am cursed with Christ, in relation to the Law. So should you, Peter!'

In the context of a meal, in Antioch, the eyes of the Lord had searched Peter's heart through the word and testimony of Paul.

### **Eyes like flames of fire**

Remember that Jesus is the great High Priest of our confession. He is coming and ministering the elements of the bread and the wine.

Melchizedek came in this meal-time that Peter was part of, and Paul was part of, and in this conversation, the eyes of the Lord were like *flames of fire!*

Eyes like flames of fire, searching Peter's heart - by what means?

It was by the word of Paul. And what was that word?

It was a *lamp* to his feet, and a *light* to his path.

The ministry of Christ in this communion meal, through the prophetic engagement of Paul with Peter, was a priestly action of Jesus Himself to search Peter's heart by the word, which is a *lamp*.

That lamp is the eyes of Jesus Himself. We read, 'It is a *light* to the feet.'

What did that light do to Peter's feet?

It *washed* his feet!

I don't know about you, but I am really excited about this. This was happening as they were eating their dinner.

Their eyes, as a flame of fire, ministered by the word which is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

### **Washed and connected to the sixth wound**

Through this ministry, Peter was being washed and connected to the sixth wound where Jesus was being nailed, hands and feet, to the cross.

Paul said, 'I have been *crucified* with Christ.'

Through this word, Peter had the opportunity to turn from his carnality. This is the foundation of the church.

'On this Rock, Peter, I am going to build My church'

Here, Peter had to *receive* his feet being washed by Paul, the *persecutor* of the church. Peter had to 'look - and what was he looking to? He is looking to the sixth wound.

Do you see that Christ Himself, coming with eyes as a flame of fire, ministered from His finished, one offering; from that specific wound? Through this ministry, Peter was being washed and connected to the fellowship of the sixth wound.

### **Cursed with Christ**

In the fellowship of this suffering, Peter was to be joined to this suffering. If he was believing the word, and faith was being exercised by this word, he would be joined to the fellowship of this wound. And what would it look like for him?

He, in the eyes of his fellow Jews, was to be cursed with Christ. This is because 'cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree!' Jesus was cursed because He was nailed to the cross by sinful men.

Where Peter started to transgress the Jewish Law in the eyes of the Jews, he was cursed with Christ, wasn't he? He was despised by them.

There was a degree of suspicion about Peter. That was suffering! It was the suffering of being crucified with Christ.

When Peter was crucified with Christ, by accepting that suffering and receiving the reviling in the same way that Jesus did, what was happening? His self-righteousness was being cut from his life.



He was obtaining the very life, in the blood, that was being shed by Christ's sixth wound.

Peter was being delivered from his loyalty to the Law, and he was obtaining the life of Christ Himself, so that he could walk, and priest, like Paul.

### **We are all to have a ministry of reconciliation**

I have simply written, 'In the fellowship of this suffering, as Peter was cursed with Christ in the eyes of his fellow Jews, he was being delivered from the curse of the Law, and established in the truth.'

This is a beautiful point. This was a ministry of reconciliation to Peter. Do you see that reconciliation is not primarily for the people in the world, although there is a reality to it?

The beginning point of our ministry of reconciliation is when we speak to one another. This is 'speaking the truth in love'.

It is not pointing out each other's faults, in terms of our own judgement of one another. It's ;in the Spirit:, seasoned with salt, grace on our lips. That grace is joining each of us to the fellowship of Christ's offering where reconciliation is found.

Paul exhorted us all to this ministry of reconciliation. 'Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ.'

Praise the Lord, we are all being reconciled!

'And has given us the ministry of reconciliation.' 2Co5:18,19.

Jesus did this through His offering, and now we are to be ministers of the life of that offering, to one another, connecting one another to the fellowship of Christ's offering.

That is, God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

### **Christ is the great High Priest**

Christ was the High Priest of both Peter's and Paul's confession. Paul did not come as a great high priest to Peter. *Christ* is the great High Priest, but He ministered to Peter through the words of Paul.

Christ was the High Priest of both Peter's and Paul's confession. As great High Priest, Christ ministers in a white garment.

We are to minister as priests in white garments, with Him, according to the order of Melchizedek.

He is the great High Priest, and we are priests, with Him, according to that order. We are not high priests, but a kingdom of priests.

### **We are to have white garments as He has a white garment**

The key point for us is that we are all to have white garments just as Christ has a white garment.

'You have a few names in Sardis who have not defiled their garments.' Rev 3:4.

This was a presbytery in Sardis, and there was a number of presbyters, and probably a number of congregants, who had *soiled their garments*. They were spotted with the flesh! However, there were a few who, like Peter and Paul, had not.

'Who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.'

'He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.'

Paul's garments were being made white through his fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ.

Paul said, 'I count everything else; every dimension of righteousness other than fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ, to be "dung". Every focus of mine is to be conformed to His death, and the fellowship of His sufferings, to live by the *exanastasis* life that is in the blood of Christ, shed on His body, sprinkling my heart'.

That was Paul's testimony.

Paul's garments were being made white through his fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ. This was one who was not defiled; who was *worthy*.

Peter's garments were spotted because of his partiality and observance of the Jewish Law. He needed to receive the washing of the water of the word, from Paul, didn't he?

Paul was washing Peter's feet.

Through this word, faith was ministered to Peter, so that Peter was able to participate in the sixth wound, crucified with Christ.

He was delivered from obligation and loyalty to righteousness attained through the Law because, otherwise, Christ had 'died in vain'. Peter was to be delivered from that, and to live by the life that is in Christ's blood.

That was what Peter was being delivered to, and what happens when his motives were being sprinkled by the blood.

It was not Paul sprinkling Peter with that blood. What was Paul doing?

*Paul was washing Peter's feet.* This is a light to your feet.

### **The sprinkling of our conscience**

Paul was washing Peter's feet and, as Peter, by faith, walked with Christ, the blood that was shed by Christ sprinkled Peter's conscience, which was the cleansing of his garments.

The sprinkling of our conscience is the change in our motive for life, and the garments are our mandate to priest ourselves.

In this regard, we read, 'Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, to serve the living God'.

Paul had clean garments and he was ministering to his friend. Peter 'extended the right hand of fellowship' to Paul.

He ministered to his friend, speaking to him the word of truth, seasoned with salt, with grace on his lips, at a table where they are eating a meal – washing his feet.

Peter, by faith, was turning, joining the fellowship of that suffering. As he did so, his heart was being sprinkled from an evil conscience, and he was able to priest himself as a living sacrifice with Christ.

His garments were being sprinkled clean, as well. That doesn't mean that Peter was now somehow obligated to Paul. They were to continue in *fellowship together*. Peter had a sanctified work to do. Paul had a sanctified work to do.

### **Fellowship connects us to Christ's one offering**

Fellowship connects us to Christ's one offering, and to His enabling priesthood.

It is important to understand that there is no priest, or leadership figure, 'transubstantiating' the

bread and wine of communion to us as the body and blood of Christ.

The word 'transubstantiation' may be new to some people.

The principle of transubstantiation is that, in communion, a person receives a natural wafer and a 'cup', and a priest blesses it, or prays over it, so that when it is eaten by the person, it turns, literally, into the flesh of Jesus, and the blood of Jesus in that person's body.

It becomes 'trans- or re-substantiated, meaning that the substance, simply a piece of wafer and a cup of wine, is transformed into *a new substance* through this invocation, or blessing, when it enters the person's body.

That is complete nonsense!

The bread and the wine is the basic, the minimum, for a meal. We are not saying it does anything different in us, but you can't commune with one another unless you come to a table to participate.

We *do* eat and drink the two elements. It is simply that the elements *don't change*. They don't become Jesus' body and blood in us.

We don't have a priest who transubstantiates the bread and wine of communion to us, as the body and blood of Jesus

The second point is that there is no priest, or clergy figure, who has the authority, or station, so that what they do and say makes those elements our communion.

Fellowship connects us to Christ's one offering into His enabling priesthood. It is important to understand that there is no priest, or leading figure, transubstantiating the bread and wine of communion to us as the body and blood of Jesus.

In other words, we are not participating in the communion because a priest or a leader prays over the elements and ministers them to us as the body and blood of Jesus.

The communion is not another sacrificial event, as though, every time we eat and drink, we are killing Him again. We are definitely not saying that!

### **We are becoming the bread and the cup for one another**

So, what is the communion?

This is a summary of what I have been speaking about in this session.

When we eat and drink in fellowship, it is not merely eating and drinking with anyone. It is eating and drinking with those who are part of the community of Christ, in which the Father has placed us.

We eat and drink in fellowship, remembering and reminding one another through dialogue of our participation in the offering of Christ.

Isn't that what Paul did with Peter? He reminded Peter that he should be crucified with Christ.

When we eat and drink in fellowship, remembering and reminding one another through our conversation of our participation in the offering of Christ, the food and drink of the meal is not being changed to anything.

Rather, we who are eating and drinking in the name of Christ are being changed *because of our participation in the offering of Christ*.

We are becoming the *bread* and the *cup*.

That should be life-changing for us. The communion is not the bread and wine that we eat and drink. It is *because* we come to eat the bread and wine that *we are becoming the bread and the cup* to one another.

Do you see how much we need to speak by faith?

This conversation of speaking by faith begins with prayer, but it becomes a commitment to be the bread and the wine to one another.

You might be saying, 'Yikes, where does it say in the Bible that we are to be the bread, and we are to be the blood?'

I will read a Scripture, and you are going to think, 'How did I not see that?' That is what I did. When I heard it spoken to me, and read it, I thought, 'That is unbelievable!'

'For we, though many, are one bread.' 1Co 10:17.

If we want to break the bread to one another, don't we need to *hear and receive one another*?

We are actually *partaking of one another*.

'For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.'

You see, it is not the wafer that does it. But, because we are all committed to that fellowship, we are ministering to one another, as the bread.

As we give and receive, it makes us *that bread* that makes us one body. Body ministry becomes extremely important to what that bread means to us, doesn't it?

'For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.'

### **The cup is a drink offering**

What about the cup?

The cup is full of the blood of a grape.

We will take some time in a couple of weeks to talk about the distinction between blood for sprinkling, which is the blood of the Lamb, and blood of the grape, which is the blood of Christ in the cup.

Why is that important?

It is because that cup is called 'a drink offering'. It is actually blood, which is poured out.

Paul said, 'Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering [he is saying, 'If I am that cup to you'] on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.' Php 2:17.

Will you rejoice, with Paul, to be poured out on the service and sacrifice of another so that their sacrifice and service ascends to the Father, and is remembered, by Him?

That is to lay down your life to reveal another.

That' is what it means to be part of the Vine, isn't it? We are to be the fruit, and what we are ministering to one another as we speak by grace is the fruit of the Tree of Life.

'Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

'For the same reason [he is saying, 'You should be poured out on the sacrifice and service of another's faith.'] you also be glad and rejoice with me.'

The communion is our participation in the fellowship of the body of Christ, where we are becoming the bread and wine to one another.

We eat His flesh, and drink His blood, because we abide in Him, as those who hear and receive His word, which is Spirit and life to us.

**Conclusion**

I hope you are excited, with me, at what the Lord is unfolding for us in order that we understand our participation in the communion.

We will take our time with this, because it has some cultural implications for us in terms of how we meet house to house, and how we gather for communion when we gather together at the church.

It has some implications for how we understand what it means to be the bread, and to 'pour out' on one another.

Thanks, everyone, we will leave it there for today.