

# EATING AND DRINKING IN A WORTHY MANNER

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Peter Hay, prepared for word ministry, 13 June 2021

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## **The effect of drinking 'mixed wine'**

In our last session, we were considering the deluding and fatiguing effect of seeking and drinking what the Scriptures describe as 'mixed wine'.

We understood that this is the way of those who are joining, or who are already exemplifying, the mixed culture of the woman 'Babylon'.

The word to every Christian is to 'come out from among them and be separate'.

## **Sanctification within the church**

The apostle Paul, in his second letter to the Corinthians, was writing to a church that had this mixture in it. He did not address people in the world; he addressed Christians in the church. And he was calling for sanctification within that church.

'Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.' An 'unbeliever' is someone who doesn't believe the word; not people out in the world who haven't heard. Rather, these ones reject the word that is proclaimed.

'For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial [referring to Satan or a demon]?'

'Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God [of which we are to be part] with idols?'

When we first began to look at this subject, we were looking at the effect of 'the fountain for sin and uncleanness', through which the land, speaking about our life and our households, would be delivered from idols, and from unclean spirits.

'For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM. I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE".'

So, having given this command, Paul said, 'Therefore COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM AND BE SEPARATE, SAYS THE LORD. DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN'.

'Touching what is unclean' occurs when a person engages in life in a way that makes them susceptible to unclean spirits.

'DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN, AND I WILL RECEIVE YOU. I WILL BE A FATHER TO YOU, AND YOU SHALL BE MY SONS AND DAUGHTERS, SAYS THE LORD ALMIGHTY.' 2Co 6:14-18.

We see that our sonship is *dependent* upon this separation.

## **Giving attention to a conversation other than the gospel of sonship – 'mixed wine'**

A person who 'drinks wine' gives their attention and voice to a conversation that is based in a word *other than the gospel of sonship*. That is why it is called 'mixed wine'.

When we do this, Satan gains an advantage in our life and in our family.

Solomon said, 'At the last it bites like a serpent and stings like a viper.' We do not become drunk on the first sip of wine. As we progressively drink too much, we become drunk.

Solomon associated this condition of drunkenness with being bitten by Satan. 'At the last it bites like a serpent and stings like a viper.' Pro 23:32.

We could say that a person who is bitten by a serpent is 'drunk with the mixed wine of Babylon'. And, if we engage in this conversation, and it becomes our culture, then we are those who have been overtaken.

We are bitten by the serpent.

## **Weighed down; oppressed**

The condition of drunkenness is the condition of being *envenomed* by the serpent, Satan. Jesus called this being 'weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the cares of this life'.

The evidence of being bitten by Satan is being *weighed down*. A person who is weighed down is *under oppression* – they are weighed down because they are being oppressed. They are *weary* and *heavy-laden*, often tormented in their mind and thoughts, and fatigued emotionally. They cannot find the

*blessed rest* that belongs to those who are yoked with Christ.

### **Yoked to Christ; discerning the body**

A person who is not yoked with Christ is obviously unable to *discern* the body of Christ. We discern the body of Christ as someone who is *connected* to it.

When we speak about 'discerning', we are referring to our capacity to 'see'. We are exhorted by Jesus to take heed to ourselves, and by Paul to be those who are *discerning*, or seeing, the body.

Often, the ones who claim to see the most clearly are actually those whose vision is most impaired.

### **Our sight is by illumination of the word by the spirit**

A person who is *blind* is someone who recognises their need for sight outside of themselves. Jesus said to the Pharisees, 'If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, "We see." Therefore your sin remains.' Joh 9:41.

The sight that we are to have is not the sight of our own eyes. The sight is the *illumination* that we receive by the word that comes by the Spirit.

### **To fall asleep is to lose our sonship**

Paul said that people who are engaged in this conversation, which is described as 'mixed wine', become weak and sick, and *fall asleep*, which means to *die spiritually*, because they eat and drink in an unworthy manner, not discerning the Lord's body.

'For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgement to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.' 1Cor 11:29-30.

Being 'weak and sick' is the same as those who are 'weary and heavy-laden', which is the evidence of being *weighed down* by carousing, drunkenness and the cares of this life, which is the mark of someone who is under *oppression* from Satan.

To 'fall asleep' is to 'lose our sonship'.

These are people who are relationally unresponsive. That doesn't mean that they are not vocal or social; they may be very vocal and social. In fact, the volume of their words may indicate the inhibition associated with drunkenness. But they are actually unresponsive to *the word* that is being proclaimed.

Their speech is not the expression of faith that comes by hearing the word.

Jesus described falling asleep, or sonship dying away, with the 'grounds': the wayside ground, the thorny ground, and the stony ground.

It highlights the point that we can be in the church, but be asleep; or our sonship is dying away. That is where the *mixture* inside the church is.

### **Watch and pray**

We are told that a person eats and drinks in an unworthy manner because they don't discern the body. Jesus concluded His exhortation to examine ourselves so that we don't get weighed down as those who are drunk, by saying, 'Watch therefore, that you may be *counted worthy* to escape all these things [referring to the judgement of God that's coming on the earth]'. Luk 21:36.

Paul said that the weak and the sick, and those who fall asleep, are under the judgement of God. So, to escape the judgement of God now, and all that is coming on the earth, we need to *watch*, so that we may be counted worthy.

We can connect this instruction of Jesus directly with His letter to the church in Sardis.

### **You think that you are alive but you are dead**

'And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, "These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars [This is the seven stars in the right hand of Christ. He's saying, 'I'm coming as the One from whom the word is being proclaimed through this messenger administration.]':

'I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive [or awake], but you are dead [or asleep]. Be *watchful*, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die [or to fall asleep], for I have not found your works perfect [meaning 'blameless'] before God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent.

'Therefore if you will not watch [in order to be worthy], I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.

'You have a few names even in Sardis 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. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’ Rev 3:1-6.

This is an amazing passage. Although these congregants in Sardis claimed to be ‘alive’, or awake, in Christ, as believers in the church, they were in fact ‘dead’, or asleep, because Jesus had not found their works perfect.

### **Ensnared by a different conversation; not blameless**

This means that they were not *walking in a blameless manner before God*.

They believed that they were awake, but the word declared, ‘The way that you are living and seeing is the evidence that you are asleep having been weighed down because you have been ensnared by a different conversation, and you are exemplifying a different culture.’

They were not blameless - for what reason? It was because they had not been *watchful*. This means that they did not discern; neither had they been *diligent to maintain the culture of godliness* which they had previously attained.

They believed that they were alive, but were dead. They had *fallen away from their sonship*; their sonship had died.

### **Sons of God, separated to Him**

However, Jesus noted that there were ‘a few names’ in Sardis; a few sons of God among them.

They had heard the call to ‘come out from among them and be separate, and I will be a Father to you and you shall be My sons and daughters’.

There were a few names who were sons of God. Wherever we see ‘name’, it refers to someone who is *named as a son*. Jesus noted that there were a few names in Sardis, who had not *defiled their garments*.

### **Our garments are to be washed in the blood of the Lamb**

Jesus was making the point that those whose sonship is likened to ones who have fallen asleep, have defiled garments. Those garments are defiled because they are *not* washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Concerning the sons who had separated themselves from this fallen culture, Jesus said, ‘They shall walk with Me in white, for they are *worthy*.’

### **Eating and drinking in a worthy manner**

We are speaking about eating and drinking in a *worthy manner*.

So, there is a way of walking which is with Jesus in a garment that is white, which is the mark of someone who is worthy. Not perfect, but worthy! We see that *worthiness* is connected to *blamelessness*.

Jesus promised, ‘He who overcomes will be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life’. The ‘name’ in the Book of Life is talking about the sons of God.

### **As we eat and drink in a worthy manner, we overcome**

So, what is the key to being clothed in white garments, as those who are worthy?

It is to be *an overcomer*.

Jesus said, ‘He who overcomes will be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; for I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.’

The Lord is not ashamed to call them His brethren. This is beautiful - to be called the brothers and sisters of Christ.

We will draw some of these threads together now.

*Worthiness* has to do with how we *eat and drink*.

To be appropriately *clothed*, and *worthy* to walk with Christ as those who are eating and drinking in a worthy manner, we must be an *overcomer*.

Overcoming is the evidence of eating and drinking in a worthy manner, that is part of a *conversation* that is not drunkenness.

### **We overcome Satan**

What are we overcoming? Helpfully, the Scriptures are clear on what we are to overcome, and how we are to overcome.

We are to overcome the Devil and what he has *fathered* in mankind.

‘Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down [referring to the Devil].

‘And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.’ Rev 12:10-11.

If you want to walk worthy as those who are eating and drinking in a worthy manner, you must be *an overcomer*; you must be an overcomer of the Devil.

### **Satan gains an advantage when we engage in a different conversation**

And how does the devil get an advantage in our lives?

It occurs when we give ourselves to a *different conversation*, and we become unclear and perverted in our sight and in our expression.

We must be overcomers, and we are to overcome by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of our testimony, and by not loving our lives to the death.

It is important to note that it is not one or the other; all three are fundamental to overcoming.

We will now look at how we overcome in these ways.

### **WE OVERCOME BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB**

We overcome by the *blood of the Lamb* as His blood is sprinkled on our hearts and on our garments.

We do not overcome simply because Christ's blood was shed on our behalf. That was for the forgiveness of sins.

Unless that blood is shed on *our heart*, so that we are *sprinkled clean from an evil conscience* to serve the living God, we are not overcoming anything.

Overcoming by the blood requires it to be *sprinkled on our heart and on our garments*.

Now, the 'garments' have to do with *the mandate of our priesthood*.

So, how does this happen? How do we get that blood on us so that we are overcoming the devil?

### **Our heart is cleansed from an evil conscience**

What does the devil want? He wants us to live by *the dictates of our own heart*. That is what he fathered in us. It is called 'an evil conscience'.

And it is active when we proceed by our knowledge of good or evil. When we do that, we are in bondage to Satan, and to *fear*.

The blood needs to be on our heart to *cleanse us from an evil conscience*.

Christ's blood was shed through the wounding events that He endured on His offering journey from Gethsemane through to Calvary. He was

injured and abused, causing blood to be shed on Him. That is where the blood is. We have access to that blood only as He, our great High Priest, priests to us a daily participation in the *fellowship*, or *communion*, of His offering and sufferings.

Each day, our confession of faith is, 'I have been crucified with Christ, it's no longer I who live.'

The devil wants us to say, 'I am going to live this life.'

Instead, we who are overcoming by the blood of the Lamb accept that we are dead with Christ, and that it is no longer we who live, but Christ lives in us, and His life which was in His blood, is the life by which we now live.

And we live that by the faith of the Son of God, which comes by hearing His word.

### **We can only participate in Christ's offering and sufferings as we walk in the light of the word**

It is important to note that our participation in Christ's offering and sufferings is only possible when we *walk in the light of the word* that is proclaimed by His messengers.

Just because we have a bad day or are suffering, it does not mean that the blood of Christ is sprinkling us from an evil conscience.

If we are *disconnected from fellowship* in the light, our suffering will actually be the suffering of those under judgement.

The only way that that blood is actually cleansing our conscience is when we are walking in the light of the word.

We walk in the light of the word and have fellowship with one another in our fellowship at the *agape* meal.

The apostle John note this in the opening of his letter. We know these passages well, but in the light of this overcoming, it 'sparkles' in another way.

### **Fellowship with the presbytery word**

He referred to the *presbytery word* here.

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

So, we have no fellowship with the Father and His Son if we don't have fellowship with the presbytery.

John said, 'This is the message which we as a presbytery are proclaiming to you so that you will have fellowship with us'.

'This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you.'

### **The word is a light that calls us out of darkness**

What is the message?

'That God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.' 1Jn 1:5.

This sounds like Paul proclaiming as a messenger, saying, 'What communion has light with darkness?'

So, it is not that we declare, every Sunday, 'God is light and in Him is no darkness'.

Rather, the word is proclaiming the light, calling us out of darkness.

'If we say that we have fellowship with Him [we claim that we are connected to Christ and He is active in our life], and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practise the truth. But if we walk in the light [of the word] as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.' 1Jn 1:6-7.

So, we do have to be joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, but it is because we *walk* in the light of that word.

This grants us faith, so that we live each day *by faith*.

We are *speaking* in the fellowship of the light, which is an *agape* meal, both devotionally in our houses, and house to house, and with those messengers who proclaim the word.

As we walk through the day *by that faith*, we have a participation in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, and the blood that was shed through those sufferings is sprinkling our heart and garments.

And we are overcoming the devil as the desire to live our own life is being removed from us. That is 'overcoming by the blood of the Lamb'.

### **God is the light of the world; sons of light**

The word, 'God is light and in Him is no darkness', is the same message that was proclaimed to Abraham, 'Do not fear, I am your faith, I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward.'

Jesus, the Word, came to Abraham, and said, 'I am your exceedingly great reward.' Jesus spoke to His followers, and He said to them, 'I am the light of the world.' Joh 8:12.

'God is light and in Him is no darkness.' Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world.'

Jesus is saying to us, 'I am revealing to you the light that God is.'

'He who follows Me *shall not walk in darkness* [those who walk in the light], but have the light of life.' Joh 8:12.

That is, 'I am your exceedingly great reward.' This is the exceedingly great reward that belongs to the *sons of light*. Joh 12:36. 1Th 5:5.

### **Draw near, by faith**

If we are receiving the word of life, and are participating in fellowship with one another, including with those who proclaim God's word, we are able, through faith, to *draw near to the Lord*.

Don't draw back when you hear the word. When it comes and it is confronting to you, you are able, by faith, to *draw near*.

What happens when we draw near? Our hearts are sprinkled by His blood from an evil conscience, and our bodies are washed with the pure water of the word. That is 'a fountain for sin and uncleanness', by which we are being delivered from our idolatry, and the unclean spirits are being taken out from the land, which is our life.

This is what it means to be able to serve God as part of a kingdom of priests.

### **OVERCOMING BY THE WORD OF OUR TESTIMONY**

'Overcoming by the word of our testimony' means that we are being *conformed* to the name that we have been given by the Father.

A testimony is an *expression*; and that expression is in response to the word by faith.

But it then expresses the word *as a culture, or a way of life*. This is our testimony.

Now, of course, obtaining and expressing the life of God according to our name from the Father requires us to forsake the naming of ourselves. We can't express what the Father's named us if we are holding on to our own name.

Our name, as a son of God, is expressed as a *testimony* when we are fulfilling the works that the Father has prepared for us in Christ Jesus.

Our engagement in these works is not dependent on how we *feel* or whether we believe that our circumstances are conducive to our obedience.

If we are joined to the fellowship of His offering and sufferings as those who are having our hearts and garments sprinkled by the blood, we are, by definition, *suffering with Him*.

If we *draw back*, because we don't feel that the conditions of our life are conducive to participation, we are not being sprinkled with the blood.

And we are not able to express *the word of our name* in Christ.

These are not independent aspects of overcoming; they are completely *dependent on* one another.

In the same way that Jesus did not deviate from the works of His obedience as He tasted the sufferings of death for every person, a son of God who is standing in the grace of God does not *draw back* from the works of their sonship when the circumstances of their life become unfavourable.

That is when we demonstrate faith.

## **OVERCOMING BY LAYING DOWN OUR LIVES**

'Laying down our lives to the death' refers to the fundamental and absolute commitment to the lordship of Christ.

'And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance [that belongs to a son]; for you serve the Lord Christ.' Col 3:23-24.

Our commitment to the lordship of Christ is demonstrated as we forsake all mechanisms of self-preservation and self-promotion, and we submit to the lordship of Christ in the church. We count them as loss, as Paul did, acknowledging that they are being taken out into the sea of God's forgetfulness.

We cannot say that Christ is our Lord, and not submit to the expression of His lordship through the ministry of His word that is coming from the presbytery.

John said, 'If you want to have fellowship with the Father and His Son, you must receive the word and join the fellowship that belongs to the presbytery.'

When Paul said, 'I count it all as loss', he wasn't saying, 'I think it's all bad.' He was saying, 'Those are the things that the Father has forgotten, and while I'm in Christ, I'm able to forget them too.' I let them go as what they are – rubbish!

As we are conformed to Christ's death, we are losing our life for Christ's sake, and we are finding our life in Him. Praise the Lord!

## **We are joined to an ongoing meal which is the provision of Yahweh**

Finally, the promise of recovery belongs to those who eat and drink *in a worthy manner*.

The purpose for our fellowship in His offering and sufferings is 'walking worthy', which is fundamental to eating and drinking in a worthy manner.

Eating and drinking the *agape* meal is not just coming to church on Sunday to have morning tea with each other. We are joined to *an ongoing meal* – the provision of Yahweh, which is the fellowship of His offering; Yahweh's offering.

The Lord Himself spoke of the purpose for our fellowship in His offering and sufferings. It is interesting that He described our participation in this meal as 'a fast'.

He did not focus on the food and drink of the meal. He focused on, and said that, the food and drink, the *reality* of eating and drinking, is a *connection to His offering*. And, it has certain implications for us.

'Is this not the fast that I have chosen: [this is Yahweh speaking] to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the *heavy burdens*?'

What are those heavy burdens? They are the things that cause us to be *weighed down*; to become weary and heavy-laden. They are the things that connect us to the drunkenness of Babylon.

The Lord said, 'Join My fast, and be delivered from that weariness.'

‘To let the *oppressed* go free.’ If you want to be delivered from unclean spirits and familiar spirits in your life and your house, the only way is to choose the fast that He has chosen.

‘And that *you* break every [other] yoke.’ The only yoke that we should have on our lives is our yoke to Christ. Any other yoke is our commitment and connection and participation in another conversation. So *we* have to identify them and say, ‘I am not joining that anymore.’

We are hearing a word that is saying, ‘Come out from among that and be separate.’

‘Is it not to share your bread with the hungry?’ This is a classic statement, because we are joined to a fast. Sharing our bread is *overcoming* by the word of our testimony.

‘And that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh?’

In the light of the word as it comes, this is part of walking in the light.

### **The promises of the Lord if we hear and receive His word**

In this passage of Scripture, the Lord declared the wonderful promise to those who hear and receive His words in the *agape* meal, and who *converse*, by faith, with one another in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings.

And these are just some of the promises.

‘Then your *light* shall break forth like the morning.’

This is someone who is overcoming by the blood of the Lamb. Jesus said, ‘I am the light of the world and you will have the light of life.’

So, if you are joined to this fellowship of His offering and sufferings, *your* light shall break forth like the morning. This is ‘the prophetic Scriptures made more sure’ in your life, dawning in you, like the sun in the morning.

‘Your healing shall spring forth *speedily*.’

If you are becoming weary and heavy-laden because you have forsaken the *agape* meal, if you will turn and repent, and begin to mourn, your healing will spring forth immediately; ‘speedily!’

‘And your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard.’ That sounds like ‘a voice behind me’, saying, ‘This is the

way to go; don’t deviate to the right or deviate to the left.’

‘Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and He will say, “Here I am”.’ That is, those who are lifting up holy hands without wrath or doubting, praying always. Isa 58:6-8.

The Lord is bringing a season of revival among us.

Healing will come speedily to those who give their ear to the word of the Lord, and forsake their own way. As we turn to the Lord, and are sanctified to our unique participation as a member of the body of Christ, many ailments and depressions will cease in a moment.

Moreover, we will find peace as our spirit is revived, and we are delivered from the demonic oppression that afflicts the rebellious.