

## What is the focus of the Lord's Supper?

This question should not be necessary, as the Lord's people have correctly answered this for 2,000 years. However there are some who have recently insisted that the historical perspective is false. This minority claims that the purpose of the Supper is to point forward to the wedding banquet of Christ at the end; it is even called 'a rehearsal' of this banquet. For this reason they insist that the elements of the Supper are not just the bread and wine, but that the Supper is a feast, or a full meal. So, the bread and wine are eaten along with food that is part of a full meal, in the context of social gathering, mixed in with social chit chat and various people doing social things as if at a party or picnic.

This is false. It has appeared in history in cults such as the Dunkers where an agape meal (communal meal) became a central focus of church life and the bread & wine of the Supper subsumed into a peripheral aspect of fellowship. Thus the Supper is focused upon community and people instead of Christ and the cross. The looking forward to a banquet instead of looking backward to the cross is also a secondary focus upon man rather than Christ since this banquet is more about hope for the elect and future glory rather than the past work of Christ. These errors are based upon very faulty exegesis and a complete misunderstanding of the theological and interpretative principles involved. We can highlight the Biblical argument in the following simple points.

**Theological matters:** the centre of God's plan of salvation is the incarnation, humiliation, suffering, death, resurrection and ascension of the eternally begotten Son. The central focus of Christ's work is the cross; the reason for him being sent to Earth. So a principle emerges that all God's work and all salvation not only focuses on Christ but is centred particularly in the cross. To make sure that we see this, scripture is full of it. The types and symbols continually point to this from Isaac on the altar through the symbolism of the blood offerings to the dedication of the temple where tens of thousands of animals were killed and so on. We know that it is the central focus of heaven, for instance as shown in Rev 5:6-14. The word 'lamb' appears 25 times in Revelation, all but one refers to Christ. The symbolism of the Lamb regards Christ's sacrifice, as a lamb led to the slaughter; heaven's central spotlight on Christ is as the Lamb slain. This is entirely in keeping with the principle seen in God's plan throughout history and scripture; symbolism, symbolic numbers / colours / items, typology, direct statement, didactic teaching, prophecy, poetry and much else in scripture point to the cross of Christ.

This is enough to warn us off anything which diverts our attention away from Christ and his cross. But there is much more.

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