

5. Universalism Fails to Recognize Who is to Partake of the Lord's Supper/Communion.

Universalism would allow all who believe they are children of God to partake of the Lord's Supper/Communion. Under these conditions, if a person believes they became a child of God or member of the Church by being sprinkled as an infant, they may partake of communion. If a person believes that immersion as an adult has made them a child of God, they may partake of communion. Universalism makes no difference on the ground of what a person believes made them a child of God. According to Universalism, the mixed multitude may partake of the Lord's Supper/Communion together.

Universalism normally makes no consideration of the life style of those who partake of communion. Universalism mostly teaches that all should love and respect each other while agreeing that the Lord Jesus arose from the dead. If this can be obtained, then the beliefs and lifestyles of the worships are not considered. Does this form of communion service fit the pattern taught to the Church by the Inspired Word of God? Did the Lord deliver this ordinance to the Church in this fashion? Did the Apostles teach the Church to observe the communion in this manner? Let's consider the scriptures to determine the answers to these questions.

Let's first consider some scriptures in order to learn how the Lord delivered this ordinance to the Church.

(Mat 26:25-30) Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said. {26} And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. {27} And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; {28} For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. {29} But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. {30} And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

(Mark 14:19-26) And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, Is it I? and another said, Is it I? {20} And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish. {21} The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for

that man if he had never been born. {22} And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. {23} And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. {24} And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. {25} Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God. {26} And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

(Luke 22:14-23) And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. {15} And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: {16} For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. {17} And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: {18} For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. {19} And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. {20} Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. {21} But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me is with me on the table. {22} And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! {23} And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

As these verses are studied, it is noticed that the order of the things that happened are the same in Matthew and Mark but different in Luke. In Matthew and Mark we find that the bread was taken then the fruit of the vine was taken. However, in Luke we find the fruit of the vine, then the bread, and then the cup AGAIN being taken. Notice the wording of verses 20 and 21 in Mark and compare them to Luke verses 21 and 22. From studying these three accounts, we learn that Luke is NOT careful to present the exact order of the things that happened during this the Lord's Supper. There is a passage of scripture that does clarify with certain detail what happened that night.

In order to learn exactly what happened that night, let's consider what someone who was actually there has to say about this occasion. Notice some verses from John chapter 13.

(John 13:21-30) *When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. {22} Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. {23} Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. {24} Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. {25} He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? {26} Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. {27} And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. {28} Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. {29} For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. {30} He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.*

Here we find an eyewitness account of what happened the night that the Lord instituted the communion in His Church. We realize from reading the other gospels that the communion followed the Passover service. Part of the Passover consisted of dipping bread in a vessel before it was eaten. This was referred to in John 13:26 as “dipping the sop”. When we read about this taking place, we learn that Judas Iscariot took the “sop” and went immediately out, verse 30. If Judas took the “sop”, which was part of the Passover, and went out immediately, he was NOT present to take of the Lord’s Supper/Communion. This is not obvious when you read Luke’s account of what happened that night; however, it is very clear that this is what happened when you consider the eyewitness account given by John.

Why is this important to consider anyway? Well, it is plain that the Lord did NOT serve just anyone His Communion. He limited whom He served to those eleven men whom He later gave the worldwide commission. These who He served the communion were the same ones who He authorized to make disciples, baptize those disciples, and teach the baptized disciples to observe all things He had commanded them. What did the Lord teach these eleven about the communion? Did he teach them to serve it to betrayers? As a matter of scriptural example, He only served those who had been faithful to stay with Him during His trials here on Earth.

What did the Apostle Paul teach regarding who to invite to partake of the communion? Let us again consider the 1st Corinthian letter for this information.

(1 Cor 5:11) But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

Here we notice that the Apostle is addressing those who are considered to be brothers. This thought makes our mind go back to the points regarding the authority given to the Church by the Lord. Notice how the Church is commanded to deal with brothers who are unrepentant. Here we find that the Church is being taught to NOT eat with certain types of brethren. Do we suppose that this was referring to just any kind of meal? We should NOT make this assumption. This verse is clearly teaching whom to invite to partake of the communion.

Recall that this same Apostle taught this same Church in chapter eight of this letter to eat casual meals with unbelievers under certain conditions. If a Church member can eat with an unbeliever, out in public, can he not eat with a believer out in public? This seems only reasonable. Why then would anyone think that 1st Corinthians 5:11 is dealing with anything BUT the communion? Church members are not restrained from eating a casual meal as long as it is received with thanks giving. This teaching in 1st Corinthians 5:11 harmonizes exactly with the example of the Lord as He dealt with Judas Iscariot. So then, the Head of the Church expects His Church to partake of His communion in the same way He delivered it unto them.

Here we find overwhelming evidence that Universalism fails to recognize this Bible teaching. When this is considered, it should not seem as something amazing regarding Universalism. Universalism is not part of the Lord's Church body, so why should we expect it to keep something that was NOT entrusted to it?