



The Lord's Supper

It is the last meal that Jesus took with His Apostles.

And it is also one thing that Jesus had recommended to do regularly. Today, in Congregations who teach the new birth in Jesus Christ, this Lord's Supper is celebrated so often differently from one another.

Then how, and when, should we celebrate the Lord's Supper?

All those who are born again know the meaning of the Lord's Supper, but do you know it in depth?

Do you know why Jesus took this model of the bread and wine? What was His purpose?

We will see all together the details of this celebration, and how can we integrate it and apply it in our lives today. We will also see benefits, this isn't just something that we remember. If I have rightly understood the Lord's Supper and that I practice it the right way, several important changes will occur in my life.

In the same way that the life of Jesus was the fulfillment of the law, the Lord's Supper was the fulfillment of the Passover instituted by God in Egypt. This is why it is very important to know and understand the different stages and the why? of the feast of the Passover.

The Jewish people were in a condition of slavery when they all resided in Egypt. They were living there for more than 200 years, which meant that for many, Egypt was the only country they had known and also that their condition of life

was almost normal, because they had never known anything else. Then came the time of a change, time of a new condition of life for the Jewish people.

For a perspective on this, we are approximately 1460 years before the birth of Jesus. Moses had already made the decision to follow God's plan for his life leading the people out of Egypt. Several attempts had already been made before Pharaoh, but the King of Egypt despite the miracles made by the hand of Moses, still refused to let the people leave go free. It was already one year after that different wounds befell on Egypt, and Pharaoh remained on his position.

Exodus 11: 9-10 *But the Lord said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not heed you, so that My wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." So Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh; and the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the children of Israel go out of his land.*

Then came the time when God established the Passover. This time should mark a change, another life, a freedom that did not exist, and a new identity for this people.

For this they had to take a lamb or a kid that would roast in the fire, they had to eat it with bread and bitter herbs. They were not to break any bones of the animals.

Numbers 9: 12 *They shall leave none of it until morning, nor break one of its bones. According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it.*

This meal was to be taken in a "ready to go" statement. It wasn't a meal of relaxation like any other meal with family or neighbors. The Jews would have had their belt on, their shoes on their feet and their stick in hand. Usually, when they had a festive meal, it was usually a moment of relaxation. One took off his shoes, put his stick at the entrance of the house, off his belt to be more comfortable. But this time it was very different, this Passover meal had to be taken with an attitude of a swift departure, with the thought that things would change. There was a strong contrast between the bitterness of the herbs and the sweetness of the meat with the bread, this is to symbolize that the people were about to go out of a State of bitterness (slavery) to go towards a new life that God had prepared for them (the promised land). Even if by their unbelief,

the Jews took 40 years to get there, nevertheless, God held ready, this land of promise in only a few days walk.

We are not going to stop too long on the Passover in Egypt, because we will use this example only to demonstrate the accomplishment of the Lord's Supper over the original Passover in Egypt and throughout the old Covenant.

Later, we even see that a non-Jewish foreigner could join a Jewish family to celebrate the Passover with them. This is something that God had foreseen when He gave the first Passover instructions to Moses. It was enough that the foreigner agreed to follow the laws and ordinances in order to celebrate the Passover. The number was not limited; the Passover was open to all for little that they agreed to comply with the law, which meant among other things, of all the males of the foreign family to be circumcised.

Numbers 9: 14 *'And if a stranger dwells among you, and would keep the Lord's Passover, he must do so according to the rite of the Passover and according to its ceremony; you shall have one ordinance, both for the stranger and the native of the land.'*

Exodus 12:48 *And when a stranger dwells with you and wants to keep the Passover to the Lord, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it.*

The Passover was established once a year, the 14th of April. This Feast has always been here to mark important times, such as the end of the manna and the beginning of the food in Canaan.

Joshua 5: 12 *Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.*

When King Josias made disappear all the altars, all priests dedicated to false gods, the people returned under optimum conditions toward God, and the first thing was, to celebrate the Passover.

2 King 23:21 *Then the king commanded all the people, saying, "Keep the Passover to the Lord your God, as it is written in this Book of the Covenant."*

But also when the children of Israel returned from captivity because of Nebuchadnezzar.

Ezra 6: 19 *And the descendants of the captivity kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month.*

The Passover is therefore present at each crucial point on each time they returned to God, at each change of situation where the people got closer to God, whenever God wanted to make His people move forward into a new dimension. And this rule is also present at the end of the Ministry of Jesus, it is always the same pattern.

For more than three years Jesus announced a new dimension of things, the fulfillment of the law, eternal life by repentance. (for more details on this subject see my study on the new birth). During these 3 years Jesus taught the Good News. He also trained His apostles who had the task to teach in their turn, so that from generation to generation, the teaching would continue to ensure that the maximum of people reach eternal life.

We are on the eve of the arrest of Jesus. For several weeks the doctors of the law had planned to have Him arrested, and Jesus knew it. But before dying willingly on the cross He had to perform one last thing, the Passover. And this time it would not only be in memory of the output of Egypt, but the entry into a new life, a new spiritual dimension.

This time should never be interrupted by Pharisees, priests, or other troublemakers. For this (the bible does not say), Jesus certainly contacted a reliable man, maybe one of His good friends who would be lend a room to Jesus in his house for to celebrate the Passover with His Apostles. This Passover was really the culmination of His teaching to the Apostles, it was not only to remember that God had made out His people from Egypt. The family of this House was not invited to participate in the Passover with Jesus. This was not a usual Passover meal, Jesus needed a place where He would not be disturbed, where He could freely give the key of His teaching to His Apostles.

Luke 22: 10-12 *And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters. Then you shall say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"'" Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready."*

This is Peter and John who had been commissioned by Jesus to prepare this meal. They had to go buy a lamb, some bread, and all the ingredients, and then go to the temple to sacrifice the lamb. Everything had to be done with caution because the priests and scribes had been spying on all the facts and actions of Jesus in order to cause His death.

Mark 14:1 *After two days it was the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take Him by trickery and put Him to death.*

Then the night came, Jesus arrives with His Apostles in the House for the Passover meal. The first thing that Jesus said was that it was for a long time he waited this moment with them. Jesus was looking forward to arrive at that time, and He said He expected it with strong expectation, other translations say "ferverently", or "so much". This meal had to be the validation of all the teaching which He had given for the past 3 years to His Apostles. We could consider this as the essential bridge from one covenant to another. The Apostle Luke is the only one to talk about this ardent desire of Jesus to eat the Passover with His Apostles.

Luke 22:15 *Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;*

This Supper is often misunderstood, because most of the time it is poorly taught or simply not taught. The result is that a large percentage of Christians don't get any benefit of this new Passover that Jesus taught that very evening.

You will know at the end of this text if this is your case. To those who recognize themselves in a misapplication of the Lord's Supper from this study, I would like to say: "If you passed this teaching until today, it is because you maybe have not checked the word that has been taught you, or because you have not taken

the time to well understand what is written. I would like to encourage you now to try to understand before applying. Feel free to use the team that you form with the Holy Spirit, it is His job to teach you. (For more details on this subject see my study on The Holy Spirit).

Although often in communities, it is the passage of 1 Corinthians 11 which is quoted. I have never seen anyone to take the time to explain the context of this passage. However, it is very important, because Paul spoke in this case, to individuals who have completely deviated from the practice of the Lord's Supper. Among others, there were drunken people, others formed divisions, quarrels, and even when they were assembled Paul said it was for getting worse. But we'll see this passage in a little more detail below.

Peter and John had therefore finished preparing the meal of the Passover. Then everyone arrived to take the meal, Jesus and the 12 go up into the room that Peter and John had prepared.

Matthew 26: 20 *When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve.*

When it is written "He sat down", this does not mean that they were all sitting on a Chair around the table as we usually do today in western countries. The original Word used here is *anakeimai* which means being together taking a dinner sitting or lying. At this same time John 13:23 shows us that John was laying on the chest of Jesus. One might wonder why Jesus speaks of a table in ***Luke 22: 21***? On the table here describes the meal and prepared foods and not furniture.

John 13: 23 *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.*

The meal was going so probably around the dish, sometimes while sitting on pillows, sometimes lying on the side. Yet this was not what God had commanded when He instituted the Passover. The meal should been taken with sandals on, buckled belt, and stick in hand. This is perhaps not very important you might say but there is a teaching to the attitude of Jesus here.

The Jews at the time had let some habits settle in their Passover meal. It is possible that at the time of the Passover meal lying down became practice because of some Roman had already invaded the country for several years. But all this did not seem to disturb Jesus. He did not say to Peter and John: "but, there is no table? " No chairs? It is not this way that your Dad asked you to take this meal". The bible mentions no offense in this regard. And reading from verse 23, John 13, we can even say that Jesus agreed to take the Passover meal under these conditions, as John had his head on the chest of Jesus. One can hardly imagine each of them in such a posture, sitting on a Chair around the table.

What I would like to point out, is that Jesus was not concerned with the layout of the Passover, sitting on a Chair or not, around a table or not. Often we Christians today are very strongly influenced by 'how' to take the Lord's Supper. Some say, that we have to take the bread and wine all at the same time. Others say, use bread cooked just like in the time of Jesus, and others still say, the Lord's Supper should be taken in the form of a real meal and not during a service in the Church.

At the risk of disappointing some of you, I'll say that the elements of it are irrelevant: in a true meal between brothers and sisters, with wine or grape juice, with Viennese bread or oriental bread... Regardless, the key is to remember the death of Jesus and to appropriate it in me. That's all that matters, the rest is only waste of time and source of unnecessary divisions. Jesus gave no instructions on the form that should take the celebration of this Supper. The form has no significance as long as the meaning of the body and blood of Jesus are integrated in my celebration.

Consider the example of an Inuit tribe in Alaska. They are called Eskimos. During the winter they mainly eat meat of seals, fish, seabirds, etc... The summer they can also feed with berries, fruit, eggs, etc... These people have no bread, and even less of grapes for making wine. Then if a tribe came to know the good news, what would they do? Should we all send them to the city to be able to live their Christian lives and be able to celebrate the Lord's Supper?

The answer is no of course.

It is not so much what I will eat or drink to celebrate the death of Jesus that is important, but much more; it is State of spirit in which I will do it. I am not saying that we must celebrate the Lord's Supper with anything, of course if I am in a place of the world where I have access to the bread and the fruit of the vine, I'll choose on those two things. What you should remember it is that my attitude prevails on the kind of food I'll take to celebrate the death of Jesus.

Let's go back for a moment to our meal of Passover with Jesus and His Apostles. Let's see together the different details of the conduct of this meal, which will help us to better understand every word, every action of Jesus so that everyone can reproduce this celebration in all its power. The Gospel of John does not apparently report the story in its chronological order, it is important to report it for a clear understanding of each stage of this meal.

Jesus and His Apostles were eating the Lamb, and each was to converse with another or listen to the words of Jesus. Then the time had come where the bible says Jesus was troubled in His spirit.

John 13: 21 *When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."*

The Gospel of John is the one who reveals to us that Jesus was troubled in His spirit. (For more details on this subject see my study on spirit, soul and body). After more than 3 years of Ministry, Jesus reaches the end of His mission. He knew that now it was only a matter of hours before He would be arrested and crucified. When it is written that His spirit was troubled, it is not The Holy Spirit, we are talking about here, but the spirit which is part of His being "spirit soul and body." It is very important not to mix the two, because in this case it would be a false idea of Jesus as a human being. You might think He would not really struggled against His flesh or not really suffered.

Then Jesus announces that one of the 12 will soon denounce Him. This had to create a change in the atmosphere during this meal, as all were saddened by this announcement. But Jesus knew that it was only the normal sequence of His mission on Earth. He knew that He had come to die, and this time was approaching as a major step closer.

Peter gestured to John who was very close to Jesus, asking Him as who was it.

John 13: 23-24 *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke.*

Jesus clearly refers to Judas. But it seems that nobody had really understood what was happening at that time. Often in the Gospels, we have the impression that the Apostles did not understand what was happening there, or did not understand certain teachings of Jesus. And here is yet again a same situation where Jesus is saying: "Judas will betray me, it is he who will be the instrument of my arrest." And no one seems to oppose to it, in any case the bible does not mention it. We could have thought that our brother Peter would have objected to this betrayal, but not so. We see that God's plan is running in all its perfection. And even when satan enters in Judas and he left the meal while the meal is not over, nobody is surprised about it; his companions believed that Jesus had sent him buying extra things for the meal.

John 13: 26-29 *Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it." And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly." But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, "Buy those things we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor.*

Judas is now gone, Jesus is alone with the 11 Apostles, He can now reveal and give this new alliance for which He taught for more than 3 years. This is something that Jesus had been waiting for a long time. This new alliance was going to be the starting point of the grace of God, a new time, a new area which began and we are still living in today.

Luke 22: 15 *Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer;*

Amplified Translation here has an even more 'human' dimension it says:

Luke 22: 15 *He said to them, "I have earnestly wanted to eat this Passover...*

And Jesus continues His sentence, saying that this would be His last meal on Earth with them. The long-awaited moment has arrived. These 3 years and a half to teach, to fight against satan's attempts to make all fail, to announce the arrival of an area of grace from God towards all human beings. Jesus did it. Everything was not accomplished yet because the cross had not yet taken place, but the teaching on Earth was now almost complete. It only remained to seal the new alliance with the 11, so that they would continue until its completion at the return of Jesus. And for this Jesus would show them how.

Now is the time of this new Covenant that Jesus will establish. So far, He had preached the new birth by the repentance. And with this new alliance, Jesus will give the means to go furthermore, to be able to experiment more in depth this new birth.

I remember, as a young Christian I was wondering: "but what is it that has become new in me? " Yes, a few facets of myself have changed, but not as many as that... Yet the bible says that I am a new person". All these questions were mixing up in my head without really having a clear and practical response. When I asked the question to more experienced Christians than me, they responded that it is Jesus who made me this new person. This, I already knew, but what I did not know, is by what practical effect I could see this transformation in me. Those kinds of answers were not helped me much because this did not answer my questions at all. Today, more than 25 years after, thanks to the Holy Spirit and some teachings, I have the answer to my questions. And a large part of the answer is in a good understanding of the Lord's Supper.

Matthew 26: 26-28 *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."*⁷ *Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*

I have long wondered why Jesus chose to take some bread to symbolize His body, and wine to symbolize His blood. He could have taken the Lamb that they were eating to symbolize His person, but Jesus did not, yet this was apparently

a good image. If Jesus chose bread and wine to symbolize His person this is for at least two reasons.

To take some cooked lamb, instead of the bread and wine would not have had the same impact. Because there are two aspects in the Lord's Supper, the body and blood of Jesus, it is those two things that need to be celebrated. The single lamb celebrated, would have with time completely erased these two factors, on one hand the body and on the other hand the blood of Jesus given for us. A few hundred years later we would have forgotten completely that there are two very significant things that Jesus gave in the last supper, His body and His blood. The years would have quickly reduced it, and today we would surely be celebrating in the last supper the fact that Jesus gave His life for us, without any additional details. It is a true thing, but it is very important to understand the details of this gift. Yet blood is part of the body, then why Jesus makes a difference with the two?

When I 'am born again, I enter in a process of change. We are all made of a spirit, a soul, and a body. In my new birth my spirit is now separated from my soul (according to Heb 4:12) and made perfect (for more details see my study on the new birth). But my body and my soul, they remain inclined to sin. Sin does not necessarily say, do or think terrible things. It is whenever I do not do the will of God that I sin. I miss the goal that God has set for me. Do you know that the one who created the entire universe took time to think about you and determine the best choice of your life on Earth? This is what I would call the will of God for us. And yet with our so limited mind compared to Him, we often don't do His will because we think that we know better than Him, or because we can't make it to know it. That is why Jesus wanted that we all remember regularly that He gave His body and His blood for us.

Whenever I take the bread, I remember that the body of Jesus is integrated into mine.

But why do this, you may say?

It is essential to successfully integrate this fact in me. When my body is sick for example, I know that my body is grafted onto His own, it is like an envelope over my body. In addition to seeing my sins forgiven, this image helps me better to see what is happening in my body where it needs healing, or when my

body wants to lead me to do bad things, this image helps me activate the faith that I have already received.

With his body on mine, I'll much more respect my physical part, I will care more about it. I know that Jesus has given me His body who has never sinned, to go on mine. It's like a very precious thing that I have received, I'll be careful of it, this is why my sins are erased and that God sees them no more. The result is that I will sin less often with my body. I no longer consider my body as it was before my new birth, now an additional body has been given to me to cover mine. And this is not any, it is Jesus Christ's body, the son of God who has never experienced sinning. Whenever I eat the bread of the Lord's Supper I must remember all this.

Then Jesus took a cup of wine to symbolize His blood and He said "drink of it all of you". In the bible, blood is symbol of the soul of life who goes throughout all the body. The soul is found in the blood, it is my intelligence, the one that will treat my thoughts and give orders to my whole body. In His blood Jesus gave His soul, His life, His intellect, and His way of thinking. And in the same way that for my body, I have to remember that my soul is grafted on to Jesus.

It is also essential to integrate in our life: knowing that my soul, my mind is like covered by the one of Jesus, I will no longer manage my thoughts in the same way. I constantly have the thought that the soul of Jesus is on mine. As I will just like for my body, also take much more care for my thoughts, because I know that these are the thoughts of Jesus that are on mine. It is helpful to know that my flesh (body and soul) are covered by the one of Jesus. I will no longer fight in the same way, and some powerful results will emerge in my life. The bible speaks often of the blood of Jesus, who saves, who heals. Understand that if we were, you and me at the foot of the cross when His blood was shed, and that we could take some of it in a glass, this blood would have no value. It would simply be the physical blood in the body of Jesus. When the bible speaks of the blood of Jesus shed for us, that is to say: "His life given voluntarily with His own will, His own intelligence by Jesus for us, this perfect sinless, life offered."

What perfect plan!

The bread and the fruit of the vine are still often today staple foods in most regions of the world. This is why Jesus chose bread and wine, because they are foods that almost everyone should eat at least once per day.

Jesus said when speaking of the last supper: "do this in remembrance of me". It is something that we should do regularly, but why?

Simply because although often the devil comes to suggest lies, that we end up believing. Lies such as: "Jesus who gave His body to come to the aid of yours? But it is wrong, look; you are not even able to keep a good resolution".

Or: "Jesus gave His soul for you? It is still a lie that you thought when you read this study on the last supper. You are not even able to have good thoughts towards such and such".

I have often heard Christians who taught that it is impossible that a demon can put thoughts in my soul. Well if this is what you think, I can tell you that such a thought already is of an evil spirit. Take the time to reread the passage where Paul speaks about an Angel of satan coming to talk to him when he talks about his thorn in the flesh in **2 Corinthians 12: 7**. Many Christians, not to say most of them, think that this is a physical problem that Paul describes. But not at all, it is an evil spirit that comes regularly trying to discourage him speaking of his failures.

Remember now whenever you take the Lord's Supper that Jesus gave His body for yours and His soul for your soul. If Jesus choose to take foods which entered into us, it is well to integrate this fact, I eat His body that comes over mine, and I eat His soul that comes over mine.

Personally I try to remember this whole process every time I eat bread and that I drink. I drink almost no wine for a matter of taste, I do not wait to drink some wine to remember that Jesus has given me His soul. Several times a week, when I arrive at the table and that there is bread and something to drink, I remember what Jesus has done for me. But this does not prevent me from celebrating the Lord's Supper with my brothers and sisters in the community where we are. But I do not want to wait once a month to remember all of this. I need to renew it regularly.

I think that we all need to renew it regularly.

What are the benefits of it?

When I find myself in a situation where I have to pray for such or such thing, if the thought that the body, soul and on top of it the Holy Spirit of Jesus is fully part of my being, I'll be more efficient in my prayer. This will be obvious. I will not have to resemble my thought, concentrate extensively to get to finally be ready to formulate my prayer. It is always that I have to remember that His body and soul are part of me. And it is for this that Jesus chose food to symbolize His gift to us. Because human beings cannot do without food. The food, I can't be without it, it is essential for me if I want to stay alive. In the same way, remember that Jesus gave me His body and His soul is a matter of life, I can't do without it. This is why it is very important to feed us from this thought, this celebration regularly. Jesus gave His body and His blood so that His all life will be integrated into my being. This is why because of the voluntary gift of Jesus for me, I will live forever, because God sees me without sin. The Lord's Supper is there for me to not forget that Jesus has given His entire life for me, but also that I will not forget that this life I received is in full: His body, His soul and His Spirit.

Often it is the passage from 1 Corinthians 11:23 which is read in congregations to celebrate the Lord's Supper.

Every time it saddens me, when I hear that Sunday after Sunday, this passage is read to celebrate the Lord's Supper become like a recitation that nobody understands anymore or not listening to it. It would be much more beneficial to Christians sometimes, to hear an explanation of why Jesus gave His body and His blood for us. This will not prevent reading from time to time the Gospels or 1 Corinthians passage which speaks about the Lord's Supper. The result would be that a large percentage of people would not know about all the practical benefits of the Lord's Supper that the body and soul of Jesus is encompassed on theirs.

Some only remembered that Jesus had suffered and had taken a sad countenance upon themselves, others were trying to review what might be the

most “significant” sins they had committed recently in order to ask for forgiveness before taking the bread and wine.

Today many people think that God will expose them if they do not repent of all their sins before taking the Lord’s Supper.

Not at all.

All this is only the result of a lack of understandings or lack of comprehension. Often, because that 1 Corinthians 11 passage which is quoted, pushes Christians to put themselves in the same position as the Corinthians to whom Paul spoke in this passage.

Read again the letter of 1 Corinthians. You will see that Paul is forced to rebuke severely the members of this church. There were some arguments between men and women as to if one is superior or not to another as well as divisions and adultery, even said that they gathered together to become worse. During the Lord’s Supper some were drunk, others took advantage of eating the food of others, and there was nothing left to eat when others had arrived. Others had to be driven out of the Church by Paul for a time. There were people who took the bread and the wine without being born again. Paul adds that it is the reason why there are so many sick among them, and that many are not healed. I will not list all the problems of this church, but everyone will have understood that those Corinthians had some serious problems to solve.

And it is in this context that Paul had been forced to remind them of how to take the Lord’s Supper.

Do you consider that your church is like the one of the Corinthians? That it has the same problems? I do not wish it.

If thus it is not the case, then don't consider yourself as the Corinthians of this time. The severities of Paul are not directed against you. Don’t you feel accused, and do not look for what sins you have or might commit which might result in a judgment against you. The Lord’s Supper is not there to accuse us, nor to push us into the guilt of sin. It is there simply to remind me that Jesus gave His body and His soul for me, and I have to use this benefit every day.

This does not mean that we must not consider the teachings of Paul thereon about this subject.

Quite the contrary.

1 Corinthians 11: 27-29 *Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the .*

Why Paul said this?

Simply because there were people who joined at the Lord's Supper meal without going through the new birth. And thus these people were "unworthy". This does not mean that they would never be part of it. No. But these people would first have to pass through the new birth. It is a very logical and obvious thing when you think about it. How can we celebrate and remember the fact that Jesus gave His body and His blood for me while I had not accepted nor integrated this fact into my being. It is an aberration. If I declare by this Act that I am released from the law of God, and that in fact I am not, it is a judgment against myself. I can't rejoice in something that I don't have, just as if I had it. Paul had to send Timothy to put this community of Corinth back to balance, even the elders of this Church had failed in their task. Nobody was able to give a teaching according to the good news of Jesus, which caused derivatives like those of some who celebrated the Lord's Supper without even going through the new birth. And in this case the people ate and drink a judgment against themselves.

Why?

Because before being practical the Lord's Supper is spiritual.

When I take the bread and the wine, Paul said that I proclaim, or I am announcing that I'm at the benefit of the death of Jesus Christ. In other words, I'm proclaiming before all creation, but also before the angels, before any evil spirit, that the blood, the life of Jesus forgave all my sins, that God's law has no more action on me, and that I have authority over satan and his demons by Jesus Christ by receiving His body, His soul.

God proclaimed a Grace period where everyone is forgiven for all his sins, one just has to accept it. Do you think that satan and his demons would stay there doing nothing in front of a prey as someone who has not passed through the new birth and who proclaims: "I am forgiven of my sins and I got Jesus Christ's life in me, I have the authority against you satan and all your army!". It's like go taunt evil powers, starting in a battle without any force or without any weapons, and put me in a dangerous position. That is why, in this case I eat and drink judgment against myself, I draw an action of the devil upon me. I see often parents, during the Lord's Supper, giving bread and a small glass of grape juice to their children. If this is your case, now you know what you are exposing your children to. This celebration is not a meal to feed physically or a pretext to calm my young child who will do a whim if I do not give him bread and juice at the same time as me!

Understand that there are spiritual consequences behind all this. Then do not expose your children spiritually due to your negligence.

Paul goes on to say: **1 Corinthian 11: 28** *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.*

We are still in the same context, Paul is firmly trying to educate a community which has no more stable teachings. He just said that some take the Lord's Supper without even being born again. And it is in the same idea, he said: "*But let a man examine himself*". In other words: "before taking part in this meal, make sure you are really born again, make sure you have well understood and integrated the process of the new birth".

And Paul goes on to say: "*and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup*". The idea of Paul was not to put out all those who were not born again of the Lord's Supper.

Quite the contrary.

By saying that Paul said in other words: "if by examining your life, you have noticed that you are not born again, then hurry up to go through the new birth, so you can quickly integrate the body and soul of Jesus in you, by taking the bread and wine".

Then Paul gives an element that was often a misunderstood subject.

In the early years of my Christian life, I have often wondered if we could get sick if we took the Lord's Supper unworthily, or even die? I had heard Elders say, perhaps like some of you also, that if I took the Lord's Supper without examining myself and asking for forgiveness for the sins that I could commit, God could allow a disease in my life, and I could perhaps even die.

Such ideas are just deceptive strategies that are coming from evil spirits.

At this time we can say that my knowledge of God was well narrow. Today it is still, but much less, because I learn yet very regularly in the team that I formed with the Holy Spirit.

When we analyze a little these things, these words of Paul fall under the right meaning.

1Corinthians 11: 30 (AMP) That [careless and unworthy participation] is the reason why many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep [in death].

Remember that we are still in the same context, where Paul sternly teaches those people who celebrate the Lord's Supper without been born again, but also where he finds that it has no solid teachings in this community. It is to such an extent that Paul is obliged to send Timothy to teach in addition to his letters, because Paul understood that the Corinthians will not come out from this by themselves, they were not autonomous.

And in all this context, it is unfortunately normal for many to be sick and still infirm.

Why?

Because no one was able to teach on healing in a powerful way. No one was able to integrate the fact that he had been received in Jesus, all authority on all diseases, all infirmities, and to apply it in his own live or in the lives of their brothers and sisters. What made the sick people remain sick (For some of them they ended up to dying from their diseases), and the infirm remained crippled. And their number increased as more people were arrived in the Church.

I remember in our first community, two of my sisters that I liked very much who were sick. It was at 2 or 3 years of intervals. The first was suffering from multiple sclerosis. Month after month we saw the disease take more and more upon her. Yet our Church prayed pleading God to intervene, but we saw her going down and down, more and more. Then she went up to heaven with God. My other sister in Christ was suffering from bone cancer. The same things had been applied. All the Church begged God of healing, but after a few years she passed away and went also with God. Today they are both with Jesus. And when I think about them, I miss them both.

At the time the leaders of the Church said: "God chose to take her with Him. We did everything to make her healed, but it was not the will of God".

Often we hide our incompetence behind the "so-called" will of God. All our community has been improper in these two failures. God wants us in good health. And I am just as much at fault me and my wife because of our ignorance, which were part of the Church at the time, having our two sisters leaving.

How many churches see that there is a lot of sick, infirm among them who remain sick and infirm years after years. Do not accommodate yourself of such situations, don't you say "perhaps God who allows it".

No. God does not wish to allow that His children remain sick and infirm!

This is why Paul said to the Corinthians: *"That [careless and unworthy participation] is the reason why many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep [in death]"*.

These people, and this sentence of Paul was the result of it. People were sick and eventually dying of their disease without being able to be healed by the power of the cross.

It is my only motivation when I'm writing my studies, by teaching men, couples: allow that no one remains ignorant. Because it is the ignorance of the true good news that leads to suffering. There's not an "elite" among Christians.

Everything that Jesus has done you can do it too with a little effort to activate what He gave you by grace, and a little knowledge of His word.

John 13: 2-5 *And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.*

By reading these verses above you surely thought: "But why does he speak of Jesus washing the feet of His disciples in this study of the Lord's Supper?"

I also asked myself the question during the preparation of this study. And we will see together that "Jesus washing the feet of His disciples" is part of the teaching of the last supper. If I have not understood the teaching that Jesus gave in washing the feet of His disciples, I will not be able to fully practice the teaching of the last supper in my life, and I will have unfortunately not all results of it.

The Gospel of John is the only one who talks about this moment where Jesus washes the feet of the Apostles. John was more than 80 years of age when he wrote this Gospel, and even several decades after he remembered the details of the entire scene John had quickly put into practice for this truth to be called happy as Jesus said in **John 13: 17**.

Now let's look at a little more closely the passage from **John 13: 2-5**.

After having finished eating Jesus gets up, laid aside His garments to be more comfortable, and to not to dirty it, then He starts to wash the feet of His disciples. It is because there was a dispute between the Apostles that Jesus washed their feet. A few minutes before, the eleven were not agree among themselves, because they wanted to know who was the most important.

Luke 22: 24 *Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.*

Yet Jesus just took time to explain to them that they must remember His life given for them that God has removed all their sins, and they must keep everything in them by the body, and the soul of Jesus given in His blood. I especially do not blame them, because how many times have we put into practice straightaway the teachings of the Holy Spirit? Often we need a little time before we can fully assimilate a teaching given by the Holy Spirit or heard by a preacher. For us, Christians today it is easy because we know already all of the new Covenant. But they were still going through the running of the good news. And now our brothers sought to know which would be the greatest among them. John could have said: "I'm one that is the closest to the master"... And Peter: "but me, I walked on the waters of the Lake..."

Everyone had surely given his argument to prove that he was the greatest of the Apostles. But Jesus replied to them in a manner that opposes of the ways of human society. He said in other words: "Do not be like the leaders of this world who took their power and their responsibilities for themselves and who love being flattered by others by standing above the others. They want to be called benefactors. It is not this way that one is the greatest in the Kingdom of my father. Don't be like them, it is not this way that you will amass treasure in heaven. But on the contrary the authority and greatness is acquired by elevating others".

Luc: 22: 25-26 *And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called "benefactors". But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves.*

Then Jesus goes on to say: "I will now show you how we can be the greatest. Look, who is the Envoy, the Son of God who came to remove sins? It's Me, you know it. Then look at now, I will place myself in a position inferior to yours. And that is why I am the greatest among you, because I agreed to abandon my own person, and because I abandoned it, My father gave me His glory".

Luke 22: 27 *For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.*

Jesus is telling the Apostles that now they must be no more focused on themselves, but on Jesus. And this is because they will be more focused on

themselves, that they will go through a real new birth and become empty vessels ready to be filled with the nature of Jesus.

Do you know why Jesus was able to receive the glory, the power and authority of God in His life? Because He was God's Messenger of course, but because He has also agreed to renounce to Himself, to be centered on Himself.

If my thoughts agree to: "from now on to leave the "me" aside, I will not try to do things for personal recognition, I will let the very nature of Jesus that I have received be expressed in my being". It is only at this point that Jesus will make in me what His father did in Him.

It is very easy to talk, and less easy to act for validating His words. This is what Jesus will do now.

John 13: 3-5 *Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.*

This work was usually reserved to the servants or slaves of the House. This period was not like the one we live today. The roads were dusty, it happened that there were animal's droppings on the road and that one walk in, some mud, etc... What makes that, after walking all day, the feet of the people were not in the same state as ours when we remove our shoes and our socks at night at home. At the time there were no socks, no shoes covering the feet. No need to say that that the feet could be very dirty.

The Apostles had to be surprised to see Jesus getting up, then take a basin, fill it with water. Everything was already ready in the upper room to wash the feet of the guests. Perhaps in preparation for Passover, Peter and John had ensured that there is something to wash the feet of Jesus and those of the disciples, and that the master of the House in early evening would send a servant to do so.

But no, it had not happened like this.

It is Jesus who took the place of the servant. (For more details see my study on the person of Jesus). Apparently nobody objected to having their feet washed by the master. Verse 5 of John 13 shows us that Peter was not the first to have his feet washed by Jesus. Let us remember that the Apostles went out from a dispute between them about who was the greatest. I think that everyone had remained in silence and began to feel very slight when they saw that Jesus began to kneel and wash the first feet. Nobody would no longer dare to speak. The thought of a few minutes earlier where one was looking for to elevate himself began to fade.

Then comes the turn of Peter.

Peter, often the first to speak, but also often the first to act in faith and to lead his comrades. Peter the leader.

John 13: 6-8 *Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?" Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this." Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."*

He denies that his master put Himself down to take the role of a servant. But Peter has not yet fully integrated this new nature that removes the "me". For him it is inconceivable that Jesus could wash his feet because He is the master. Peter has not yet understood that Jesus is the master because He is not focused on Himself, because He let the nature of God live in Him instead of His flesh. Note that Peter did not say: "No, master you will not wash my feet, it is rather me who will wash your feet, because you are the master".

Peter considers Jesus too important to let Him wash his feet, although he did not consider himself, enough of a "servant" to wash Jesus feet.

It is also be self-centered, when I consider myself not quite 'small' enough to go help my brother or my sister in any situation. And this is what Jesus responds to Peter. In other words He said to him: "Peter, if you don't let me wash your feet and if you do not accept the fact that I became myself as a servant before you for a moment, well we will not have much in common you and me. If you want

to receive my glory, that is my love, my authority, my nature in you, you will need also to place yourself as a servant in front of your brothers and sisters".

What I like about Peter is, he doesn't take too long to understand. As soon as he receives a teaching he integrates it to his life immediately. Even if he makes mistakes, he does not wait for months to analyse himself to recover. Immediately after the remark of Jesus he says:

John 13: 9 *Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!"*

Peter has now understood the teaching.

John 13: 12 (ERV) *When Jesus finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and went back to the table. He asked, "Do you understand what I did for you?"*

Jesus told them that He only received what was given to Him by His father, but that the apostles also will receive nothing that will come from Jesus Himself.

John 13: 14 *If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.*

It happen to me several times to see or to hear Christians who wash their feet of each other today. I have nothing against, but this remains a symbol. This may be a strong point from the point of view of the image in a preaching for example. I remember a friend who, after teaching in the Church, had taken a bowl and had invited those who wished to have their feet washed. But His teaching was on the fact that we should not hesitate to position us below a brother or sister in order to help him to get up in his journey.

John 13:10 (GW) *Jesus told Peter, "People who have washed are completely clean. They need to have only their feet washed. All of you, except for one, are clean."*

Jesus said that when we took a bath in a lake or public baths we were clean but when we got home the feet were stained with dust and therefore dirty. Which means that the wheel is turning, and sooner or later you will have to wash the feet, and sooner or later we will have to wash your feet. In both cases deny not, think: "I refuse to focus on myself."

John 13: 16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.

Jesus said that He is not greater than His father, that it is in forgetting about Himself that He has incorporated the nature of God into His human being. And in the same way we Christians are not greater than our Lord Jesus, and that it is in forgetting about ourselves (without to denigrate ourselves, keeping our dignity) that we will incorporate the nature of Jesus in our being. And if we practice this way of thinking, we will be called "happy". Here the word 'happy' means, overwhelmed with happiness to live in the blessing.

John 13: 17 (GNT) Now that you know this truth, how happy you will be if you put it into practice!

To forget about ourselves is a long process. Do not be discouraged! This is not because the 'my or me' is able to upsurge sometimes and that I have to abandon everything and say "this is not worth it, I won't make it". No, don't give into these satanic lies.

Often I 'am disappointed in myself when I realize that in such or such a situation I've done wrong, because I was focused on myself. At the beginning I was very discouraged, and with my desire to always do well, I told myself that it was not worth it to continue my efforts. But today when that happens to me, I think that all this is a process, that it can take a little bit of time and that I'm on the right track. So I get up and I go for it and I only see the positive being accomplished so far.

Did you understand the entire process of the Lord's Supper?

All the situations of that evening are linked. They are the result of a teaching.

When I'm born again, I integrate the body and the life of Jesus in me.

That is why God no longer looks at me as a sinner, and that my body and my soul are now grafted onto the ones of Jesus. I have to remember this whenever I eat and drink bread and the fruit of the vine (or the basic food of my country if there is no bread and vine). And that is only because I remember regularly this that I will be able to die, little by little the fact to be centered on myself. And

it's because I would be less and less self-centered that I could position myself as a servant for my brothers and sisters when it will be necessary... that I will wash the feet at a time, and I let someone wash mine to another.

Remember all this when you will take the Lord's Supper in your community. Your sins are forgiven; there is no need to go back to them.

The Lord's Supper is there to lift us up, to encourage us. It is here for us to remember all the potential that Jesus gave to us. It is used to move forward, His goal is not to overwhelm us by thoughts of penance, or to perform any religious ritual.

The Lord's Supper refreshes the thought that Jesus lives in me, and that I have received everything to reach to the goal.

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