

"Nourished By Christ"
(1 Corinthians 10:16-17)

Introduction: When you eat a meal, the food goes through the digestive process and eventually nourishes and sustains your whole body.

The same thing takes place in the spiritual realm. The new man needs nourishment. The Lord has given it to us through the means of grace.

The body can be over nourished and so be harmed. But the soul cannot. Often, it receives far too little. We don't place the same emphasis on our spiritual well-being. ***But God is concerned and He has provided for you a spiritual meal by which you might be strengthened.***

And what I want you to see from this text this morning is,

The Lord's Supper is a spiritual meal for our spiritual nourishment and growth in grace, in which we have communion with Christ and with one another as His mystical body.

I. ***In Partaking of the Lord's Supper, We Are Nourished By the Lord*** (v. 16).

A. Context.

1. Paul speaks of the union of the Israelites.
 - a. All were baptized into Moses.
 - (i) All passed through the sea.
 - (ii) All were under the cloud.
 - b. All ate the same spiritual food.
 - (i) The manna which God supplied.
 - (ii) It was spiritual food.
 - c. All drank the same spiritual drink.
 - (i) They drank from the rock.
 - (ii) Paul says the rock was Christ.
2. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with all of them.
 - a. They craved evil things.
 - b. God punished them as an example to us.
 - c. That we should not crave evil as they did.
3. One of their most serious offenses was idolatry.
 - a. They sought to worship God through an idol.
 - b. For this they were severely chastened.
4. Paul exhorts the Corinthians to flee idolatry.
 - a. To partake of the table of demons was to become sharers in those demons.
 - b. To partake of the table of the Lord was to become a sharer in the Lord.
 - c. One cannot be sharers in both.
5. This text tells us the Lord's table is not merely a memorial.
 - a. It is a participation, a sharing in Christ.
 - b. It is a sharing of His blood.

- c. It is a sharing of His body.
- d. What then is the Lord's Supper?

B. It is a Remembrance of Christ's Work of Atonement.

1. Christ gave Himself for us and for our redemption.
 - a. His body was broken in His crucifixion.
 - b. His blood was poured out for our sins.
 - (i) The blood of Christ cleanses from all sin.
 - (ii) Not the literal blood, but His death.
 - (iii) Christ paid for our sins by His death.
2. At the Lord's table, we remember this sacrifice.
 - a. You cannot be a Christian and be unaffected.
 - b. He died for **our** sins.
 - c. He came to free us from God's wrath.
 - d. This should stir us up to holy **zeal**.
 - e. If you are unaffected, your heart has been hardened.
 - (i) You must repent.
 - (ii) Ask Christ to renew your affections.
 - (iii) To stir in you fervent love for Him, His word, His will.

C. But it Is also a Spiritual Feeding Upon Christ; It Is A Means Of Participating in the Body and Blood of Christ.

1. We do not physically eat Christ's body.
 - a. Some branches of the church believe this.
 - (i) Romanists believe we eat the real body and blood.
 - (ii) Lutherans, the actual body and blood are present.
 - (iii) They try to do justice to the language.
 - b. But this is impossible.
 - (i) Christ is in heaven <Acts 3:21>.
 - (ii) Christ is present, but not physically.
2. Yet, we are really nourished by Him.
 - a. Though He is not physically present, He is present.
 - b. Not all which is Christ, but the whole Christ.
 - (i) Christ is both divine and human.
 - (ii) His divine nature is omnipresent.
 - (iii) His human nature is not.
 - (iv) At the table, the whole Christ is present.
 - (v) He is present with all His saving benefits.
3. When we partake, it is the mouth of faith feeding upon Christ.
 - a. This language is used in Scripture.
 - (i) <Matt. 26:26-28>.
 - (ii) <John 6:31-35, 48-58>.
 - b. Some of our Reformed catechisms use this language.

"To represent to us this spiritual and heavenly bread Christ has instituted an earthly and visible bread as the sacrament of His body and wine as the sacrament of His blood. He did this to testify to us that just as truly as we take and hold the

sacraments in our hands and eat and drink it in our mouths, by which our life is then sustained, so truly we receive into our souls, for our spiritual life, the true body and true blood of Christ, our only Savior. We receive these by faith, which is the hand and mouth of our souls" [Belgic Confession 35).

- c. Sacramental language: the sign called by what signified.
 - (i) The tree of life.
 - (ii) Baptism (Acts 2:38).
 - (iii) The wine signifies His blood.
 - (iv) The bread His body broken for us.
 - d. But what is signified is truly present to our faith.
 - (i) The whole Christ is present.
 - (ii) He is present to strengthen and nourish.
4. This eating is not physical, but spiritual, by faith.
- a. When we eat, we are nourished spiritually.
 - (i) It is not merely an act of faith.
 - (ii) It is an actual impartation.
 - (iii) Calvin writes, "In this way the Lord intended, by calling Himself the "bread of life" [John 6:51], to teach not only that salvation for us rests on faith in his death and resurrection, but also that, by true partaking of him, his life passes into us and is made ours--just as bread when taken as food imparts vigor to the body" (*Institutes* 4.17.51:365).
 - b. We are nourished by the heavenly bread of Christ
 - (i) We become sharers in His blood.
 - (ii) We become sharers in His body.
 - (iii) They penetrate us and become part of us.
 - (iv) By the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. It is actually the grace which Christ merited through His incarnation, obedience, suffering.
 - (i) All that Christ did, He did for you.
 - (ii) He would not be the bread of heaven if He had not been born, lived and died for us, and rose again.
 - (iii) You receive this grace in the sacrament.
 - d. The same grace as through the other means, only a different channel.
 - (i) We are daily nourished and sustained by this bread.
 - (ii) But it is signified and sealed to us in this holy feast.
 - (iii) This is God's seal and our assurance.
 - e. The elements are set apart by **blessing** them.
 - (i) From ordinary use.
 - (ii) **As** an emblem of Christ's body and blood.
5. **So In Partaking of the Lord's Supper, We Are Nourished By the Lord by receiving the benefits He merited for us.**

11. ***In Partaking of the Lord's Supper, We Express Our Unity With One Another (v. 17).***
- A. ***In Communion, the Lord is Present with His People.***
1. We have seen that above.
 2. He is spiritually present, not physically.
 3. He is present to commune with us and strengthen us
- B. ***But We Also Have Communion with One Another.***
1. We are all part of His mystical body.
 2. This is represented by the one loaf.
 - a. We are all nourished from the one loaf.
 - b. This is symbolic of our nourishment from One Head.
 - c. We all are the members of His body.
 3. The bread alone describes the whole Lord's Supper.
 - a. It is a synecdoche: a part for the whole.
 - b. It is sometimes called "the breaking of the bread" (A 2:42).
 - c. Here we have communion with one another and Christ.
 4. It is not an individual matter.
 - a. It declares the unity of the body.
 - b. And is not for private use.
 - c. We therefore partake as a congregation.

Conclusion:

1. So the Lord's Supper is more than merely a memorial, it is also a spiritual meal for the soul.
2. By faith, we feed upon the merits of Christ's mediation in His incarnation, death, burial and resurrection.
3. It is to the spiritual nourishment of our soul, as the bread and wine to the body.
4. For this reason, it is beneficial for us to partake as often as we can.
 - a. The early church partook "continually" <Acts 2:42>.
 - b. They were not afraid it would lose its effect.
 - c. It is a channel of God's grace to us to strengthen us.
5. And in partaking, we also have communion with one another.
 - a. We are all a part of the mystical body of Christ.
 - b. This is evidenced by the fact that we all partake of the one loaf.
 - c. We should not be in variance with one another, but peace.