

Churches of Christ and the Lord's Supper: Twentieth Century Perspectives*

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Alexander Campbell's famous sentence, "In the house of God there is always the table of the Lord," embodies the essence of Stone-Campbell Eucharistic theology and practice.¹ This simple sentence describes the weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper on the Lord's Day in the presence of God as a joyous feast.

The "house of God" is the weekly assembly of the saints where God and his people meet. Those assembled "must feel" themselves as "specially [sic] in the presence of the Lord, not as on other days or in other places."² Campbell possessed "a deep and solemn conviction that the [assembly] is the house of God—the temple of the Holy Spirit—and that we are, especially and emphatically, in the presence of the Lord while we are engaged in his worship." Every occasion of the "assemblies of the saints" is a "meeting with the Lord."³

Against the backdrop of Scottish Presbyterianism and Independents as well as in the context of a typological hermeneutic, "table" is a significant theological and liturgical term for Campbell. Extending the typological hermeneutic by recalling the language of Leviticus 23, Campbell calls the day of "assembly" a "day of rest, of peace, of joy, a festival sacred to the Lord."⁴ Presbyterian sacramental solemnities, whether Scottish or American, were often characterized by the intense practice of penitential spiritual disciplines, including

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meditation on Christ's sufferings, self-examination, and sorrow.⁵ It was a solemn, even dreadful, occasion. Campbell complained the Supper had become "religious penance, accompanied by morose piety... expressed in...sad countenances on sundry days of humiliation, fasting and preparation."⁶ The sacramental habits of his contemporaries, according to Campbell, summon "mourners to the house of sorrow" and it is "as sad as a funeral parade."⁷ For Campbell himself, however, "table" was not only a real gathering around a table, but saturated with festive joy. Christ "did not assemble them to weep, and wail, and starve with him," Campbell writes. "No, he commands them to rejoice always, and bids them eat and drink abundantly." We assemble to "eat and drink with him" at his table.⁸ The table is a moment when disciples are "honored with a seat at the King's table" where they "eat in his presence" and "in honor of his love."⁹

Yet, despite this language and a Reformed theological orientation which confessed the Supper as a "means of grace," the dominant language of the early Stone-Campbell Movement and among Churches of Christ is commemorative, even "simply *commemorative*."¹⁰ The problem here is not Zwinglianism but, as Fikes has demonstrated, Lockean "common sense philosophy" which "hindered the vibrant practice of communion."¹¹ The rational categories of Lockean epistemology did not permit the full vigor of a Calvinian understanding of the spiritual dynamic of the Supper to fully enrich Campbell's understanding of the Supper. Only later when those categories were recognized and in some sense transcended, as with Robert Richardson and Robert Milligan, was a more sacramental theology possible.¹² It is present in Campbell, I believe, but his default mode of thinking tended to epistemologically delimit the meaning of the table. The Lord's Supper is more of an "argument" for the gospel rather than the experience of divine communion.¹³

Churches of Christ in the 20th Century

The table in both its form and function is eclipsed in the 20th century. There are, perhaps, several logistical reasons for this. The introduction of individual communion cups, the practice of being served by deacons or others in the pews, and the construction of buildings whose architecture and furniture arrangement were more auditory than participatory contributed to the loss of table form. Moreover, not only did the table form disappear, but by the end of the

20th century the table itself was no longer a piece of liturgical furniture in some Churches of Christ. For these congregations the table has disappeared into the foyer of the auditorium and the congregation is served from the rear.

In addition, Churches of Christ lost the festive joy of the table envisioned by Campbell. The meaning and practice of the Supper returned to what Campbell described as a "house of sorrow" or a "funeral parade." Churches of Christ in the early 20th century were even more saturated with rational Enlightenment categories than were the founders of the Stone-Campbell Movement and their immediate ancestors in the late 19th century. When it came to the positive ordinances of the gospel, baptism and the Lord's Supper, they emphasized law, obedience and reason.

On September 30, 1915 A. B. Lipscomb, the editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, published a special issue on the Lord's Supper.¹⁴ These articles, with various additions, were printed as a pamphlet by the Gospel Advocate Company five times from 1917 to 1972. As a guide to the meaning and celebration of the Lord's Supper, including model "Table Talks," it provides a relevant case study for the theology and practice of the Lord's Supper among Churches of Christ in the early 20th century.

Churches of Christ have generally focused on two dimensions of the table theology. The Lord's Supper is commemorative (memorial, monumental) and declarative (testimonial, proclamation).¹⁵ Both of these are primarily cognitive and anthropocentric categories. We remember and we proclaim. Through this cognitive process, we contemplate the death of Christ and when we do this together we proclaim the Lord's death.¹⁶

Others, however, did insist on a spiritual dynamic, a means of grace, through eating and drinking at the Lord's Table. Harding identified Scripture reading, fellowship with the poor, the Lord's Supper, and prayer as means of grace through which God "transform[s] poor, frail, sinful human being[s] into the likeness of Christ."¹⁷ E. A. Elam and E. G. Sewell, heirs to the Lipscomb-Harding emphases, both used this language frequently.¹⁸ The spiritual dynamic is a healthy one in these writers.

Using *Around the Lord's Table* as an example of the theological matrix in which Churches of Christ observed the Supper during the 20th century, I will emphasize several dominant characteristics that run through most, if not all, twenty-seven

contributors who range from Texas to Tennessee and from Georgia to Kentucky. The theology and practice of the Supper among 20th century Churches of Christ may be characterized as: (1) cognitive/mental; (2) introspective/penitential; (3) vertical/individual; and (4) legal. The function of the table is fundamentally to bring the cross into full view and through the eye of understanding to experience the agony, suffering and sorrow of the death of Jesus. Noting that the “purpose” of the Lord’s Supper is “strictly monumental and commemorative,” M. C. Kurfees suggests that the participant—“on the wings of memory”—is led to the “somber shades and gloom of Gethsemane and by the cruel cross of Calvary, where, amid earthquake shocks and supernatural darkness, the story of ineffable love is told in agony and suffering.” There the communicants linger, remember and commune (by memory) with the Lord.¹⁹

Cognitive and Mental.

Silent “solemn contemplation” is the primary mode in which the Supper is experienced among Churches of Christ. It is a cognitive exercise by which the participant “by the eye of faith” sees “the awful suffering of our Savior that day as he was subjected to the humiliating indignities that culminated in his ignoble death on the cruel Roman cross.”²⁰ Through “remembering, reflecting, visualizing” we focus on the cross rather than the “entire scope of the earth-life of” Jesus. We “remember the cross.” The intensity of this moment means that “the worshipper,” Chessor believes, “who has the greater power of concentration and reflection, and who employs that faculty, will be able to get greater spiritual benefits.”²¹ The Lord’s Supper, according to A. B. Barrett, is the “solemn moment of the worship when...our minds are carried back to Calvary to see anew the passion of the Lamb of God.”²² Through this “memorial service” we “picture the sufferings of Christ.”²³ Indeed, to “fail” to discern the Lord’s body by “think[ing] of him as he suffered upon the cross while we engage in this communion of his body and his blood” is to condemn ourselves since the Supper “commemorates the tragedy of Calvary.”²⁴

Introspective and Penitential.

Churches of Christ have generally understood that eating and drinking is a time of “godly fear and self-examination.”²⁵ Indeed, the

“*worthy manner*” of eating and drinking is “to picture the sufferings of Christ in the agony of the garden and in his crucifixion” which constitutes the “proper attitude” that “make[s] the individual worship acceptable to the Lord.”²⁶ The “examination prescribed by Paul is for the purpose of bringing our thoughts into control, so that we may eat and drink in the proper spirit and attitude.”²⁷ It is a moment to “see to it that we ourselves are in covenant relation with Christ and on praying terms with God.”²⁸

Vertical and Individual.

With an emphasis on silence, solemnity and contemplation, it is not surprising to find an individualistic and vertical emphasis. The horizontal dimension is almost completely absent. Indeed, W. E. Brightwell bluntly states that “our communion is with the Lord. There is [horizontal] fellowship, but that is only accidental.”²⁹ R. L. Whiteside is even more blunt: “In worship people do not commune with one another...In the worship our communion should be with the divine being.”³⁰ However, this is not a uniform perspective. Trice believes that even in the “solemn silence” there is “sweet fellowship with each other and with the heavenly Father.”³¹

Legal Test of Loyalty.

Churches of Christ, perhaps more than the other streams of the Stone-Campbell Movement, emphasized the legal “sacred duty” to eat and drink weekly in commemoration of the Lord’s death.³² We embraced the language that the Lord’s Supper is a “positive appointment” which functions as an “acid test” of our love. The “observance of the ordinance tells in large measure who is on the Lord’s side, and vice versa.”³³ It functions as a “test of loyalty.”³⁴ “Can a church member say he is fighting the good fight and keeping the faith, and at the same time,” Wrye asks, “ignore, neglect, or forget to obey this positive command?”³⁵ Thus, it is the “duty” of every Christian “to proclaim the death of our Lord in a faithful observance of the Lord’s Supper on every first day of the week.”³⁶ Further, our observance “cannot do anything [the Bible] does not require, and...must do all it does require.” Consequently, we should follow the model in Scripture as close as possible since it is “safe.”³⁷ Indeed, if we neglect the duty of weekly communion, “we have no promise of salvation should we die” in that

neglect. It is “safe” to eat weekly.³⁸ Churches of Christ come by this attitude naturally—it is embedded in our consciousness at least from the time of Tolbert Fanning who wrote, “Without its weekly observance no one can worship God acceptably, or promise himself the eternal rewards of Christians.”³⁹

These elements have shaped the practice of Churches of Christ in the 20th century. There is no movement of those who eat and drink other than the servers. Communicants are served as they sit silently in their pews in contemplation of the cross of Christ. There they “silently, solemnly, sublimely” proclaim the Lord’s death till he comes.⁴⁰ In other words, it is an anthropocentric and individualistic legal duty performed in memory and proclamation of the death of Jesus.

Churches of Christ in the 20th century lost the emphasis that Campbell thought was so important to the renewal of the weekly table in the church. On the one hand we lost the social dimension of the table—even losing not only the table form but the table itself in some contemporary churches, and on the other hand, we lost the joyous nature of the feast.⁴¹

*Reorienting Future Practice to the Future*⁴²

I suggest that the theological notion of “eschatological table”⁴³ (feasting at the kingdom meal) can recover both the social and joyous intention of Alexander Campbell and, more importantly, the sacramental experience of the post-resurrection meals of Jesus with his disciples (e.g., Emmaus). While this point received increased attention in the 20th century,⁴⁴ it has not as yet sufficiently informed the theology nor shaped the practice of the contemporary church.

Given Paul’s phrase “till he come” in 1 Corinthians 11:27, it would be unlikely for any tradition to ignore the relationship between the Lord’s Supper and the second coming. But how this relation is construed is what signals the lack of eschatological reflection. Indeed, the eschatological meaning of the Supper is usually reduced to the proclamation and promise of the fact that the Lord will come again.

In Churches of Christ the eschatological relation was often taken as a temporal frame. This is something we do until Jesus comes. In other words, Paul gives us the terminus of the Supper. We will remember him until he is once again present. Then, it is sometimes said, we will dispense with the meal. Others see Paul’s words as primarily stating a fact. The meal proclaims the fact of Jesus’ coming.

Entailed in this proclamation is a corresponding yearning or anticipation of that future reality. We long for the future, but the eschatology is wholly future. Still others see Paul's words as a pledge of the future. It is not only proclamation but promise. The Supper is a pledge of the second coming. These may be properly called eschatological ideas, but they are oriented to temporality, facticity and promise. They are decidedly futurist. The eschatology of the Supper is reduced to a promised future fact.

Some early twentieth century scholars recognized something more in the eschatological character of the Supper. Though much of Lietzmann's theory about the origin of the Lord's Supper as a contrast between the eschatological joy of Jerusalem meals and the memorialism of Pauline churches is now in disrepute, his emphasis on the meal character of the Supper and its continuity with the pre-resurrection meals of Jesus is a significant contribution.⁴⁵ Lohmeyer also emphasized the importance of the meal-parables and meal-acts in the ministry of Jesus as the impetus for the Eucharist.⁴⁶ More significantly, Cullmann reshaped Lietzmann's theory by emphasizing the post-resurrection meals and the Pauline extension of those meals back to the Last Supper.⁴⁷ Markus Barth, then, embraced the whole trajectory by recognizing the continuity between the pre-resurrection, post-resurrection and ecclesial meals of Jesus with his disciples.⁴⁸

In the light of this trajectory of scholarship, recent study has emphasized the importance of (1) the table in the ministry of Jesus; (2) the expression of resurrection joy in the post-resurrection meals with Jesus; and (3) the eschatological presence of Christ in ecclesial meals. In this line of thinking, the presence of Jesus as host of the kingdom table is the central feature of the Lord's Supper.

In the Gospel of Luke the table is the primary "organizing principle" of Luke's narrative.⁴⁹ He eats with sinners and Pharisees. He models table etiquette in the kingdom of God. In Jesus God eats with his people and by meal-acts proclaims what the kingdom of God is like.⁵⁰ The table ministry of Jesus forms the backdrop for Luke's description of the Last Supper which, according to Wainwright, "was apparently intended to be the last of the parabolic meal-signs dispensed by the man who had coming eating and drinking, and next would come the full feasting in the kingdom."⁵¹

"Breaking bread" in Luke-Acts is a covenant meal where the Lord is present as host and the disciples sit together as a community not only in the hope of the resurrection but in the present experience of the

alreadiness of the eschaton. Disciples share food with each other as an expression of the communion that exists among the disciples by virtue of God's redemptive act in Jesus. As they eat, they anticipate the eschatological kingdom. But they did more than anticipate. They actually experienced the presence of the risen Christ at the table.

The continuity between ministry meals (e.g., Luke 9), the Last Supper (Luke 22), post-resurrection meals (Luke 24) and ecclesial meals (Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7-11) is the presence of the living Christ in the breaking of the bread. "The eschatological prospect held out by Jesus at the Last Supper," Wainwright writes, "did not have to await the church's eucharist for its fulfillment, let alone remain unfulfilled until a coming of the kingdom which has even yet not occurred, but was *already fulfilled in the meals which Jesus took with His disciples immediately after his resurrection.*"⁵² The continuity between the Gospel of Luke and the breaking of bread in Acts is the eschatological reality of the resurrected Jesus. It is the continuation of the post-resurrection meals. "The Last Supper and those resurrection appearances," Torrance writes, "belong together in one sacramental whole. Though Jesus has withdrawn His visible presence from us, there is such an intervention by the risen Lord as the invisible reality behind each celebration of the Lord's Supper. Jesus Christ is as really present in the Eucharist as He was on that Easter day to His disciples."⁵³

"Breaking bread," then, was not a solemn funerary ritual but the new community's celebration of the presence of the risen Jesus through which God revealed the eschaton. The disciples ate with joyous interaction and enthusiastic generosity as they praised God for his redemptive work. Joy is pervasive in Luke's meal stories and is particularly appropriate to the Eucharist as well as analogous to the joy that characterized the sacrificial meals of the Old Testament (Deut 12:7, 12, 18; 14:26; 27:7).⁵⁴ It is one of the great discontinuities between the meals of Israel, Jesus' meals in Luke and the contemporary church that joy is not the most prominent way in which the contemporary Supper is experienced.

This eschatological joy is rooted in the presence of the living Christ at the table. As Marshall notes, "Above all, Luke's contribution is to stress that the Lord's Supper is the joyous celebration of the experience of salvation in the presence of the risen Lord."⁵⁵ In Lucan theology, it is "the Eucharist which gives the risen Christ, living and present, to the faithful. So it is that for Christians the Eucharist is the

great sign of the Lord's Resurrection, the sign by which they recognize the Lord as living and present."⁵⁶

Yet, as we reflect on the continuing presence of the risen Christ at the Lord's table in the church, we are confronted with the tension that the risen Christ is also absent. Torrance calls this "eschatological reserve" in the sense that there is "an eschatological lag waiting for the last Word or the final Act of God."⁵⁷ In our post-ascension but pre-*parousia* situation, we live in the tension that Jesus is both absent and present. He is absent—he no longer walks upon the earth in the flesh, but sits at the right hand of God. He is present, however, sacramentally at the table. Consequently, there is continuity and discontinuity with the post-resurrection meals. While the table mediates the presence of Christ, it is clear that Jesus is not physically present in the same sense in which he was present at the post-resurrection meals. The Eucharist continues the post-resurrection meals but in a post-ascension context. Thus, the Eucharist is an anticipation of the "not yet" character of the eschaton, but is also a sacramental participation in its "alreadiness." It is more than a pledge of what is to come—it is the present experience of the future itself, but it is not yet the fullness of face-to-face fellowship with the risen Christ.

This tension shapes the Eucharistic practice of the church. The one who bridges that tension is the Spirit of God. Pneumatology—being in the Spirit—unites the church with the absent Christ so that he is truly present at the table. When Christ ascended, he poured out the Spirit upon his people. The Spirit unites heaven and earth. Moreover, this is an eschatological Spirit who brings the future into the present. He himself is not only a down payment, an earnest, or pledge of the future, but the future is now present through the Spirit. The presence of the Spirit is the presence of the eschaton.

The presence of the eschatological Spirit in the assembly gathered around the table pulls us into the fullness of the kingdom of God. By the Spirit we experience the alreadiness of the kingdom as we are gathered to God in his throne room. The Eucharistic assembly is "the sacrament of the coming of the risen Lord, of our meeting and communion with him 'at his table in his kingdom'." Through the Eucharist the church ascends and enters "into the light and joy and triumph of the kingdom" in such a way that the Eucharist is a "fully realized symbol."⁵⁸ This is the truth of the Orthodox mantra that the assembly of the church is "heaven on earth," or "standing in the temple

we stand in heaven.”⁵⁹ “Let us beware,” Chrysostom warns, “that we do not remain on the earth.”⁶⁰

Conclusion

The solemnity and apparent sadness of the Supper’s mood and form among Churches of Christ does not fit the Emmaus road experience or the ecclesial meals in Acts. The Supper is an experience of resurrection joy at the kingdom table. The “Easter meals gave [the disciples] their understanding of the rite in the Upper Room;”⁶¹ we disciples recognized the victory of the resurrection as we eat and drink with Jesus in hope. At the table we bring our “Fridays” to Jesus and celebrate the victory of Christ on Sunday. The table transforms “Friday” into “Sunday.” Unfortunately, the church still generally practices the Supper as if it were still Friday rather than Sunday. But the point of the Supper is that we celebrate Sunday as we give thanks for what God did in Jesus. Sunday reinterprets and renews our Fridays since “the mystery of the Resurrection is sacramentally present in the Eucharist.”⁶²

If the church embraces eschatological presence at the table as the already of a not-yet future, the Eucharistic liturgy of the church should be primarily shaped by hope, joy and spiritual (mystical) communion. The Disciples’ hymnal *Thankful Praise* is a good example of a move in this direction. For example, it emphasizes a table theology where Jesus sits as host.⁶³ It embodies a “meditative” or “contemplative joy.”⁶⁴ This joyous experience is a “present sharing in the eschatological banquet” rather than simply an “anamnetic thanksgiving.”⁶⁵ Certainly contemplative joy is consistent with the nature of the eschatological banquet, but the joy of the eschatological banquet should not be limited to contemplation. It should be participatory, interactive and communal as well as table-formed.

The church should not abandon, of course, memorialism (we remember Jesus) or a sense of mystical presence through the bread and wine (Calvin’s emphasis). But these perspectives should be brought under an eschatological horizon.⁶⁶ As Dix reminds us, “The whole conception of anamnesis is in itself eschatological...What the church ‘remembers’ in the eucharist is partly beyond history—the ascension, the sitting at the right hand of the Father and the second coming.”⁶⁷

The horizon of the Christian faith is the eschaton. In the Eucharist we “remember the future”⁶⁸ because the eschatological

human, Jesus the Messiah, is present at the Eucharist as an earnest of the future. Through the Lord's Supper disciples experience the eschatological joy of the risen Christ as he hosts our communal meal. As an eschatological meal of the partially realized kingdom of God, it is filled with joyous thanksgiving, grateful anticipation and mystical communion.

The eschatological horizon reminds us that the root metaphor of the Eucharist is neither tomb nor altar, but table.⁶⁹ In the house of God, as Campbell wrote, there is always the table of the Lord.

Endnotes

¹ Alexander Campbell, *The Christian System*, 2nd ed. (Pittsburg: Forrester and Campbell, 1839), 314.

² Alexander Campbell, "Order," *Millennial Harbinger Extra* 6 (October 1835): 508.

³ Alexander Campbell, "Worshipping Assemblies--No. I.," *Millennial Harbinger*, New Series 3 (October 1839): 441-2.

⁴ Alexander Campbell, "The First Day of the Week Is Not the Seventh Day," *Millennial Harbinger* 5 (September 1834): 466.

⁵ Leigh Schmidt, *Holy Fairs: Scotland and the Making of American Revivalism*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 134-36.

⁶ *Christian System*, 175.

⁷ Alexander Campbell, "A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things.--No. VI.: On the Breaking of Bread--No. I.," *Christian Baptist* 3 (1 August 1825): 176.

⁸ *Christian System*, 175.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 340.

¹⁰ Thomas Munnell, *The Care for the Churches* (St. Louis: Christian Publishing Co., 1888), 251.

¹¹ Thomas Jason Fikes, "'In a Manner Well Pleasing': The Theology and Practice of the Lord's Supper in the Stone-Campbell Movement, 1800-1875" (Ph.D. dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2005), 43; see especially chapter four of the dissertation. This was also a problem with the Reformed tradition as well when influenced by such Enlightenment categories.

¹² Robert Milligan, *The Scheme of Redemption* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1977; reprint of 1868 ed.), 429-30; Robert

Richardson, *Communings in the Sanctuary* (Lexington, KY: Transylvania Printing and Publishing Co., 1872).

¹³ Fikes, 113-114; cf. Campbell, *Christian System*, 323: “This institution commemorates the love which reconciled us to God, and always furnishes us with a new argument to live for him who died for us. Him who feels not the eloquence and power of this argument, all other arguments assail in vain. God’s goodness, developed in creation and in his providence, is well designed to lead men to reformation. But the heart, on which these fail, and to which Calvary appeals in vain, is past feeling, obdurate, and irreclaimable, beyond the operation of any moral power known to mortal man.” His response to Richardson’s question of whether there was “something of a higher and more important nature connected” with the Supper than the memory of Christ’s death was that the “Supper is emblematic of the Messiah’s sacrifice, and commemorative of his death, and it is a weekly memento that our sins have been expiated by his blood” (cf. *Millennial Harbinger* Third Series 3 [July 1846]: 396).

¹⁴ A. B. Lipscomb, compiler and John T. Hinds, ed., *Around the Lord’s Table: A Series of Articles Written by Conscientious and Thoughtful Men About the World’s Greatest Commemorative Institution*, Revised Edition (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1950). It was printed in 1917, 1922, 1934 (rev. ed.), 1950, and 1972.

¹⁵ G. G. Taylor, “Church Worship. No. 2,” *Gospel Advocate* 57 (June 26, 1912): 732-33.

“The design of this institution...is two-fold—viz., (1) *memorial* and (2) *testimonial*.” Or, Thrice, “Tact Required,” *Around the Lord’s Table*, 46: “memorial...testimonial.” Or, Leroy Brownlow, *Why I Am a Member of the Church of Christ* (Ft. Worth, TX: Leroy Brownlow Publications, 1945), 169-170: “a *memorial which preaches...*”; Or, R. L. Whiteside and C. R. Nichol, *Sound Doctrine* (Clifton, TX: Nichol Publishing Co., 1954; reprint from 1920), 1:165-166: “commemorative” and “declarative.”

¹⁶ On occasion, but with some rarity, a third dimension of the table is communion with Christ either in the sense of eating with Christ or eating his body. For example, Whiteside and Nichol, , identify the meaning of the table as (1) commemorative, (2) declarative, and (3) “spiritual nourishment.” Though quoting John 6:53-55, they understand this nourishment as the “faithful observance of all his commands [which] is a means of eating his flesh and drinking his blood.” Thus,

the "eating of the Lord's Supper is distinctly commanded, and in its faithful observance as well as in any other duty discharged, we are feasting our souls on his spiritual food" (*Sound Doctrine*, 1:166). Eating and drinking in the Lord's Supper, then, is of the same category as all spiritual nourishment--obedience to the commands. It is a feasting on the joy of obedience rather than feasting on the spiritual reality who is Jesus by the power of the Spirit. Whiteside and Nichol practically reduce "spiritual nourishment" to obedience. It is nourishment in the sense in which they understand nourishment but for others this would be another function of cognition rather pneumatology. It is through the submissive act we are nourished just as we are nourished by every other obedience to any of the divine commands.

¹⁷ James A. Harding, "Scraps," *The Way* 4 (26 February 1903): 401-2. Cf. John Mark Hicks and Bobby Valentine, *Kingdom Come: Embracing the Spiritual Legacy of David Lipscomb and James Harding* (Abilene, TX: Leafwood Publishers, 2006), 75-141.

¹⁸ E. G. Sewell, "The Importance of the Lord's Supper," *Gospel Advocate* 57 (September 30, 1915): 986: "proper attendance upon the Lord's Supper is a wonderful means of grace to strengthen the hearts and lives of Christians in all things connected with the service of God." E.A. Elam, "The Lord's Supper," *Gospel Advocate* 57 (September 30, 1915): 983-984: "Jesus meets his disciples here in their assemblies to partake of the Lord's Supper...Every time the Supper is observed, Jesus is present...This is a spiritual Supper, is spiritual food, and upon it Christians feed [for] spiritual growth or development."

¹⁹ M. C. Kurfées, "The Design of the Supper," *Around the Lord's Table*, 17-18.

²⁰ Campbell A. Taylor, "Supper Displays God's Wisdom," *Around the Lord's Table*, 50. W. Halliday Trice, "Who, When, Why?," *Around the Lord's Table*, 37 describes it as a moment of "solemn silence."

²¹ James E. Chessor, "A Service of Remembrance," *Gospel Advocate* 62 (June 24, 1920): 613.

²² A. B. Barrett, *Gospel Advocate* 57 (30 September 1915): 676.

²³ Willis B. Allen, "In a Worthy Manner," *Around the Lord's Table*, 42.

²⁴ Early Arceneaux, "The Worship of the Church: Communion and Fellowship," in *Abilene Christian College Bible Lectures 1933* (Austin: Firm Foundation Publishing House, 1933), 101.

²⁵ E. A. Elam, "A General View of the Supper," *Around the Lord's Table*, 14.

²⁶ Willis H. Allen, "In a 'Worthy Manner,'" *Around the Lord's Table*, 42.

²⁷ W. E. Brightwell, "Table Talks," *Around the Lord's Table*, 59.

²⁸ A. N. Trice, "Tact Required," *Around the Lord's Table*, 47.

²⁹ W. E. Brightwell, "A Royal Feast," *Around the Lord's Table*, 57.

³⁰ R. L. Whiteside, "Posture in Prayer and Communion," *Gospel Advocate* 82 (28 Nov 1940) 1135. This, of course, is not just limited to 20th century Churches of Christ. Cf. Munnell, *Care of the Churches*, 254: "Now, the foundation of the whole blunder is laid in the notion that the Lord's Supper is a communion with one another, instead of a communion with the Lord...the other heresy that the Lord's Supper is a fellowship with one another;" also P. H. Welshimer, *Concerning the Disciples: A Brief Resume of the Movement to Restore the New Testament Church* (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing, 1935), 198: "In observing the Lord's Supper we commune with Christ and not with men...The closeness of it is shown in the individual communing with his Christ...This makes it personal, individual."

³¹ W. Halliday Trice, "Who, When, and Why?," *Around the Lord's Table*, 37.

³² O. E. Billingsley, "Things to Avoid and Things to Do," *Around the Lord's Table*, 40.

³³ James E. Chessor, "Avoid Random Talks," *Around the Lord's Table*, 44.

³⁴ J. Z. Tyler, "The Ordinances of the Lord," in *New Testament Christianity*, ed. Z. T. Sweeney (Columbus, IN: New Testament Christianity Book Fund, 1926), 113-124.

³⁵ H. W. Wrye, "Jewish and Christian Feasts," *Around the Lord's Table*, 25.

³⁶ G. G. Taylor, "Church Worship. No. 2," *Gospel Advocate* 57 (June 26, 1912), 733.

³⁷ Elam, "A General View of the Supper," *Around the Lord's Table*, 9. Elam uses the term "safe" five times in reference to the order

of bread and cup with separate prayers, unleavened bread, and a single loaf.

³⁸ J. C. Estes, "The Fallacy of the Seventh-Day Theory," *Around the Lord's Table*, 29.

³⁹ Tolbert Fanning, "Questions," *Gospel Advocate* 9 (6 June 1867): 494.

⁴⁰ W. E. Brightwell, "Table Talks," *Around the Lord's Table*, 57.

⁴¹ Not everyone lost that joyous dimension. S. H. Hall reproves the church for its "memorial" atmosphere on Sunday: "We not only commemorate his death and resurrection in this memorial service, but we proclaim his death and resurrection in view of his second coming...Let our songs, our prayers, and our sermons blend together and make it a memorial our Lord had in mind when he instituted the Lord's Supper and sanctified and set the day apart as the Lord's day—a Supper dedicated to him and a day dedicated to him" ("Does the Church of Christ Today Conduct a Memorial Service," *Gospel Advocate* 86 [6 Jan 1944]: 9).

⁴² The multi-dimensional nature of the Supper is quickly discerned through the common motifs that liturgies, theologians and preachers often use. The popular idea that the Lord's Supper looks upward, outward, inward, backward, and forward reflects this perspectivalism. Or, more formerly, one of the Stone-Campbell Movement's most significant sacramental theologians, William Robinson, summarizes the Supper as memorial, proclamation, covenant, communion, and feast (*Essays on Christian Unity* [London: James Clark & Co., 1924], 275-278). More recently, Andrew Paris within the Stone-Campbell tradition condensed its meaning to 4 "Cs": commemoration, confession, communion, and covenant (*What the Bible Says about the Lord's Supper* [Joplin, MO: College Press, 1986], 151-243). Bryon Lambert, also part of the Stone-Campbell Movement, identified ten aspects: obedience, remembrance, thanksgiving, proclamation, prophecy, covenant, altar, self-examination, communion and feasting ("Have We Understood the Lord's Supper?" in *The Lord's Supper: Historical Writings on Its Meaning to the Body of Christ*, ed. Charles R. Gresham and Tom Lawson [Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Co., 1993], 208-210). Or, in one of the most recent contributions from Evangelical quarters Gordon Smith organizes his

presentation around the themes of remembrance, communion, forgiveness, covenant, nourishment, thanksgiving, anticipation, and presence (*A Holy Meal: The Lord's Supper in the Life of the Church* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005]). Leonard J. Vander Zee discusses meaning under the headings: presence of Christ, mediation of the Holy Spirit, Supper and sacrifice, remembrance, and meal of hope (*Christ, Baptism and the Lord's Supper: Recovering the Sacraments for Evangelical Worship* [Downers Grove, IL: 2004], 187-219. Or, ecumenically, the 1982 World Council of Churches Lima document entitled *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* defines the meaning of the Eucharist as thanksgiving to the Father, the memorial of Christ, the invocation of the Spirit, the communion of the faithful, and the meal of the kingdom (<http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/faith/bem4.html>).

⁴³ For a fuller exploration of this idea, see my "The Lord's Supper as Eschatological Table," *Evangelicalism & the Stone-Campbell Movement: Volume 2, Engaging Basic Christian Doctrine* (Abilene: ACU Press, 2006), 184-205.

⁴⁴ The seventh agreement of the 1957 Oberlin Faith and Order statement recognized that "there is a growing realization of the eschatological nature of the Eucharist" (*The Nature of the Unity We Seek; Official Report of the North American Conference on Faith and Order*, ed. Paul S. Minear [St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1958], 203). The most significant work has been Geoffrey Wainwright, *Eucharist and Eschatology* (London: Epworth Press, 1971). Other representative studies are Scott McCormick, Jr., *The Lord's Supper: A Biblical Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1966), 88-108; William Hill, "The Eucharist as Eschatological Presence," *Communio* 4 (Winter, 1977): 306-320; John H. McKenna, "The Eucharist, The Resurrection and the Future," *Anglican Theological Review* 60 (1978): 144-165; Horton Davies, *Bread of Life and Cup of Joy: Newer Ecumenical Perspectives on the Eucharist* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 80-116; Arthur A. Just, *The Ongoing Feast: Table Fellowship and Eschatology at Emmaus* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1993); Peter Leithart, "The Way Things Really Ought to Be: Eucharist, Eschatology, and Culture," *Westminster Theological Journal* 59 (Fall 1997): 159-76; Robert G. Clouse, "Eschatology and the Lord's Supper: Hope for the Triumph of God's Reign," in *The Lord's Supper: Believers Church Perspectives*, ed. Dale R. Stoffer (Scottsdale, PA:

Herald Press, 1997), 129-139; Rebecca Kuiken, "Hopeful Feasting: Eucharist and Eschatology," in *Hope for Your Future: Theological Voices from the Pastorate*, ed. William H. Lazareth (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 192-198; Martha L. Moore-Keish, "Eucharist: Eschatology," in *A More Profound Alleluia: Theology and Worship in Harmony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 109-132.

⁴⁵ Hans Lietzmann, *Mass and the Lord's Supper: A Study in the History of Liturgy*, trans. D. H. G. Reeve (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1979 [German original, 1926]).

⁴⁶ J. Lohmeyer, "Das Abendmahl in der Urgemeinde," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 56 (1937): 217-52.

⁴⁷ Oscar Cullmann, "The Meaning of the Lord's Supper in Primitive Christianity," 5-23, in *Essays on the Lord's Supper*, trans. J. G. Davies (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1958 [French original, 1936]).

⁴⁸ Markus Barth, *Abendmahl: Passamahl, Bundesmahl und Messiasmahl* (Zollikon-Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1945). Cf. Markus Barth, *Rediscovering the Lord's Supper: Communion with Israel, with Christ, and Among Guests* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988).

⁴⁹ John Koenig, *The Feast of the World's Redemption: Eucharistic Origins and Christian Mission* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), 181.

⁵⁰ See Eugene LaVerdiere, *Dining in the Kingdom of God: The Origins of the Eucharist in the Gospel of Luke* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1998).

⁵¹ Wainwright, 35.

⁵² Wainwright, 38.

⁵³ T. F. Torrance, "Eschatology and Eucharist," *Intercommunion*, ed. Donald Baillie and John Marsh (NY: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1952), 334

⁵⁴ Cf. Philippe Henri Menoud, "The Acts of The Apostles and the Eucharist," in *Jesus Christ and the Faith*, trans. E. M. Paul (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1978 [French original, 1953]), 84-106; cf. Barth, *Rediscovering*, 74.

⁵⁵ I. Howard Marshall, *The Last Supper and the Lord's Supper* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 133.

⁵⁶ Jacques Dupont, "The Meal at Emmaus," in *The Eucharist in the New Testament: A Symposium*, ed. J. Delorme, trans. E. M. Stewart (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1965), 121.

⁵⁷ T. F. Torrance, *Royal Priesthood*, 2nd ed (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), 45. I am indebted to Vander Zee, *Christ*, 216 for this reference and the substance of this paragraph.

⁵⁸ Alexander Schmemmann, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, trans. Paul Kachur (Crestwood, NY, St. Vladimir's, 1987), 43-44.

⁵⁹ Schmemmann, 45.

⁶⁰ As quoted by Schmemmann, 169.

⁶¹ Torrance, "Eschatology and Eucharist," 333-34.

⁶² T. F. Torrance, "Eschatology and Eucharist," 334.

⁶³ Keith Watkins, ed., *Thankful Praise: A Resource for Christian Worship* (St. Louis: CBP Press, 1987) nos. 55 (p. 73), 178 (p. 140), and 179 (p. 140). Cf. also Keith Watkins, *Celebrate with Thanksgiving* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 1991).

⁶⁴ Keith Watkins, *The Feast of Joy: The Lord's Supper in Free Churches* (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1977), 19-20.

⁶⁵ Gerard Francis Moore, "The Eucharistic Theology of the Prayers for Communion Service of the Lord's Supper of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ): 1953-1987," (Thesis, Licentiate of Theology, Catholic University of America, 1989), 125.

⁶⁶ Dupont, "The Meal at Emmaus," 121: "We are familiar with the idea that the Eucharist is the memorial of the Saviour's Passion, and so it is. But it would be to restrict its significance if we saw in it only the death of Jesus without seeing his Resurrection at the same time. For the early Christians the death and Resurrection formed only one mystery, which was likewise inseparable from its third factor: the *parousia*."

⁶⁷ Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London: Dacre Press, 1945), 264.

⁶⁸ Kuiken, "Hopeful Feasting," 197.

⁶⁹ See Leithart, "The Way Things Ought to Be," 166, 172-73. Cf. Paul H. Jones, *Christ's Eucharistic Presence: A History of the Doctrine* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 45. This is the major thesis of my book *Come to the Table: Revisioning the Lord's Supper* (Orange, CA: New Leaf Press, 2002).