

GOD CARES HOW WE EAT THE LORD'S SUPPER

David Halbrook

God has always been interested in the worship humans offer to Him. We learn this from Cain, Abel, and even Jesus (Genesis 4; John 4:23-24). When we eat, marry, divorce, and worship, we must ask what God permits us to do.

From the beginning, Christians assembled to *break bread* (the Lord's Supper) in remembrance of Jesus' death on the first day of the week (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23-26).

Jesus gave *this bread* to represent His body. Thus, we have no permission to eat cookies or potato chips to remember His body (Yes, things like that have been done and are sinful).

Jesus also said that *this cup* (grape juice) represents His blood. May we mix some Sprite with the juice to alter the flavor? No, worship is aimed at pleasing God, not us!

The disciples met and ate on the first day of the week (the day of Jesus' resurrection). Just as God gave no permission for other breads or kinds of drink, where is God's permission to eat this memorial on another day or to assemble on that day but not break this bread? God cares how we worship—do you know what He has said?

-- *Editor's Note:* Our *Arkansas Weekly* article this week builds upon the same principles as past articles (cannibalism, marriage, etc)—what has God said and what does He permit? Will you meet anyone this week who would benefit from this article? Will you try to help them?

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

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FAMILIES IN THE LOCAL CHURCH (1)

Chris Reeves (http://thegoodteacher.com/?page_id=13)

Where have all the godly families gone? They are disappearing rapidly. They are disappearing from society due to the high rate of divorce, "dead-beat" dads, child abuse (emotional, physical and sexual), and juvenile delinquency. Godly families are also disappearing from local churches of Christ. I see more and more parents attending by themselves without one or more of the children. When you ask the parent where the child is, they offer up some flimsy excuse as to why they could not come. I see more and more disinterested teenagers staying at home or going out with their friends instead of attending a local gospel meeting. I see more and more grandparents bringing grandkids because one parent or both parents have left the church. I see more and more single parents and divorcees in the Lord's church.

The faithful, family unit is slowly becoming a thing of the past. Today, families with their busy schedules find themselves living separate lives and doing less and less together. They have two or more jobs, two or more cars going in different directions, and various electronic gadgets laying around the house that occupy their attention (T.V.s, cell phones, DVD players, x-box games, computers, internet, instant messaging, iPods, etc.). Rarely do families eat together, talk together, read the Bible together, worship together, attend a gospel meeting together, visit together or do good works together.

Bible Families Who Got Involved Together

In Bible times there were godly families who stayed together and served God together. We certainly need families like this today! I think of those families in the days of Nehemiah who worked together and worshipped together. There is a family mentioned in Nehemiah 3:12, Shallum and his daughters, who worked together in

rebuilding a portion of the wall. Some parents today cannot (or will not) get their children to help them do the Lord's work in the local church. The children are too into worldly activities to get involved. But this does not have to be. There is room in the kingdom for family members to do their part. Families are also mentioned in Nehemiah 8:2-3 who came together to worship God and hear the reading of God's word. These families stayed from early morning until midday, and were attentive at the same time. Can you imagine such a thing? Some families today do well just to sit together through a one or two hour service.

When we come to the New Testament, we find Bible families in the days of Paul who supported gospel preachers together. Luke tells us in Acts 21:4-6 that Christian men came together with their wives and children to pray with Paul and bid him farewell to Jerusalem. These families showed up together in order to encourage Paul and hold up the hands of a gospel preacher. I'm sure this meant much to Paul. All families today can be more sacrificial in getting out, leaving their comfortable surroundings and busy schedules, and doing something together to encourage gospel preachers and other brethren in their service to God. Later in Acts 21:8-9, Luke records that Paul stayed in the home of Philip the evangelist who had four virgin daughters who prophesied. We do not have the gift of prophecy today. But, how encouraging it would be to see more fathers whose daughters or sons are faithful Christians and who would open their homes and be more hospitable to brethren.

THE TWO COVENANTS

Richard Thetford

We know that in all religious practices we must follow the teaching of God. God must direct our steps and we must allow Him to do so (Jer 10:23). When we read the Bible we must understand that the only way we can have eternal salvation is to obey ALL the commandments of God as they pertain to us. But which one's pertain to us today? Before we answer this question let's look at God's covenant relationship with His people.

The Bible Contains Two Distinct Covenants

We know that there are two covenants in the Bible because in Hebrews 8:7-8 we read: *"For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the*

house of Judah." Here we can see that there are two covenants mentioned, but that the first had fault. It is because of that fault that God said a "new covenant" will be made.

Characteristics of the First Covenant

Here is what we know about God's first covenant with His people. First of all it was given to Moses. John said: *"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"* (John 1:17). Secondly, it was only a shadow of things to come. *"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect"* (Heb 10:1). From these scriptures we can already see some of the fault with that first covenant given to Moses. But that is not all. We can also learn that the old law was the ministration of death. We read from 2 Corinthians 3:7: *"But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away:"* We further learn that it was a schoolmaster (Gal 3:24) and it could not justify (Rom 3:20). Therefore, seeing that the old law had fault we can now ask:

Is The First Covenant Binding On Men Now?

In Colossians 2:14 we read where it was blotted out. Paul said: *"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;"* It is written very clearly here that those ordinances under the law given to Moses have been *"blotted out"* and we can also see above where the old law was a schoolmaster (Gal 3:24), now it says we are no longer under a schoolmaster (Gal 3:25). The first covenant has been done away with (2 Cor 3:11). We can also read where it was disannulled and taken away. *"For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof"* (Heb 7:18) and *"Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second"* (Heb 10:9).

Therefore we know now that God did away with the first covenant relationship that He had with His people and so we can also know the answer to our question that was asked in the first paragraph. But which one's (of God's commandments) pertain to us today? The answer is those commandments given to us under His new covenant that was given by Christ and those are found in the pages of the **New Testament**.

(www.thetfordcountry.com/files/Articles/Two_Covenants.htm)