

# LECTURE LXVII.

## THE LORD'S SUPPER.

### SYLLABUS.

- See Conf. of Faith, ch. 29 with Catechisms.
1. Give a definition of this sacrament, with the Scriptural account of its institution; names, and ceremonial.  
See Matt. xxvi : 26-29; Mark xiv : 22-26; Luke xxii : 15-21; 1 Cor. x : 16, 17; xi : 17 to end. Dick, Lect. 92. Turretin, Loc. xix, Qu. 21.
  2. What are the elements, in what manner to be prepared and set apart, and what their sacramental significance?  
Turretin, Qu. 22, 23, 24. Hill, bk. v, ch. 7. Dick, Lect. 92.
  3. State and refute the doctrine of the real presence by a Transubstantiation, with the elevation and worship of the host.  
Council of Trent, Sess. 13, especially ch. 4, and Canons Cat. Rom. pt. ii, ch. 4, Qu. 17-41. Turretin, Qu. 26, 27. Calvin's Inst., bk. iv, ch. 18. Hill, as above. Archbishop Tillotson and Bishop Stillingfleet against Transubstantiation. Dick, Lect. 90.
  4. State and refute the doctrine of Consubstantiation.  
Turretin, Qu. 26, 28. Augsb. Confession, and other Lutheran symbols. Hill, as above. Dick, Lect. 91.

**T**HE only sacrament which Protestants recognize, besides baptism, is that called by them, in imitation of Paul (1 Cor. xi : 20), "The Lord's Supper" (*ἡ δεῖπνον κυριακόν*). The only other Scriptural names which seem clearly established are the breaking of bread (*κλάσις τοῦ ἄρτου*, Acts ii : 42-46; xx : 7), and possibly *κοινωνία* (1 Cor. x : 16). The cup is called *ποτήριον τῆς ἐδόξιας* (1 Cor. x : 16), but this is evidently not a name for the whole ordinance. And in verse 21, communicating is called partaking of the Lord's Table (*τράπεζα*). This hardly amounts to a calling of the ordinance by the name of "table;" but it is instructive, as showing no favour whatever to the notion of altars and sacrifice, as connected with the Lord's Supper.

Among the fathers it was called often *εὐχαριστία*, sometimes *συνάξις* or *λειτουργία*; more often *θυσία*, or *μυστήριον*; or among the Latins, *missa*. The use of the word *θυσία* was at first only rhetorical and figurative; and thus the error of considering the Lord's Supper an actual sacrifice had its way prepared. While the Romanists sometimes endeavor to trace the word *missa* to other etymons (as to *ם* tribute; *הַחֲבִיטָה*, banquet; or to *μύησις*, initiation), its derivation is undoubtedly from the formulary with which the spectators and catechumens were dismissed before the celebration of the Lord's Supper: *missa est* (viz., congregatio).

The definition which Presbyterians hold, is that of our Catechisms, e. g., Shorter, Qu. 96: "The Lord's supper is a sacrament wherein, by

giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Christ's appointment, His death is showed forth; and the worthy receivers are not after a corporal and carnal manner, but by faith made partakers of His body and blood, with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace." This is obviously no more than a correct digest of the views stated or implied in the sundry passages where the ordinance is described. Its institution was evidently simple and free from mystery; and had not the strange career of superstition been run on this subject by the Christian Church, the dispassionate reader would have derived no conceptions from the sacred narrative but the simple ones of a commemorative seal. And these natural, popular views of the sacrament are doubtless best adapted for edification.

I hold that our Saviour undoubtedly held His last passover on the regular passover evening, and that this ordinance, intended by Him to supersede and replace the passover (1 Cor. v : 7), was very quietly introduced at its close. To do this, He took up the bread (doubtless the unleavened bread of the occasion), and the cup of wine (after Jewish fashion mingled with water), provided for the occasion, and introduced them to their new use by an act of solemn thanksgiving to God. Then He brake the bread and distributed it, and, after the bread, the wine—partaking of neither Himself—saying: "This do in remembrance of Me; eat, drink ye all of it, to show forth the Lord's death till He come." These mandatory words were accompanied also with certain explicatory words, conveying the nature of the symbol and pledge; stating that the bread represented His body, and the cup the covenant made in His blood—the body lacerated and killed, and the blood shed, for redemption. The sacramental acts, therefore, warranted by Christ are, the taking, breaking, and distributing the elements, on the administrator's part, and their manual reception, and eating or drinking, on the recipient's part. The sacramental words are the thanksgiving, the explicatory and promissory, and the mandatory. The whole is then appropriately concluded with another act of praise (not sacramental, but an appendage thereto), either by praying, or singing, or both. And to add anything else is superstition.

To continue this subject: The elements are bread and wine. The Greek Church says the bread must be leavened, the Latin unleavened, making this a point of serious importance. We believe that the bread used was paschal. But it was not Christ's intention to give ritually a paschal character to the new sacrament; and bread is employed as the material element of nutrition, the one most familiar and universal. Hence, we regard all the disputes as to leaven, and the other *minutiæ* made essential by the Romish

History of Institution.

2. Elements.

tribrick (wheaten, mingled with proper water, not worm-eaten, &c.) as non-essential. Probably the wine was also mingled with water on the first occasion; but, on the same grounds, we regard it as selected simply as the most common and familiar refreshment of the human race; and the presence of water is therefore non-essential. Indeed, modern chemistry has shown that, in all wine, water is the solvent, and the largest constituent.

According to all Christians, these elements are conceived as undergoing some kind of consecration. Their Consecration What? Rome places this in the pronouncement of the words of institution, "This is My body," and teaches that it results in a total change of the substance of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. But the only change which Protestants admit in a consecration of the elements, is the simple change of their use, from a common, to a sacred and sacramental one. And this consecration we believe to be wrought, not by pronouncing the words, "This is My body," but by the eucharistic act of worship which introduces the sacrament. For the natural language of consecration is that of worship; not that of a didactic and promissory sentence. Witness the cases of grace over our food, and all the consecrations of the Old Testament, e. g., Deut. xxvi : 5-10. When Christ says, "This is My Body," were the consecration what Papists suppose, these words would imply that it is already made. And last, the words, supposed by them to be words of consecration, are too variant in the different histories of the sacrament in sacred Scripture.

The breaking of the bread is plainly one of the sacramental acts, and should never be done before-hand, by others, nor omitted by the minister. The words *εις άρτος* (1 Cor. x : 17) are not correctly represented in the English version. The proper force of the word, as may be seen in Jno. vi : 9, is loaf, or more properly, cake; and the Apostle's idea is, that the oneness of the mass of bread, and of the cup, partaken by all, signifies their unity in one spiritual body. It would be better that the bread should be taken by the officiator in one mass, and broken before the people, after the prayer. The proper significancy of the sacrament requires it; for the Christ we commemorate is the Christ lacerated and slain. Further; Christ brake the bread in distributing it; and commanded us to imitate Him, saying: "This do," &c. Third; the Apostles undoubtedly made the breaking one of the sacramental acts; for Paul says, 1 Cor. x : 16, "The bread which we break," &c. Last, when the sacrament itself is more often called "the breaking of bread," than by any other one name, it can hardly be supposed that the breaking is not a proper part of the ceremonial.

There is also a significancy in the taking of the wine after the bread, in a distinct act of reception; because it is the blood as separated from the body by death, that we commemorate.

Hence the soaking of the bread in the cup is improper, as well as the plea by which Rome justifies communion in one kind; that as the blood is in the body, the bread conveys alone a complete sacrament. As we should commemorate it, the blood is not in the body, but poured out.

The acts on the Communicant's part, also, are sacramental and significant, viz: the taking and eating. These acts symbolize generally, Faith, as the soul's receptive act; just as the elements distributed by God's institution signify that which is the object of faith, Christ slain for our redemption. But the Confession 29, § 1, states, in greater detail, and with strict scriptural propriety, that these acts commemorate Christ's death, constitute a profession and engagement to serve Him, show the reception of a covenanted redemption thus sealed to us, and indicate our communion with each other and Christ, our Head, in one spiritual body. The first idea is plainly set forth in 1 Cor. xi : 24, last clause, as well as parallel passages, and in verses 25 and 26. The second is implied in the first, in the individual character of the act, in 1 Cor. xi : 25, "covenant," and in the nature of faith, which embraces Christ as our Saviour from sin unto holiness. The third idea is plainly implied in the significancy of the elements themselves, which are the materials of nutrition and refreshment; as well as in Jno. vi : 50-55. For though we strenuously dispute, against Rome, that the language of this passage is descriptive of the Lord's Supper, it is manifest that the Supper was afterward's devised upon the analogy which furnished the metaphor of the passage. And the didactic and promissory language, "This is My body," "This is My blood," sacramentally understood, obviously convey the idea of nutrition offered to the soul. The last idea is very clearly set forth in 1 Cor. x : 16, 17. And this is the feature of the sacrament from which it has received its popular name, of Communion of the Lord's Supper.

The parties who may properly partake of the Lord's Supper are so clearly defined, 1 Cor. xi : 27-30, as to leave no room for debate. It is those who have examined themselves successfully "of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body, and faith to feed on Him, repentance, love, and, new obedience." Shorter Catechism, question 97. See, also, Larger Catechism, question 171-175. That this sacrament is to be given only to credible professors, does not indeed follow necessarily from the fact that it symbolizes saving grace; for baptism does this; but from the express limitation of Paul, and from the different graces symbolized.

Baptism symbolizes those graces which initiate the Christian life: The Supper, those also which continue it. Hence, while the former is once applied to infants born within the covenant, to ratify their outward membership, in the dependence on the gracious promise that they shall be brought to commence the Christian life afterwards; it would be wrong to grant the second sacrament to any who have not given some indication of an actual progress in spiritual life.

Thus far, all has been intelligible, reasonable, and adapted to nourish and comfort the faith of the plain believer. But the well-informed are aware that this ordinance, so quietly and simply introduced by our Saviour, and so simply explained, has met the strange fortune of becoming the especial subject of superstitious amplification; until, in the Romish Church, it has become nearly the whole of worship. It would be interesting to trace the history of this growth; but time only allows us to remark, that two unscriptural ideas became early associated with it; in consequence of a pagan grossness of perception, and a false exposition of Scripture. One of these was that of a literal or real corporeal presence; the other that of a true sacrifice for sin. Still, those more superstitious Christians who held these two ideas, did not, for a long time, define the manner in which they were supposed to be true. At length two theories developed themselves, that of Paschasius Radbert, transubstantiation; and that of Berengar, consubstantiation. The former of these triumphed in the Lateran Council 1215; the latter was condemned as heretical, till Luther revived it, though stripped of the sacrificial feature.

According to Rome, when the priest canonically, and with proper intention, pronounces the words in the mass: "*Hoc est corpus meum,*" the bread and wine are changed into the very body and blood of the living Christ, including, of course, His soul and divinity; which mediatorial person, the priest does then truly and literally break and offer again, as a proper sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead; and he and the people eat Him. True; the accidents, or material qualities of bread and wine remain, but in and under them, the substance of bread is gone, and the substance really existing is Christ's person. But in this condition of things, it exists without the customary material attributes of locality, extension, and divisibility; for He is none the less in heaven, and in all the 'hosts,' all over the world at once; and into however small parts they may be divided, each is a perfect Christ! Hence, to elevate, and carry this host in procession, and to worship it with *λατρεία* is perfectly proper. Whether such a batch of absurdities is really believed by any reflecting mind, it is not for us to decide.

The scriptural basis for this monstrous superstructure is

Scriptural Arguments for. very narrow, while the papal is wide enough. Rome depends chiefly in Scripture on the language of Jno. vi : 50, &c., and on the assertion of the absolutely literal interpretation of the words of institution in the parallel passages cited by us at the beginning. We easily set aside the argument from Jno. vi : 50, &c., by the remark, that it applies not to the Lord's Supper, but to the spiritual actings of faith on Christ figuratively described. For the Lord's Supper was not yet instituted; and it is absurd to suppose that our Saviour would use language necessarily unintelligible to all His followers, the subject never having been divulged to them. On the contrary, in verse 35, we find that the coming and eating is defined as the actings of faith. If the chapter be forced into an application to the Supper, then verses 53 and 54 explicitly teach that every one who eats the Supper goes to heaven, and that no one who fails to eat it does; neither of which Rome admits: And in verse 63, our Saviour fixes a figurative and spiritual interpretation of His words, beyond all question.

When we proceed to the words of institution, we assert that the obvious meaning is tropical; and is equivalent to "This represents my body." The evidences of this are manifold. First, we cite the frequency of similar locutions in Hebrew, and Hebraistic Greek. Consult Gen. xli : 26, 27; Ezek. xxxvii : 11; Dan. vii : 24; Exod. xii : 11; Matt. xiii : 38, 39; Rev. i : 20; xvii : 9, 12, 18, *et passim*. Yea, we find Christ saying of Himself: "I am the way, the truth, the life," Jno. xiv : 6; "the vine," Jno. xv : 1; "the door," Jno. x : 9. Why is a tropical exposition more reasonable or necessary here? Yet, without it we make absolute nonsense.

But even if we had no usage to illustrate our Saviour's sense, it would be manifest from the text and context alone, that His sense is tropical. The *τούτο* must be demonstrative of bread, and equivalent to, this bread (is my body); because bread is the nearest antecedent, the whole series of the narrative shows it; in the parallel case of the wine, cup is, in one narrative, expressed; and the allusion of Paul, 1 Cor. x : 16, "The bread which we break," shows it. So, the *σῶμα* means evidently the body dead (corpse), as is proved by the expression "broken for you," and by the fact that the blood is separated from it: as well as by current usage of narratives. Now paraphrase the sentence: "This bread is my dead body," and any other than a tropical sense is impossible. For (a.) The predication is self-contradictory; if it is bread, it is not body; if body, it is not bread, subject or predicate is out of joint. (b.) The body was not yet dead, by many hours. (c.) Incompatibles cannot be predicated of each other. A given substance A. cannot be changed

Words of Institution Properly Explained.

True Meaning of Props.

into a substance B. which was pre-existent before the change; because the change must bring B. into existence.

Again: all will admit that the proper sense is that in which the disciples comprehended the words as first spoken. It is impossible that they should have understood the bread as truly the body: because they saw the body handling the bread! The body would have been wholly in its own hand!

Scripture calls it bread still after it is said, by Papists, to be transubstantiated. 1 Cor. x: 17. "All partakers of that one bread." See also, 1 Cor. xi: 26, 27, 28.

There are variations of language which are utterly incompatible with a strictly literal sense. In the gospels it is said: "He took the cup . . . and said This is my blood," &c. There must be here a metonymy of the cup for that which it contains—at least. But in 1 Cor. xi: 25, the words are "This cup is the new covenant of my blood," &c., where, if literalness is retained, we get the impossible and most unpopish idea, that the cup was the covenant.

But passing from the exegetical, to the general argument, a literal transubstantiation is impossible, because it violates our senses. They all tell us it is still bread and wine, by touch, taste, smell, sight. The senses are the only inlets of information as to external facts; if we may not believe their deliberate testimony, there is an end of all acquired knowledge. This may be fairly stated in a stronger form: it is impossible that my mind can be validly taught the fact of such a transubstantiation; for the only channel by which I can be taught it is the senses; and transubstantiation, if true, would teach me that my senses do not convey truth. It is just as likely that I do not hear Rome saying, "Transubstantiation is true," when I seem to hear her, as that I do not see a wafer, but a Christ, when I seem to see it. Nor is it any answer to say: the senses deceive us. This is only when hurried; and the sensible medium imperfect, or senses diseased. Here all the four senses of all men, in health unanimously perceive only bread and wine.

In the second place, it is impossible to be true; because it violates our understanding. Our mental intuitions compel us to recognize substance by its sensible attributes. Those attributes inhere only in the substance, and can only be present by its presence. It is impossible to avoid this reference. An attribute or accident is relative to its substance; to attempt to conceive of it as separate destroys it. Again: it is impossible for us to abstract from matter, the attributes of locality, dimension, and divisibility. But transubstantiation requires us to conceive of Christ's body without all these. Again: it is impossible for matter to be ubiquitous; but Christ's body must be so, if this

Transubstantiation  
Absurd. (a.) Because  
it Violates our Senses.

(b.) It violates Reason.  
No Plea to call  
it a Miracle.

doctrine be true. And it is vain to attempt an evasion of these two arguments from sense and reason, by pleading a great and mysterious miracle. For God's omnipotence does not work the impossible and the natural contradiction. And whatever miracle has ever taken place, has necessarily been just as dependent on human senses, for man's cognizance of its occurrence, as any common event. So that if the fundamental law of the senses is outraged, man is as incapable of knowing a miracle as any other thing.

Once more the doctrine of transubstantiation contradicts the analogy of faith. It is incompatible with (c.) It violates the our Saviour's professed attitude and intention, Analogy of Faith. which was then to institute a sacrament. But Rome herself defines a sacrament as an outward sign of an invisible grace. Hence Christ's attitude and intention naturally lead us to regard the elements as only signs. This is true of all the sacraments of Old and New Testaments, unless this be an exception: and especially of the passover, on which the Supper was engrafted.

Transubstantiation would utterly destroy the nature of a sacrament; because, if the symbols are changed into the Christ, there is no sign.

It contradicts also the doctrine of Christ's ascension and second advent. For these teach us, that He is at the Father's right hand now, and will only come thence at the final consummation.

It contradicts the doctrine of atonement, substituting a loathsome form of sacred (literal) cannibalism, for that faith of the soul, which receives the legal effects of Christ's atoning sufferings as its justification.

Transubstantiation being disproved, all elevation and worship of the host, as well as kneeling at the sacrament, are disproved. The Episcopal reasons for the latter are, that while no change of the bread and wine is admitted, and no worship of them designed, yet the reverence, contrition and homage of the believer for his crucified Saviour prompt him to kneel to Christ. We reply, that the worship of Christ is of course proper at all proper times. But the attitude of worship is not proper at the moment when Christ expressly commands us to do something else than kneel. Had the paralytic, for instance, of Matt. ix : 5, 6. when he received the order, "Arise, take up thy bed and go," insisted on kneeling just then, it would have been disobedience, and not reverence. So, when Christ calls us to a communion in eating together His sacramental supper, the proper posture is that of a guest, for the time. If any Christian desires to show his homage by coming to the table from his knees, and returning from it to them, very well. But let him not kneel, in the very act in which Christ commands him to feast.

Therefore, Host not to be Worshipped.

Consubstantiation teaches that there is no literal change of the elements, but that they remain simple bread and wine. Yet, in a mysterious and miraculous manner, there is a real presence, in, under, and along with them, of the whole person of Christ, which is literally, though invisibly, eaten along with them. Unworthy communicants also receive it, to their own damnation. While this doctrine is not attended with the impious results of transubstantiation, it is liable to nearly all the exegetical, sensible, rational, and doctrinal objections. Indeed, in one sense, the exegetical objections are stronger; because if literalness must needs be retained in the words of institution, it is a less violation of language to make them mean the bread is the body, than that the bread accompanies the body. The Lutheran exegesis, while boasting of its faithful preservation of our Saviour's language, really neither makes it literal, nor interprets it by any allowable trope. It does not outrage the understanding so much, by requiring us to believe that substance can be separate from all its accidents; for it professes to leave the substance of the bread untouched. Nor is it so obnoxious to the last head of objections raised against transubstantiation, in that it does not destroy the sacramental sign. But the rest of my arguments apply against it, and need not be recapitulated.

4. Consubstantiation  
Equally Erroneous, but  
not so Impious.