

## LECTURE LXVIII.

### THE LORD'S SUPPER.—Concluded.

#### SYLLABUS.

5. In what sense did Calvin hold a Real Presence? What the doctrine of Zuinglius concerning it; and what the doctrine of the Westminster Divines?  
Calvin Inst. bk. iv, ch. 17, § 1-11, and Commentaries. *Zwinglii Ratio Fidei* § 8. Dorner's Hist. Prot. Theo., Vol. 1 § 2, ch. 3. Dr. Wm. Cunningham, Discussion of Ch. Prin. Conf of Faith, ch. 29, Hill, bk. v, ch. 7. Dick, Lect. 91. Turretin, Loc. xix, Qu. 28. Hodge, Theol. Vol. 3, ch. 20, § 16. So. Presb. Rev., Jan. 1876, Art. 6.
6. Is the Lord's Supper a sacrifice?  
See Council of Trent, Sess. 13, ch. 2. Cat. Rom. pt. ii, ch. 4, Qu. 53. Turretin, Qu. 29. Dick, Lect. 91.
7. Are private communions admissible?  
Cat. Rom. as above. Dick, Lect. 92.
8. Defend the propriety of communion in both kinds.  
Cat. Rom. as above, Qu. 50, &c. Calvin Inst. bk. iv, ch. 17. Turretin, Qu. 25.
9. Who should administer the Lord's Supper?  
Ridgley, Qu. 168 to 170, § 2.
10. What is the nature of the efficiency of the sacrament to worthy communicants, and of the sin of its abuse by the unworthy?  
Calvin Inst. bk. iv, ch. 14, especially § 17. Hill and Dick as above. Knapp, § 145. See also on whole, Knapp, § 144, 146.

**T**HERE is a sense, in which all evangelical Christians would admit a real presence in the Lord's Supper. The second Person of the Trinity being very God, immense and ubiquitous, is of course present wherever the bread and wine are distributed. Likewise, His operations are present, through the power of the Holy Ghost employing the elements as means of grace, with all true believers communicating. (Matt. xviii: 20). But this is the only sort of presence admitted by us.

**Zwinglian View of Supper.**  
Zwinglius, seemingly the most emancipated of all the Reformers from superstition and prejudice, taught that the sacrament is only a commemorative seal, and that the human part of Christ's person is not present in the sacrament, except to the faith of the intelligent believer. This he sustains irrefragably by the many passages in which we are taught that Christ's humanity is ascended into the heavens, thence to return no more till the end of all things. That this humanity, however glorified, has its *ubi*, just as strictly as any human body; that if there is any literal humanity fed upon for redemption by the believing communicant, it must be his passible and suffering humanity, while Christ's proper humanity is now glorified; (which would necessitate giving Christ a double humanity); and that the sacramental language is tropical, as is evinced by a sound exegesis and the testimony of the better Fathers. The defect of the Zwinglian view is, that while it hints, it does not

distinctly enough assert, the sealing nature of the sacraments.

Both Romanist and Lutheran minds, accustomed to regard the Eucharist from points of view intensely mystical, received the Zwinglian with loud clamour, as being odiously bald and rationalistic. Calvin, therefore, being perhaps somewhat influenced by personal attachments to Melancthon, and by a desire to heal the lamentable dissensions of Reformed and Lutherans, propounded (in his *Inst.* and elsewhere) an intermediate view. This is, that the humanity, as well as the divinity of Christ, in a word, his whole person, is spiritually, yet really present, not to the bodily mouth, but to the souls of true communicants, so that though the humanity be in heaven only, it is still fed on in some ineffable, yet real and literal way, by the souls of believers. The ingenious and acute defence of this strange opinion, contained in the *Inst.* Bk. iv : Ch. 17, proceeds upon this postulate, which I regard as correct, and as eminently illustrative of the true nature of the sacramental efficiency; that the Lord's Supper represents and applies the vital, mystical union of the Lord with believers. Such therefore as the vital union is, such must be our view of the sacrament of the Supper. Is the vital union then, only a secret relationship between Christ and the soul, instituted when faith is first exercised, and constituted by the indwelling and operation of the Holy Ghost : or, is it a mysterious, yet substantial conjunction, of the spiritual substance, soul, to the whole substance of the mediatorial Person, including especially the humanity? In a word, does the spiritual vitality propagate itself in a mode strictly analogous to that, in which vegetable vitality is propagated from the stock into the graft, by actual conjunction of substance? Now Calvin answers, emphatically : the union is of the latter kind. His view seems to be, that not only the mediatorial Person, but especially the corporeal part thereof, has been established by the incarnation, as a sort of duct through which the inherent spiritual life of God, the fountain is transmitted to believers, through the mystical union. His arguments are, that the body of Christ is asserted to be our life, in places so numerous and emphatic (*Jno.* i : 1, 14 ; vi : 27, 33, 51-59 ; *Eph.* v : 30 ; *1 Cor.* vi : 15 ; *Eph.* iv : 16) that exegetical fidelity requires of us to understand by it more than a participation in spiritual indwelling and influences purchased for believers by His death ; that the incomprehensibility of a spiritual, though true and literal, substantial conjunction of our souls with Christ's flesh in heaven, should not lead us to reject the word of our God ; and that faith cannot be the whole amount of the vital union of believers to Christ, inasmuch as it is said to be by faith. The union must be more than the means which constitutes it.

Now, it is this view of Calvin, which we find Hill asserting,

Is Calvin's the Westminster Doctrine? and Dick and Cunningham denying, as the established doctrine of the Anglican and Scotch Churches, and of the Westminster Assembly. A careful examination of Ch. xxix : § 7, the decisive passage of our Confession, will show, I think, that it was the intention of the Westminster Assembly, while not repudiating Calvin's views or phraseology in a marked and individual manner, yet to modify all that was untenable and unscriptural in it. It is declared that worthy communicants "do really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporeally, but spiritually, receive and feed upon Christ crucified and all the benefits of his death: the body and blood of Christ being then not corporeally or carnally in, with, or under the bread and wine; yet as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers," as the elements themselves to their senses. Note first: that they say believers receive and feed spiritually upon Christ crucified and the benefits of His death; not with Calvin, on His literal flesh and blood. Next, the presence which grounds this receiving, is only a presence to our faith, of Christ's body and blood! Hence we construe the Confession we think fairly, to mean by the receiving and feeding, precisely the spiritual actings of faith in Christ as our Redeemer, and on His body slain, and blood poured out, as the steps of His atoning work; so that the thing which the soul actually embraces, is not the corporeal substance of His slain body and shed blood, but their Redeeming virtue. The discriminating remarks of Turretin, Qu. 28, (Introduc.) are doubtless correct: and are doubtless the expression of the very view the Assembly intended to embody. The human person of Christ cannot be said to be present in the sense of substantive proximity or contact; but only in this sense; that we say a thing is present, when it is under the cognizance of the faculty naturally adapted for its apprehension. Thus the sun is called present in day, absent at night. He is no farther distant in fact; but his beams do not operate on our visual organ. The blind man is said to be without light; although the rays may touch his sightless balls. So a mental or spiritual presence, is that which places the object before the cognizance of the appropriate mental faculty. In this sense only, the sacrament brings Christ before us; that it places Him, in faith, before the cognizance of the sanctified understanding and heart.

We reject the view of Calvin concerning the real presence, [recognizing our obligation to meet and account for the Scriptures he quotes, in a believing, and not in a rationalistic spirit]; first, because it is not only incomprehensible, but impossible. Does it not require us to admit, in admitting the literal (though spiritual) reception of Christ's corporeal part, it in a distant heaven, and we on earth; that matter may exist without its essential attributes of locality and dimension? Have not our

Calvin's Proposition Impossible.

souls their *ubi*? They are limited, substantively, to some spot within the superficies of our bodies, just as really as though they were material. Has not Christ's flesh its *ubi*, though glorified, and as much more brilliant than ours, as a diamond is than carbon? To my mind, therefore, there is as real a violation of my intuitive reason, in this doctrine; as when transubstantiation requires me to believe that the flesh of Christ is present, indivisible and unextended, in each crumb or drop of the elements. Both are contrary to the laws of extension. And that Christ's glorified body dwells on high, no more to return actually to earth till the final consummation is asserted too plainly and frequently to be disputed. (Matt. xxvi : 11; Jno. xvi : 28; xvii : 11; xvi : 7; Luke xxiv : 51; Acts iii : 21; i : 11.

Second. The bread broken and wine poured out symbolize the body broken and slain, and blood shed, by death. Now, according to Calvin, it is a mystical union which is sealed and applied in the Lord's Supper, so as to propagate spiritual life; and throughout John vi, where His life-giving flesh is so much spoken of, it is not the Lord's Supper, but the believers' union to Christ, which is described. Well, how unreasonable it is to suppose spiritual life communicated through the actual, corporeal substance of Christ's body, at the very stage at which the body is itself lifeless?

Third. While the Old Testament believers had not the identical sacraments which we have, they had the same kind of spiritual life, nourished in the same way. (See Rom. iv : 5; Heb. xi, and especially I Cor. x : 1-4). Here the very same figure is employed—that of eating and drinking. How could this be an eating of His flesh, when that flesh was not yet in existence?

This remark brings that theory of the mystical union, on which the Romish, the Lutheran, and the patristic doctrines of the "real presence rest," to a decisive test. Were Old Testament saints saved in the same gospel way with us? Yes. Then that theory which makes the theanthropic Person the corporeal duct of spiritual life, is not true: for when they were saved, there was no theanthropic Person.

Fourth. The sixth chapter of John contains many internal marks, by which the feeding on Christ is identified with faith, and His flesh is shown to be only a figure for the benefits of His redemption. The occasion—the miracle of feeding the thousands with five loaves and two fishes, and the consequent pursuit of Christ by the multitude, made it very natural that Christ should adopt the figure of an eating of food, to represent receiving Him. Verse 29 shows that eating is simply believing; for had Calvin's sense been true, our Saviour would not have

If any Body Present,  
it is the Body Dead.

Old Testament  
Saints could not Share  
it

The Conjunction is  
Simply Believing.

said so emphatically, that believing was the work of God. In verse 35, again, it is implied that the eating is but coming, i. e., believing. So, verses 40, 47 with 50. In verse 53, we have language which is as destructive of a spiritual feeding on the literal body in the sacraments, as of a corporeal; for in either case it would be made to teach the unscriptural doctrine, that a soul cannot be saved without the sacraments. In verses 63, our Saviour plainly interprets His own meaning. Christ's omniscience having shown Him that the hearers were misconceiving His words, as of a literal and corporeal eating; He here proceeds to correct that mistake. His scope may be thus paraphrased: "Are your minds so gross as to suppose that salvation is to be attained by a literal eating of the Saviour's material flesh? No wonder you are scandalized by so gross an idea! Is it not a sufficient proof of its erroneousness, that in a few months you are to see the Redeemer's person (divine and corporeal) ascend to the heavens from which the eternal Word descended? Of course, that utter seclusion of His material body from the militant Church sufficiently explodes every idea of a material presence and literal eating. But besides: all such notions misconceive the true nature of redemption. This is a spiritual work; no material flesh can have any profitable agency to promote it, as it is a propagation of life in the soul; the agency must be spiritual; not physical. And the vehicle of that agency is the gospel word, not any material flesh, however connected with the redeeming Person. The thing you lack, is not any such literal eating (a thing as useless as impossible) but true, living faith on Christ." (Verses 60-64). The best proof of the justice of this exposition is its perfect coherency with the context. Calvin (*Com. in loco*) labours hard, but unsuccessfully, to make the passage bear another sense, which would not be fatal to the peculiar feature of his theory. And the whole tenour of Scripture (e. g. Matt. xv : 17, 18), is unfavourable to the conception of the moral condition of the soul's being made dependent on a reception of corporeal substance.

Last. (See I Cor. xi : 27, 29). The destructive effects of unworthy communicating are here described in terms which plainly make this mischief the counterpart of the benefit which the true believer derives, by proper communicating. Now, if this latter is an access of spiritual life through a substantial (though spiritual) reception of Christ's Person, the former must be a propagation of spiritual death, through the poisonous effects of this same Person, substantively present to the soul. But, says Calvin, with obvious correctness, the unbelieving communicant does not get the Person of Christ into contact with his soul at all! The thing he guiltily does, is the keeping of Christ away from his soul totally, by his unbelief.

Calvin Inconsistent  
with Results of Unworthy  
Eating.

Here we may appropriately answer the tenth question.

True Nature of Sacramental Efficiency.

We hold that the Lord's Supper is a means of grace; and the scriptural conception of this phrase explains the manner in which the sacrament is efficacious to worthy communicants. It sets forth the central truths of redemption, in a manner admirably adapted to our nature sanctified; and these truths, applied by the Holy Ghost, are the instruments of sanctification and spiritual life, in a manner generically the same with, though in degree more energetic, than the written and spoken word. So, the guilt of the unbelieving communicant is not one inevitably damning; but it is the guilt of Christ's rejection; it is the guilt of doing despite to the crucified Saviour by whom he should have been redeemed; and this under circumstances of peculiar profanity. But the profanation varies according to the decree of conscious hypocrisy, and the motive of the act.

In conclusion of this head, I would remark that all these objections to that modified form of the real presence which Calvin held, apply *a fortiori*, to the grosser doctrines of the Lutheran and Romanist. The intelligent student can go over the application himself.

Rome asserts most emphatically that the Lord's Supper is

6. Is the Supper a proper and literal sacrifice; in which the Sacrifice? Rome's elements, having become the very body, Arguments. blood, human spirit, and divinity of Christ, are again offered to God upon the altar; and the transaction is thus a repetition of the very sacrifice of the cross, and avails to atone for the sins of the living, and of the dead in purgatory. And all this is dependent on the priest's intention. After the authority of Church Fathers and councils, which we set aside with a simple denial, Rome argues from Scripture, that Christ was a priest after the order of Melchizedek; but He presented as priest, bread and wine as an oblation to God, and then made Abraham communicate in it: That Christ is a "priest forever," and therefore must have a perpetually recurring sacrifice to present: That Malachi (i: 11), predicts the continuance of a Christian sacrifice among the Gentiles, under the New Testament. That the words of institution: "This is My body which is broken for you," when taken literally, as they ought to be, imply a sacrifice, because the bread, having become the veritable body, must be whatever the body is; but the body is there a sacrifice. And that Paul (1 Cor. x: 21), contrasts the Lord's table with that of devils (i. e., idols). But the latter was confessedly a table of sacrifice, whence the former must be so. But the true argument with Rome for teaching this doctrine, is that of Acts xix: 25; they "know that by this craft they have their wealth." The great necessity of the human soul, awakened by remorse, or by the convincing Spirit of God, is atonement. By making this horrible and impious invention, Rome has brought

the guilty consciences of miserable sinners under her dominion, in order to make merchandise of their sin and fear. While nothing can transcend the unscripturalness of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, I regard this of the sacrifice of the Mass as the most impious and mischievous of all the heresies of Rome.

In answer to her pretended scriptural arguments: There is not one word of evidence that the bread and wine of Melchizedek, if even an oblation, were a sacrifice. Does Rome mean to represent the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as in exercise 1400 years before Christ had any body to commemorate? Christ's priesthood is perpetual; but it is perpetuated, according to Hebrews, in His function of intercession, which He continually performs in the heavenly Sanctuary. And besides: it is a queer way to perpetuate His priestly functions, by having a line of other priests offer Him as the victim of their sacrifices! Rome replies, that her priest, in offering, acts in Christ's room, and speaks in His name. Such impiety is not strange on the part of Rome. We set aside the whole dream by demanding, where is the evidence that Christ has ever called one of His ministers a priest, or deputized to him this function? The prediction of Malachi is obviously to be explained by the remark, that he foretells the prevalence of Christian institutions among the Gentiles, in terms and imagery borrowed from Jewish rites. The same bungling interpretation which Rome makes here, would equally prove from Is. ii: 1, 4, that the great annual feasts at Jerusalem are to be personally attended by all the people of Europe, Australia, America, &c.; and from Is. lvi: 7, that not only the "unbloody offering of the Mass," but literal burnt offerings shall be presented under the New Testament by the Gentiles. By disproving the transubstantiation of the bread, we have already overthrown the argument founded on it. And last: it is evidently an overstraining of the Apostle's words, to infer from 1 Cor. x: 21, that the thing literally eaten at the Lord's table must be a literal sacrifice. Since the elements eaten are the symbols of the divine sacrifice, there is in this an abundant ground for the Apostle's parallel. And moreover, when the Pagans met after the sacrifice, to eat of the body of the victim, the table was not an altar, nor was the act a sacrificial one.

The direct refutation of this dogma has been so well executed by Calvin, Turretin, and other Protestants, that nothing more remains, than to collect and state in their proper order the more important arguments. The silence of the Scripture is a just objection to it; because the burden of proof properly lies on those who assert the doctrine. The circumstances of the first administration of the Supper exclude all sacrificial character. No one will deny that this sacrament must bear the same meaning and character in all subsequent repetitions, which

Heads of Direct Refutation.

Christ gave it at first. But on that night, it could not be a sacrifice, because His sacrifice was not yet made. Christ was as yet unslain. Nothing was offered to God; but on the contrary, Christ gave the elements to man: whereas, in a proper sacrifice, it is man that offers to God. Not one of the proper traits or characteristics of a true sacrifice is present. There is no victim, shedding His blood; and "without the shedding of blood is no remission." There is no sacrificial act whatever; and this is especially fatal to Romanists; because the only oblation to God, which can by any pretext be found in the history of the institution in Scripture, is that of the eucharistic prayer. But, say they, the transubstantiation does not take place till after this, in the pronouncing of the words of institution. There is no death and consumption of a victim by fire; for the only thing like a killing is the breaking of the bread: but according to Romanists, this occurred in our Saviour's institution, before the transubstantiation. Again: The mere fact that the Supper is a sacrament is incompatible with its being a sacrifice; for the nature of the two is dissimilar. True, the passover was both, but this was at different stages. But we object with yet more emphasis, that the doctrine is impiously derogatory to Christ's one priesthood and sacrifice, and to the sufficiency thereof, as asserted in Scripture. Christ is sole priest. (1 Tim. ii: 5; Heb. vii: 24; ix: 12), and He offers one sacrifice, which neither needs nor admits repetition. (Heb. vii: 27; ix: 25; x: 1, 2, 10, 12, 14 and 26 with ix: 12-14).

Protestants deny the propriety of private communions. because they deny that the Supper is a sacrifice. It is a commemoration of Christ's death, and shows forth His death. There should therefore be fellow communicants to whom to show it forth, or at least spectators. It is a communion, representing our membership in the common body of Christ. Hence to celebrate it when no members are present to participate is an abuse. The motive for desiring private communion is usually superstitious, and therefore our Church does wisely in refusing it.

The grounds on which Rome withholds the cup from the laity may be seen stated in the Council of Trent, and cited in Dick. They are too trivial to need refutation. It is enough to say that the assertion that the bread by itself is a whole sacrament, because the blood is in the body, is false. For it is the very nature of the Lord's Supper to signify, that the blood is not in the body, having been poured out from it in death. We might justly ask: Why is not the bread alone sufficient for the priests also, if it is a whole sacrament? The outrage upon Christ's institute is peculiarly glaring, because the injunction to give the cup to the communicants is as clear and positive as to observe the sacrament at all. And our Saviour, as though

7. Private Communion Rejected. Why?

8. Laity Entitled to the Cup.

foreseeing the abuse, in Mark xiv : 23, and Matt xxvi : 27, has emphatically declared that all who eat are also to drink. This innovation of Rome is comparatively modern ; being not more against the Word of God, than against the voice and usage of Christian antiquity. It presents one of the strongest examples of her insolent arrogance both towards her people and God. The true motive, doubtless, is, to exalt the priesthood into a superior caste.

9. For the answer to this, see Lectures on the Sacraments in General. Qu. 10.