

The Papal and Hierarchial System - Part 7

by Joseph John Gurney

The sermon argues that certain ceremonies or ordinances in the Christian faith do not have an inherent power or virtue that conveys grace to the soul of the recipient.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12

Topics: "Sacramental Theology", "Spiritual Baptism"

Description

Joseph John Gurney preaches about the sacraments, emphasizing that the true sacraments in Christianity are spiritual in nature, such as the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the communion with Christ through faith. He refutes the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, highlighting that the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper are symbolic acts of remembrance and fellowship, devoid of inherent mystical grace. Gurney stresses the importance of spiritual baptism as the means of regeneration and union with Christ, and the communion with Christ as the true spiritual supper that nourishes believers for eternity.

Transcript

ON THE SACRAMENTS

THE oath which it was customary to administer to every Roman soldier, on his joining the armies of the empire, was called a sacrament -- sacred words, accompanied by a solemn interior meaning, by which the newly enlisted warrior was bound to the service of his general and his prince. No such term is to be found in the Holy Scriptures; nor is it easy to discover at what date, or on what occasion, it first found its way into the vocabulary of Christians. Its theological meaning, however, is ably developed by Hooker, as follows: "As often as we mention a sacrament" says he, "it is improperly understood; for in the writings of the ancient fathers, all articles which are peculiar to Christian faith, all duties of religion, containing that which sense or natural reason cannot p166 by itself discern, are most commonly named sacraments.

Our restraint of the word to some few principal divine ceremonies, importeth in every such ceremony, two things; the substance of the ceremony itself which is visible; and besides that, somewhat else more secret, in reference whereunto we conceive that ceremony to be a sacrament." See Johnson's Dictionary on the word. From this passage it is evident, that the true point which is necessary to make any thing a sacrament, is some internal and mysterious truth or operation, hidden both from the outward senses and natural reason of man, and therefore an object of religious faith.

Thus the word is applied to certain ceremonies, because they are outward and visible signs of an inward grace, supposed to be annexed to them, and properly inherent in them. That there are, in the first and general sense of the word, as used by the ancient fathers, many sacraments in the Christian religion cannot be denied; for all the peculiar doctrines of our faith are mysterious in the view of human reason they contain a depth which the unassisted wisdom of man cannot fathom.

So also the precepts of Christianity are many of them peculiar, and have their foundation p167 in Him who is himself the Word of God the Wonderful One whom man knows not by nature, but in whom nevertheless "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Again, if certain ceremonies are called sacraments in consequence of some mysterious virtue, or powerful operation, with which they are supposed to be connected, it is certain, that this efficacious interior must in itself be still more a sacrament, on the old logical principle, "Quo quidvis tale fit, id magis tale est; That by which any thing becomes such, is itself more such" On this last point we shall have more to say hereafter.

In the mean time, a view must be taken of those ceremonies, or ordinances, which are called sacraments, because of their supposed necessary connexion with a hidden or mysterious operation, or, in other words, an inward grace. The Romish church insists on seven such ordinances baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, penance, ordination, extreme unction, and marriage. From this list, Protestants have selected baptism and the eucharist, as the only sacraments of Christianity; these, therefore, will require our chief consideration.

In the meantime, in order to the clearing of our subject, p168 it may be well to make a few remarks on the five remaining articles. 1. Confirmation. That it is the duty of parents and others who have the care of children, to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, is an undoubted truth; and when they come to an age approaching to manhood, it is surely incumbent, both on their natural protectors and their spiritual overseers, to confirm them, both by precept and example, in a religious life and conversation, that they may not enter the callings of the world, or be exposed to its manifold temptations, without the protection of those Christian principles which can alone insure their virtue here, or their eternal happiness hereafter.

So far we are fully warranted by the acknowledged principles of scriptural truth. With respect to confirmation in its technical meaning, it may be defined as the ceremony by which young people, when they come to years of discretion, take upon themselves, under the laying on of the hands of the bishop, the vows made for them at their baptism in infancy by their sponsors that they will renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, and lead a righteous and godly life. It is almost needless p169 to say that such a ceremony is never once mentioned or alluded to in Scripture.

Both among Roman Catholics and some Protestant churches, it forms part of a plan, which, whether expedient or not, notoriously belongs to the inventions of man, and not to the law of God. It is not my present business to inquire what benefit may accrue to individuals from their entering on such solemn engagements, or from the advice and instruction with which the ceremony is usually accompanied. I have only to remark, that whatsoever else confirmation may be, it is not a sacrament; because it is not necessarily or properly connected with any interior powerful operation, with any inward grace.

Experience amply proves that thousands and tens of thousands of those who are recipients, and (so far as appears) honest and willing recipients, of this ordinance of the church, are by no means partakers of an effective inward grace. On the contrary, they grow up to manhood in the character of mere worldlings; and

through the broad and easy road which leads to destruction. My lot was once cast in a foreign country where this result is notorious. The clergy of the church, p170 there established, are officially engaged in training the young of their flock, until the period arrives for confirmation.

When this ceremony has been performed, the young person is no longer considered to be under any peculiar clerical care. The vow has been exacted, and liberty is now given. This liberty soon degenerates into licentiousness; and "confirmation," so far from being the fastening of the principles of Christian truth and virtue, is found, in very many instances, to be a sort of signal for unrestrained entrance on the paths of vice. Who then can imagine that there is any inherent sacramental virtue in the ceremony of confirmation?
2.

Penance. That there is an extreme danger of confounding penance with repentance, is evident from the fact that in Roman Catholic versions of the New Testament, the former is generally substituted for the latter. Penance I understand to be disciplinary punishment, inflicted by the Romish clergy on those who have acknowledged any transgression at confession. When some poor Irishman, for example, is seen creeping round one of the chapels on his bare knees, over rough stones, or is heard repeating a thousand Ave Marias, this is penance a performance p171 which Rome celebrates with the name of sacrament.

This disciplinary infliction is considered, as I understand, to serve the purpose of satisfaction for sin. That it often takes the place of those grand essentials of Christianity, "repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," is, in my opinion, highly probable. The suffering which reconciles the offender to his priest, and procures him absolution as its meed, is sufficient for the children of superstition and ignorance; they forget the necessity of a broken spirit; they forget the efficacy of the blood of Jesus for the blotting out of sin.

This tendency in the practice, of penance, may possibly be at times counteracted by a watchful care on the part of the clergy; but no one can fail to perceive that it is at once natural and highly dangerous. Be that as it may, however, penance, with its accompaniments, is no sacrament; it is destitute of any necessary connexion with inward grace. Many of those who are thus punished, and thus absolved, sincere though they be in their submission to the infliction, pursue the path of sin; are punished and absolved again and again; and have, in the end, nothing to depend upon for their p172 salvation, but priestly discipline and priestly absolution. 3.

Ordination. Did the gift of the Holy Ghost truly and necessarily accompany the ceremony of ordination, that ceremony might justly claim the name of a sacrament. But as the fact is otherwise, and is generally understood and allowed to be so, ordination is an outward form without any hidden or mystical interior; and therefore no sacrament. 4. Extreme Unction. "Is any sick among you?" says the apostle James, "let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

The apostle wrote during the age of miracles; when in answer to the prayers of his saints, the sins of sick persons were freely forgiven through faith in Jesus, and they were at the same time restored to bodily health; the miracle wrought on the body being the evidence of the spiritual deliverance or cure. Just such was the happy lot of the palsied sufferer, who, after Jesus had forgiven his sins, was miraculously healed, and took up his bed and p173 walked. There is no reason to suppose that even in that day, the anointing with oil (a common oriental practice) was of any efficacy for procuring either the pardon of the soul, or the

cure of the body.

That it has no inward grace connected with it in the present day that it is no means of obtaining reconciliation with God, no means of admission into heaven, as many a superstitious votary of Rome ignorantly imagines is evident from the fact, that the old sign of the miraculous healing of the body is totally wanting. Extreme unction therefore, whatever else it may be, is no sacrament. 5. Marriage. It is fervently to be hoped, notwithstanding all the legal facilities which are, in the present day, given to marriage, to the exclusion of religious ceremony as a necessary accompaniment, that this sacred tie, will always be regarded by Christians as a religious compact, honourable in the sight of God and man, and bearing the stamp of a divine sanction and authority.

Nor can it be denied, that this compact has been blessed to many souls that husband and wife, in very numerous instances, are found to be each other's helpers in spiritual things, and joint partakers of the p174 "grace of life." But to imagine that inward grace is connected with the ceremony of marriage, in such a sense as that when the latter is performed, the former is thereby bestowed, is to imagine a fiction, of which experience is constantly demonstrating the utter futility.

Rich blessing therefore, as it is to man, and when rightly entered into, truly a religious as well as a civil covenant - Marriage unquestionably is no sacrament. On a calm review of the five articles of ecclesiastical practice or ceremony, which have now been briefly considered, it must be evident to every impartial inquirer, that there is no inherent mysterious virtue in any one of them. In making this assertion, it is necessary for us to observe the distinction between the blessing which may rest on the sincere mind in the conscientious performance of any supposed religious duty, and a hidden power in the performance itself, by which alone it is constituted a sacrament.

I presume that even the votaries of Rome would allow, that the reception of any of these ceremonies, by the mere hypocrite, would avail him nothing; and the most zealous Protestants might willingly grant, that the sincere p175 and conscientious performance of ceremonies, believed to be ordained of God, may be accompanied by a blessing, even though the rites themselves are destitute of any true divine authority. But Rome asserts that there is in these ceremonies an inherent power or virtue, by which grace is conveyed to every sincere recipient.

Protestants, on the contrary, are of the judgment in accordance with the plainest dictates of reason and truth that there is no such inherent power or virtue in Confirmation, Penance, Ordination, Supreme Unction, or Marriage; and therefore that none of these ceremonies are sacraments. And now having briefly disposed of these five articles, we must proceed to take a view of the two remaining ceremonies, to which the generality of Protestants, as well as the members of the church of Rome, ascribe such an inherent power, and therefore apply the name of sacraments I mean water baptism, and the eucharist.

I. It is generally believed both by Roman Catholics and Protestants, that water baptism was instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, as a standing ordinance in his church. In this sentiment I cannot concur; but whether it is correct or otherwise, I believe it may be easily shown that this ceremony p176 is no sacrament. We have no reason to imagine that it contains any inherent power or virtue, by which grace is conveyed to the soul of the recipient whether that recipient be the sincerely believing adult, or the harmless unconscious infant.

In order to unfold the subject with clearness, it must in the first place be observed, that the inward grace which is supposed to be contained in water baptism, is the grace of regeneration -- the grace by which

man, naturally corrupt and dead to holiness, is born again, or born spiritually, unto righteousness. In adults this grace must be regarded as tantamount to conversion. The history of the New Testament furnishes no clear instance of the baptism of infants. The "household of Stephanas," and the families of Lydia, and of the jailer at Philippi, may have included little children, or they may not; we are in possession of no evidence either way.

In the mean time, the examples are numerous, in the New Testament, of the baptism of grown up persons. Many were they who flocked to the banks of Jordan, that they might receive this rite of purification at the hands of John. Even Jesus himself, who needed no p177 repentance, submitted to the ceremony, because of the character which it then undoubtedly bore of a divine ordinance. And no sooner had he commenced his own ministry, then his disciples made use of the same rite in his name; so that when a dispute arose "between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying," it was said to John, "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him:" John iii. 25, 26.

It is probable that the disciples of Jesus continued to practice this rite, during the whole course of his ministry. So also the historical fact is clear, that after our Lord's resurrection and ascension, they made frequent use of water baptism. The converts on the day of Pentecost, the Samaritan converts, the Ethiopian eunuch, Cornelius and his family, the jailer at Philippi, and Lydia, with their respective households, the Corinthian and Ephesian believers, were all baptized with water, by the hands of the apostles, or with their sanction and authority: see Acts ii. 38; viii. 12, 38; ix. 18; x. 48; xvi. 15, 33; xviii. 8; xix. 5. p178 Now I freely confess my own apprehension, that in thus making use of water baptism, the apostles and their brethren were not acting under any command from their Lord and Master, but only following up an old practice which was perfectly familiar to the Jews.

When the law was delivered to the Israelites from Mount Sinai, they were commanded to "wash their clothes;" and the Rabbins determine that this washing was the immersion of their whole persons with their clothes on; this being the baptism, or rite of purification, appointed for the people, on their entering into the covenant of the law. We are assured by Maimonides, and other learned Jews, that the baptism of proselytes to the Jewish faith, was a practice on which their forefathers insisted from a very early antiquity; and that no proselyte could be considered a partaker of the national privileges, who was not both circumcised and baptized.

If either ceremony was wanting, the Judaism was incomplete.[8] In point of fact, bathing or washing in water, under some form or other, was the constant sign by which the Israelites were accustomed, under the p179 Jewish law, to mark the change from defilement to purity, or from one degree of purity to another. Thus every new doctrine every new subject of belief was accompanied by a corresponding cleansing of the body in water. The proselyte from heathenism was baptized on adopting the Israelite's faith, in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The disciple of John was baptized, on a further stage of belief namely, in the near approach of the Messiah. The disciples of Jesus were baptized, in their turn, when they were converted to faith in the Messiah already come. Each step in the process indicated an advance in the law of holiness, and each step was accompanied, as a matter of course, by a new baptism. Yet the rite of purification, in all these cases, was of the same nature, and belonged to the peculiar mode of thinking and acting, to which the Israelites were accustomed.

In other words, it belonged to the system of divine worship established under the law - a system which "stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances," imposed on the Jews until the "time of reformation." From such practices, p180 so familiar to their thoughts and habits, the apostles of Jesus were emancipated only by degrees. Neither did our Lord insist on any sudden change in this respect; but having promulgated the great doctrine that, under the Christian dispensation, God who is a Spirit, was to be worshipped only in spirit and in truth worshipped under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and in the reality, as distinguished from the shadow, type, or figure he left that grand principle to work its own way in the minds and hearts of his followers.

In the mean time, his example, on the subject of baptism, was very significant. Before he commenced his own ministry, he submitted to the baptism of John, which was divinely authorized, and formed part of the righteousness which then was; but as the messenger of the New Covenant, he personally abstained from the use of any such rite. When the apostle John records "how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John," he adds, "though, or howbeit Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples:" iv. 2.

Shortly or immediately before his ascension, and p181 in the course of his parting conversation with his disciples, our Saviour made repeated mention of baptism. Then it was that he gave his apostles their commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles "baptizing them in (or into) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:" Matt, xxviii. 19. Were we to grant that water baptism was here intended, it obviously does not follow that our Lord instituted this ceremony for the use of his apostles; much less that he established it as a permanent ordinance in his church.

The apostles, as has been observed, were already in the practice of using this rite; and if the outward ceremony was here intended, our Lord's words cannot (as I conceive) be fairly understood as commanding it, but only as giving to it (or rather to the ministry with which it was connected) a new direction. The apostles had hitherto confined their labours to their fellow-countrymen, who were believers in the Father and the Holy Ghost; and the faith into which they were the means of bringing them, and into which they baptized, was faith in Jesus the incarnate Son.

Now they were to go forth among the idolatrous heathen, p182 and the faith in which they were to instruct their hearers -- the faith into which their doctrine and baptism were to introduce them, was faith in the true God JEHOVAH ELOHIM, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. In this point of view, the words Doctrine and Baptism were almost synonymous -- it being, as before remarked, the acknowledged principle of the Jews, that where there was a new doctrine, there also, as a matter of course, was a new baptism.

But Jesus was accustomed to speak of baptism in a spiritual sense: (Mark x. 39,) and another passage in which, in his last conversation with his disciples, he adverted to the subject, seems to afford a key to his meaning here. "Being assembled together with them," (immediately before his ascension) he "commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence:" Acts i. 4, 5.

On the day of Pentecost, the apostles, and with them the whole infant church, were indeed baptized with the Holy Ghost; and being thus endowed, they were made instrumental p183 (under the power of Him who promised to be with them always unto the end of the world) in extending the same baptism to others.

Theirs was a living ministry; the words which they spoke, like those of their divine Master, were spirit and they were life. Thus was their preaching the means of bringing down a most blessed spiritual influence on those who heard them; as was the case with Peter, when he declared the truths of the gospel to Cornelius and his friends.

Not by any form, not by any outward element, but by the proclamation of the whole truth, under the power of God, they baptized the Jews into the name of Jesus -- the Gentiles into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Well therefore might Paul (an undoubted partaker in the great apostolic commission) say to the Corinthians, "Christ sent me not to baptize (i. e. with water) but to preach the gospel." Well might he add, that the "preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God:" 1 Cor. i. 17, 18.

This view of the subject perfectly agrees with Mark xvi. 15, 16, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." He that believes the gospel, from the heart, and is baptized by the one Spirit into the one body, shall indeed receive the "end" of his faith, "even the salvation" of his soul: comp. 1 Pet. iii. iM. 28, On the review of this statement, the unprejudiced inquirer may perhaps agree with me in the sentiment, that there is no sufficient evidence in the New Testament that water baptism was ordained by our Lord; or that we are required to observe this ceremony as of permanent obligation, under the Christian dispensation.

The more we reflect on the spiritual and vital nature of the New Covenant, the clearer (as I believe) will be our apprehension that all types and shadows, in the worship and service of God, are by a general law abolished, having received their fulfilment in the glorious realities of the gospel; and being for ever finished, in point of authority, first, by the sacrifice of the Son of God on the cross, and secondly, by its blessed consequence the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the church of Christ.

To continue to observe such types and shadows, seems to me to be an adherence to the principles of the Jewish law, and to be at variance with one p185 of the grand features of our common Christianity. But whatever may be the conclusion deduced from our premises on this point, one thing appears to be clear that the rite of baptism as practised by John the Baptist and the apostles, contained no hidden or mysterious grace, no regenerating or converting power, whereby the honest recipients of the ceremony were made partakers of newness of life.

In other words, it was no sacrament. In order to substantiate this remark, we have only to recur to the plain history of the subject. When the multitudes from Jerusalem, Decapolis, and other places, flocked to the banks of Jordan, to be baptized by John, it may be presumed, that many of them were sincere in the belief of his doctrine, and were truly brought to repentance towards God. Now of this repentance, if we may judge from the analogy of Scripture, his preaching was the means, and the baptism by which it was accompanied, nothing more than the appointed sign.

Again, when "Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John," (John iv. 1), or rather, when Jesus made these disciples, and his followers baptized them (see ver. 2), there can be no doubt that the p186 grace of conversion went forth towards these new believers, under the preaching of Jesus; and that the ceremonial act of the apostles, which followed their conversion, was simply the visible sign and acknowledgment of that which had already taken place. Just similar was the case with the three thousand converts on the day of Pentecost, (Acts ii. 38); with the Ethiopian who was convinced and converted under the preaching of Philip (viii. 38); with Lydia and her household, and the jailer and his family, at Philippi (xvi.

15, 33); with the believing Corinthians (xviii. 8), and Ephesians (xix. 5).

All these were brought to a knowledge and acceptance of the truth as it is in Jesus, by means of apostolic preaching; and were afterwards baptized, by the hands or with the permission of the apostles, as a public sign of that conversion which had already taken place. Saul himself is a notable example of the same character. Who can doubt that his regeneration took place by a singular and immediate act of divine grace, when the Lord Jesus arrested him on his journey with an exceeding great light, and spake to him with a voice from heaven?

His subsequent baptism was clearly a ceremonial act, by which was denoted the washing away of his sins in the blood of Jesus, and the change of heart which God had already wrought in him. The account of the Samaritans who attended to the preaching of Philip (Acts viii. 12), and of Cornelius and his family, who listened to the words of Peter (x. 48), are both worthy of particular consideration, in reference to this subject. The Samaritans, including the sorcerer Simon, when they beheld the miracles wrought by Philip, were unable to resist the evidence; they gave credence to the word preached, and "were baptized both men and women."

Yet we find that they had not then received the full grace of conversion; as is obvious in the case of Simon; for it is expressly declared, that the "Holy Ghost was fallen upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus:" (Acts viii. 16). Afterwards, wholly apart from their baptism, that grace was bestowed upon them (Simon excepted) through the laying on of the hands of the apostles Peter and John. On the contrary, Cornelius and his friends were most remarkably baptized with the Holy Ghost, under the preaching of Peter; and p188 after they had received this divine gift, they submitted to the ceremony of water baptism, which was the token and recognition, but not the means, of their regeneration.

In all these cases, it is surely very clear that the grace, virtue, or interior power of regeneration, not inherent in the ceremony of baptism; but was the gift of God through other means; and that the ceremony served its own purpose only; namely, that of an outward, visible, and for the most part, public sign. The same view of the subject is obviously applicable to the baptism of adult converts in the present day; whether those converts are made from among nominal Christians, or in the heathen world.

They hear the words of truth; they receive, or are supposed to receive, the grace of conversion, through the instrumentality of the preacher; and water baptism, a purely ceremonial practice, is afterwards added as a public confession or sign. The grace of regeneration is no way inherent in the ceremony itself, and therefore, whatever else it may be, that ceremony is no sacrament. Much less is the inward grace of regeneration contained in this rite, when applied to unconscious p189 infants.

These are all equally worthy recipients of the water of baptism. The Roman Catholic church, and not a few professing Protestants, declare that water, to be the water of regeneration. They even allow of no regeneration, but that which they suppose to be inherent in the drops which are sprinkled on the bodies of these innocents. But what is the actual result what the practical fruit of this ceremony, which time and experience develop? A vast proportion of these children prove, by their subsequent conduct and character, that they have never been born again born from above -- born of the Spirit.

To the inward grace of regeneration they are utter strangers, and while they "follow the multitude to do evil," they afford a palpable and unanswerable argument to convince us that, whatsoever may be the supposed advantage or authority of the practice, infant baptism is destitute of any interior grace, or power of regenerating the soul, and is therefore no sacrament. II. And now we must advance to the one

remaining practice of professing Christians, which is not only regarded both by many Protestants as well as by the Roman Catholics, as a sacrament, but is looked upon as sacred above all other ceremonies of the church, and is often spoken of par excellence, as the sacrament.

Unwilling as I am to run counter to any habitual feelings of reverence in my fellow Christians, truth compels me to confess my own judgment, that this ceremony also, according to Hooker's definition of the term, is destitute of any claim to such a title. I cannot however allow that the Lord's supper, as it was practised by the primitive Christians, came under the head of ceremonies. A little attention to the history of the practice will suffice to convince us that it bore a different character.

It was a common custom among the Jews, at their suppers or dinners, to break their loaf of bread in order to distribute it among the company, and to take this opportunity of returning thanks to that gracious Being who so bountifully supplied all their need. The cup of wine also was handed round the table, to be drunk of by each individual, for the refreshment of the body, yet in token, probably, of social and religious fellowship.[9] There can be no doubt that this custom was observed by the Lord Jesus and his disciples, as by other Jews, when they partook of their daily social meals; and we have a distinct account of their doing so, at the last paschal supper, which they ate together, for the sustenance of the body, as well as in obedience to the law of God on this particular subject.

It was, however, a most touching and solemn occasion. The lamb of the passover was an expressive type of Jesus himself the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world; and the hour was now at hand when he was to be offered up on the cross, as a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of all mankind. No wonder that at such a time he saw meet to give to customs, otherwise familiar, a religious direction; to speak of the bread which he was breaking, as a symbol of his own body, so soon to be broken; and of the cup of wine which he handed to his friends, as a token of his own blood which was now about to be shed.

No wonder that he should command his immediate followers, when they observed these customs, (whether at the feast of the passover, or on other more common occasions,) to do so in remembrance of Him. "Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me," and again, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." In pursuance of this command we find that the primitive disciples were careful even at their social meals, to keep the Lord, who died for them, always in remembrance.

These believers had all things in common; and, "continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart:" Acts ii. 46. It was at their daily meals that they broke their bread; and then, doubtless, that they called to mind that sacred body which the bread symbolized, and which had been broken for the salvation of their souls. After a little time, however, when the number of Christians became larger, and churches were formed in various parts of the world, the daily social meal was, naturally enough, exchanged for the weekly love-feast a moderate repast, of which the believers in each place partook together, in token of their mutual good will and religious fellowship.

It appears that these repasts were held on the first day of the week; but separately from their meetings for worship. Paul and his companions partook of the love-feast, on that day, at Troas, where the disciples "had come together to break bread;" and when "he had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, so he departed:" Acts xx. 7, 11. So at the close of the first century, we find from Pliny's celebrated letter to the emperor Trajan, that the Bithynian Christians met, early in the morning, on a stated

(doubtless the first) day of the week, for the purpose of worshipping Christ; and at a later hour of the same day, assembled again in order to partake of a moderate social meal.

This was evidently the love-feast, when the bread was eaten and the wine drunk, in commemoration of the death of Jesus the crucified, but now living and reigning Saviour. The love-feast is particularly mentioned by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians, whom he sharply reproves for a most miserable abuse of this practice. It appears that the Corinthians flocked to this meal in a careless and irregular manner; that many of them abused it for the sinful indulgence of their appetites; that while some were p194 left to hunger, others were feeding themselves luxuriously, and drunken with wine.

Another subject of complaint was, that persons who partook of this Christian meal, which the apostle calls the Lord's supper (doubtless because of its resemblance to the last supper of which the Lord partook with his disciples), were also accustomed to unite in the feasts of the heathen, and to eat meats which had been offered to idols. The apostle sharply reproves both these abuses, which were indeed utterly opposed to that devotional feeling, and that holy moderation, which become the Christian character.

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices, partakers of the altar? What say I then? that the idol is any thing? or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, p195 they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils" As the priests who ate of the flesh of the sacrifices which had been offered on the Lord's altar, were united partakers of the altar i. e. of those things which appertained to the altar and the sacrificial service of God; and as the heathen feasters were united partakers of devils i. e. of those things which respected the worship of devils; so the Christian believers, who attended the Lord's supper, were united partakers of the body and blood of Christ i. e. of those things which had respect to the body and blood of Christ.

In making use of these expressions, the apostle refers to the circumstance, that it was customary, among the primitive Christians, to break their bread and drink their wine, on these occasions of social and religious fellowship, in commemoration of the body and blood of Christ or in other words, of his propitiatory death on the cross. The religious direction of the practice had indeed been grievously overlooked by those persons who had abused it for their own p196 carnal gratification.

"When ye come together therefore into one place" says Paul, "this is not to eat the Lord's supper; for in eating, every one taketh before other his own supper; and one is hungry and another is drunken. What have ye not houses to eat and to drink in; or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not." The apostle follows up this just rebuke with a brief description of the Lord's last supper with his disciples, when he broke the bread and handed round the cup of wine, as symbols of his own body and blood an account which (either by immediate revelation or through the medium of the other apostles) he had "received of the Lord."

He reminds them of the true intent of the observance "for as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this wine, ye do show the Lord's death till he come;" points out to them the danger of eating and drinking unworthily, "not discerning the Lord's body;" and exhorts them to a Christian and orderly conduct on these occasions of social enjoyment, and solemn religious commemoration. "Wherefore, p197 my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, (that is, be very hungry,[10]) let him eat at

home, that ye come not together unto condemnation:" 1 Cor. xi. 33, 34.

Now on a review of this simple statement, it is evident to my apprehension, that the love-feast, or Lord's supper of the early Christians, ranged under the head not of religious ceremonies appertaining to the worship of God, but rather under that of pious practices, in connexion with the social duties and enjoyments of the present life. It was impressing a religious tendency and direction on a particular custom, which naturally spread from the Jewish to the Gentile believers.

It was one instance of conformity to the general principle "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" and again, "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him:" 1 Cor. x. 31; Col. iii. 17. I cannot perceive that our Lord's injunction can be reasonably understood to extend beyond the limits of the custom to which p198 it refers "as oft as ye drink this cup, do it in remembrance of me." Just so the washing of the feet of a neighbour or a friend, was customary among the Jews, at the Christian era.

Our Saviour, therefore, enjoins his disciples to wash one another's feet the substance of the command being obviously that they should be kind and submissive one to another, in love. The practice has ceased, but the spirit of the commandment remains the same. So I apprehend that the substance of the other injunction that substance which will ever continue, whether the custom to which it related, be maintained or not is neither more nor less than this that Christians should ever keep in deep and hallowed remembrance, the dying love of the Saviour of men.

Tertullian, at the end of the second century, speaks of the celebration of the eucharist, in connexion with the meals of the Christians in tempore victus;[11] but it was at a somewhat earlier date, as we learn from a well-known passage in the works of Justin Martyr, (A. D. 147,) that the practice in question had assumed the form, in some parts of the church, of a directly ceremonial observance. p199 The morsel of bread was then eaten, and the wine tasted by the believers, at the close of their assemblies for worship not for the satisfaction of any bodily want, but simply as a religious rite.

Every one knows that this is the character of the Lord's supper, as it is now used among Christians. It has become a purely ceremonial act, and is regarded, especially among Roman Catholics, as the most solemn part or article in the public worship of God. Under this new character, it seems directly to interfere with the general law, that under the gospel dispensation, God is to be worshipped spiritually that all type and figures in the worship of the Most High, are now exchanged for the eternal reality and substance of religion that they are at once fulfilled and abolished by the coming in the flesh, and propitiatory death, of the Son of God.

In the mean time, whether we look at the practice of the early Christians, or that which has prevailed among the professors of the truth, in modern days, we are left without the shadow of an evidence, that the participation of bread and wine, in the Lord's supper, is a sacrament i. e. an p200 outward observance, properly containing an interior grace. In order to render this point clear, we must advert first to the Roman Catholic, and secondly to the Protestant view of this subject.

The inherent mystery, which the advocates of Rome ascribed to the bread and wine, is an actual bodily participation of that which the bread and wine symbolize, even the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. They strangely imagine, that after the consecration, by a priest, of the wafer and the wine, these substances are miraculously converted into that body and blood, which are truly and substantially eaten and drunk by those who partake of the sacred elements; and they further allege, that this corporeal eating

of Christ's body, conveys with it a spiritual blessing to the soul, and is one appointed and necessary means of man's salvation.

These preposterous notions have, in my judgment, no other origin than the direful superstition, which, not very long after the times of the apostles, began to brood like a cloud over the professing church of Christ, and involved it by degrees p201 in gross and perilous darkness. Yet the Romish church pleads, as authority for transubstantiation, the words of Jesus, when he brake the loaf and distributed it to his disciples "This is my body which is broken for you." The question then lies in the meaning of these words.

Now there is a clear and all-sufficient reason why our Lord cannot be understood as declaring that the bread which he had broken, was actually his body namely, that his body was then a living frame, not yet broken a veritable body which his disciples saw and handled, and which was occupying a portion of space, distinct from that which the bread occupied, while the very words which form the subject of dispute were flowing from its lips. Christianity most justly requires us to believe many mysterious truths which are beyond reason; but it never yet claimed our faith in that which is contrary to reason.

It was indeed attested by many miracles suspensions and counteractions of the established order of nature; but here there is supposed, not merely a miracle, but , an actual, physical impossibility. The same body or substance cannot possibly exist in two places at once. To suppose the contrary, is to suppose an absolute p202 absurdity that which never was, is not, and never can be. Nor is the case at all different in the present day. We may rest assured that the glorified body of Christ is in heaven a place of infinite enjoyment and glory.

It is not possible that it should at the same time be in the hands of the priest on earth, whether in the form of a wafer, or under any other appearance much less in the hands of a thousand priests at once, in a thousand different places. That our text does not afford any reasonable pretext for the fabrication of so enormous a fiction, a little calm consideration may be sufficient to evince. It is surely matter of common parlance to use the verb to be, in the sense of figuring or representing; as for example, any one might say, when looking at figures in a picture representing Christ and the apostle Paul, That is the Saviour! that is Paul!

We ought moreover to remember that our Lord spoke, as there is every reason to believe, in the vernacular Syriac, in which language the verb in the sentence "This is my body," would not have been expressed at all; as the reader may satisfy himself by a reference to p203 the old Syriac version of the New Testament. "This my body" said our blessed Lord as he held the bread in his hands; words which may, with perfect propriety, be understood as conveying the idea that the bread symbolized or represented his body.

As the corporeal eating of the body of Christ must therefore be regarded as fictitious, it would be irrelevant to argue the second question, whether such an eating conveys grace to the soul. That which has no existence, can have no effects. But in the notion that the body of Christ is actually eaten in the consecrated wafer, and that this carnal act is necessary to salvation, there is surely much that degrades the cause of truth; much that directs the mind of those who are honestly seeking their salvation, into wrong channels; much that is calculated to divert from a simple reliance on the crucified, risen, and reigning Saviour, and to substitute for him an idol of man's own imagining.

How many poor bewildered sinners have been taught, on their death beds, to regard this ceremony, with its supposed hidden mystery, as their viaticum to heaven, instead of casting themselves, in deep

repentance and lively faith, on Him who died p204 for them; and through whose blood and righteousness alone, we can enter the portals of heaven, and take possession of the inheritance of the saints in light. In so corrupt a superstition, so gross a perversion of the great realities of the gospel, there can surely be no inherent grace; but rather loss, and danger, and sometimes perhaps even death, to the immortal spirit.

How then, in the second place, does this matter stand with those Protestants, who while they reject the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation, and regard it as utterly unreasonable, nevertheless practise the eucharist as a ceremony in divine worship, and under the notion that it contains, within itself, some mysterious power for the benefit of souls? Is such a notion founded on Scripture? -- or is it justified by experience? I apprehend that both these questions must be answered in the negative.

The precept of Christ, to which Protestants as well as Papists refer as their authority for the rite, makes mention of the breaking of the bread and the handing of the cup, only as a memorial "Do it in remembrance of me." Accordingly we find, that the early Christians, without the slightest view (as far as appears) to any internal p205 mystery, applied that practice to the purpose of commemoration. This commemoration might be blessed to the souls of the right-minded, who truly desired to keep their Lord in remembrance; -- but we have no reason to suppose that there was any peculiar inward grace connected with it, any more than with other acts of Christian piety.

The true feeding on the body and blood of Christ by a living faith, might or might not accompany the practice in question; and certainly this feeding might take place at other seasons, when the outward symbol was far removed from the Christian believer. Now if there was no inward grace inherent in the practice, and inseparable from it when honestly performed, that practice was no sacrament. Much less can it be regarded in that point of view, in its present form, as a ceremony in the worship of God.

That this ceremony may be overruled, as a solemn remembrancer, to the benefit of some minds, I am by no means disposed to dispute; but such an effect affords no evidence that there is a mystical interior attached to the rite, and properly contained in it; and this could alone render it a sacrament. On the other hand, there is surely a danger lest p206 the rite in question should operate unfavourably, especially in those persons who have the strongest sense of devotion and mystery attached to it.

To them it may often prove a diversion from the very truth; a substitution of the lifeless form for the sacred reality - a miserable exchange of Christ himself, for a favourite symbol or shadow. It is a singular confirmation of these remarks that many of the clergy, in the present day, have departed from their former simplicity in this matter, and are now laying an almost popish stress on the ceremony of the eucharist, have at the same time divested their discourses, to the people, of the cardinal doctrine of Christ crucified.

Thus, while the symbol of the Saviour who died for us, is inordinately cherished, the Saviour himself, and his most precious atoning sacrifice, are made to retreat within the vail of awful concealment -- perhaps of absolute oblivion. It appears then, that whether we allow or disallow the practices of water baptism and the Lord's supper, p207 as they are now used among Christian professors, we are brought to a sound conclusion, that like the ceremonies of the Jewish law, they are destitute of any interior mystery or grace, by which the soul can be affected; and can be regarded only as shadows or representations of those divine mysteries which truly belong to the plan of our redemption, and are absolutely necessary to salvation.

Now it is on all hands acknowledged, that had such mysteries been inherent in the rites of baptism and the eucharist, they would have imparted to these ceremonies the true character of sacraments. On the logical

principle therefore already alluded to Quo quidvis tale fit, id magis tale (that by which any thing becomes such, is itself more such) we cannot refuse to allow that these blessed realities are themselves sacraments indeed. Yes, Christianity has her sacraments in very truth not any outward form affecting the bodies of men but a spiritual baptism, and a spiritual supper.

Both these are clearly introduced to our notice, and strongly insisted on as of vital importance, by our Lord himself and his apostles. First, as to spiritual baptism; it is divine in its p208 character, proceeding not by any natural law, but immediately and supernaturally, from that God who is a Spirit. It is that sovereign work of grace, by which the dark, dead, sinful soul of man is enlightened, quickened, and converted to God; so as to be translated into the kingdom of Christ even in this world, and to become a partaker of the divine nature, by a new creation.

Sometimes it is described as a new birth -- as in John i. 12, 13: "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God:" and still more at large by our Saviour himself in John iii. 3-8: "Except a man be born again, i. e. as in the margin, from above[12]) he cannot see the kingdom of God . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

The latter of these clauses is an enlarged repetition, or paraphrase of the former. To be born of water and the Spirit, and to be born from above, are synonymous terms. Hence it is clear, that the substantive p209 water is here used, as in many other passages of Scripture, figuratively to denote the cleansing influence of the Spirit, which "conies from above;" so that "water and the Spirit" must here be regarded as expressing only the Holy Spirit and his divine influence. This view is confirmed by the immediate context in the verses which follow, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again (or from above.) The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This divine work is described by the apostle Paul as a washing: see 1 Cor. vi. 9 11. "Be ye not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, &c. &c. shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you, but ye are washed" &c.

Again Eph. v. 25, 26: "Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." Here the word, even the preaching of the gospel, is set forth as the appointed means p210 by which Christ washes or baptizes his church a doctrine which proves that a truly anointed minister of the Lord Jesus may, through the power of his ever-present helper, thus baptize his hearers into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

But this is a work which the Lord is sometimes pleased to effect without the intervention of any human instrumentality, as was the case with Paul himself. The marvellous change of heart, which he had experienced, is elsewhere described by the apostle, under the same figure: see Tit. iii. 3 6, "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Like the water and the Spirit in John iii. the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, may be regarded as perfectly identical. These terms appear to set forth one blessed and necessary work, even the baptism of Christ, the baptism of the Spirit. p211 Under the gospel dispensation, Jesus Christ is the

true Baptizer. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance," said John the Baptist, "but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:" Matt. iii. 11.

In the gospel of John, the Holy Ghost alone is mentioned. As for the fire, like the water in John iii. it may here stand for that divine influence, by which the soul of the believer is purified, and his very heart changed within him. When this baptism is experienced, he puts off "the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," and puts on "the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Lastly, that quickening, cleansing work, by which the needful change is effected in us, from death to life, and from sin to righteousness, is the baptism which saves, mentioned by the apostle Peter.

After speaking of the ark "wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water," the apostle adds, "The like figure whereunto (or that which answereth whereunto doth also now save us; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the p212 answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is gone into heaven; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him:" 1 Pet. iii. 21, 22. The risen and ascended Saviour baptizes from above.

He sends forth that living influence of the Holy Ghost, by which sinful man is enabled savingly to believe in his atoning sacrifice, and to bring forth the fruits of righteousness. Thus are we made partakers of a conscience void of offence in the sight of God and man: comp. Heb. ix. 14. There is surely much reason to believe that Paul is speaking of this powerful internal work, when he insists on the necessity of dying unto sin, and of rising again with Christ, unto a life of righteousness.

"What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life:" Rom. vi. 1 4. And again, to p213 the Colossians, "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein ye also are risen with him, THROUGH THE FAITH OF THE OPERATION OF GOD, who hath raised him from the dead:" Col. ii. 10-12.

So also when he assures us that there is "one body and one Spirit, even as we are called by one hope of our calling; one Lord (Jesus Christ), one faith, one baptism" we may fairly conclude, either that "baptism" here takes the sense of "doctrine," of which (as before-mentioned) it is evidently capable; or that the apostle is speaking of the one baptism of the one Lord, which is with the Holy Ghost. This view of his meaning is perfectly accordant with another passage, in which he speaks of this spiritual baptism as the means of introduction to a living membership in the body or church of Christ: see 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

For by ONE SPIRIT p214 we are all baptized into one body; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Happy and holy are they who drink at this sacred fountain; for ever blessed they, who submit to the baptizing and renovating power of the Holy Ghost. All these, and these only, are living members of the body of Christ, children of grace, and heirs of glory. But secondly, if the sacrament of regeneration is at

once the only and the sufficient means of bringing us into union with Christ our Head, and with all his members the world over, and if imparting to us the principles of a new and heavenly life, that union and that life can be maintained only by our participation (may I not say our daily participation?) in another sacrament, even the spiritual supper of our Lord.

"Behold," says Jesus to the churches, "I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me:" Rev. iii. 20. This cheering promise is in exact accordance with some very remarkable expressions which our Lord uttered after he had broken the bread and handed the wine, at the last paschal supper. "But I say unto you, that I will not p215 henceforth drink of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom:" Matt. xxvi. 29.

On another occasion he said to his disciples, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom," etc.: Luke xxii. 28 30. Nor can it be denied, that it is the same gracious Saviour who, in the prophetic language of the Song of songs, thus addressed his spouse, the church "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, beloved:" Cant. v. 1.

I should suppose that no evangelical Christian, of whatsoever peculiar name, could for a moment hesitate in accepting these beautiful passages in a purely spiritual sense, as representing the communion which true believers in Jesus, in times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, are permitted to enjoy with their holy Head, and one with another in Him; a communion which, from season p216 to season, cheers them on their journey to the promised land, and will constitute their chiefest joy in heaven itself.

Here is sustenance for the inmost soul! here is the saving supper of the Lord! But Christ himself is the food of the Christian, and is to be eaten by his disciples in this true sacrament. Nothing can be more affecting, and nothing more important, than his own doctrine on this subject, contained in that memorable discourse which the apostle John has placed on record with the pen of inspiration: see John vi. 35 63. "I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE: he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst....

I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead; this is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews, therefore, strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say p217 unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying, who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his

disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? IT is THE SPIRIT THAT QUICKENETH, THE FLESH PROFITETH NOTHING: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." The declaration with which our Lord here concludes his discourse, is of incalculable weight and p218 importance.

It seems to me virtually to undermine and abrogate for ever all typical and carnal ceremonies in divine worship. Most assuredly it affords the true key to the preceding doctrine. We have our Lord's own explicit authority for understanding it spiritually. Those who under the immediate influence of the Spirit, and by a living faith, appropriate the glorious Saviour who came down from heaven that he might give life to the world, truly feed on Jesus, the bread of God, the bread of life.

The Christian, whose sole reliance is placed on the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, and who lives by that precious faith, may justly be said to eat the flesh of the Son of man, and to drink his blood. There is indeed no spiritual life for any man, to whom the gospel is preached, on any other terms; and all who, under the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, thus believe with the heart, are nourished up by this heavenly food to all eternity. They dwell in Christ, and Christ dwells in them.

Furthermore, when the believers in Jesus are assembled and united in solemn worship when they draw near to the Father, in one Spirit, through the Son of his love when they are livingly brought to the remembrance p219 of the body which was broken, and of the blood which was shed for them -- when "the love of God" is "shed abroad" in their hearts "by the Holy Ghost which he giveth us" then are they rich partakers of a true sacramental communion -- then are they honoured guests, even here, at the TABLE OF THE LORD, in his kingdom.

[8] Footnote:

Issure Biahj cap. xiii.

[9] Footnote:

See Lightfoot, Hor. Heb. in Matt.

[10] Footnote:

Vid Schleusner lex. et Grotius in loc.

[11] Footnote:

De Coron. milit.

[12] Footnote:

This is the sense in which the apostle John always uses the word.

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