

CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER 18 Oct. 2020

- Word of welcome and intercession prayer
- Votum (Opening prayer): Psalm 123: 1-2
- Blessing
- Hymn of praise
- Prayer
- Scripture Reading: Titus 3: 1-8
- Children's moment
- Preparing to Hear God's Word: Hymn: Vonkk 77
- Preaching

With the protest in our country at present, one wonders again why things are going so bad in our country. How could the murderers of Brendin Horner have gotten it over their hearts to kill him like that? How do politicians find it so easy to incite hatred? Paul's answer to this is: "easy". Because by nature we are hateful and hate each other. By nature, the Heidelberg Catechism says we tend to hate God and our neighbour. Who are Paul and the Catechism talking about here? Is this just talking about the murderers of Brendin Horner? Is it just talking about Julius Malema? No, the Word says, "We also were before." Christians were also haters. If you cannot see that, you are still blind and the gospel cannot benefit you. When the Heidelberg Catechism says of us that we are prone to hate God and our neighbour, it is not an exaggeration. There are always people who say that it is not true and that it is unfair to think so blatantly about our Human nature. We must be guided in such matters by the Biblical message of the depravity of the human heart. And the Bible clearly teaches that we are hateful and hateful of one another.

So what can you expect from God? His judgment. His revenge. He wants to judge you and plunge you into eternal damnation. Jonathan Edwards said it like this in his famous sermon 'sinners in the hands of an angry God': "The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times so abominable in his eyes, as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in ours."

This is also true of you, no matter how good a person you may think you are. Perhaps you are asking: But “is there no help then? Is there no hope for a hater like me? No way to get rid of this? To this question the Word provides the answer this morning...

- Prayer
- Offerings
- Formulary: message of Lords Supper

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, attend to the words of the institution of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ as they are delivered by the apostle Paul: *“For I received from the Lord the teaching that I passed on to you: that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and said, ‘This is My body, which is for you. Do this in memory of me.’ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup and said, ‘This cup is God’s new covenant, sealed with My blood. Whenever you drink it, do so in memory of Me.’”* (1 Cor 11: 23-25).

This means that every time you eat this bread and drink from this cup you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes. It follows that if anyone eats the Lord’s bread or drinks from his cup in a way that dishonours him, he is guilty of sin against the Lord’s body and blood. So then, everyone should examine himself first, and then eat the bread and drink from the cup.

For if he does not recognise the meaning of the Lord’s body when he eats the bread and drinks from the cup, he brings judgement on himself as he eats and drinks. For the proper celebration of the Lord’s Supper, genuine self-examination is required. The true examination of ourselves consists of these three principle parts: We must consider our sins - sins of attitude, thought, word, deed and neglect, and because of these humble ourselves before God.

We must firmly believe that our sins are forgiven only on the ground of the atonement of Jesus Christ. We must earnestly strive, in our whole life, to show thankfulness to the Lord and to live in true love and unity with our neighbour (1 Cor. 11: 27-29). We must also consider the meaning of the Lord’s Supper:

Firstly, it is a memorial meal. When He instituted His Supper, the Lord said: *“Whenever you drink it, do so in memory of Me.”* (1 Cor 11: 25). In the Lord’s Supper we commemorate and proclaim the death of the Lord. At the sight of the bread and wine the congregation calls to mind all of the Passion of Jesus Christ: how He gave His life; how He fell to the ground

like a grain of wheat and died; how He drained the cup of bitterness; how He was forsaken of God and called

out: “*My God, my God, why did you abandon me?*” (Matt. 27: 46) that we might never more be forsaken by Him. But the Lord's Supper is much more yet. Not only does the congregation remember a Lord that died: it lives in the fellowship of the risen Lord. Therefore, the Lord's Supper is **secondly** a least of communion with the Living Lord. Paul attests to this in these words: “*The cup we use in the Lord's Supper and for which we give thanks to God: when we drink from it; we are sharing in the blood of Christ: And the bread we break: when we eat it, we are sharing in the body of Christ:*” (1 Cor 10: 16) Through the Holy Spirit the living Christ is truly present with us at the Lord's Supper. Besides, by this name Spirit we are also united as members of one body in true brotherly love, as the apostle says: “*Because there is the one loaf of bread, all of us, though many are one body, for we all share the same loaf:*” (1 Cor 10: 17)

Thirdly, communion with the Lord at His table is also a guarantee. Didn't He say: “. . . *this is My body*” and “. . . *this is My blood*”? (1 Cor 11: 24-25; Matt 26: 26, 28; Gal 2: 20; Eph 2: 6; Col 3: 1; HC Sunday 23.) As surely as this bread is broken for everyone to see and handed out and this cup is given them, and we eat and drink thereof; just as surely do we share in Christ; in His death and in His resurrection. In this event, our love guarantees the merit of His atonement to us completely, as if we ourselves had stood before God, as if we ourselves had suffered punishment for our sins, as if we ourselves had died for them and had risen again and gained our righteousness before God. The certainty which this assurance gives us is not based on our feelings or moods, but on the signs from the hand of the Lord, yes, on the Lord Himself.

Fourthly, this sacrament is also a proclamation of our future expectation. In the Lord's Supper, we have the assurance that the Lord Himself is one with us (1 Cor 11: 26). Yet, the congregation also looks forward to the return of our Lord and in this celebration proclaims the death of the Lord until He comes. Through the Lord's Supper we reach out to that day when Christ will appear in glory and bring everything to fulfilment; the day when He will make new the heaven and the earth so that righteousness may dwell therein - and God may be all and in all. At the Lord's Supper, the bride of Christ yearns for the bridal feast of the Lamb.

Finally, it is clear from all that has been said that the Lord's Supper is above all a feast of joy. Even though the tokens speak of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, of His cross His blood that was shed and His broken body, the celebration of the Lord's Supper is not a sign of mourning and sorrow. The Congregation does celebrate the feast with solemn devotion. Yet it is a feast of joy where the Saviour Himself in a unique manner dispenses to us the fruits of His suffering: His death and resurrection: In this joyful feast the congregation may, already

taste of the joys awaiting us at the wedding feast of the Lamb. Come; let us rejoice with the apostle: "*Who will accuse God's chosen people? God Himself declares them not guilty! Who, then, will condemn them? Not Christ Jesus, who died, or rather, who was raised to life and is at the right-hand side of God, pleading with him for us!*" May the almighty; merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ help us in this, through His Holy Spirit (1 Cor 15: 28; Rev 19: 9; Rom 8: 33-34).

- Song: Song 253: 1-2
- Form: Obligation
- Silent prayer
- Song: Song 309: 1-3 (preparation of table and seating)
- Confession of Faith (Apostolic - standing)
- Distribution
- Use of the bread and wine

In breaking and distributing the bread, the minister shall say: The bread, which we break, is the communion with the body of Christ. Take, eat, remember and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christus was broken unto a complete remission of all our sins:

When the wine has been poured and distributed the minister shall say: The cup of blessings, which we bless, is the communion with the blood of Christ.

Take, drink, remember and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed unto a complete remission of all our sins.

- Praise and thanksgiving prayer (Psalm 103)
- Closing song: Song n.o. 115 in books
- Blessing
- Amen