



"Only in quiet waters do things mirror themselves undistorted.
Only in a quiet mind is adequate perception of the world."
—Hans Margolius

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Remember Me (Part Two)

As we saw in Part One, the apostle Paul teaches Christians in [I Corinthians 11:27-29](#) to appraise themselves carefully before partaking of the bread and the wine in the [Passover](#) service:

So if anyone eats this bread and drinks from this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, he is guilty of [sin](#) against the body and the blood of the Lord. That is why a man should examine himself carefully before eating the bread and drinking from the cup. For if he eats the bread and drinks from the cup unworthily, not thinking about the body of Christ and what it means, he is eating and drinking God's judgment upon himself; for he is trifling with the death of Christ. (*The Living Bible*)

If we fail to do this, we run the risk of participating in the service in an "unworthy manner." This warning is not intended to scare us away from partaking of the Passover, but the exact opposite! Passover is not focused on us but on [Jesus Christ](#) and what He did. When we examine ourselves

properly, we adjust our relationship with Christ for the better, and the changes carry over in how we treat our brethren. In this confounding, fearful time, such change is sorely needed!

The seventeenth-century English Puritan Stephen Charnock wrote *The Existence and Attributes of [God](#)*, and in it he comments on this subject. The following appears in a section entitled "A Discourse of the Unworthy Receiving of the Lord's Supper," where he writes about [I Corinthians 11:29](#):

An unbeliever doth not properly eat his condemnation; for condemnation is not naturally or sacramentally in the [bread and wine](#), but he eats that which will be the cause of his condemnation, because not considering the glorious use these elements are destined to, he doth not consider how great and glorious a thing the body of the Lord is, which they represent; and so violates, in those signs, the honour due to His majesty. (p. 473)

Unworthy receivers of the Passover meal contract tremendous guilt and incur great danger, pronouncing a sentence on themselves. Paul mentions sickness and death in verse 30. If we partake of the Passover in an unworthy manner, it may be at least equal to the sin of the Jews in killing Christ, transforming what was ordained to bring life into death.

We can think of it as equivalent to placing the body of Christ into a corrupt vessel, that is, mixing the holy with the unholy. Judas did this very thing! He did not seem to care who Christ was but wanted only to use Him for his own purposes. He waited for his chance to stab his Master in the back because He was not fulfilling His role, as Judas saw it. His end was death.

Charnock writes about "an unbeliever," and in reading his quotation, we may have thought, "Well, that's not us! We believe!" We need to consider that the larger subject is worthiness and accountability. If an unbeliever partakes of the Passover, he will indeed be held accountable due to his unworthiness, but how much more will God hold a believer accountable? We can apply what Jesus says in [Luke 12:48](#) here: "For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required." God has certainly given us far more than we deserve, and so God requires more of us.

It is an incredible, wonderful honor to be invited to partake of the body and blood of our Savior, the great God of creation! Very few people in all human history have been invited to partake of this meal. The bread and wine of this sacred service are set aside only for those whom He wants to be one with (see [John 17:6-11](#), 20-23). The blood of Jesus Christ indeed is the sacrifice that makes it possible for our sins—and eventually the sins of the world—to be forgiven, but that does not mean anyone can partake. Only His called and baptized disciples have that privilege (see [Matthew 26:19-20](#); [Luke 22:14](#)).

This invitation to participate should humble us, reminding us that nothing we can do will make us worthy of this gift. He gave Himself to be beaten and hanged on a cross until every drop of His life had drained out so that we could be redeemed, forgiven, and live—and it pleased the Father to have it so ([Colossians 1:19-23](#)). We cannot comprehend that kind of [love](#)! What a Father we have!

Paul writes in [1 Corinthians 11:29](#) about "discerning the Lord's body." *Discernment* means "to have or show good judgment or insight; to perceive clearly with the mind or senses." God wants us to perceive clearly what Jesus has done in offering Himself for us so we can worthily participate in the Passover ritual—so we do not bring judgment on ourselves.

In [Exodus 12:5](#), God gives simple instructions about selecting the animal to be sacrificed on Passover: "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats."

In [John 1:29](#), John the Baptist exclaims: "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of [the world](#)!" While the original Passover lamb did not cover the Israelites' sins, it helped free them from Egyptian slavery. Its blood, smeared on their doorframes and lintels, provided protection from the Death Angel, but unlike what happens in the New Testament ritual, they were not instructed to drink of it or its symbol, wine. Consider, however, that God's elect are invited to drink the symbol of His blood, a sign of a far more spiritual and intimate relationship with our God and Savior. In this way, we acknowledge our oneness with the true Lamb of God (see [John 6:53-56](#)).

In Genesis 22, God tells Abraham to take [Isaac](#) to Mount Moriah and sacrifice him. Of course, God stopped him as Abraham drew back the knife.

God then provided a ram as a substitute offering. Metaphorically, Abraham is a type of the Father, and Isaac is a type of Christ. It is interesting to consider that, in saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" John knew by revelation that he was pointing out God's sacrificial Lamb. This time, it would be God the Father making the sacrifice, and the knife, as it were, would not be stopped! His Son would die so that we could be freed from bondage and be one with Him for all eternity.

This truth really brings out the meaning of [John 3:16](#), spoken by that perfect Sacrifice: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

- Ronny H. Graham

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Discerning Truth and Applying Wisdom](#)

by Martin G. Collins

Discernment is a prerequisite to making wise choices. Dr. M. Scott Peck argues we can develop and exercise discernment by becoming sensitive to early warning systems, which trigger the reactions of revulsion and confusion when evil confronts us. In interpersonal relationships, a discerning person pays close attention to another's vocabulary, his tone of voice, pace of speaking, laughter and body language. Discerning individuals possess four qualities: 1.) Penetration—the ability to see beyond the superficial, (2.) Insight—profound depth of mental acuity, (3.) Discrimination—the ability to distinguish the false from the truth, and (4.) Perception—a sympathetic "gut" feeling. True spiritual discernment is a gift from God, enabling us to judge between good and evil, comparing things in life with God's Word to see whether they match up with His standards. Like human discernment, we need to exercise spiritual discernment daily until it becomes habitual. We as God's Called-out Ones need to cry out for discernment by exercising the mind of Christ.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[Passover, Obligation, and Love](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

In the Model Prayer, Jesus mentions the forgiveness of sin in terms of paying off debt. Anyone with an unpayable debt that was redeemed by another would feel an immense sense of gratitude and obligation to his benefactor. John Ritenbaugh discusses how Christ's redemption of us from our massive debt of sin obligates us to obey and serve Him by doing good in acts of love and service to others.

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