

BRYAN STATION BAPTIST CHURCH

THE PIONEER BAPTIST

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OUR FOURTEENTH ANNUAL MISSION BIBLE CONFERENCE

Our conference, held on October 23-25 this year, was a great spiritual feast! We were blessed to have over 70 preachers from all over the United States, missionaries from foreign countries, and many other of our beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord. Many who attended spoke of the blessings received from the preaching of His word, the closeness of God's people, and the great spiritual atmosphere. It is always a blessing to our church to host this conference. We're looking forward to next year, October 28-30, the Lord willing.

--Al Gormley, Pastor

THE CHRISTIAN'S ALTAR

or

THE SACRED FOOD OF THE CHRISTIAN

BY: C.D.COLE

INTRODUCTION: One of the leading characteristics of pure Christianity is its spirituality. I use the word spiritual in contrast with the word material. *"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."* John 4:24. This means that worship does not consist in looking at or handling material things, things that appeal to the physical senses. Spiritual worship does not require a stately cathedral and a lot of material figures, such as is found in some religious buildings. This is not to say that our church buildings should not be clean and attractive, but you can have a beautiful chapel filled with people, and yet have no worshipers. On the other hand Paul and other martyrs worshipped God while languishing in filthy dungeons. John was banished to the rocky and barren and lonely island of Patmos, but there he held sweet communion with the Saviour.

In Christianity there is no place for meats and material altars, as there was under the old ceremonial law of the old dispensation. Judaism was made up of types and figures, visible and material manifestations of the divine glory; but in Christianity we have the spiritual Divinity in heaven whom we worship in spirit and in truth. We have the spiritual reality of the material shadow. We have no visible and material manifestation of God; we have no visible and material High Priest; we have no visible and material altar; we have no visible and material meat, but we do have the spiritual reality of which these things were typical.

Paul says that those who place dependence upon so called sacred meats are not profited. The heart is blessed by grace and not by meats. The grace of God, manifested in the Gospel, understood and believed, will do the heart more good than the use of any kind of material food. The Christian does have his food, but there is nothing material about it; it is a spiritual reality.

"We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." Hebrews 13:10. The Hebrew word for altar means literally a place of slaughter or sacrifice. And this place of sacrifice was the place from which the priest got his food, the place of sacrifice was also an eating place. The Jewish priest got his food off the altar.

"We have an altar." Paul is meeting the objection of the Jews to Christianity that the Christian had no altar, no sacrifice and no sacred food. Paul says that the Christian does have something to eat and something the Jewish priest did not have.

Under the old economy there were two kinds of offerings. In some of the offerings the priest got at least a part of the animal that was sacrificed as his food, while in the sin-offering on the day of atonement, the body of the animal was burned outside the camp, and the priest did not get any portion of it. But the Christian is allowed to feast, spiritually, on the sacrifice Christ offered outside the city of Jerusalem. The sacrifice the Jews offered on the annual day of atonement was not used for food, but Christ who offered Himself to God is the sacred food of the believer.

The Levitical priests could not eat what was offered on the great day of atonement, but the Christian priest can eat of Christ who died upon Calvary. To the charge that the Christian had no sacred food, Paul replies that he has spiritual food that even the priest did not eat of in typical manifestation.

Christ is not only our passover sacrificed for us; He is also our food, the source of life and strength. He is the bread of life.

Let us look at the method of eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood.

1. It is not the literal and carnal eating and drinking. There is nothing you can put in your mouth that will save you. If this is literal and carnal eating of Christ, then we would have to have Christ's literal flesh and blood to eat and drink. And it is obvious we do not have him in that sense. Nor can anybody give Him to us in that sense. My nephew claims to do this when he consecrates the piece of bread and gives to his people. If it were possible to have the literal and actual blood Christ shed on the cross, the sinner might drink of it and still be lost. I repeat there is nothing you can put in your mouth or stomach that will save you.

2. The language about eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ is figurative and spiritual. It means to derive from the sacrifice the blessings which His sacrifice was intended to obtain for us. This is not done with any of the five physical senses, but by faith. We feed upon Christ when we believe his death and resurrection was sufficient for our salva-

tion. In *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 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 come 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?"* John 6:47-52. Believing and eating are used simultaneously and interchangeably. I feed upon Christ when I depend upon his sacrifice for my salvation. I feed upon Christ when I draw upon him for the resources I lack and can find in Him. I need right standing with God and in Him I have this right standing, and I get it by faith in Him. I need peace with God, and He made this peace by the blood of His cross. *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Romans 5:1. I need redemption from the curse of the law I have broken, and I have this redemption through Christ. *"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."* Romans 3:24.

"Not saved are we by trying,
From self can come no aid;
'Tis on the blood relying,
Once for our ransom paid;
'Tis looking unto Jesus,
The Holy One and Just;
'Tis His great work that saves
us,
It is not try but trust."

3. In feeding upon Jesus Christ we have fellowship with the Father. That which satisfied His justice, magnified his law, glorified all His perfections, and gave Him perfect satisfaction, is that which quiets our conscience, and rejoices our heart. We find enjoyment in that which God the Father finds enjoyment. We hear God saying, as it were, in refer-

ence to the sacrifice of His Son, "I am fully satisfied," and our souls echo back, "So are we." He says, "This is my Son, in whom I am well-pleased," and we reply, "This is our Saviour in whom we delight to trust."

4. It will not take many words to show the superiority of the Christian privilege as to sacred food over the Jewish people, and even over the Jewish priests.

a. They had the privilege of eating the types or emblems of blessings; we, in feeding upon Christ, have the blessings themselves. They had only the emblems of expiation and forgiveness and fellowship with God; we have in reality the expiation, forgiveness, and fellowship with God through Christ.

b. The Jews had only a part of the sacrifices for their food, we have the whole sacrifice of Christ to feed upon.

c. The Jews did not dare to drink the blood of their sacrifices, but we drink His Blood.

CONCLUSION: The only thing that can benefit any sinner for salvation is Christ crucified. We have redemption through His blood and nothing else. What He did on the cross was enough to put away sin. In bearing our sins He also took them away. And the only way to benefit from His death is through faith. We get the blessings through trust in Him.

"It is not try, but trust;
'Tis His great work that saves us;
It is not try, but trust."

"Faith is the living power from heaven,
which grasps the promise God has given;
securely fixed on Christ alone
--a trust that cannot be o'erthrown.

Faith finds in Christ whatever we need
to save and strengthen, guide and feed.

***DO WE SEE OUR OWN SIN?
Matthew 5:20, "For I say unto
you, That except your righteousness
shall exceed the righteousness of the
scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no
case enter into the kingdom of
heaven."***

In a certain village in Scotland there lived a half-witted man whose coat presented a curious appearance. Down the front it was covered with patches of various sizes, mostly large. When asked why his coat was patched he said the patches represented the sins of his neighbors. He pointed to each patch and gave the story of the sin of some one in the village, then went on to another until he had related the sins of all in the village. On the back of his coat there was a small patch not larger than a three-penny piece. On being asked what it represented, he said, "That's my ain sin, and I cannot see it." This is a fair picture of the Pharisees in Christ's time, but how about our own attitude today?

Strong in His grace it joys to share
His cross: in hope, His crown to wear.

Such faith in us, O God, implant,
And to our prayers
Thy favor grant,
In Jesus Christ, Thy saving Son,
Who is our fount of health alone."