

Quotes from the Word: The Holy Supper

OLD TESTAMENT

Teach me Your way, O Lord;
I will walk in Your truth;
(Psalm 86:11)

Truly my soul silently waits for God;
From Him comes my salvation.
(Psalm 62:1)

Save Your people, and bless Your inheritance;
Feed them and lift them up forever.
(Psalm 28:9)

He satisfies the longing soul, and fills the hungry soul with goodness.
(Psalm 107:9)

The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace.
(Psalm 29:11)

The eyes of all look expectantly to You,
And you give them their food in due season....
The Lord is near to all who call upon Him,
To all who call upon Him in truth....
He also will hear their cry and save them.
(Psalm 145:15, 18-19)

With what shall I come before the Lord,
And bow myself before the High God?
(Micah 6:6)

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.
(Psalm 23:5-6)

The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in
From this time forth, and even forevermore.
(Psalm 121:8)

He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.
(Psalm 91:11)

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NEW TESTAMENT

And He took the bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:19-20).

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to them and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And He said to them, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many" (Mark 14:22-24).

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him" (John 6:51, 56).

Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come (Revelation 1:4).

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Revelation 3:20).

"Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power to the Lord our God!" (Revelation 19:1)

"Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." "Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!" (Revelation 19:6-7, 9)

To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood...be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen (Revelation 1:5-6).

HEAVENLY DOCTRINE

ESTABLISHED BY THE LORD

The Holy Supper has been established by the Lord in order that the Church may be joined by means of it to heaven, and so to the Lord. This is why it is the holiest thing of the Church (*Arcana Coelestia* 10519).

The Holy Supper is the chief feature of external worship (*Arcana Coelestia* 2811).

The Holy Supper is an external of the church that contains within itself an internal, and by means of this internal it conjoins the person who is in love and charity with heaven, and through heaven with the Lord (*Arcana Coelestia* 4211).

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THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

The bread and wine in the Holy Supper mean all the worship of the Lord from the good of love and faith (*New Jerusalem and the Heavenly Doctrine* 221).

The Lord Himself is in the Holy Supper. Flesh and blood are the Lord in respect to the Divine good of love, and blood and wine are the Lord in respect to the Divine truth of wisdom. Therefore the Holy Supper involves three things, namely, the Lord, His Divine good, and His Divine truth (*True Christian Religion* 711).

The truth is that the person who looks to the Lord and performs repentance, is conjoined with the Lord by means of that most holy sacrament, and is introduced into heaven. The bread and wine do not produce this effect, for there is nothing holy in them, but material bread and heavenly bread correspond mutually to each other, and so do material wine and heavenly wine.

Heavenly bread is the holy of love, and heavenly wine is the holy of faith, both from the Lord, and both the Lord. Thence there is a conjunction of the Lord with a person, and of a person with the Lord, not with the bread and wine, but with the love and faith of the person who had done the work of repentance. Conjunction with the Lord is also introduction into heaven (*Apocalypse Revealed* 224:13).

In the Holy Supper the Lord is wholly present with the whole of His redemption. His “flesh” symbolizes the Divine good of His love, and His “blood” the Divine truth of His wisdom. Consequently that the Holy Supper is a spiritual eating (*True Christian Religion* 716).

PREPARATION FOR THE HOLY SUPPER

In order that everyone ready to repent might look to the Lord alone, the Lord instituted the Holy Supper, which confirms the remission of sins in people who repent. It confirms this because in that Supper or Communion everyone is kept looking to the Lord alone (*Divine Providence* 122).

The question then is asked: how is one to repent? The answer is, in deed; that is, by examining oneself, recognizing and acknowledging one’s sins, praying to the Lord, and starting a new life. Repentance is impossible without self-examination. But what purpose does self-examination serve, but to enable us to recognize our sins? Or what purpose does their recognition serve, unless we acknowledge their presence in us? Or what purpose would these three actions serve, if not to enable us to confess them before the Lord, to appeal for His help, and from this point on to start a new life, which is the end in view? This is real repentance.

If real repentance is practiced from time to time, in fact as often as one prepares oneself to partake of the Holy Supper, and if one thereafter refrains from one or two sins one caught oneself committing, this is enough to start the process of making it real. Anyone at that point is on his way to heaven, for that is when a person begins to become spiritual instead of natural, and to be born anew under the Lord’s guidance (see *True Christian Religion* 530).

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There are two obligations incumbent on one after self-examination: prayer and confession. Prayer should be that the Lord may have pity, grant the power to resist the evils of which one has repented, and supply the inclination and affection for doing good. Confession should be that one sees, recognizes and acknowledges one's evils. There is no need to list one's sins before the Lord, nor to pray that they may be forgiven. The Lord has guided the person in self-examination, disclosed the sins, and inspired sadness and together with this an effort to desist from them and begin a new life (see *True Christian Religion* 539).

If it [self-examination] is only as to the actions, it discovers little; and this not enough: [Give] the reason. But if it is as to the thoughts and intentions, it discovers more. And if it searches out what the person regards or does not regard as sins, then it discovers [all]. For whatever a person within himself regards as allowable, that he does (*Doctrine of Charity* 5).

Those come to the Holy Supper worthily who have faith in the Lord and charity toward the neighbor, that is, who are regenerate.... That God must be acknowledged in order that one may have religion, or that anything of the church may be in him, is declared by reason itself.... That after the acknowledgment of God, charity is the second means which enables one to come to the Holy Supper worthily.... Faith in the Lord is the third means of worthily enjoying the Holy Supper, because charity and faith make one, like heat and light in springtime, from which two conjoined every tree is born anew (*True Christian Religion* 722:1,2,4).

Those come to the Holy Supper worthily who have faith in the Lord and charity toward the neighbor; and the presence of the Lord is effected by the truths of faith, and conjunction with Him by the goods of charity together with faith. From this it follows that those who worthily come to the Holy Supper are conjoined with the Lord (*True Christian Religion* 725).

CONJUNCTION WITH THE LORD

The "bread" [of the Holy Supper] symbolizes the Lord's love toward the universal human race, and the reciprocity of humankind and the "wine" symbolizes charity (see *Arcana Coelestia* 6789:3).

Conjunction with the Lord is effected by means of love and faith.... Who does not see that the bread and wine do not effect this, but the good of love, which is meant by the bread, and the truth of faith, which is meant by the wine, and which are the Lord's own, and which go forth and are communicated from Him alone? Moreover, all conjunction is effected by love, and love is not love without trust (*True Christian Religion* 727:3).

It should be remembered that people are joined to the Lord through the sacrament of His Supper only if they have within themselves the good of love to the Lord and the good of faith in Him, which they have received from Him (*Arcana Coelestia* 10522).

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There is such holiness that human minds are by that Supper conjoined with heavenly minds, when from internal affection they are thinking that the bread and wine signify the Lord's love and the reciprocity of a person, and are thus in holiness from interior thought and feeling (*Arcana Coelestia* 2177:8).

A person has the ability to conjoin himself to the Lord and the Lord to himself forever. Nevertheless, as a person is finite, the Divine Itself of the Lord cannot be conjoined, but only adjoined to a person, as, for the sake of illustration, the light of the sun cannot be conjoined to the eye, or the sound of the air to the ear, but only adjoined to them, thus imparting the ability to see and hear (*True Christian Religion* 718).

AN INTRODUCTION TO HEAVEN

The Lord is present and opens heaven to those who approach the Holy Supper worthily. He is also present with those who approach unworthily, but to them He does not open heaven. Consequently, as baptism is introduction into the church so is the Holy Supper introduction into heaven (*True Christian Religion* 719:1).

With those who only understand what is true, and good, the Lord's presence is universal or external, while with those who also will and do what is true and good, the Lord's presence is both universal and individual, or both internal and external. Those who merely understand and talk about what is true and good are like the foolish virgins who had lamps but no oil; while those who not only understand and talk about what is true and good, but also will and do it, are the wise virgins who were admitted to the wedding while the former stood at the door and knocked, but were not admitted (Matt. 25:1-12). From all this it can be seen that the Lord is present and opens heaven to those who come to the Holy Supper worthily. He is also present with those who come to it unworthily, but to them He does not open heaven (*True Christian Religion* 719:3).

Nevertheless it is not to be supposed that the Lord closes heaven to those who come unworthily. He does this to no person, even to the end of his life in the world. It is the person who closes heaven to himself, and this he does by the rejection of faith and by evil of life. And yet a person is held constantly in a state of possible repentance and conversion, for the Lord is constantly present and urging to be received; for He says: "I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear My voice and open, I will come in and will sup with him and he with Me" (Rev. 3:20). Therefore the fault is in the person himself, who does not open the door (*True Christian Religion* 720).

Baptism is introduction into the church. The Holy Supper is introduction into heaven. These two sacraments, baptism and the Holy Supper, are like two gates to eternal life. By baptism, which is the first gate, every Christian is let into and introduced into what the church teaches from the Word respecting the other life, all of which teaching forms the means whereby a person can be prepared for and led to heaven. The second gate is the Holy Supper, by which every person who

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allows himself to be prepared and led by the Lord is admitted into and introduced into heaven (see *True Christian Religion* 721).

The two sacraments, baptism and the Holy Supper, are in the Christian church like two gems in the scepter of a king... Again, these sacraments may be likened to a double temple, one below, the other above. In the lower one the gospel of the Lord's new coming and of regeneration and consequent salvation by Him is preached; and from this temple, near the altar, there is a way of ascent to the higher temple, where the Holy Supper is celebrated. From it is the passage into heaven, where those ascending are received by the Lord... These things are representations of the two sacraments and their uses (*True Christian Religion* 669).

It has pleased the Lord to reveal the spiritual sense of the Word, to enable this church to enter into the real use and benefit of these sacraments, baptism and the Holy Supper (*True Christian Religion* 700).