

The second New Testament ordinance is the Lord’s Supper, which the Lord Jesus himself instituted on the night that he was betrayed. The Lord’s Supper is observed by eating the bread and drinking the cup which symbolise the body and blood of the Lord, which bread and cup are a visible proclamation of the death of Christ and its benefits for all who are united to Christ (1 Corinthians 11:23–29). The Lord’s Supper is to be observed regularly by all believers in good standing with their local church who, receiving the elements in faith, spiritually receive and feed upon Christ crucified and all the benefits of his death (John 6:29, 35, 47–58).

(Sola 5 Confession 7.8)

We previously considered the sacrament of baptism, which is the new covenant fulfilment and continuation of old covenant circumcision. The second ordinance—the Lord’s Supper—likewise has its root in an old covenant practice—the Passover meal—but takes on a new significance for the new covenant people of God. The purpose of the Lord’s Supper is for the church to corporately remember the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and to receive from him the nourishment, strength, hope, joy that come from feasting on all that he purchased on the cross.

The Confession begins by noting that **the Lord’s Supper was instituted by the Lord Jesus himself ... on the night that he was betrayed**. As you compare the various accounts of that night, it seems that the Lord **instituted** this meal after he dismissed Judas. What is the significance of that little detail? _____

Jesus **instituted** this meal **on the night that he was betrayed**. We previously considered the baptism is an expectation and not an optional extra for the Christian. Does this same obligation apply to the Lord’s Supper? If so, are there any valid reasons for Christians to neglect this meal? _____

What areas of self-examination ought the believer to enter into while participating of the meal? _____

The Confession continues by describing how the meal should be observed: **The Lord’s Supper is observed by eating the bread and drinking the cup which symbolise the body and blood of the Lord, which bread and cup are a visible proclamation of the death of Christ and its benefits for all who are united to Christ.**

There is some debate within various traditions as to what elements should be used in the Communion meal. Some argue that unleavened bread and unfermented juice must be used because, throughout Scripture, leaven and the fermentation process represent sin, and to use leavened bread or fermented juice (i.e. wine) is to symbolically desecrate the sinless body and blood of Jesus. How would you critique this understanding of the elements? _____

Some others, particularly, it seems, in more Confessionally Reformed circles, argue that wine (and not grape juice) MUST be used because the Bible commands it. How would you evaluate that claim? _____

Given your answers above, what is your understanding of the elements that ordinarily ought to be used in Communion? _____

The Confession says that these elements **symbolise the body and blood of the Lord**. This sets the Confession apart as a Protestant Confession, for it rejects the notion, per Roman Catholic teaching of transubstantiation, that the elements BECOME the body and blood of the Lord. Nevertheless, the meal is more than mere symbolic remembrance; it is a means of grace in **which bread and cup are a visible proclamation of the death of Christ and its benefits for all who are united to Christ**. What does it mean that Communion is a “means of grace”? _____

The **Lord’s Supper**, says the Confession, **is to be observed regularly by all believers in good standing with their local church**. How **regularly** ought the meal to be **observed**? _____

Why should Communion be **observed regularly only by all believers in good standing with their local church**? Read 1 Corinthians 10:16–17 to help your thinking as you answer this question. _____

If the Communion meal is intended to display our unity as a church (1 Corinthians 10:16–17), what should we think about partaking outside of the regular gathering of the church? _____

The Confession concludes that church members, **receiving the elements in faith, spiritually receive and feed upon Christ crucified and all the benefits of his death**. Consider the supplied proof text (John 6:29, 35, 47–58) and discuss what it means to **spiritually receive and feed upon Christ crucified and all the benefits of his death**. How is this receiving and feeding different from what happens at conversion? _____

At BBC, we partake of the Communion meal weekly (as an element of worship), in the evening (in order to more effectively fence the Table), and corporately (as corporate participation as the body of Christ).