



# The Voice of Truth



December 30, 2012

## Wine Or Grape Juice In Communion?

By Jimmy Pettigrew

It was the night before the crucifixion that Jesus bowed his head blessing the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine. This event in the life of Christ was to be the memorial of his life, death, and resurrection. Therefore, the seriousness of this memorial is one that must not be overlooked. This institution of this memorial was done at the Passover feast (**Mark 14:12-25; Luke 22:1-20**). When Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, He naturally used the elements that were used during the Passover meal (**Matthew 26:17-19**). All leaven was to be removed from the houses (**Exodus 12:19**).

Strong notes that both Hebrew words translated "leaven" include the idea of fermentation. Leaven is a substance used to produce fermentation in dough and make it rise (**Exodus 12:15, 19-20**). In Bible times leaven was usually a piece of fermented dough retained from a previous baking that was placed in the new dough to cause it to rise. During the Exodus, the Israelites had eaten unleavened bread because of their hasty departure from Egypt (**Exodus 12:34, 39**). The practice of this first Passover was continued in all subsequent observances of the Passover. At the beginning of the Passover season every year, all leaven was expelled from the house (**Exodus 12:15**) and was kept from the house for seven days (**Exodus 12:19**). These days, called the "Day of Unleavened Bread" (**Acts 12:3**), commemorated the eating of unleavened bread at the time of departure from Egypt. So when Moses commanded that no "leaven" should be found in the houses this must have included that which is fermented! In the same manner there is to be no leavening in our observance of the Lord's Supper. The bread must be unleavened to properly observe this part of worship. Likewise, the fruit of the vine must be unleavened in order to be obedient to God's command. Unleavened fruit of the vine is that which is unfermented. Therefore Jesus could not have used fermented drink when He instituted the Lord's Supper.

Notice further that no leaven was to be used in blood

sacrifices (**Exodus 23:18; 34:25**). If leaven (fermentation) was not to be used in sacrifices, which was just a type of our real Passover (**1 Corinthians 5:7**), what makes us believe that Jesus would use fermented wine to remember the blood He shed (**Matthew 26:28**)?

That Jesus used unfermented juice of the grape is made clear in that He specifically referred to this juice as the "fruit of the vine" (**Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18**). If Jesus had left it up to us to choose the type of juice, we would use the Greek word "oinos" which includes the juice of the grape in all its stages. Bacchiocchi notes that "The noun fruit (gennema) denotes that which is produced in a natural state, just as it is gathered. Fermented wine is not the natural fruit of the vine but the unnatural fruit of fermentation and decay". (Wine In The Bible, p. 49). Count Chaptal, the eminent French chemist says: "Nature never forms spirituous liquors; she rots the grape on the branch, but it is an art which converts the juice into (alcoholic) wine. (William Patton, Bible Wines, p. 16). Josephus, a historian living during the time of the apostles, confirms that the "fruit of the vine" refers to "freshly squeezed grapes", not fermented wine. He says, "... he saw three clusters of grapes ... and that he squeezed them into a cup ... he let him know that God bestows the fruit of the vine upon men for good" (The Antiquities Of The Jews 2, 5, 2, 64-66). Thus history proves that "fruit of the vine" refers to unfermented grape juice, not fermented wine as some has affirmed.

People, we can know that intoxicating wine was not used in the Lord's Supper based on clear Bible teaching. If Jesus had given an alcoholic beverage to His disciples He would have stood condemned under the Law of Moses. The prophet states, "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor strong drink" (**Habakkuk 2:15**). Would not Jesus have been guilty of giving His neighbor strong drink if He had given wine to His disciples? ABSOLUTELY! How can an elder not be given to wine (**1 Timothy 3:3**) and yet partake

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of alcoholic wine on the first day of every week? How can we abstain from every form of evil (**1 Thessalonians 5:22**) and turn around and partake of a substance that causes death, divorce, and destruction? How can we "be not

*drunk with wine*" when one drink is the first step towards drunkenness (**Ephesians 5:18**)?

Simply put, there is no possible way Jesus authorized us to use fermented wine in partaking the Lord's Supper. ♦

## **"The Truth About The Lord's Supper"** By Jarrod Jacobs

Were you aware that one of the 2011 Super Bowl ads was "pulled" due to its offensive nature? It was a commercial that opens with a "preacher" worrying about how the "flock" was dwindling and the bills were growing. So, he prayed and got "inspired" to provide Doritos and Pepsi Max for the Lord's Supper. When folks learned of the change, the lines were extended out the door for people to "partake", while the "preacher" rejoiced at his "inspired" decision and the money rolling in. From what I understand, there was a "Catholic" and "Protestant" version of this commercial made.

While I am happy that this commercial was pulled from the Super Bowl ads, the reason I know about its existence is because it has made its way to the internet! Therefore, folks can see it, anyway. It is just not connected with the Super Bowl, now.

This is just one more example of how people are bound and determined to make light of and even ignore the Lord's ways. First, we see men twisting Scriptures by either refusing to take the Lord's Supper every first day of the week (**Acts 2:42, 20:7**; etc.); or they engage in the opposite extreme by offering the Lord's Supper multiple times during the week and on "special occasions", like weddings. The television commercial referred to above is just another example of people making light of something that belongs to God. Just as in the days of Samuel, to borrow a phrase, we understand that men are not making fun of us, but they are making fun of God (**1 Sam. 8:7**)! In light of this, let us search the Scriptures and learn what has been revealed from God concerning the Lord's Supper. What is the truth?

### **The Lord's Supper Is A Memorial**

Before Christ's death upon the cross, He instituted a memorial by which His people are to remember Him. This memorial is described in **Matthew 26:26-28**. *"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of*

*the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."*

Notice that this memorial is a divinely prescribed memorial because Christ instituted it. It did not originate in the mind of man! Too, this memorial is one that continues in the Lord's kingdom. If, as some say, the Lord has not yet established His kingdom, then the Lord's Supper ought not be observed by anyone today. Yet, we see the first century Christians observing the Lord's Supper (**Acts 2:47, 20:7**). Obviously, they understood the Lord's kingdom was in existence. In fact, His kingdom exists today, fulfilling prophecy that had been written down before Christ came to earth (**Dan. 2:44**)!

This memorial reminds us of the Lord's sacrifice, and ought never be taken lightly, ridiculed, or belittled! Just as we are (and should be) sober and reverent at the memorials of men (Pearl Harbor, Arlington, etc.), shouldn't there be an even greater sense of reverence, soberness, etc., when observing this memorial of Christ's death?

### **The Lord's Supper Consists Of Specific Elements.**

The TV ad we mentioned earlier depicted a man "inspired" to change the elements of the Lord's Supper and substitute with other things. In so doing, this man sinned. When we read from the inspired writings (**II Pet. 1:20-21; Jn. 16:8-13**; etc.), specifically, the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul, we learn that the elements comprising the Lord's Supper are unleavened bread and fruit of the vine (**Matt. 26:26-28; Mk. 14:22-25; Lk. 22:15-20; I Cor. 11:23-30**). Just as we could not observe the Lord's Supper on another day than the first day of the week, so also we cannot substitute these elements for other things.

You see, when God has been specific on a matter, then we have no right to change or substitute anything. This was true when God told Noah to specifically build an ark of

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gopher wood (**Gen. 6:14**). No substitutions were allowed in the type of vessel made, or the type of wood used! It was true when God demanded specific sacrifices as described in the book of Leviticus. No substitutions in the sacrifices were accepted by God. When Naaman was told the cure for his leprosy was to go wash in the Jordan River seven times (**II Kings 5:10**). No substitutions to this plan were accepted by God! In like manner, when it comes to the Lord's Supper, since the Lord has been specific about the elements (**Mk. 14:22-25**), the day of observance (**Acts 2:47, 20:7**), the meaning behind it, etc., how can we accept any substitute? We can't!

Christ has been specific as to what He wants, and we need to respect His will!

### The Lord's Supper Is A Communion.

The apostle Paul wrote, "*The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the*

*body of Christ?*" (**I Cor. 10:16**). To speak of a communion is to speak of a partaking, a sharing, a partnership, or fellowship. Thus, when Christians are worshipping on the first day of the week and partaking of the Lord's Supper, we are sharing together with the Lord. We are in fellowship with Him! What a wonderful and special blessing this is! Truly, we draw closer to God when we worship Him in spirit and in truth (**Jn. 4:24**)! How sad it is that folks have tried to cheapen this experience through changing the elements, or through changing the day of observance, and similar things. This is a sharing together that Christians do with Christ, since we are together in the kingdom, now (see: **Matt. 26:28**)!

### Conclusion

In light of Scriptural evidence, let us respect the Lord's plan for our partaking of the Lord's Supper. Man may use TV, the internet, radio, etc., to make light of this act of worship, but we know the truth!

Credit: [www.southside-churchofchrist.com](http://www.southside-churchofchrist.com) ♦

## The "Astounding" Doctrine of Jesus Christ

By Jonathan L. Perz

Indeed, there are no words on earth more "astounding" as those of Jesus Christ our Lord. I found it very interesting, as I was considering Bible references to the "doctrine of Christ," that there are at least 13 references to people being "astounded" at Christ's doctrine and teaching.

What made this so interesting is how quick folks today dismiss, by their lack of adherence and reverence, this same doctrine. Many treat it as if it is nothing more than 'run of the mill' and 'boring.' It is given the 'back seat' by many preachers of God's word to every other form of literature under the sun. Caving in to the demands of their hearers, preachers today offer fancy and humorous illustrations, heart-wrenching and tear-jerking stories, and mountains of emotional "testimonials," while perhaps garnishing their wonderful lessons with a passage or two of the doctrine of Christ. While these other things might seem fine in and of themselves, it was not their use that "astonished" those of the first century. It was the substance, authority and power of the doctrine of Christ (cf. **Mark 1:22; Mark 1:27; Luke 4:31-32**).

Another proclamation ringing through the land today also belittles the "astounding" doctrine of Christ. That is, to preach more Christ and less doctrine. In an attempt to

distinguish the Man and His doctrine, folks want to hear more about Christ and His role as Savior and less about Christ and His role as Lord. Folks are demanding more of those "feel-good" lessons that lack any essence of true Bible teaching. Is it not the Master Teacher we read of in the Bible "astounding" people with His doctrine? Therefore, should we not learn from Him what constitutes faithful Gospel teaching and preaching?

Our Lord's lessons were not humor laden, feel-good lessons that tickled the ears of those who heard them. They were lessons that taught people how to live godly lives (The Sermon on the Mount—**Matthew 5-7**). They were lessons that taught and explained the divine will of God (**Matthew 22:33**). Some of His lessons warned of the leaven of the Pharisees—that is, their soul-condemning doctrines (**Mark 17:6-12**). Some of His lessons stung the ears—pricking, and in some cases, hardening the hearts of those who heard them. However, even when accompanied with strong rebuke, His doctrine was considered astounding (i.e., when Jesus cast the money changers from the temple—**Mark 11:15-19**).

Thus, in light of such example, anyone and everyone who would break the bread of life (His Word—**John 6:35**)

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and impart it unto a listener had better take heed not to blaspheme the good doctrine of Jesus Christ in word or in deed (**1 Timothy 4:6, 16; 1 Timothy 4:16; 1 Timothy 6:1**). Little do we realize, to defame the doctrine of Christ is to defame God, for Jesus told us that it is not His doctrine, but God's (**John 7:16**).

Preachers: take heed to the doctrine—preach it openly and boldly! *"Reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine"* (**2 Timothy 4:2-3**). Preach it when

folks like it and when folks don't! Make the substance and meat of your lessons the doctrine of Christ and when appropriate, garnish with the other things!

Hearers: command the sincere milk of God's word (**1 Peter 2:2**). Accept no substitutes for the rock-solid preaching of truth. Demand sound doctrine, which cannot be condemned—which is *"according to the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ"* (**1 Timothy 1:10-11**). Ask not that your "ears be tickled;" rather, demand that your hearts be convicted!

*Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦*

**THE ONE BODY**

The church is the body of Christ, "And he is the head of the body, the church (**Col. 1:18**). There is only one body, one church. *"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all"* (**Eph. 1:22-23**). The New Testament teaches that there is only one body; this one body is the church. We are "fellow heirs of the same body" (**Eph. 3:6**). We are "reconciled to God in one body" (**Eph. 2:16**). Christ is founder of only one church. *"Upon this rock I will build my church"* (**Matt. 16:18**). Jesus did not say that we would build a church, His church or one of His churches. He said, "I will build my church." The word "church" signifies singularity. Jesus did not build many different churches, but one! None should encourage any to seek the church of your choice, but the church of Christ's choice, that is, the one that is Christ-built, blood-bought (**Acts 20:28**), the one in which He is the Saviour of (**Eph. 5:23**).

Since there is one, and only one church and since Christ saves only those in that one church; thus, if one living today is not a member of that church (**Rom. 16:16**), then he is not saved. ♦

**When an archer misses the mark, he turns and looks for the fault within himself. Failure to hit the bull's-eye is never the fault of the target. To improve your aim – Improve yourself.**

*Don't think you can ignore the Lord in this life and He will give you a crown in the Life to come.*

**What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

- Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3
- Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24
- Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30
- Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21
- Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27
- Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

**About the Hillcrest church of Christ**

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**Schedule of Assembly**

**Bible Study:** Sunday, 9:00am  
**Worship Service:** Sunday, 10:00am  
**Bible Study:** Wednesday, 7:00pm\*

\*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month