

DEVOTIONAL AID FOR 16 NOVEMBER 2020 – 22 NOVEMBER 2020



**UPPER
HUNTER**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Dear church family,

The Lord's Supper is one of the two sacraments Christ instituted. This sacrament is meant for the strengthening of our weak faith. Christ knows that we, like a flock of sheep, are ever in need of His care. No Christian is ever able to claim that he or she has such a strong faith that they need no assistance or reinforcement from the Lord Himself. We who have begun to know the depths of our sin and the greatness of Christ's grace will ever turn to Him again and again. The Lord's Supper, then, is a great time of celebration and thanksgiving because Christ has promised to strengthen our faith through it. I hope our church will never grow ignorant or dull towards the Lord's Supper. I quote from Kevin DeYoung's excellent book on the Heidelberg Catechism: "What good news God proclaims to us at [the Lord's Supper]—what a visible sign of God's grace we enjoy! As surely as I know, without any doubt or hesitation, that I am holding bread and sipping juice, so surely can I know, with complete confidence, God loves me in Christ."¹

I hope this week's (and the next few weeks' as the Catechism continues to teach us about the Lord's Supper) we will grow in our understanding and appreciation for the Lord's provision for us.

Yours in Christ,

Timothy Lee

<https://www.upperhunterpc.com>

¹ Kevin DeYoung, *The Good News We Almost Forgot*, p137.

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM²

Lord's Day 28

Q75) How does the Lord's Supper remind and assure you that you share in Christ's one sacrifice on the cross and in all His gifts?

A) In this way: Christ has commanded me and all believers to eat this broken bread and to drink this cup in remembrance of Him.

With this command He gave these promises:

First, as surely as I see with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken for me and the cup shared with me, so surely His body was offered and broken for me and His blood poured out for me on the cross.

Second, as surely as I receive from the hand of one who serves, and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord, given me as sure signs of Christ's body and blood, so surely He nourishes and refreshes my soul for eternal life with His crucified body and poured-out blood.

Q76) What does it mean to eat the crucified body of Christ and to drink His poured-out blood?

A) It means to accept with a believing heart the entire suffering and death of Christ and by believing to receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life. But it means more. Through the Holy Spirit, who lives both in Christ and in us, we are united more and more to Christ's blessed body. And so, although He is in heaven and we are on earth, we are flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone. And we forever live on and are governed by one Spirit, as the members of our body are by one soul.

Q77) Where does Christ promise to nourish and refresh believers with His body and blood as surely as they eat this broken bread and drink this cup?

A) 1 Corinthians 11:23-26: "The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, 'Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

1 Corinthians 10:16-17: "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."

JOHN 6:56–58

John 6:56 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever."

One of the most precious truths in the Christian doctrines (teachings) is 'union with Christ.' What it means is that we who believe in Christ are united to Him, and all the blessings from God are given to us through or in Christ. There is no blessing for us apart from Christ, be it forgiveness of sins, growth in holiness, or resurrection and eternal life. We are forgiven when we are united to Christ by trusting Him. We grow in holiness because we are united to Christ as we continue to trust Him. We will be resurrected because we are united to the One who is already resurrected. Whatever blessings we might expect from God as a believer, we receive every single one of them as we receive Christ Himself. We are one with Christ. The Lord's Supper is an occasion where we are tangibly assured of this reality of union with Christ as we see, touch, smell, and taste the bread and the wine (or juice). "[...] as surely as I receive from the hand of one who serves, and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord, given me as sure signs of Christ's body and blood, so surely He nourishes and refreshes my soul for eternal life with His crucified body and poured-out blood." (HC Q75)

² The text of the Catechism is usually from <https://threeforms.org/heidelberg-catechism/>, but time to time, for the sake of clarity, I have also adopted the translation used in *The Good News We Almost Forgot* by Kevin DeYoung.