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THE MEAL THAT HEALS

ENJOYING INTIMATE, DAILY COMMUNION WITH GOD



PERRY STONE

The Meal That Heals

A Powerful Revelation on the Covenant of Healing Through the Receiving of Daily Communion

Written by Perry Stone, Jr.

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to Dr. John Miller, a unique and special friend who resides in Tampa, Florida. It was he who called my attention to this powerful revelation. May the truth contained in this book impact your life just as it did mine.

INTRODUCTION

Most born again believers in Full Gospel churches believe God is able, through the prayer of faith, to heal the sick today. Yet, their belief does not seem to be impacting their situation. Too many Christians are emotionally weak and physically sick. The Apostle Paul wrote to those in the church at Corinth and told them, *"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep"* (1 Corinthians 11:30). He revealed the reason for their infirmities: they did not "discern the Lord's body" (1 Corinthians 11:29). In this book, you will learn that the Christian church has complete understanding of the work Christ did on the cross to redeem us from sin. However, it is spiritually unaware of the atoning work Christ did before He went to the cross, when He was beaten and bruised for our healing.

This unfamiliarity with the full atonement is often bred by ministers who sat under the instruction of theologians who willfully preached a doctrine of unbelief as it relates to God's power to heal today. This lack of true understanding has obscured the full revelation of Christ's suffering.

The second area of misunderstanding stems from the teaching of Communion, also known as the Lord's Supper. Every week, Catholics celebrate Mass, in which they believe the host (bread) becomes the body of Christ and the wine in the cup becomes the literal blood of Christ. Among Protestant groups, the Lord's Supper is received once a week, once a month, or sometimes once a year, and is considered a reminder of Christ's suffering.

The lack of spiritual revelation regarding the true intent of the Lord's Supper has weakened the church. This book will reveal what I believe is a very important revelation for the body of Christ. Some of the information in this book will contradict the teachings of some theologians and may even be contrary to the traditions of certain denominations. Those people who believe physical healing was a limited spiritual gift that operated only in the first century will not be receptive to the information in this book. But I am not interested in convincing a theologian, or receiving applause from a denomination, or debating those folks whose unbelief is founded upon tradition and not upon truth.

I believe those who will receive and practice this revelation will be impacted for life. Just as God brought the Hebrew nation out of bondage and "not a feeble person was among the tribes," I believe it is God's will to heal the church spiritually, emotionally, and physically. Therein lies the message of this book,

The Meal That Heals.
A Servant of the King, Perry Stone, Jr.

Chapter 1

THE REVELATION OF THE ATONEMENT

"And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

Romans 5:11

If I were to ask you what Jesus Christ accomplished for us through His sufferings, I would probably receive one answer:

Christ died on the cross to forgive us of our sins. This answer would be correct but incomplete. According to the New Testament, Christ's death on the cross was atonement for our sins, in the pattern of Old Testament sacrifices (Exodus 32:30). In fact, the word atonement is mentioned eighty-one times in the Bible, eighty of which are found in the Old Testament, and it alludes to the various animal offerings that would atone for man's sins. Clearly, sin was the central outcome of man's fall, but other consequences followed.

Both sin and sickness became a reality after Adam was expelled from the garden. For this reason, early in Scripture the Almighty God revealed Himself as a healer to those who would trust Him. Abraham prayed for Abimelech so that his wife and maidservants could conceive children (Genesis 20:17). Moses cried out for Miriam to be cured of leprosy (Numbers 12:13). King Hezekiah was healed of an incurable disease through prayer (2 Kings 20:56). God established a healing covenant with the entire nation of Israel, as written in Exodus:

"As said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee."

Exodus 15:26

In the Hebrew Scriptures, the phrase "Lord that healeth" is *Yahweh Rapha.* This name is one of sixteen compound names for Yahweh (God) found in the Old Testament. Most scholars will agree that this Old Testament healing covenant existed for 1,500 years and was carried over through the ministry of Jesus. The four Gospels record three levels of Christ's deliverance ministry:

1. miracles of physical healing (Matthew 8:16)
2. miracles of casting out evil spirits (Mark 1:34)
3. creative miracles (Luke 22:5 1)

Christ immediately instructed His disciples to heal the sick and expel evil

spirits (Matthew 10:8). These miracles were performed through the authority of Jesus' name (Mark 16:17-18). The name Jesus is an English translation of *IESOUS.* This Greek name is a transliteration of the Hebrew name Y'Shuah (Joshua), meaning *Yahweh is salvation.* In the Christian west, the word salvation brings to mind the spiritual result of repentance. Yet, in the New Testament, the verb save is the Greek word *sozo.* The word salvation (a noun) is *soteria.* These words refer to deliverance from material and temporal danger or suffering (Matthew 8:25, Mark 13:20), deliverance from sickness (Matthew 9:22), and being made whole! The word salvation not only means to save from sin; it also means to deliver, to protect, and to heal!

Our salvation in Christ is more than repenting of sin and having our names written in heaven (Luke 10:20). Salvation includes redemption for the whole man: body, soul, and spirit. God is concerned not only about our spiritual well being, but about our physical and emotional wholeness as well. This is clear in the following Scripture:

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Thessalonians 5:23

God wants us both holy and whole (Hebrews 12:14, 1 Thessalonians *5:23).* The common New Testament Greek word for whole is holos, meaning *altogether.* It implies being sound in body, soul, and spirit or, as we would say today, completely healthy. The whole man consists of the body (physical), soul (emotional), and spirit (spiritual). A physically strong yet emotionally unstable person is not completely whole, and neither is a person who is spiritually strong yet physically weak. It is the will of God to keep our tri-part being (body, soul, and spirit) preserved until such time that our life is complete or until Christ returns, whichever comes first.

Some people say, "We are all going to die sometime and when it's time to go, we are going to go and nothing can change that." Scripture does not support such a fatalistic view; instead, the Bible indicates that prayer can cancel the assignment of death.

King Hezekiah was told he was going to die but, as the king earnestly wept and prayed, God added fifteen more years to his life (2 Kings 20:6). Miriam, the sister of Moses, was stricken with leprosy but Moses interceded and the Lord spared her life (Numbers 12:13). The Bible also asks this question in Ecclesiastes 7:17: "*Why shouldest thou die before thy time?"* This indicates the possibility of departing this life too early.

Paul said that many in the church at Corinth were "weak, sick, and many

slept". Paul used the word slept or asleep to describe the condition of a believer after death (1 Corinthians 15:51, 1 Thessalonians 4:14, 1 Thessalonians 5:10). The Scriptures make it clear that a person can die before his or her appointed time. Accidents, criminal acts, and sickness are three darts whose sting can spread the pain of a premature departure.

Many Scriptures indicate that God blessed His people with a long life:

"And thou shalt go to thy father 's in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age."

Genesis 15:15

"And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulcher of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites."

Judges 8:32

"And he died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour: and Solomon his son reigned in his stead."

1 Chronicles 29:28

"And even to your old age I am he: and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will hear; even I will carry, and will deliver you."

Isaiah 46:4

"After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons ' sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days."

Job 42:16-17

We must acknowledge that it is God's will for us to live a long life and fulfill our days. Moses wrote that a person could live to be seventy or eighty years of age:

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet it is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off and we fly away"

Psalms 90:10

My father has noted that, in the Bible, there is no verse that tells us how long each of us will live. We both believe it is God's desire for you to live a full life. If you are reading this and do not agree with that statement, you may as well put this book down now and proceed no further. However, if you believe that *"with long life will God satisfy you, and shew you His salvation"* (Psalms 91:16), then continue reading.

The Threefold Atonement

The greatest Old Testament prophecy related to the redemptive assignment of Christ is recorded in Isaiah chapter 53. Beginning with verse one and continuing through verse ten, we read:

“Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

He is despised and rejected of men: a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death: because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.”

Isaiah 53:1-10

The subject of this great prophecy is often called Isaiah’s suffering servant. Christian scholars have noted how this ancient prophecy detailed the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. Seven hundred years later, the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy was completed in the New Testament when Jesus Christ (the Messiah) would not open His mouth as He stood before judgment (Mark 15:3); when He was stricken for the transgressions of God’s people (Matthew 8:17); when He died with the wicked (two thieves); and when He was buried in a rich man’s grave (Mark 15:46). God made His soul a sin offering (Hebrews 10:9-10). The New Testament writers point to the fulfillment of Isaiah 53 in the life and ministry of Christ.

Isaiah, God’s anointed prophet, also revealed a threefold redemptive work that would be accomplished through the suffering Messiah. Isaiah *53:5* reveals

the mystery:

1. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquity. This speaks of *spiritual healing* and is related to the forgiveness of sins.
2. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him. This speaks of *emotional healing* for the mind and the soul.
3. With His stripes we are healed. This refers to *physical healing* for the body.

Spiritual healing transforms the human spirit; emotional healing renews the mind; and physical healing brings healing and life to the physical body. Healing for the whole person represents Christ's assignment of three-part atonement. Most Christian churches preach and practice about one-third of the total provision given through Christ, which is the message of salvation through faith in the cross.

Of course, this is the ultimate message, for Christ's greatest assignment was to redeem mankind from sin. We can enter heaven with sickness, but we can never enter as a sinner!

At the same time, it is important that we not underestimate or theologically undermine the spiritual impact and purpose of Christ's suffering. It is time for the church to bring back the message of both emotional and physical wholeness. Believers can never appropriate the physical and emotional aspects of the covenant unless they are aware of the finished work of redemption.

Jesus accomplished much more than we have often been taught. It is time to explore the lost message of full redemption and restore the truth to the body of Christ.

Chapter 2

CARRYING WHAT YOU DO NOT NEED TO CARRY

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted."

Isaiah *53:3-4*

If you were locked in prison for life and suddenly learned that a close friend had offered to take your place, would you choose to stay behind bars? If you were dying in an intensive care unit, and you learned that another person willingly could carry your affliction so you could return to your family and live a healthy life, would you allow the transfer of the disease? Under the Old Covenant, God permitted a spiritual transfer of sin during a yearly service called Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement.

Once every year, on the tenth day of the seventh month, the high priest stood before God on Yom Kippur. According to Leviticus 23:27, God designed this day as a time of national fasting and repentance. One activity during Yom Kippur involved two identical goats that were brought before the high priest. One goat, designated for the Lord, was slain and burned on the altar. The second goat, named for Azazel, was also called the scapegoat. Both goats were to be identical in age, size, and color. As both goats were presented to the high priest, he would reach his hand into a wooden box and pull out one of two gold engraved markers. One read "for the Lord," and the other read "for Azazel" An eighteen-inch red thread was then tied to the neck of the goat designated for the Lord. This goat would be slain and offered as a burnt offering before the Lord, while the second goat (the scapegoat) would play an important role in carrying the sins of the nation.

According to Jewish tradition, as the scapegoat was brought before the high priest, he would lay his hands upon the goat's head and pray a special series of prayers that symbolically transferred the sins of the Priest, the Levites, and the Israelites on to the scapegoat. After the ceremony, a chosen man led the goat into the wilderness where it was eventually abandoned. A red thread was tied to the horns of the scapegoat in case it would later appear in a community in the wilderness. Anyone who saw the red thread on the goat's head knew it was the goat carrying sin, and they were to avoid contact with it.

Later, a system developed wherein an appointed man led the goat with a rope around its neck outside the eastern gate, across the mountains, and into the wilderness. He eventually transferred the goat to another man who would run with the goat to a distant mountain and hand the goat to a third person. Miles outside the city of Jerusalem, on a mountain called the Mount of Azazel, the scapegoat, carrying the sins of the nation, was pushed off a cliff where it tumbled to a violent death hundreds of feet below. When this goat met its death, a crimson colored thread that had been nailed to the outside of the Temple door supernaturally turned white. This was visible evidence to the Priests, Levites, and Israelites that God had forgiven their sins. Isaiah may have been referring to this crimson thread when he wrote:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Isaiah 1:18

The death of the scapegoat assured the people that their sins were gone once and for all and would never be brought up again. This is why Isaiah penned these words from the Lord:

"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

Isaiah 43:25

Two Goats and Three Red Threads

The two goats and three red threads on the Day of Atonement presented a perfect picture of our future redemption through Christ. The scarlet threads were placed in three locations: the neck of one goat, the right horn of another goat, and the Temple door. The thread on the Temple turned white once God had forgiven Israel's sins.

The three red threads are a visual image of the three persons on three crosses on the day of Christ's crucifixion (John 19:18). Jesus hung in the middle, thus representing the "goat for the Lord" that was slaughtered on the altar. The thief on one side died unrepentant, thus carrying his sins to the grave (Luke 23:39-40).

He represents the scapegoat that carried the sins into the wilderness where it met its death. The other thief was converted on the cross; therefore, his "scarlet sins became white as snow" (Luke 23:3943). This thief's conversion is represented by the red thread nailed to the wooden door of the Temple that changed colors in the midst of the Yom Kippur ceremony.

The two goats had to be identical, and tradition says they came from the

same area. It is interesting to note the parallel picture of this event and the trial of Jesus. Christ was condemned to die, but Barabbas, a man who was guilty of a crime, was released and set free (Matthew 27:16-26). The Hebrew name of Jesus is Y'shuah. According to an early church father, the actual name of Barabbas was Y'shuah. Both he and Christ had identical first names. The name Barabbas comes from two words: bar, meaning *son* and abbas, meaning *the exalted or high father.* Jesus Christ was the exalted Son of the Heavenly Father (Acts 2:3 3). Barabbas had an exalted earthly father, but Christ had an exalted Heavenly Father. Thus, we see that the two identical goats are a picture of the two men, Christ and Barabbas.

The Yom Kippur ceremony was an image and a preview of the atoning mission of Jesus Christ. He died on the cross and, by bearing the sins of the world, He became the final offering for sin.

Christ Carried it All

Under the Old Covenant, a man could not become a priest until the age of thirty (Numbers 4:3). John the baptizer introduced Christ as the *"Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world"* (John 1:29). Christ was about thirty years of age at that time (Luke 3:23). It would be Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who would take the sins of humanity and defeat the power of sin in the lives of those who would trust Him:

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."

Colossians 2:14

A Secret in the Garden

After forty-two months of ministry, Christ and three disciples huddled under the gnarled olive trees in the garden of Gethsemane. As the disciples' eyes became heavy with sleep, the eyes of Christ pierced the veil of what was coming as He begged that the cup of suffering would pass from Him (Matthew 26:39).

In the darkness, Christ interceded to His father for three hours (Matthew 26:36-46). Luke indicated that *"His sweat became as it were great drops of blood"* (Luke 22:44). Luke said He entered into agony. The Greek word is agonia and it implies extreme emotional stress. Why was Christ under such mental pressure? How could His sweat become as great drops of blood?

That night in the garden, I believe there was a conflict unfolding in the invisible arena of the spirit world that only Christ and God were aware of. The pressure of the sins of the world was being transferred to the Son of God. Satan was unaware of this process and would have stopped it had he known the future impact of this moment:

“Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”

1 Corinthians 2:8

The Bible indicates that Christ had to be made sin in order to redeem us from sin:

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

2 Corinthians 5:21

Just as the sins of the nation were placed upon the scapegoat, the sins of the world were placed upon Christ. During this spiritual journey in the garden, Christ was “made sin with our sin.” Peter confirms this sin transfer in 1 Peter 2:24 which says, “*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree...”* Apparently, the anguish Christ felt at that moment, while in deep prayer, was so intense that Christ had to pray in order to keep from physically dying. This may be why Paul wrote:

“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.”

Hebrews 5:7-8

This Scripture could not refer to the crucifixion, for Christ died on the cross. I believe this verse alludes to the agonizing hours of fervent intercession in Gethsemane as the weight of the world’s sins were laid upon the sinless Lamb of God (John 1:36). Imagine never having known the impact of sin and never having experienced a sinful nature, then suddenly having the weight of the iniquity of the entire world fall upon you. The mental anguish must have been almost unbearable. Yet, Christ bore the sins of the world that we might be free from bearing our sins! We need not carry the sin that Christ carried if we accept the forgiveness and cleansing provided for in His sufferings:

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

1 Peter 1:18-19

“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

2 Corinthians 5:21

The Venom of the Serpent

When a sinner approaches God for forgiveness of sins, the precious blood of Christ cleanses the spirit and soul from all sin (1 John 1:9). An example, in the natural, of how this spiritual transfer occurs is a snakebite. The average person who is bitten by a highly venomous snake could die within a matter of minutes or hours.

Yet, there are reptile lovers who have been bitten so often that their bodies have built up immunities to the poison. After years of bites, they have become immune to certain types of dangerous snakes.

As humans, we are all subject to the bite of the serpent, Satan. We have no protection against him without Jesus Christ. As Christ bore the sins of the world, He experienced a bite from the serpent. Christ's blood built up immunities to the serpent's bite and, when we who are bound by sin receive a fresh application of His blood, the life of Christ enters our spirit, thus making the deadly bite of the enemy null and void. By faith, we receive a spiritual blood transfusion and the law of sin and death is broken as the law of the Spirit of life in Christ is released in our spirit and our mortal bodies!

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

Romans 8:2

Most Christians fully understand this great plan of salvation and redemption. Yet, according to Isaiah, there are other benefits to be derived from the sufferings of Christ. The two areas Isaiah spoke of deal with emotional and physical well being.

He Carried Our Sicknesses

While the forgiveness of sin is the central feature of Christ's work, Isaiah the prophet also indicated that the Messiah carried more than just our iniquities:

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows... "

Isaiah 53:4

Note that the common Hebrew word for sickness is *kholee.* This Hebrew word is from the root chalah, meaning *to be weak, sick, or afflicted.* We read in Deuteronomy 7:15, *"And the LORD will take away from thee all sickness* (kholee)..." This word is translated sickness in 1 Kings 17:17, 2 Kings 8:8, and other places.

The common Hebrew word for pain is *macob.* This is used in Job 33:19: *"He is chastened also with pain* (macob)." Another verse in Jeremiah 51:8 reads, *"Take balm for her pain* (macob).

In Isaiah 53:4, the word for griefs is *kholee* and the word for sorrows is *macob.* Other English translations note this fact:

"Surely our sickness he hath borne, and our pains he hath carried them."
Young's translation
"But only our diseases did he bear himself and our pains he carried."
Dr. Isaac Leeser's translation

Alexander McLaren notes, "The Hebrews drew no sharp line of distinction between diseases of the body and those of the soul, as we are accustomed to draw. All sickness was taken to be a consequence of sin." In other words, both sin and sickness are a result of the fall of Adam.

As Christ began to heal the sick in His day, Matthew quoted the seven hundred year old prophecy from Isaiah *53:4* being fulfilled through Jesus Christ. Notice the wording of the following passage:

"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."
Matthew 8:17

This English translation is taken directly from the Hebrew text of Isaiah *53:4*. In Matthew's Gospel, the Greek word for sickness is astheneia, which means *want of strength or weakness.* The Greek word for sickness is astheneo, which is translated in the New Testament as *disease, infirmities, or sickness.* Christ not only bore our sins; He also carried our sicknesses. Some liberal theologians believe this sickness was sickness of the spirit, or "sin sickness." I would argue, why would God, for 2,000 years, heal the physical sicknesses of those who believe in Him, then suddenly stop this important blessing under the New Covenant? If we have a better covenant established on better promises (Hebrews 8:6), then how could God withdraw His physical healing covenant and yet consider the New Covenant to be a better covenant?

If we carefully examine the sufferings of Christ, He was literally made sin with our sins and sick with our sicknesses. But the atonement does not end with spiritual and physical healing. Christ also bore our mental (emotional) healing.

Emotional Healing

Emotional problems are the underlying root of many spiritual and physical problems. I have several friends who are medical doctors and, according to them, there are many people in hospitals today whose root cause of sickness is a problem with unforgiveness, strife, and bitterness. This inner spiritual crisis creates stress that affects the well being of the physical body. Many of God's children are seized by the fear of what may happen in the future. Others have suffered emotionally for years, grieving over the loss of a loved one or close friend. Some live with a spirit of rejection, trapped in a zone of inferiority. The good news is that Christ's redemptive work included emotional and mental

healing. Isaiah tells us:

1. He was despised and rejected of man (Isaiah 53:3).
2. He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief (Isaiah 53:3).
3. He was oppressed and afflicted (Isaiah 53:7).
4. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him (Isaiah 53:5).

Christ was rejected and oppressed. Imagine being conceived of the Holy Spirit, having an angel call you the Son of God, and people in your hometown calling you the son of Joseph (John 6:42). When Christ was tempted by the devil for forty days, Satan challenged Him by saying, "If you are the Son of God, then prove it" (Matthew 4:3-6). During Christ's final hours, as every fiber of His body throbbed in pain, unbelieving men huddled below the cross, mocking Christ as His redemptive blood dripped from His bruised and beaten flesh. Despite this harassment, Christ was willing to forgive those who instigated His death (Luke 23:34).

Christians who walk in rejection and dwell in their past, not forgiving those who have erred against them, will be emotionally weak against any attack of the adversary. Often they go from one prayer line to another, one personal prophecy to another, seeking the ultimate will of God or personal affirmation to lift their spirits. Yet, in a short time, they have settled back into a condition of depression and oppression. I have seen individuals place the blame for their emotional roller coaster on others who have hurt them, never realizing they have never allowed Christ to release the people they are holding captive in their mental prison.

Some emotionally weak Christians cannot build a relationship without it ending in a conflict. In some instances, they are manifesting an inward struggle, birthed from past pain and fed by continual clashes with others. I have met believers who know that God has forgiven them of their sins, but they have difficulty forgiving themselves. The greatest danger is that continual unforgiveness in your heart can open the door to allow a tormenting spirit to operate in your mind (Matthew 18:34-3 5).

Jesus provided forgiveness for your sins, but you must appropriate the finished work of Christ by utilizing the A, B, C's of faith: *asking* in prayer, *believing* in your heart, and *confessing* the Scriptures. Christ has provided for your physical well being, but you must believe and respond to the healing promises. Likewise, Christ, our suffering

Messiah, also made a provision for your emotional healing, but as long as you are not willing to forgive others, you lock the door of God's blessings on your life.

"But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Matthew 6:15

Learning to Release and Bless

Your willingness to forgive those who have abused or emotionally harmed you becomes your key to locking the door on tormenting spirits that mentally harass you. As believers, walking in forgiveness is not an option, but rather a command. Jesus said:

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

Matthew 6:12

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Matthew 6:14-15

"And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

Matthew 18:34-35

Twice in my life I found the need to release forgiveness toward two people whose actions and attitudes hindered our ministry. My flesh wanted to take a stick and clobber them. However, my inner spirit knew the Word of God and how my prayers would be hindered if I did not choose to forgive them. I recall a close friend telling me, "Perry, you must release and bless." Jesus said to pray for those that despitefully use you and bless those that persecute you" (Matthew 5:44, Luke 6:28). By God's grace, I was able to release both people and keep my spirit from becoming a place where I would hold these people in a mental prison.

Jesus bore our physical, mental (emotional), and spiritual weaknesses. If Christ has carried this, why should we? If we can easily accept, through faith, the fact that Christ died to forgive us our sins, why should it be difficult to accept how Christ also brought healing to our mind and body? Why must theologians split hairs over the simplicity of Christ's redemptive work? Let the Bible speak for itself.

Chapter 3

BIBLICAL METHODS OF HEALING

"He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions."

Psalms 107:20

The Bible reveals a variety of methods used to bring divine healing to the afflicted. In the New Testament, Christ healed several blind men. He led one man outside the city and touched his eyes (Mark 8:23). On another occasion, He spat on the ground and placed a piece of mud on the man's eyes (John 9:6). In both instances, the men were healed. Christ would touch a person (Matthew *8:15),* speak the word (Matthew 8:8), or command a person to put faith into action to produce a miracle (Matthew 9:6). The methods varied, but the results were the same: people were healed.

Some modem denominations believe that miracles and healing through God's power ceased at the death of John, the last apostle. This would date the conclusion of healing manifestations and miracles at around 96 A.D. Others believe that, by the third century when the New Testament was being compiled into one book, God put a stop to physical healing and miracles.

Yet, writings during the first four centuries of the church indicate that healing, casting out of evil spirits, and miracles continued long after the death of the last apostle of Christ:

"For numberless demoniacs throughout the world and in your city, many of our Christian men exorcising them in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, have healed, and do heal rendering helpless and driving the possessing devils out of men, though they could not be cured by all the other exorcists and those who used incantations and drugs." Justin Martyr, 165 A.D., *Apologetics II,* chapter 6

"Those who are in truth His disciples, receiving grace from Him, do in His name perform miracles; and they do truly cast out devils. Others still heal the sick by laying their hands on them and they are made whole. Yea, moreover, as I have said, the dead have even been raised up, and remained among us for many years." Irenaeus 200A.D., *Hermetics,* Book 1, chapter 32 "And some give evidence of having received through their faith a marvelous power by the cures which they perform, invoking no other name over those who need their help than that of the God of all things, and of Jesus, along with a mention of His history. For by these means we too have seen many persons freed from grievous

calamities and from other ills, which could be cured neither by men nor devils."

Origen 250 A.D., *Contra Celsum,* Book III, chapter 24 Clement mentions in 275 A.D. that there were "men who have received the gift of healing confidently, to the glory of God" *(Epis,* C. XII).

In 429 A.D., Theadore of Mopsueste said, "Many heathen amongst us are being healed by Christians from whatsoever sickness they have, so abundant are the miracles in our midst." *Christlieb — Moderb Doubt,* page 321

Healing was part of the Old Covenant and continued into the New Covenant. In the New Testament church, praying for the sick was a common practice:

"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer offaith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

James 5:14-15

Four Methods of Receiving Healing

Dr. John Miller has noted that there were nineteen people recorded in the four Gospels who were delivered through the ministry of Jesus and the apostles. Out of the nineteen, there were eleven whose problem was caused by a spirit (Luke 4:33, Luke 9:42, Luke 13:11, and so on.) God worked with His disciples to confirm the preaching of His Word:

"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will."

Hebrews 2:4

There were four branches on God's healing tree:

1. Miracles that happened through *signs and wonders* (Hebrews 2:4)
2. Miracles that happened because of an *anointing* (Acts 10:38)
3. Miracles that happened through a *deliverance* (Luke 4:18)
4. Miracles that happened by accepting the *atonement of Christ* (1 Peter 2:24)

Using the Scripture as our guide, we find four New Testament (New Covenant) methods used to bring healing. While there are many Scriptures to back up each method, I will list only one reference for each:

1. The laying on of hands (Mark 16:18)
2. Anointing with oil (James 5:14-15)
3. The gifts of healing and miracles (l Corinthians 12:7-10)
4. The spoken Word (Psalms 107:20)

Christ, His disciples, and the New Testament apostles would lay their hands upon the sick to impart healing (Mark 16:18). According to Mark *5:30,* those

who exercised faith could literally feel the healing virtue (power) enter their bodies. Numerous examples are found where the sick were cured through the ministry of the laying on of hands. Laying on of hands is also a basic doctrine in the Christian church (Hebrews 6:2). In this manner, the anointing was transferred from one person to another:

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."

Acts 10:38

The second New Covenant method is anointing the sick with oil and praying a prayer of faith. Notice that forgiveness and the healing prayer of faith go hand in hand.

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer offaith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he has committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

James 5:14-15

Oil is a symbol of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Under the Old Covenant, when the olive oil was poured out upon the heads of the kings, the Spirit of the Lord would come upon them (1 Samuel 16:13). It is the anointing of the Holy Spirit that breaks the yoke (Isaiah 10:27). In the early church, the elders (the older and spiritually mature men in the congregation) would pray over the sick and anoint them with oil. If the prayer was offered in faith, the sick would be healed. The healed individuals were then required to confess their faults one to another, and to pray one for another:

"Confess your faults one to another; and pray one for another; that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

James 5:16

The third method of New Covenant healing is through a manifestation of the gifts of healing and the working of miracles:

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit. To another the working of miracles... "

1 Corinthians 12:8-10

The gifts are a supernatural impartation, or ability to pray for the sick and afflicted and experience a manifestation of God's power. Throughout history, God has used the prayers of righteous men and women to see miracles of answered prayer, including miracles of healing (James *5:16).*

Often the gift of faith works in cooperation with the gifts of healing or the

working of miracles. On several occasions, I have felt the supernatural gift of faith come upon me in an extended revival. At that moment, you are able to believe God can do anything! There is no sense of doubt in mind or spirit. During these times, we would have the greatest spiritual results in the altars, as countless numbers would be saved, filled with the Spirit, or healed.

Some argue that these gifts ceased with the apostles. I remind them they are called the "gifts of the Spirit" and not the "gifts of the apostles." They did not begin with the apostles, nor did they conclude with the apostles. They began with the Holy Spirit and will come to completion with the return of Christ:

"So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Corinthians 1:7-8

The fourth method comes by speaking the Word. There are several New Testament examples where Christ simply spoke the Word to bring healing to the sick. A centurion had a sick servant at home and came to Christ saying, *"Speak the word only and my servant shall be healed"* (Matthew 8:8). The man's servant was cured the very moment Christ spoke the Word (Matthew 8:13). Jesus said this was the greatest level of faith, to simply believe in the power of the spoken word (Matthew 8:10).

Often a person will stand in place on behalf of another person. A prayer of faith is offered in the name of the Lord on behalf of the person who is suffering. This is certainly biblical. The Word says:

"He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions."

Psalms 107:20

Notice that all four of these methods require the participation of a person in order to assist in prayer, anointing with oil, or laying on of hands. It takes a minister or an anointed servant of the Lord to lay hands upon someone and offer prayer. The gifts of the Spirit work through humble servants of God. Elders are men in the church and are instructed to anoint a person with oil. Even the spoken Word requires that we open our mouths and declare the healing power of God. This is where a difficulty sometimes lies.

Here is the Challenge

Some people have been anointed with oil until their head is slippery, yet they remain sick. Others drive long distances, wearing out the tread on their tires, to attend special healing crusades where many are touched. Yet, some return home with the same affliction. Others wait patiently for a special moment to seek out a

minister with a special ministry gift, only to be disappointed with the results. What is a believer to do when a minister is not present? Or when spiritual gifts are not manifesting, or no elders are present to pray the prayer of faith? What if the person praying for you does not have an anointing or unction from the Holy Spirit at that moment — when it feels like empty hands on empty heads? When prayers go unanswered, so do numerous questions, such as "Why hasn't the Lord answered my prayer?"

At times, mens' prayers can fail. For example, in 2 Kings 4:28-35, Elisha told his servant Gehazi to lay his rod upon a dead child and God would heal the lad. Gehazi followed the instructions, but there were no results. The child remained dead. Finally, Elisha lay his body over the cold corpse and life entered the boy. Why were there no results in the actions of Gehazi? If we read the chapter that follows, we find that Gehazi's heart was not pure before God. He had lied and become greedy (2 Kings *5:2027).*

At times, prayers may be hindered not because of our lack of faith, but because there are spiritual roadblocks in the lives of those who are attempting to minister to us. Of course, there are other reasons why a person may seek healing through prayer and not receive an immediate response.

One minister experienced a terrible physical trauma that left him about eighty percent paralyzed. After praying a few times and asking God to touch him, a close minister friend said, "This incident has certainly changed my theological views about healing in the atonement. It is clear that God won't heal everyone." Although sincere, this minister was basing his theology upon a personal experience and not upon the revelation of the atonement.

It would be like saying, "Many people who attend church in America are not born again; therefore, salvation must not be a free gift for everyone." Salvation is a provision in the covenant. The grace of God does not cease to work just because some people do not accept it. The gift of salvation means nothing to people until they accept the gift by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ and allowing salvation to change their hearts. In like manner, we should not judge the provisions in the Covenant based upon the lack of immediate results from a prayer that was prayed. Even Jesus had to pray twice for a blind man (Mark 8:23-25).

Also, God will never go beyond a person's free will to answer a prayer. In 1981, I recall a Christian woman who was diagnosed with cancer. The church began to pray for her recovery. As I was in prayer, the Holy Spirit impressed me that the woman had asked the Lord to take her on to heaven. The next day, she passed away. Many

in the church were confused as to why their prayers for healing were not

answered. The fact is that someone's prayer was answered — the woman's prayer. Her closest friend later informed me that the woman had told her, "I feel that my assignment is complete and I wish the Lord would allow me to go home to be with Him." Often, we don't know the various prayers that have been prayed or the reasons why the prayers seem hindered. This is why we must all be individually responsible for our own faith, prayers, and actions.

When examining the power of the New Covenant, there is one method of Covenant healing that is not dependent upon the faith, prayer, or anointing of someone else, but is entirely dependent upon your faith in the blood and the body of Christ.

That healing is manifested through the Communion service.

The Covenant of Communion

There is a powerful provision found in the New Covenant that has often been overlooked and misunderstood. This provision is found in the Communion meal, often called the Lord's Supper in the Protestant churches.

Being a fourth generation minister who was raised in a Full Gospel church, I am fully aware of the purpose and practice of the Communion service. In churches where my father has pastored, I recall conversations where some church members felt that if Communion was observed too often, believers would not appreciate it as much. The idea seemed to be that if believers partook of the Communion often, it would somehow lose its meaning. This was a man-made theory and was certainly not taught in the Bible. Others were hesitant to receive Communion, believing they may not be worthy of it. I often thought that if people felt they were not worthy to partake of Communion, how could they say they were ready for the return of Christ?

Under my father's ministry, I was taught that properly discerning the body of Christ through the Lord's Supper could result in physical healing. What I had not considered, until recently, was how often a person *could* receive Communion. In our denomination, ministers must be licensed or ordained before they can serve Communion to believers in a local church. Through the study of Dr. John Miller, I learned two important facts:

1. Biblically, there is no set time that a person should receive Communion. Jesus said, "As oft as you do this, do it in remembrance of me" (1 Corinthians 11:24-25).

2. There is no Scripture to indicate that it must be administered only by a licensed or ordained minister.

In the first few centuries, some in the church indicated that a person should partake of the Lord's Supper three times a year: at Easter (Passover), Pentecost,

and the Lord's Nativity (Christmas). It was written, "We decree that on each Lord's day, the oblation of the altar should be made by men and women in bread and wine, in order that by means of these sacrifices they may be released from the burden of their sins." *(Decrees of Fabian*, Volume VIII, pages 640-641).

The tradition of the Roman Catholic Church is to serve Communion in a weekly Mass, while Protestant churches vary.

Yet, the Scripture does not tell us to do it weekly, monthly, or yearly, but "as oft as you do" (1 Corinthians 11:24-25).

Dr. Miller shared with me the concept of receiving Communion every day. This was a new idea that I needed to weigh out by the Word of God. Today, I am convinced that daily Communion is an avenue to healing through the Covenant relationship between you and Christ.

Chapter 4

THE MEAL THAT HEALS

“And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD's Passover.”

Exodus 12:7-11

The meal that heals begins with an event called Passover. The Sons of Jacob had grown into a powerful nation while dwelling in Egypt for 400 years (Genesis *15:13).* Egypt was the world’s most influential nation, yet it was captivated by idolatry. The time had arrived for the Hebrew nation to depart from Egyptian slavery and repossess the Promised Land. Both young and old were to make the exodus together. The journey back to the Promised Land should have taken weeks on foot, through a rugged terrain called the wilderness. Unless each person was in excellent health, the trip would be difficult and, for some, impossible. The night prior to this journey, God introduced the meal that healed.

The plan of God required that every household slay a young lamb, the blood of which was sprinkled on the left, right, and top of the outside door post (Exodus 12:3-7). The lamb’s blood became a token of supernatural protection against the destroyer that, at midnight, would slay the firstborn in every unmarked house (Exodus 12:13). Christians understand the application of blood on the door post to be a picture of the three crosses on Mount Calvary, and of how the blood of Christ applied on the “door post” of our heart will give us eternal life and deliver us from death.

The second aspect of Passover was the meal itself. The slain lamb was to be roasted and all of the lamb was to be eaten, including the main organs of the lamb’s body.

“Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.”

Exodus 12:9

The lamb's blood applied on the door post brought protection from death, but eating the lamb's body brought a supernatural healing. The next morning, the entire nation of Israel came out of Egypt saved and healed!

"He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes."

Psalms 105:37

Imagine an entire nation being healed in one night as the flesh of the lamb entered their bodies. Dr. Miller pointed out the following information: there is a procedure done in Europe called cell therapy. Years ago, a doctor in Europe noted that if you take the fetus of a lamb prior to the development of its immune system, the cells of the organs can be used in human cell therapy. For example, the heart of the lamb is liquidized and mixed with saline solution. It is then injected into the heart of the patient with certain heart problems. The cells of the lamb actually assist in replacing the bad cells in the heart. This can work with the liver, the spleen, and all other vital organs.

This method has been used in parts of Europe for years, but it has never been used in the United States, most likely for two reasons. It would have a negative financial impact on the pharmaceutical industry and, in America, the animal rights activists wouldn't allow us to kill the fetus of a lamb. The fetus of a human, yes, but not the fetus of a lamb.

Dr. Miller related another example. Years ago, researchers took a large number of worms, placed them in a chamber, and fed them by using a red and a green light. The green light indicated that it was time to eat. Eventually, the worms learned that food was available when the green light was turned on. After some time, these worms were cut up and fed to other worms that were placed in the special chamber, When the green light came on, these worms automatically knew it was a signal to eat. This research indicated that the information embedded in the DNA of the previous worms automatically became a part of the DNA of the new worms.

The same spiritual principle is involved when eating "all of the lamb." A Hebrew with heart problems could eat the heart of the lamb and that lamb's heart could heal their heart. If the Hebrew was experiencing a liver disorder, then eating the liver of the lamb could heal the liver of the Hebrew. Yet, it was much more than the cells of the lamb assisting the cells of the person eating the lamb. This procedure was a picture of the sufferings of the future Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, healing those who would believe upon Him.

Eating His Flesh and Drinking His Blood

A preview of the Communion table actually begins with Abraham. In

Genesis chapter 14, Abraham met with Melchizedek, the king and priest of the Most High God and, in Salem (Jerusalem), Abraham partook of the bread and the wine and paid tithe to Melchizedek (Genesis 14:20). This mysterious man called Melchizedek was both a king and priest (Genesis 14:18). Centuries later, Christ would become a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 5:10).

In John 6:32-58, the Jews were asking Jesus for a sign and Christ referred them back to Israel's wandering in the wilderness. God sent manna down from heaven and fed the entire nation for forty years. Christ then explained that He was the true bread come down from heaven. Just as the manna sustained and nourished the people for forty years, those who would eat the true bread from heaven would receive eternal life. Jesus said:

"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 came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: 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?

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."

John 6:48-56

In the entire sermon, which is recorded in John 6:32-58, Jesus twice emphasized the story of bread and manna. He mentioned the word bread twelve times, comparing the manna in the wilderness to Him being the true bread from heaven. The repetition of the word bread indicates that this is a major message Christ is relaying to His audience. As Jesus spoke of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, the predominately Jewish congregation no doubt went into shock. The Law of Moses taught that meat should not be eaten raw (Leviticus 13:14-16). Now, imagine the reaction of the people when Christ told them to eat His flesh and drink His blood! No wonder the entire congregation, with the exception of His disciples, stood up and walked out. Was Jesus encouraging cannibalism? Were His words to be taken literally?

On one occasion, Christ spoke of destroying this Temple and in three days He would build it again (Matthew 26:61). Religious critics twisted the intent of Christ's statement and rumored that He wanted to destroy Herod's Temple in

Jerusalem. Christ was referring to His physical body and not the man-made Temple in Jerusalem. At times, Christ taught in parables and mysteries that needed further explanation:

"But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him."

Mark 9:32

It would be much later, at Christ's final Passover supper, that the disciples would understand the full meaning of Christ's message about His blood and His body. That night, as Jesus held up the cup that represented the ancient Passover, He introduced the cup with a new meaning: the cup of His blood of the New Covenant (Matthew 26:28). As Christ broke the unleavened bread representing the haste out of which the Hebrews fled Egyptian bondage, Christ spoke of this bread representing His body:

"And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for l say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come. And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Likewise also the cup after supper saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you."

Luke 22:17-20

The disciples were aware of what the cup and the bread represented. Each year at the feast of Passover, the Jews would remember the time they came out of Egyptian slavery (Leviticus 23:5-8). There was no time to place leaven in the bread; therefore, the bread was baked without the leaven. During the Passover meal, the bread used for the supper is called matzo, meaning *baked without leaven.*

There are four cups of wine used at every Jewish Passover. According to the Jerusalem Talmud, each cup represents one of the four words used in the redemption of Israel out of Egypt:

1. And I will bring you out (Exodus 6:6)
2. And I will deliver (Exodus 3:8)
3. And I will redeem (Exodus 6:6)
4. And I will take (Exodus 6:7)

According to the Talmud and rabbinical commentaries, the wine is mingled with water so the wine will not be strong. Because of the children, some Jewish families use a special wine that has no fermentation (alcohol). It is produced in Israel, has a very sweet taste, and is actually considered the "pure blood of the grape" (Deuteronomy 32:14). When wine is used, the water and wine are mixed in each of the four cups before the blessing is made. Again, we see a picture of

the Lamb of God who would suffer and die at the time of Passover. When the centurion pierced Christ's side, blood and water came forth (John 19:34).

At the Last Supper, when Jesus held up the cup, He called the contents the "fruit of the vine" (Matthew 26:29, Mark 14:25, Luke 22:18). I believe this is significant. The blood in Christ's body was unique since He was born of a virgin (Matthew 1:23). The blood type of the child comes from the seed of the father, and Joseph was not the father of Jesus. Since our Lord was conceived by the Holy Spirit, the blood of Christ came directly from God in the same manner that God imparted blood into the first man Adam (who was not born through a natural birth process). Because Christ was sinless, His blood was untainted with the sin element in the same manner as the sons of Adam!

During Communion, the pure blood of the grape, the fruit of the vine, represents the sinless, incorruptible blood of the Son of God. While some churches use fermented wine, which is produced by a decaying process, other churches use pure grape juice for this reason.

Jesus informed His disciples that this cup would be the cup of the New Covenant. The new blood covenant would be complete upon

His death and sealed at His resurrection. The benefits of redemption would be remembered every time a believer partook of the Lord's Supper!

Prior to His crucifixion, Christ experienced a severe beating at the Roman whipping post. They used a short handled whip with nine individual leather straps that were embedded with small bits of metal. As the soldier struck the back of the victim, the flesh would immediately swell and bruises would appear. As the beating progressed, the wounds would become deep furrows that opened the flesh into red chasms of swollen muscle and blood. Traditionally, the Roman soldier smote the victim forty times minus one, or thirty-nine individual beatings.

Medical doctors have told me that all diseases fall into thirty-nine different categories. Just as the nail scars on His hands are the visible evidence of our salvation, the stripes and bruises on the back of Christ are the visible token (sign) of our covenant healing.

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Isaiah *53:5*

"Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

1 Peter 2:24

When we accept the redemptive work of the cross, confess our sins, believe

on the Lord, and receive forgiveness, we are born again of the Spirit (John 3:3). Yet, prior to the crucifixion, Christ was beaten at the whipping post. His blood flowed for the physical healing of those who would accept that aspect of His sufferings.

Prior to the crucifixion, a crown of thorns was pressed upon the head of our Savior. After Adam was expelled from the garden, thorns and thistles became apart of the curse (Genesis 3:18). I believe the crown of thorns that was placed upon Christ's head alludes to Him carrying all of our emotional and mental infirmities. Jesus became the master of the thorns. His redeeming blood flowed down His back for our physical healing and from His head and across His face for our emotional healing. The completion of atonement was the cross where He was offered as God's Passover Lamb to bring spiritual healing, thus fulfilling Isaiah 53 and completing the threefold plan of atonement for the spirit, soul, and body, and bringing man back into relationship with God.

The Meal That Heals

After the ascension of Christ, the Christian church recognized that Christ became our Passover:

"Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificedfor us."

1 Corinthians *5:7*

Christ fulfilled Passover; therefore, He eliminated the necessity of a yearly sacrificial lamb (Hebrews 9:26). The cup and the unleavened bread became a symbol of the completed work accomplished at the death of Christ. The Christian church received this cup and bread to celebrate the finished work of Christ. The Apostle Paul informed the church at Corinth about the importance of having the believer receive the Lord's Supper:

"And when he had given thanks, he brake it and said,

Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord death till he comes."

1 Corinthians 11:24-26

In most Protestant churches, the Lord's Supper, or Communion, is conducted once every month, once every six months, or perhaps only once a year. Sadly, some congregations have not celebrated Communion for many years. Yet, Communion holds the key to walking in supernatural health and deliverance for the body, mind, and spirit.

In a Roman Catholic Church, people usually attend Mass and partake of Communion once a week. I have heard this practice criticized as being done too often, thus potentially causing a person to take it for granted. Using this reasoning, why should we pray every day or go to church once a week? After all, couldn't too much of this spiritual activity also make a person unappreciative of God's blessings?

How often did the early church participate in the Lord's Supper? Once a week? Once a month? Once a year? The Bible does not tell us how often we should receive Communion; it simply says, *"As oft as you do this."* In later centuries, it was accepted that the early church partook of the sacrament once a week. Yet, consider the following.

The bread from heaven fell every morning with the exception of the Sabbath, yet Israel ate the manna on the Sabbath by collecting double the day before (Exodus 16:5). Jesus said He was the bread come down from heaven and by sharing His body, we would receive life:

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

John 6:51

Jesus is the manna from heaven. If Israel partook of the Manna every day to receive nourishment and strength, would it be wrong for us each day to receive the bread and the fruit of the vine that represents Christ?

Note also that the believers in the early church went from house to house breaking bread and fellowshipping with one another:

"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart."

Acts 2:46

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."

Acts 20:7

I have always assumed that the phrase breaking bread referred to the believers eating dinner from house to house. Yet, notice they were breaking bread "upon the first day of the week" (Acts 20:7). The first day of the week was Sunday, or the day that would become the Lord's day for the Gentiles. The Jews worshiped on Saturday and, eventually, the Gentile Christians were expelled from the Jewish synagogues. It appears the believers were celebrating the Lord's Supper each week when they came together.

Twice we read where Christ broke bread with His disciples. At the Last Supper, Christ took the bread, broke it, blessed it, and then gave it:

"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."

Matthew 26:26

After Jesus was raised from the dead, He again was breaking bread in the home of a disciple:

"And it came to pass, as He sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them."

Luke 24:30

During both examples, our Lord took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it. At the Last Supper, He stated it represented His body. After His resurrection, some of His disciples did not recognize Him. When Jesus broke the bread and gave it, their eyes were opened and they knew it was Jesus:

"And their eyes were opened, and they knew him, and he vanished out of their sight."

Receiving Jesus Christ, the true bread from heaven, will impart eternal life and will open the eyes of your understanding to the New Covenant and your relationship with God.

The Daily Bread

In the Lord's prayer, we are instructed to ask for our daily bread (Matthew 6:11). This term refers to our daily provision in life. But we can also receive our daily bread by partaking in the Communion supper. Dr. Miller receives Communion every day and has been doing so for over twenty years!

With deadly diseases and outbreaks of viruses on the rise, ministers in the body of Christ need to instruct believers in the revelation of the full atonement. With future threats of biological and chemical attacks, our protection must be supernatural, just as it was during the exodus. The lamb's blood on the door posts restrained the destroying angel from taking the life of one single Hebrew. The roasted lamb brought physical healing to an entire nation in one night. If the blood and body of an earthly lamb restrained the destroyer, how much more can the blood and body of Christ protect the believer!

As the ancient Hebrew nation ate the lamb and received healing, likewise, we partake of the bread and cup to receive healing and life:

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."

John 6:53

"He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in

him."

John 6:56

Picture the Communion cup and bread in the manner that you would the nutritional benefits of the food that you eat every day. Proper foods are high in beneficial nutrients that are released into our bodies when the food molecules are broken down. We can hold up a plate of food and comment that it will make us healthy and strong when we eat it, then sit the plate of food down. We can continue this process indefinitely, but if we never actually eat the food, no vitamins and minerals will ever flow from the food and into our bodies. Likewise, we can talk about the fact that Christ died on the cross to save us and was beaten and bruised to heal us. But simply discussing the event will have no impact unless you believe with your heart and confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 10:10).

When we eat the unleavened bread and drink the fruit of the vine, it is more than flour and grape juice. Just as our confession leads to salvation and God honors our prayers of repentance, so likewise the Father honors our act of faith when we partake of Communion.

Our healing has been bought through Christ's sufferings, but we must properly "discern the body of Christ." We must comprehend what really happened at both the whipping post and the cross. Even the Jewish matzo bread is produced with four unique features that represent aspects of the crucifixion:

1. The bread has brown lines running through it, which give the appearance of bruises.
2. The bread has long lines embedded in the surface that look like stripes.
3. The bread has holes in it that give the appearance that the bread was pierced.
4. The bread is baked without leaven and, in the Bible, leaven represents sin.

Christ was bruised, beaten, pierced, and sinless. The Passover bread is certainly a clear picture of the body of Jesus Christ. As ancient Israel ate the lamb with the bread, they were healed. How much more can believers today, who have received the ultimate Lamb and the final sin offering, be healed of their sicknesses! Our daily bread should consist of more than natural provision. It should also include the bread that came down from heaven, Jesus Christ.

Further Proof

Many Christians have heard the name Smith Wigglesworth. Smith was an early pioneer Pentecostal minister who was noted for his daring faith and numerous miracles. Many Christian authors have noted that Smith believed it

was possible to walk in divine health.

At age eighty-seven, Smith Wigglesworth passed away during a church service. He simply closed his eyes and "gave up the ghost" (Mark *15:39).* He was one of the few people from his era who received Communion on a daily basis.

Recently, we have seen several people receive healing from various infirmities and sicknesses by receiving Communion each day. It has been amazing to see those who began taking Communion in a sick, weak, or feeble condition and watch their progress over a period of days or weeks as they begin to recover and receive strength.

Two Common Arguments

As with all spiritual truth, there will be critics. Most will be a few theologians or ordained ministers within major denominations. For example, in a Catholic Church, only the priest can serve the Mass. Among the Protestants, some denominations allow only ordained ministers to serve Communion and only during a worship service. One person said he believed the act of Communion was too sacred to place in the hands of a common lay person.

This mode of thinking would be like saying that only a minister can anoint the sick with oil. Yet, in the Bible, Ananias, who was called a disciple, prayed for Paul to receive his healing (Acts 9:10-12). In James 5:14, the elders were instructed to anoint the sick with oil. These were not the ministers in the church, but older members who were held in respect and esteem.

There is no Scripture in the New Testament to indicate that a person must be a minister or be officially ordained in order to administer the bread and the cup. Although we know the Lord's Supper was administered in the church (1 Corinthians 11), as previously indicated, the believers broke bread from house to house (Acts 2:46).

What gives a lay person who is a common believer the privilege of daily Communion at home? It is the fact that all believers are now priests unto God.

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

1 Peter 2:5

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people: that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

1 Peter 2:9

Under the Old Covenant the Levites, who were the priests and the sons of Aaron, became the High Priests. A "royal priesthood" was non-existent. Royalty

was reserved for the king and the priesthood was reserved for the Levites. Only Melchizedek, the first priest in the Bible, was considered a king and a priest.

"For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God... "

Hebrews 7:1

After Christ was raised from the dead, He ascended to heaven where He became a "priest after the order of Melchizedek" (Hebrews 5:6). Under the New Covenant, the individual believer becomes a royal priest. We present sacrifices of praise to God and we will one day rule with Him as kings on earth. As Revelation 5:10 indicates, the Lord made us *"unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth."* In the Greek, this verse reads, "You have made them a kingdom of priests."

If our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16), and we are all a kingdom of priests (Revelation *5:10),* then the individual believer is given a new spiritual authority to approach the throne and minister to God that was not available under the Old Covenant. As priests offered animal sacrifices, believers today offer sacrifices of praise (Hebrews 13:15).

In the opinion of both Dr. Miller and myself, the priesthood of the believer gives the believer the spiritual authority to personally receive Communion, one on one, between the believer and Christ.

The second argument says that one time each day is too much. If this is so, then why did God feed manna to the children of Israel every day except the Sabbath? If some think that is too often, remember that there was a table of shewbread in the Temple that held twelve loaves of bread (Leviticus *24:5)* which were freshly baked once a week. When Elijah was hungry, an angel of God prepared a meal for him, and the prophet went forty days on the meal of the angel (1 Kings 19:8). Certainly, God could have provided manna in the wilderness once a week or once a month and not once a day. Yet, God provided bread from heaven each morning.

There is a Scriptural pattern here for the bread both once a day and once a week. However, note that Jesus didn't compare himself to the bread in the Temple, but to the bread in the wilderness. The bread in the Temple was prepared by men, but the bread in the wilderness came down from heaven every day except the Sabbath.

Under the Old Covenant, a lamb was offered once each day as a daily offering. In fact, a lamb was slain in the morning and another one in the evening (Exodus 29:39). Was the daily shedding of blood that necessary? Apparently it was in the sight of God.

Most Christians agree that we should pray every day, read the Bible every day, and attempt to be obedient to God every day.

Why, then, should we limit God by saying we cannot receive Communion every day?

Two Important Points

Two important points should be made here. First of all, receiving Communion should not be viewed as a magical formula that will work like taking two aspirins for a headache. This is a spiritual act and must be viewed as such. It is also a reverent act and must be received in a spirit of humility and purity. It must be received in faith and not in unbelief. If a person says, “I will do this just to see what will happen,” then I can assure you nothing will happen. God operates from the law of faith and not by hit and miss. Unbelief can make the Word of God of no effect (Mark 7:13). A person should continue to receive Communion, even if his or her physical condition seems to worsen.

Secondly, it must not become a ritual or a routine that is enacted without thought or consideration. If receiving Communion becomes a lifeless routine that is done without true spiritual significance, then there is a spiritual danger, as we will see in the next chapter. The reason the bread and the cup are so powerful is because the Communion is a reminder to God of the New Covenant that was established through the sufferings of His son, Jesus Christ. God is always moved by His covenant. Throughout the Bible, we see where God reacts to mankind when mankind reacts to the covenant.

“My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.”

Psalms 89:34

“And he remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies.”

Psalms 106:45

Your action of receiving Communion, done in faith, brings a response from God because He is reminded of His covenant. God brought the Israelites out of Egypt because of their continual intercession:

“And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.”

Exodus 2:24

Our obedience causes God to remember the promises He provided in the New Testament. As the bread and the fruit of the vine become a part of our body, we are reminding God of His covenant with us:

“Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified. ”

Isaiah 43:26

Back to Corinth

The Apostle Paul gave instructions and warnings to the church at Corinth regarding the Lord's Supper. This church was very gifted, but there was much contention stirring within the congregation (1 Corinthians 3:3). Some who partook of the Lord's Supper were actually becoming drunk (1 Corinthians 11:21). When Paul observed the carelessness of some, he told them that some were weak, sick, and had died prematurely because they had not discerned the body of Christ.

Some individuals in the church at Corinth had not examined (judged) themselves and were spiritually cold and carnal. Yet, they were receiving the supper as though they were the best Christians in Corinth. Instead of receiving healing, the meal had no results for them.

The same sun that melts wax can harden clay. The same Gospel that sets a man free when he believes will condemn a sinner who will not believe (Mark 16:16). The same meal that can bring supernatural healing for a believer can have the opposite effect for an unbeliever. One unique example is Judas Iscariot. His irreverence at the Last Supper may have opened the door for his death.

Chapter 5

THE MEAL THAT KILLS

"Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly."

John 13:26-27

There is a warning penned in the Scriptures to those who would carelessly partake of the Lord's Supper. Here is the warning Paul gave to the church at Corinth:

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lords death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily. shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eatest and drinketh damnation to himself not discerning the Lord body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep."

1 Corinthians 11:26-30

W. E. Vines, in his expository dictionary of New Testament Greek words, notes that the word unworthily means "treating it as a common meal, the bread and cup as common things, not apprehending their solemn symbolic import."

The very meal that should have brought healing, unity, and restoration to the individual had instead brought judgment to those who did not discern it properly. A person should never partake in the Communion service in an unsaved condition or as a careless religious ritual. Before receiving Communion, we as believers should examine ourselves inwardly to determine it we have sinned against God or against our fellow man. We are to search and repent to God and man for any hidden sin or act of disobedience. In this manner, we keep our spirit and soul pure.

There is a threefold purpose for this self-examination:

1. to make sure we are in the faith (2 Corinthians *13:5)*
2. to make sure there is no hidden sin in our heart (Hebrews 12:1)
3. to make sure we are in proper relationship with the family of God (1 John 3:23-24)

If a person partakes of the sacred supper in a sinful condition, both the spiritual results and the healing effect of the meal are made void. The divine

purpose is hindered and, in the case of Judas, the meal intended to heal brought death.

Partaking Unworthily

At the Last Supper, Christ revealed that the broken bread was His body and the cup with the fruit of the vine represented His blood.

"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."

Matthew 26:26-28

Judas, one of the twelve disciples, dipped the bread in the cup and ate from the Lord's table. The Bible makes it clear that Judas was inwardly corrupt. He was an apostle who served the ministry of Christ as the treasurer (John 13:29). Once, Judas became indignant because a woman poured expensive ointment over Jesus' feet. Judas said the perfume should have been sold and the profit given to the poor. The Scripture indicates Judas was not concerned with the poor, but instead was greedy:

"This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief and had the bag, and bare what was put therein."

John 12:6

The Greek word for thief is kleptes. We derive our English word kleptomaniac from the word kleptes. A kleptomaniac is one who intentionally and consistently steals by habit. Judas was actually a thief in his heart who was willing to betray Christ for thirty pieces of silver (Matthew *26:15).*

The Bible says that Satan entered Judas' heart (John 13:27). This entrance of the evil one occurred during a very sacred moment in history. Christ was introducing the New Covenant that He would establish through His death and resurrection. Judas had no respect for the sacred revelation of the blood and body of Christ, just as Satan had no respect for the things of God (Matthew 16:23). The hypocrisy of Judas to know he was a traitor and yet pretend he was a part of Christ's ministry is unparalleled anywhere in the Bible. Yet, in some churches today, the hypocrites hide behind religious masks, cloak themselves in choir robes, and shake hands at the front door. Some live as a Christian double agent—close enough to the things of God that they can't enjoy sinning, but close enough to the world that they don't enjoy God's presence. They are masters at faking their spirituality by enduring the weekly rituals of Christianity at church. These types of personalities should heed the warning Paul gave about not discerning

the body of Christ.

When Paul spoke of not discerning the Lord's body, he could be referring to either not discerning the purpose of Christ's suffering or not discerning the healing aspect of the atonement.

For example, there are millions of Christians who accept the message of salvation from sin through Christ's death and resurrection. Yet, if you were to inform them that by His stripes they could receive physical healing, their response would be, "We don't believe God heals today," or "We have doctors; therefore, we don't need the healing gifts that once worked in the church." Imagine the number of Christians who have departed this life early, possibly before their appointed time, because they did not discern the healing power available through the threefold atonement of Christ.

After being a Christian for many years, one man came to the knowledge of Christ's full atonement. He commented, "I had a wonderful wife who developed cancer. My church taught that God made people sick to teach them a lesson. I accepted this as fact and was angry with God for trying to teach my wonderful wife, a holy Christian, some type of lesson on suffering. No one told me about the healing power of Christ." This man felt that his church traditions had cheated him. Perhaps his wife would have passed away anyway, but at least he could have been given the option of hope through the healing power of Christ.

Some may say that telling people God can heal will only get a person's hopes up. What if it doesn't happen? Why do people see a doctor, have x-rays, or take medicine? They do so because they hope that the doctor will be able to cure them, or they hope the tests will be negative, or they hope the medicine will work. Yet, a minister who brings hope through the Word is lambasted by the voices of unbelief.

Healing through the atonement involves discerning the Lord's sufferings and connecting His atoning power to the act of Communion. Yes, healing comes in a variety of methods, but the bread and the cup are a visible demonstration of an accomplished work.

The Bread and the Cup

During the time of Christ, and even today at the Passover supper, the bread becomes the central focus. There are three pieces of bread called matzo used during the Passover meal. To the Jews, these three individual pieces of unleavened bread represent Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The father of the house places the bread in a three-layered napkin. During the Passover supper, the middle piece of bread is removed and is broken in two. One half of the broken piece is hidden. This hidden portion is known as the afikoman (the "after meal")

and is eaten at the end of the meal as a reminder of the paschal lamb, which was eaten at the end so that its taste would remain in the mouth.

A custom developed for the broken half of the bread to be placed in a linen napkin and hidden somewhere in the house by the father. The children would then set out to discover the hidden piece of bread and the child who was successful would receive a special prize.

In these customs, we can see the prophetic parallel of Christ's sufferings. During the Middle Ages, Christians taught that the three pieces of bread represented the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The middle bread, representing Jesus, was removed and broken. When Christ held up the bread and broke it before His disciples, He was symbolically breaking the middle matzo. Just as part of the bread is wrapped in a linen napkin, so the bruised body of Christ was wrapped in linen cloth and hidden away from the eyes of men in a sealed tomb (Luke *23:53).* After His resurrection, the disciples ran to the graveyard, stooped inside the small cavern, and saw the grave clothes lying on a stone slab, the body missing (John 20:6-7). In the Passover Seder, the child who discovers the bread wrapped in the linen receives a gift. Those who were an eyewitness to Christ's resurrection did receive a special gift called "the promise of the Father" (Acts 1:4). This promise of the Father was the Holy Spirit, the other comforter sent to dwell in the church (John 14:26).

During the Passover meal, a cup of the fruit of the vine was set before the disciples (Matthew 26:29, Mark 14:25, Luke 22:18). Judas was present, participating in the supper as though he was a faithful friend and follower of Christ. Yet, in his heart was greed and deception. When Judas partook of the bread and drank from the cup representing the New Covenant, the spiritual condition of Judas brought judgment to his life. He knew he was going to betray his master and he was fully aware that the thirty silver coins had his name on them. Judas was in a terrible backslidden condition and was going through the religious routine, but God saw through the hypocrisy.

What Makes Us Worthy or Unworthy?

Our personal relationship with Christ makes us worthy to partake in Communion. A person without a relationship with Christ must repent of their sins and confess Christ as Savior before receiving the Communion supper. Communion is a token - a sign -that you have committed your life to Christ. His blood has cleansed you from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

People who live a double life, who appear to live for Christ at church, but who do not live for Christ outside the church doors, should repent before God and confess their sins before ever receiving the Lord's Supper.

Often, people who are suffering with a terminal disease will search out any method to bring restoration to their health. Some will seek a certain minister to pray for them, some will attend a special healing service, and some will call for the elders of the church to pray for them. At times those who are unsaved will ask God for healing. The Bible indicates that God is able to heal such a person, but only after they confess their faults (sins):

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer offaith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

James 5:14-16

Don't Underestimate the Power

Do not underestimate the power of the Communion meal. Confessing your sins and believing upon Jesus Christ will bring you salvation and eternal life, but the Communion meal can actually preserve and keep you during your earthly life. The bread and the cup are so important that Christ said He would eat it again when we enter the kingdom at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:19).

Chapter 6

THE MEAL THAT FILLS

"And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ."

Colossians 2:10-11

There was nothing in the Old Covenant Law of Moses that was very satisfying. In fact, the spiritual instruction was rigid, and disobedience was punishable by death. The life of an adulterer ended by stoning (Leviticus 20:10), as did the life of a son who cursed his mother or father (Exodus 21:17). Parents who passed their children through the fire (we would know this today as a spirit of abortion) also met death at the hands of Hebrew men who protected the law of God and the nation from spiritual corruption (Leviticus 20:2). Any person who consulted witches or engaged in occult activity could expect a short life. If the Lord Himself didn't get you, a huge rock eventually would (Leviticus 20:27). If you knocked out a fellow's tooth or injured his eye, you would end up toothless and half blind (Leviticus 24:20). The law was strong on paper, but weak in the hearts of the people.

People need something that will satisfy their restless spirits. They will spend sensational amounts of cash on senseless sins, birthing habits that cost more money than they earn and damaging their bodies beyond repair. I believe the sinner's soul searching is motivated by the pain of emptiness. The human spirit without God is a wandering soul, moving from relationship to relationship, from heartbreak to heartbreak, from pain to pain. There is a spiritual gnawing that comes with not knowing God. To avoid this restlessness of the soul, Satan brings the finest alcohol, the latest drug, or the prettiest people to surround you with pleasure. The seasonal pleasure ends when you are broke, busted, and disgusted. Something must fill this void.

Some seek pleasures; others seek things. They purchase a new house, then new furniture, then a new car. Eventually, the roof leaks, the furniture wears out, and the car falls apart. The honeymoon with your things soon fades and you are left with the bills. Something must outlast the fleeting pleasures of possessions. Religion must be the answer!

The plate is full of choices. There is the strong meat of Islam, seasoned with its teaching of Jihad. What about the spice of Hinduism that welcomes every god

imaginable to their table? The human palate can be teased by the taste of thousands of religious doctrines, each guaranteeing to touch some part of the soul. But some food is good to the taste, yet bad for the stomach. Religion is a search for God, but what we all need is a personal relationship with the Almighty. That relationship is found when we enter the New Covenant, repenting of sin and acknowledging the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.

The legal document listing the spiritual claims of the New Covenant is the New Testament. One result of entering this New Covenant is the wholeness and the fullness of all spiritual blessings that are promised to those who enter into a covenant relationship with Christ.

There are many Scriptures that reveal the desire of God to bring fullness to the believer. Among them are:

Believers can be filled with the fullness of God:

"And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."

Ephesians 3:19

Believers can be filled with the Holy Spirit:

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."

Ephesians *5:18*

Believers can be filled with the fruits of righteousness:

"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."

Philippians 1:11

Believers can be filled with goodness and knowledge:

"And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another."

Romans 15:14

Believers can be filled with the knowledge of God's will:

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all

wisdom and spiritual understanding."

Colossians 1:9

Believers can be filled with faith and power:

"And Stephen, full offaith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people."

Acts 6:8

Believers can be filled with the joy of the Lord:

"And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost."

Acts 13:52

I believe this fullness is what Christ spoke of when He said in John 10:10: *"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."* When a cup is full, it takes only one drop to make it overflow. When believers are filled with the good things of God, those near them can see the expressions of joy on their countenances.

Circumcision of the Flesh or the Spirit?

Under the Old Covenant, the sons of Abraham were to be circumcised eight days after their birth (Leviticus 12:3). A sharp knife or a flint tool was used to remove the foreskin of the flesh from the Hebrew male child. When the flesh healed, the child would carry a small scar as a reminder of the day of circumcision. This act was a token (a sign) of the covenant between the God of Israel and His covenant people (Genesis 17:11).

The male child eventually married. As he and his wife consummated their marriage, the woman shed blood which was a token or a sign of her virginity. The following morning, if there were questions about the woman's virginity, the bed sheets were removed and her mother and father brought them before the elders to prove the wife had sealed the marriage covenant by her blood (Deuteronomy 22: *15-20).*

When the husband's seed passed from his loins into his wife, his seed had to pass through the mark of circumcision on his flesh. Therefore, his seed was marked for the covenant. This may be why God used the word seed throughout the Old Testament when he confirmed promises to the future children of the Hebrew nation. God said, *"I will give the land to your seed"* (Genesis 12:7). He told Abraham that his *"seed would be as the dust of the earth"* (Genesis 13:16), and *"I will multiply your seed"* (Genesis 16:10). God blessed the seed while it was still in the loins of the father. In the following Scripture, the writer points out how Abraham paid tithe for Levi while Levi was still in his father's loins:

"And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him."

Hebrews 7:9-10

Circumcision was the visible sign of the covenant. Any Hebrew child that was not circumcised would be cut off from the people (Genesis 17:14). This mark upon the flesh was the most important act a Hebrew male could receive as evidence of his covenant with God. The main problem was the mark in the flesh had little impact upon the heart. Jesus revealed that sin came out of man's heart:

"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."

Matthew 15:19

The Hebrew prophets understood the weakness of circumcision of the flesh and predicted God would one day bring a New Covenant that would change the heart:

"And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh. "

Ezekiel 11:19

The Change in the Heart

The proof of the Gospel is in the power of the Gospel. The evidence that the message of Christ is life changing is seen in those whose lives it has changed. What other message can transform the lost sinner in thirty minutes or less? Picture this: a sinner enters a church where he has never been and sits in a seat where he has never sat. A minister he has never before seen preaches from a Bible the sinner has never read. He hears a message on redemption that he has never heard and accepts an invitation he has never received to believe in a Savior he cannot see. After praying a simple prayer, the man or woman is changed for eternity!

This is the power of the Gospel. The radical transformation of a sinner is the visible proof that the Gospel of Christ is not just another religion, but is the road to a relationship with God. If any man is in Christ, he becomes a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). The spiritual heart surgery resulting from the miracle of salvation will cause one to love the unlovable, reach the unreachable, and change the unchangeable.

The Meal That Fills

Circumcision of the flesh is no longer the method God uses for entering the covenant. God now requires circumcision of the heart. Jesus said that unless we eat His flesh and drink His blood, we would have no life in us (John 6:53). Receiving the bread and the fruit of the vine are a continual reminder of not only

the sufferings of Christ, but of our personal relationship with Him.

I cannot see God, but I can understand Him through His Word and I can feel His presence. I cannot see faith, but I can see and experience the results of faith when people exercise faith in God's Word. I cannot see the Holy Spirit, but I have both witnessed and experienced the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit in my ministry.

It is difficult to understand how a piece of bread and a small cup of juice can have the impact it has as it relates to healing and the life of God. We must remember that God *"hastens His Word to perform it"* (Jeremiah 1:12). God watches over His Word and watches your actions. When you receive Communion, you are reminding the Lord of the great work Christ did for you. Just as circumcision was a visible sign of the covenant, so the Communion meal is visible evidence that you believe and receive the work Christ did for you.

When you hold up the cup, you are saying, "Lord, this is a symbol of your precious blood." As you partake of the bread, you are saying, "Lord, I accept this as a symbol of your broken body."

Since all the fullness of God was manifested through Christ (Colossians 2:9) and Christ is in us (Colossians 1:27), then we, too, can receive all the fullness of God's favor and blessings if we follow Christ and His New Covenant instructions. If Jesus said I would have life by eating His flesh and drinking His blood, then I am more than willing to have Communion with Him. There is nothing in the Scripture to indicate that if a believer chooses to do so, he or she cannot celebrate the Lord with this meal every day.

Christians often talk about being intimate with God. One way of being truly intimate with the Lord is to receive Communion and meditate upon His redemptive work.

Chapter 7

RECEIVING THE COMMUNION MEAL

The Lord's Supper not only shows forth the Lord's death until He comes, but helps to keep a believer in right relationship with God and his fellow man. This is done through the procedure of self-examination, prior to receiving the Supper. I have outlined four steps a believer should take when receiving the Communion meal:

Look Inward

Prior to receiving Communion, a believer should look inward into their heart and spirit. This inward examination is to ensure that we have no hidden or known sin in our lives. The Bible says, "*But let a man examine himself*" The word examine means *to reach a result from an inquiry.* Ask yourself if you have offended God in word or deed. Is there a bondage or a pet sin that you are struggling with? If the answer is yes, a believer should repent before receiving Communion. This action will help keep your spirit pure between you and God.

Look Outward

Prior to receiving Communion, we must look outward toward those we know, including family, friends, or fellow believers. The Bible teaches that, if we have something against a fellow believer, our gift (offerings) will not be blessed until we first go to our brother or sister in Christ and make restitution (amends) with them:

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee;

Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy g^{ift}*. "*

Matthew 5:23-24

Restitution, or reconciliation, is the theme of the New Covenant. If Christ forgave us, then we should forgive others.

Your faith in the cross and the suffering of Christ has built a bridge between you and God, and between earth and eternity. Your relationship with God is vertical and your relationship with man is horizontal. When a vertical and a horizontal line intersect, they form a cross.

There are many believers who may hinder their full healing because of unforgiveness or strife. This inward conflict blocks the flow of God's power. As we examine our relationship with God, we must also examine our relationship

with others.

Look Upward

As believers eat the bread and drink from the cup, they should meditate upon the redemptive work of Christ, recognizing that He suffered on our behalf and that through His death and resurrection we can enjoy a threefold atonement. We can be made whole in our spirit, soul, and body. As we look upward to our High Priest, Jesus Christ, we should meditate upon the goodness of God and His mercy toward us.

Look Onward

Live every day with the expectancy that you will fulfill your God-given assignments and will live out all your days. Seize the promise of Psalms 9 1:16: *"With long life will l satisfy him, and shew him my salvation."*

My eighty-six year old grandmother, who had seldom been sick a day in her life, became very ill last fall and was taken to the hospital. At that time, we were receiving this revelation on daily Communion. My aunt, who had taken Communion and was also healed, began serving Communion to my grandmother. Within a few weeks, she was up and going again.

I told her, "I know one day you're going home to be with the Lord. We all will. When you depart, go like Smith Wigglesworth. He went at a ripe old age by simply closing his eyes and waking up in heaven."

The Communion Procedure

The actual unleavened bread used at a Jewish Passover is called matzo bread. It is available at certain grocery stores but, if it is not available in your area, use unsalted crackers. The Lord knows your heart and the effort you are making to obey Him.

For the fruit of the vine, I personally use grape juice that is obtained from a local grocery store.

As for the cup, some people may purchase an actual Passover (Seder) cup for Communion. Any type of cup may be used and you may, as I do, want to set aside a cup just for this purpose. (Our ministry has a portable Communion kit that was made especially for our ministry partners and may be purchased through the ministry.)

If you are receiving Communion first thing in the morning, clear your mind and heart of all distractions and fully concentrate upon the wonderful grace of God. Pour the fruit of the vine into the cup, take a piece of bread in your hand and, with your own words of prayer, bless the bread and the cup. Thank God for sending Christ to redeem you.

If you are in need of healing, begin to quote the promise “with the stripes of Jesus I am healed.” In prayer, tell the Lord you believe that the blood of Christ was shed for your atonement, including your physical healing. Believe, as you receive

Communion, that the life of Christ is working in your body, driving out every sickness, disease, and weakness that is hindering your life.

Remember that this is not a magical formula, but a sacred moment between you and your heavenly Father. If a person does not receive Communion every day, they should do so at least once a week. Do not allow this act to become a religious ritual where you lose the meaning.

Prayer Prior to Receiving Communion

Below is an example of a prayer that you can pray. As you grow in the grace and knowledge of God, pray a simple prayer from your heart.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for sending your Son,

Jesus Christ to redeem mankind. I thank you that, through Christ's sufferings, He purchased a threefold redemption for my spirit, mind, and body. Today I ask you to bless this bread that represents the body of Christ. Bless the fruit of the vine that represents the precious blood of Christ.

Father, as you have forgiven me, so I forgive those who have sinned against me. Lord, I forgive and release anyone who has wronged me and I ask you to search my spirit and remove any trace of sin or disobedience from my life.

Today I release from my mental prison anyone who has hurt me in any way and l ask you to bless them and help them spiritually.

Father, as I receive this Communion, I ask you to bring strength and health to me spiritually, emotionally, and physically because of the New Covenant that was sealed through the sufferings of Christ. Father, Jesus carried my infirmities; therefore, l ask you to lift from me what Jesus has carried for me. I receive it by faith and I give you all the glory and honor in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Spend time praying, meditating, and praising the Lord for your salvation, healing, and wholeness. Remember that this is a reminder of the covenant and God is moved by His covenant!

Chapter 8

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

After many years of full time ministry, I have discovered an important key connected to receiving from the Lord. All truth must be processed through the intellect, where we reason and weigh the evidence we receive:

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord... "

Isaiah 1:18

Yet, for spiritual truth to impact your life, it must be quickened to your inner spirit. As the psalmist once said:

"Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me."

Psalms 119:49-50

The word quicken means *to make alive*. There are times when you hear a message from God's Word and you are intellectually challenged. At other times, you are simply uplifted and blessed. There are occasions when the Word of God pierces into your soul like a sword (Hebrews 4:12). Then there are unique times when the message you are hearing or the book you are reading seems to come alive in your spirit. You know when this happens. The information becomes revelation as the eyes of your understanding are opened (Ephesians 1:18). The truth seems to jump from the pages and suddenly you can sense inwardly a strong witness that God will move on your behalf.

The spiritual truth you have read must become more than a book in your hands for this message to impact your life. It must quicken your heart and spirit. When the written or spoken Word of God becomes alive and energized in your heart, it becomes a rhema word. The word rhema is one of the Greek words translated in the New Testament as *Word of God.* Two examples where the word rhema is translated as Word of God are:

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word (rhema) of God."

Romans 10:17

"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word (rhema) of God."

Ephesians 6:17

Once the Word of God moves from intellectual reasoning to a quickened, living word in your spirit, then faith will enter your spirit! You are able to believe what God has spoken and respond to His Word in faith. This has

personally happened to me on several occasions. I recall praying for several months for direction in my ministry. During a special service in Ohio, the Holy Spirit quickened my spirit to act on my faith and, in obedience, the Lord would meet the needs of our ministry. I acted in faith, and He met the needs.

I want to emphasize again that the concept of Communion is Biblical and should be practiced whether or not a person is physically sick. If you attend a church where Communion is offered, then by all means receive the Blessed Sacrament. Examine your relationship with God and with man, and repent before both if necessary.

In Judaism, a distinction is made between sins committed against God and sins committed against a fellow man. This is clear from the Old Testament sacrifices. One offering was known as a sin offering and another was marked as a guilt offering. The sin offering was a sacrifice made when one sinned against the Word of God. However, the guilt offering was made as a form of restitution when a person sinned against a fellow man. The guilty person not only went before God for forgiveness, but also before the person against whom he had sinned. This is why Jesus said:

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

Matthew 5:23-24

Just as Jesus would say *"Again I say unto you"* (Matthew 19:24), I wish to remind you that one of the greatest roadblocks to healing is unforgiveness and strife. You will never receive your complete healing if you continually allow strife and contention to rule your life. Both my father and I have seen people receive wonderful answers to prayer after they began confessing their faults and forgiving those who have mistreated them.

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

James 5:16

In conclusion, I am emphasizing inner cleansing through repentance because I do not want to see this powerful covenant of healing through the Lord's Supper become null and void due to a hidden sin or attitude that is unconfessed and forsaken. I also wish to say again that this is not magic, nor is it medicine. Each person must judge this teaching in his or her own spirit and act accordingly. Whether we receive Communion daily, weekly, or monthly, we must do it in a spirit of understanding and faith. None of us has a guarantee about life tomorrow. But I believe it is Biblical that we can live out our appointed days and then depart in peace. *The Meal That Heals* gives you the Biblical revelation that

God has established to help you do just that.

PRAY BEFORE RECEIVING COMMUNION

Prayer should be offered to the Lord before receiving Communion. Below is an example of a prayer that you can pray. As you grow in the grace and knowledge of God, pray a simple prayer from your heart.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for sending your son,

Jesus Christ, to redeem mankind. I thank you that, through Christ's suffering, he purchased a three-fold redemption for my spirit, mind, and body. Today, I ask you to bless this bread that represents the body of Christ. Bless the fruit of the vine that represents the precious blood of Christ.

Father, as you have forgiven me, so I forgive those who have sinned against me. Lord, I forgive and release anyone who has wronged me and I ask you to search my spirit and remove any trace of sin or disobedience from my life.

Today, I release from my mental prison anyone who has hurt me in any way and I ask you to help them spiritually and bless them.

Father as I receive this communion, I ask you to bring strength and health to me spiritually, emotionally, and physically, because of the New Covenant that was sealed through the sufferings of Christ. Father, Jesus carried my infirmities; therefore, I ask you to lift from me what Jesus has carried for me. I receive it by faith and I give you all glory and honor in the name of Jesus Christ! Amen.

The Meal That Heals

The Biblical revelation contained in this book will not only challenge your spirit, but could possibly extend the days of your life! Several years ago, Dr. John Miller first introduced this truth to Perry Stone.

Perry believes this revelation of daily Communion has been lost in the traditional church, but is being revived In this final hour as the ultimate New Covenant weapon to attack sickness and bring healing in the lives of Christians! This is not just another message, but a life-changing spiritual revelation of God's healing covenant through the bread and the fruit of the vine.



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