



WCF 14.1

*I. The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, (a) is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts; (b) and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word; (c) **by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened.** (d)*

(a) Heb. 10:39.

(b) II Cor. 4:13; Eph. 1:17, 18, 19; Eph. 2:8.

(c) Rom. 10:14, 17.

(d) I Pet. 2:2; Acts 20:32; Rom. 4:11; **Luke 17:5; Rom. 1:16, 17.**

## **by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened**

Luke 22:14 When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. <sup>15</sup> Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; <sup>16</sup> for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

<sup>17</sup> Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; <sup>18</sup> for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

<sup>19</sup> And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

<sup>20</sup> Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

<sup>21</sup> But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. <sup>22</sup> And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" <sup>23</sup> Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.

Luke 17:1 Then He said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come! <sup>2</sup> It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones. <sup>3</sup> Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. <sup>4</sup> And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times in a day returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him."

<sup>5</sup> And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."

Hebrews 4:1 Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.

<sup>2</sup> For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. <sup>3</sup> For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said:

*"So I swore in My wrath,  
'They shall not enter My rest,' "*

although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. <sup>4</sup> For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "*And God rested on the seventh day from all His works*"; <sup>5</sup> and again in this place: "They shall not enter My rest."

<sup>6</sup> Since therefore it remains that some *must* enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, <sup>7</sup> again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "*Today*," after such a long time, as it has been said:

*"Today, if you will hear His voice,  
Do not harden your hearts."*

<sup>8</sup> For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. <sup>9</sup> There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. <sup>10</sup> For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.

<sup>11</sup> Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

<sup>14</sup> Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Romans 4:13 Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles. <sup>14</sup> I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. <sup>15</sup> So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also.

<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. <sup>17</sup> For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

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Few minutes ago, there were there was a line of young ladies at the breakfast table and it called to mind the psalm which says the daughters of Israel are corner pillars for beauty and for strength and that's marvelous. But we know. The only true strength in those corner pillars or in the men and the young men who we hope and pray that the Lord is growing is the strength of Christ and the strength of our God in Christ and he has particular means by which he not only brings us to union with himself through faith so that we are made righteous in him alone and what?

He has done alone but he also has means by which he grows us in faith in which he strengthens us. So that's what we have been on these last few weeks this grace of faith. Faith that is ordinarily by the ministry of the word and then last week we begin this last clause also by which also that is the ministry of the word and by the administration of the sacraments and prayer that is faith is.

Increased and strengthened. So last week we're focusing especially on increased and strengthened and we considered first the ministry of the world and then we considered baptism and we're coming to the other sacrament this morning in the league 22 passage and Jesus initiating the Lord's Supper. At league 22. And then we'll consider prayer Luke 17 and Hebrews 4 and wrap up with the last proof text that they used rooms 16 and 17.

So that should be Romans 1:13 at the bottom, they're not Romans 4:13 because that's Romans 1:13 through 17 that will cover to get the context for verses 16 and 17. I think verses 16 and 17 are so often memorized and isolation and we forget what Paul was doing and saying in the context, there were so focused on.

The righteousness of God that is accounted for us through faith, but that's not actually the apostles primary focus at that moment in his letter. So let's begin with prayer and then we'll consider together the word of God.

Our father in heaven we thank you and praise you. For your great mercy to us. For we are the center. And apart from your giving yourself to us in Christ exhibiting him as a propitiation for our sins. Your spirit giving life to our hearts by which we call you our although by which we trust in him as our savior.

Apart from this Lord, we could not even lift our eyes to heaven. But we thank you that you have lifted us up in Christ. You have given the minister of your spirit we ask that he would help us now as we consider your word and we pray that. You would help us not only to understand correctly what your word is saying, but that we would respond correctly.

Grant to us to be believe all that you teach and to obey all that you command unto your glory in Jesus name amen.

Alright so Luke 22 verses 14 through 23. Who are read that for us. Alright miss. Emily, nice. Lee and loudly, please.

I say to you, I will not drink free.

And he took that they sang and broke it. Gates hidden saying this is my body, which isn't for you. Do this in an un. Ique Lifewise he also took the cup after saying This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Instead for you but behold. My hands lived the hand of my portrayer is waking me on the table and truly the son of man.

Goes as it is been determined but woe to the man to that man by assumed he is betrayed and he then they began to question on themselves which of them it was true with Jesus.

Did you say this thing? Okay, which of them it was who would do this thing? All right children. What was the this thing that each of them was wondering which of them it was who would do it?

Or they're wondering about at the table with Jesus. Who would betray him? That's right, and who did betray him? Judas escape at betrayed him and who abandoned him. All of them. Okay, so. When we come to have the supper we usually read from 1st Corinthians 11 and although we could start earlier in in the chapter there, what is the how does the Apostle Paul usually start?

He tells us about the night that the Lord Jesus instituted the supper and how does he described that night? The night that he was betrayed okay, so there is a neediness and a lack of faith and a lack of faithfulness in us, that is the backdrop for the supper.

So there are comes he sits down the 12 parcels are with him. He says to them with fervent desire our desire to eat this pass over with you before I suffer. For I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

Okay, so he wanted to eat the Passover with them before. He suffered that would make the fulfillment of the Passover in the Kingdom of God a twofold thing. One he implies in the connection between verse 15 and 16 that his suffering fulfills the Passover. And that's something that we've expected ever since John the Presbyterian nurse on the baptizer.

Saw Jesus and said of him what? The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and he very intentionally says the Lamb of God, although most of the sacrifices would have been bulls and goats or at least the burnt offerings and so there is a very specific reference to Jesus as a pass over lamb and that is the the grateful filament and yet the eating of the Passover has a fulfillment as well.

Christ himself is our Passover Christ himself as our Passover land but he is as he fulfills the the the repeated Passover sacrifices with his ones for all Passover sacrifice, he also institutes a new supper. Okay, so he takes the company gives thanks he says take this divided among yourselves for I will proceed you.

I'm not drinking the fruit of the vine until the kingdom comes he took bread and he gave thanks and he broke it and he gave it to them. Any of you children ever get hungry.

Now do you ever do you have a mom or a dad who sometimes has oil of the food in front of them and they are either dishing it out on the plates or maybe depends on your circumstances handing it out to you. How do you feel about that moment when they are handing out the and I love that it's bread here that.

You know. Whatever you think about nutrition. They'll get to zest and be in antibiotic. Jesus is the bread of life who came down from heaven and he is appointed bread for use in the supper. So when he gets thanks and he breaks the bread and he's giving it to them the Lord has built into each of you children this physical hunger so that you can understand what Jesus is saying sacramentally, what does he say when he is giving them the bread.

Here going to glad you're hungry for bread good thing we had some. This is this is the bread that you're hungry for that. I'm giving to you. No. What does Jesus say he's giving to them.

This is my body, which I'm giving to you. It's very important he has in front of him a bunch of apostles who are about to do what? What about to do in the next couple of hours? Abandoned him. One of them is going to between him and the sinfulness and the weakness that is in each of them to abandon him that night is say great that they don't actually know which one is going to betray him.

In fact, in other accounts, there were each asking is it I? Right? So there the apostles it's not just Peter who after there's erection. Jesus is asking him if he loves him and Peter finally has to fall back on what Jesus knows, you know all things. You know that I love you.

I'm not you know, I'm not as sure of my love for you as you are sure of my love for you because you know all things and I don't know myself that well. Okay, but even before at the supper, they're all no that they have this weakness and they have this sinfulness in them that makes them capable of great sin.

So as the Lord Jesus is instituting this is it just for them for this one time so that they're more after they abandon him they realize what they've done like Peter although they didn't all deny him the way that Peter did with the the triple denial and the swearing and all of that was just for.

For them for the one time and how do we know? Okay. Easy question first. Easier question first. Was it just for the apostles for that one time? No, if it was we'd be sinning every week in the public worship, okay? So here else is week of faith and full of sinfulness and capable of denying an abandoning our Lord Jesus.

And what is one of the means that the Lord Jesus has appointed for giving his strength himself to to not just satisfy hunger, but to nourish and strengthen. The supper. You see how? As the church slid into this kind of re-sacrifice you mystical. Yeah internal-looking moment idea of the supper it was getting away from Jesus actually turning us not inward but outward from ourselves.

We see our need inward and it's good to reflect on that and know that and come with that neediness with that spiritual hunger, but in the supper he's pointing us to himself, this is my body, which is given for you do this and remembrance of me. Wise verse 20, he also took the cup after supper saying this cup is the new covenant somebody helped me with what the word covenant means.

And so. Okay an agreement and what does it do to these two or more people you can use the Palmer Robertson definition if you know it that is. You we had Christ of the covenants on the back table for a while. I think they all disappeared so. Oh disappearing doesn't mean getting red does it yes?

Yes, thank you desire abandoned blood sovereignly administered so it's an agreement that binds to people together and it has obligations and it has blessings for those obligations and curses for falling to meet those obligations, yes.

You're. Righteous let's. That's a difficult question because. In in different traditions the way they ended up at different things happened in different ways.

So. In the Scott's Presbyterian tradition the rarity of the practice was because of the felt necessity to exercise discipline in the in the papist while you have approaching the supper it was this mystical thing but you didn't have to understand it you didn't have to internalize anything it was like mystical and mechanical you just get the grace by.

Might take by taking an element and the most profane person in the world with no faith in Jesus. Christ could could get some grace out of it if it was just given to them so there was a strong emphasis in the reformation on church discipline and the table. Wanting those who have a credible profession to come and eat my faith so the rarity in the Scott's Presbyterian stream came from wanting to lead up to the taking of the supper with elder visitation.

A spiritual self-reflection led by elders in your home and then a communion season in which you would have weekday preaching for a week or two leading up to the annual celebration of the supper that was aimed at taking it well and the idea was that. In the preaching throughout the year you would be aiming at the kind of spiritual work that you're hoping that God will do in the congregation that we could all take it well when we did and you would get a token at your visit your elder visit that said you've been visited you have, you know settled accounts with God as it were you you're good to go to come to the table this year and, You know, they would kind of bend the frequency a little bit by staggering their

communion seasons so that when your neighboring congregation was in its communion season, you might come with your token so that would be close communion not closed for those who know that so that is very different than.

A hyper superstitious kind of the way I grew up in what was called the Presbyterian Church, but the Lord's Supper was kind of this. Individual's near each other seeing how sorry they can feel and eat, you know, tiny little cuba wonder bread and thimbles worth of welves that you know, you got yourself to feeling sorry enough for by the time it went down and that would kind of be this.

Sad memorial right so it's not just do this and remember it's at me, it's do this to feel how sad you are that this had to happen to me. I had no sense growing up with the instruction that I received about the supper that it was a celebration that the one whose death was being shown forth was coming that he was giving himself not just yet he had given himself for me but now he was also giving himself to me that this was happening in other ways through prayer and and baptism which we are to reflect upon and receive benefits from our entire Christian life and the preaching of.

The world and that the supper was one of those things. Okay, so one of the one of the reasons to spend a good amount of time on this is because the Lord Jesus has given the supper as a meal and he is the meal. Because we have a weakness and we have a sinfulness for which there is no remedy on earth the remedy for it sits at the right hand of the majesty on high sits on the throne of glory and so the Lord Jesus offers himself to us by faith and he nourishes and strengthens us and grows us in our faith through the supper.

One of the things that he does is he doesn't just nourish and strengthen us and the body but says this cup is the new covenant in my blood. Now. Jesus having established a covenant in his blood has bound himself to God. He is the covenant head he is the covenant representative and so if you belong to God through faith in Jesus Christ, then when you drink the cup of the new covenant in his blood, you're drinking a cup that belongs to you.

He says the covenant is in in my blood. But I'm putting the cup of my covenant in your hand because you have a part in the covenant that comes through Jesus Christ. So God has bound himself to his incarnate son. And to everyone who is in his son. If you are a professing Christian and you're gonna come to the table in.

I don't know how long it takes us to get there like two hours from now. And you're gonna you're gonna come to the table in two hours from now. You you hear this is my body which is broken for you do this and remembrance of me the body of the Lord Jesus Christ was broken for you taken to eat Jesus is saying that he is your strength he is your life for all of the obedience and all of the service that you are obligated to by being part of this covenant.

He is your worthiness and he is your ability and you are to receive from him at the table and continue to receive from him through faith until you until you are brought into glory until he comes okay when he puts the cup in your hand and he says this cup is the new covenant in my blood he is assuring you that you are bound that those who believe in Jesus Christ are bound to God in a way that cannot be undone yes just a, Question for you is why why why Jesus.

So that is a very good question and for me, the answer is always been to warn us against our presumption. Right. So that works for presumption about ourselves and presumption about others. Okay, Jesus has this particular knowledge of Judas but Judas is still as it were a member of the visible church.

So one of the things that this does is for those who are elders and aged sometimes run into this with parents right who have professing children and they kind of make themselves the ones who borrow their children from the table. They say Johnny didn't do good this week. I don't think he should take.

Yeah. Susie's not accent acting like a Christian I don't feel like her profession is credible anymore. Well, sorry, she's a professing member of the visible church. You talk to her about it. And you have that relationship with her and you yourself if you feel like you are an unrepentant sin may want to refrain if if you haven't settled that with the Lord a lot easier to do if you're taking it weekly rather than annual you're gonna go hungry for a year if if it's an annual thing, right?

But, Also for the for the elders of the church this grants a liberty of conscience. Because you have someone who has a credible profession of faith but the way they've been talking lately and you may have eaten a confronted and rebuked them but you can imagine how hard it would be on the soul of an elder.

That's the things that he knew about every church member were kind of controlling whether or not he was going to give the elements that week. Right? So there's there's that but also for ourselves that we would know I could eat and I could drink and I could still be Judas.

Judas didn't receive Christ at the table. Right? He didn't have faith in him. Judas received bread and wine that condemned him. So yeah, those are some of the answers I haven't looked at it recently but it is a good question and it's it's worth exploring further, yes. Dave.

But. So when a person takes. Unworthy.

Yes. I would not go. All the way to that because you can have faith and failed to take by faith. Right? The reason Judas failed to take my faith was because he had none. The reason I say that is because first Corinthians 11 talks about those who are judged for taking unworthily who will not be condemned with the world.

Right. So they are converted people in Corinth that first Corinthians 11 is saying are profaning the Lord's body at the table and eating and drinking in a way that brings. Yeah a judgment that we would put into the category of fatherly discipline. Based on the the statement so that you may not be condemned along with the world.

So it's a little bit more complicated than that but I think it is important that if for helping us to look away from ourselves and to Christ and even away from or by means of is a better way of saying it the bread and the wine to Christ through the bread and the cup to Christ.

To remember that you can eat the bread and drink the cup and still be Judas and not actually have a part in his body and not actually have a part in his covenant. Does that?

I mean, I know I don't mean to neutralize the weightiness of the way you put it. I'm just saying there are more possibilities scripturally.

Yes, but before God are we judged for all those things yes? And so, I didn't mean if you're looking for. I guess I'm just trying to understand the connection.

So knowingly insane and what they're doing and they are doing. Right, there are many things that aggravate our sins and two of them are sending against more grace and sending against more knowledge. And that is actually one of the hardest things for me. Because I feel like I had been given a great amount of grace and a great amount of knowledge and I'm still sinning in these immense ways.

And you know, if you do the, Guiltiness calculus the immensity is plugged into the the expression with all these extra exponents because of. What I've received and it just makes the table that much better. Because. The other side of the equation is the atonement of Christ. Which whose riches can't be undone the resurrection life and power of Christ that will never run out of ability to increase and build up and strengthen my faith and the the certainty of the new covenant that is in his blood and not mine.

And therefore it, you know, I am bound to God by being bound to God in Christ, which is what he's saying presenting to us at the table in the cup, you are bound to God in Christ, that is how God has bound yourself to him. That can never be undone.

And he gives you a cup and then covenant making and covenant and. Covenant observance or re renewal try to stay away from the covenant renewal language that was appropriated by some folks with not great theology and the 2000 dots. But when you when you come to that covenant table, that's the celebration part after the covenant has been established, so there's assurance and gladness and in that cut that is being presented to us.

Well. I was gonna say we could start on prayer.

Let's see if we could do week 17 very quickly and but we'll have to do more on prayer next week, then he said to the disciples it is impossible that no offense it should come but woe to him through whom they do come it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and here were thrown into the sea than that he should offend one of these little ones really the word offend there is caused to stumble take heed to your selves, if your brother sins against you rebuke him if he repents forgive him if he sins against you seven times a day and seven times.

In a day returns do you saying I repent you shall forgive him as a mother's response realizing the the command for forgiveness the apostles said to the Lord increase our faith. And.

So that is one of the shortest prayers in the Bible. But it is a wonderful little proof text for prayer as a means of grace for the building up and strengthening of faith that in order to grow in faith to the point where we are forgiving in that way and in order to grow in faith in a way for those who are going to be.

Teachers and leaders were parents even or brothers, but that we have this great warning against being ones through whom our brothers or sisters stumble that we can come to the Lord Jesus and say, Increase our faith. He is the one from him it comes he increases it through the preaching he increases it through baptism increases it through this upper increases it through prayer and will.

Yeah, I think we will take the the other proof text next week, let's pray.

Lord Jesus how we thank you. But you have not only given yourself for us. For our sin. For our forgiveness for our righteous and bright standing. With God, but that you have given yourself to us for the building up and strengthening of our faith. For our carefulness not to make our brothers sister stumble.

For our being able to forgive. Our brother and sister when we are hurt and when we've been burned many times. But Lord. Our greatest trouble is how capable we are of sinning against you. Of being unfaithful to you of abandoning you of denying you. And so we thank you that is specifically in that context that you gave us your supper.

To find you as our strength for loving you and so we do pray that you would increase our faith even through our praying now we pray that you would increase our faith through the means of grace in the public worship that we're about to go to that we would not only learn from your word but that we would receive you and your life and your sanctifying benefit from your word read and preached.

That you would stir our faith up to you at the table and give yourself to us there. For walking by faith in the rest of this week. Grant these things we ask by the working of your spirit, which we ask in your name. Amen.