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Title: The Communion and Communicant

Author: Edward Hoare

Release date: March 9, 2013 [EBook #42288]

Language: English

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THE COMMUNION AND COMMUNICANT.

BY THE
REV. EDWARD HOARE, A.M.,
INCUMBENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, RAMSGATE.

LONDON:
J. HATCHARD AND SON, 187, PICCADILLY,
MDCCCXLVII.

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THE COMMUNION AND COMMUNICANT.

THERE is no institution more delightful to the Christian than the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is a touching remembrance of a Redeemer's love—a refreshing means of grace to the soul—a happy communion of the Lord's believing family—and a gladdening foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb. With what heartfelt gratitude should believers rejoice in such a feast!

But it is not to all a feast of joy. Some neglect it from a total want of inclination; some receive it in a careless, worldly spirit, and to them it soon becomes an empty form, like a vessel in which is

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no water; while others regard it as an awful mystery—as something too high for such as they are, and, like the holy of holies in the temple, beyond the reach of common men.

This sense of mysterious awe may be traced, in great measure, to the startling words of St. Paul in 1 Cor. xi. 29, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." Nor can there be any question, that the impression made by such strong and fearful language should be that of the deepest possible solemnity. St. Paul spoke by inspiration, and that man must indeed be a bold transgressor, who does not feel awed and solemnized when he reads such a caution from the Holy Ghost. But yet the Christian is not right if he lays aside the subject under the first sense of solemn awe, or excludes himself from a delightful privilege, because he sees solemnity in the ordinance, and apprehends some possible danger in its misuse. He ought rather to take the Word of God, and study it carefully, in order to ascertain the real nature of the service, and the kind of character to which the words refer. This is the course for sensible and right-minded men; and to assist such in this investigation, is the object of the present tract.

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There are five passages in the Bible distinctly referring to the Lord's Supper, as an appointed institution in the Church, namely, Matt. xxvi. 26-29; Mark xiv. 22-25; Luke xxii. 13-20; 1 Cor. x. 16-21; and xi. 18-34. [4] As the last of these is much the fullest, it may be well to adopt it as the basis of our enquiry; and we shall be able to learn from it the authority and nature of the Lord's Supper, the danger of coming unworthily, and the character of those who do so.

I. The AUTHORITY.

It is not a scheme of man's contrivance, or the result of merely human wisdom, but was ordained by our blessed Lord himself, and enjoined on his people by his twice repeated words.

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The first occasion was on the night before his crucifixion, when he was eating the Paschal Supper with his disciples. He then gave them bread and wine, and said, "This do in remembrance of me." Here, therefore, is his own plain command—and one command from him is enough for the Christian.

But He did not leave the subject there; for after his ascension to the right hand of God, he was still mindful of his sacrament, and repeated his command by express revelation to St. Paul. He had already spoken plainly, so that none could mistake him; and three evangelists had left his words in writing, so that none could doubt as to his language: but yet, as if to prevent the possibility either of forgetfulness or mistake, when he called a new servant to his apostleship, he made to him a second revelation of his will; for on turning to verse 23, we find that St. Paul did not receive the doctrine of the sacrament from those who were apostles before him, but from the Lord Jesus Christ himself. "*I received of the Lord* that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: 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."

Now, to those who are anxious to know how they ought to act, these twice repeated words of Jesus surely give a simple answer. Some persons think it safer to abstain and wait; but is it not the safest thing simply to obey the commands of Jesus? To follow your own judgment, and to give way to doubts and fears, can never be so safe as to throw yourself like a little child at the feet of your Saviour, and there say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." You wish to be Christ's disciple, so begin at once to do what Christ commands.

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II. The NATURE.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is,

(1.) *An act of remembrance.* When our Lord gave the bread and wine to his disciples, he said, "Do this in remembrance of me:" and when they are given to us, we receive them in remembrance of Christ. We know in common life what a value we put upon any token of affection, on a book, ring, or picture, which has been given as a memorial by some dear departed friend. It becomes sacred in proportion to our love for those who gave it, and when that love is strong we care far more for it than for other things of incomparably greater value. This act is a memorial or remembrance of Christ; an outward sign to show how much we love him. He is in heaven at the right hand of God, so that none can see him; but, while the world rejects him, we remember him; and when we receive that bread and wine, we set to our seal that he is our soul's beloved, that we live on his grace, and can never forget his mercy.

But we do not merely show our remembrance of his person and character; the communion is especially a remembrance of his death. It was appointed on the very night before his crucifixion, and the broken bread represents his body crucified, while the wine is a figure of his blood so freely shed for our sins. "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death until he come."—Verse 26. Now, there never was an act so full of love as that; the world's whole history contains nothing like it; the Son of God endured the curse of rebel man. Nor did anything ever done so closely affect our deepest interests; our whole hope of eternal life depends on what he then endured for us. Had he not suffered in our stead, we had all surely perished; but now, because he has borne that curse which we deserve, believing in him we are no less surely safe. Never, therefore, must that death of Christ be forgotten or disregarded by the Christian; it is our hope, our life, and only source of peace; and that man must have known little of a Saviour's

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grace who does not desire to “bind it as a sign upon his hand,” and to let it be “as frontlets between his eyes.” Now, when we take the bread and wine we express before the world our thankful remembrance of his grace; we declare before men the deep fidelity of our grateful love. We may show our gratitude either by words or actions. This is an action to denote the deep affection of those who live by faith, a visible utterance of their unseen and unceasing gratitude.

(2.) It is *a means of spiritual food and sustenance*. The soul requires to be fed as well as the body, and without food the one will die quite as quickly as the other, for neither soul nor body has life in itself. And as the body lives by outward food, so the believing soul feeds on Christ. He is the living bread which came down from heaven, the heavenly manna provided for his people throughout the wilderness. “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever.” Now, the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is a divinely appointed means whereby believers feed on Christ. We do not mean that there is anything particular in the bread or in the wine, anything remarkable or mysterious in the elements received which conveys a blessing, for they are nothing more than plain simple bread and wine, which nourish the body and that only. But when with the lips we receive those elements in faith, the Holy Ghost within the heart is graciously pleased to pour life into the soul. According to the language of the 28th Article, “The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is faith.”

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That there is no actual change in the bread and wine is perfectly plain from the single fact, that they are always called “bread” and “wine” in Scripture *after* their consecration in the sacrament. In this and the preceding chapter there are no less than four passages in which the food which communicants receive, is called by the simple name of “bread.”

x. 17.	“We are all partakers of that <i>bread</i> .”
xi. 26.	“As often as ye eat this <i>bread</i> .”
27.	“Whosoever shall eat this <i>bread</i> .”
28.	“So let him eat of that <i>bread</i> .”

And so also with the wine. Our Lord said of it, *after* the consecration, (Matt. xxvi. 29,) “I will not drink any more of this *fruit of the vine* until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” The bread, therefore, is still bread, and the wine still wine—unchanged in all respects; the same in substance, and the same in property, as before their consecration to the Lord’s service in the sacrament. They are set apart for a holy use, and therefore should be treated reverently, like the house of God itself. But they are no more changed in nature than were the stones and woodwork of the building, when it was solemnly consecrated to be a church for the Lord.

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What, then, is the meaning of our Lord’s words, “This is my body,” and “This is my blood?” That they did not mean that the bread and wine were changed into body and blood is evident, for such an interpretation would contradict the plain language of the Bible: and that they do mean, that the bread and wine were signs, emblems, or figures of his body and blood, is equally plain from the language of our Lord; for in ver. 25, we read, “This cup is the New Testament in my blood.” Now these words must be figurative, for none suppose that the cup was changed into the New Testament; and their only possible meaning is, that the wine in the cup was a figure or emblem of the blood of the covenant. So, also, must it be with the bread. The words are quite as plain and positive in one case as in the other. “This is my body,”—“This is the New Testament;” and as they were spoken by the same person, on the same occasion, to the same company, and with the same object, it is clear that they mean the same thing, namely, that the bread is a figure of the body, as the wine is a figure of the blood.

If a person were showing a gallery of pictures, he might say, “This is St. Paul,” “This is St. Peter,” and “This is St. John;” and he would mean thereby, that those pictures on the canvass were representations of the persons whose names they bore. So, again, when our Lord said, “I am the vine,” and “I am the door,” he did not mean that he was a real vine, or a real door, but that the vine and door were figures and emblems of his offices. So also in the Lord’s Supper, when he said, “This is my body,” and “This is my blood,” he did not mean that the bread and wine were changed into real flesh or real blood, but that they were signs and emblems of his blessed work, of his body broken, and his blood so freely shed for man.

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It is not, therefore, from any mystical property in the bread and wine themselves that we expect a blessing, but from the act of receiving them in obedience and faith. In the way of his judgments, we then wait on Christ, and trust to him to nourish our souls with grace. We do not expect to feed in any literal, carnal, or material manner, but we do expect, that while with the body we receive the bread in faith, our souls will receive Christ; and when with the lips we drink the wine, the heart will be made by the Holy Ghost partaker of his blood. Thus, to hungering and thirsting souls, the communion becomes inestimably precious. When we feel our weakness, we rejoice to come before him that we may be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; when we know, that without Christ we must perish, we count it our highest joy to wait on his love as he has told us, that the fainting soul may feed on him by faith. And he does strengthen and refresh the souls of his people; he meets and communes with them from the mercy-seat; he grants to each the needful grace, and oftentimes sends them back rejoicing to their homes, and saying, “It has been good for me that I have been there.”

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(3.) There is a third point of view in which the Lord's Supper is presented in the passage, viz., as a foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." The line of sacraments forms, as it were, the long chain connecting the first and second advents, and each celebration has a reference both to the present, past, and future; to the present, for we cast the sins and burdens of the day before the footstool of a present Advocate; to the past, for the heart is full with the thankful recollection of his death; and to the future, for our present delightful communion is a faint, but true image of the blessedness of that glorious hour, when the whole company of God's elect shall be gathered in to the marriage supper of the Lamb. The sacraments are very peaceful, but they are not to last for ever; they are to be observed for a given time, till the Lord come. Then,

"Faith will be sweetly lost in sight,
And hope in full supreme delight
And everlasting love."

We now bow down to hold communion with Christ, but then we shall behold him as he is, in all his love and all his majesty; we now meet with God's people in the affectionate sympathy of a common faith, but then we shall reign with the vast multitude of God's chosen saints in the triumphant fellowship of a common glory. And to those who long for the reality, there is delightful encouragement in partaking of the figure. They then lay hold on the chain that reaches heaven; they take to themselves God's emblems, and receive them in faith as pledges and tokens of the final fulfilment of his promises.

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There is, therefore, every inducement to partake of this delightful sacrament; and whether we regard its high authority, viz., the Lord's express command, or its sacred nature, as a service of remembrance, a means of spiritual nourishment, and a foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb, we may well wonder how any true believer can forego the enjoyment of such a privilege. But yet we must not suppose that the simple act of coming to the Lord's Supper can secure these blessings, for, as we read in ver. 17, we may "come together, not for the better, but for the worse." Nay, more, it is expressly declared, in ver. 29, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." These are solemn and most important words; enough to startle inquirers, and to make all mere professors tremble; nor can any man who fears God presume to read them lightly. They suggest two most important subjects of inquiry,—What do they mean? and, To whom do they apply?

III. WHAT DO THEY MEAN? OR, THE DANGER OF EATING AND DRINKING UNWORTHILY.

In endeavouring to ascertain what the passage really means, our best course will be to refer at once to the context; for, however valuable be human explanations, there is no expositor of the Bible so good as the Bible itself. The word rendered "damnation" in the text, is translated "judgment" in the margin of our Bibles, and for the following reason. There are two sorts of judgments mentioned in the Scripture,—the chastisement of God's children, and the final punishment of the wicked. Of these, the chastisement is laid on those whom God loves; "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth" (Heb. xii. 6); but the final punishment is on the unbelieving. Chastisement is limited and proportioned to his people's strength, whereas the final punishment is an unmixed cup of horror. Chastisement is for the improvement and sanctification of those who are to reign with Christ; the final punishment is for the vindication of God's righteous law. And chastisement takes place here in the form of sickness, suffering, and sorrow; whereas, the final punishment is in eternal fire. Now, it must be allowed that the word "damnation" conveys the idea of this most awful and final punishment, and many minds have been thereby unduly alarmed upon the subject. But the context seems to teach us that the leading idea in the apostle's mind was chastisement for he proceeds to say—"For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves we should not be judged. But when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world." It is plain that he here speaks of chastisement. He says expressly, "we are chastened;" he describes it as temporal affliction in this present life; and he teaches that it is sent for the express purpose of saving us from final ruin, "that we should not be condemned with the world." [13]

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This, then, we are bound to regard as the accurate and literal meaning of the text; and, although there cannot be the slightest doubt that a man may, by the repeated abuse of holy things, and by approaching the Lord's table in a worldly and carnal spirit, so sear and harden his conscience, that he may be truly said to eat and drink his own damnation in the most awful sense of the words, we venture to believe that such is not the meaning of this present passage, but that it describes the chastening of God's children in this present life, not as the commencement of final ruin, but as a correction sent in mercy to prevent their falling into the irrecoverable condemnation of the wicked.

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But whatever be the character of the judgments, the awakened conscience must tremble at the thought of "eating and drinking unworthily." To be "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," is a sin so grievous, that if there were no judgment of any kind connected with it, the broken heart must shudder at the possibility of its heinous guilt. If there be any love of Christ in our souls, we shall not require the fear of judgment to awaken grief and horror at the most distant thoughts of such a sin. Converted men think more of sins than punishments.

We must inquire, therefore,

For the answer to this question we must again refer to the passage itself, and we shall find that,

(1.) They apply to those who are living in *strife and schism*. As members of the Church of Christ, we are children in God's family, and at the Lord's communion we meet as brethren around the Father's table. It is plain, therefore, that love should reign there. We should be knit to each other in holy love, as each one is knit to Christ by faith; and whoever breaks the bond of love dishonours Christ, and comes unworthily to the communion. Nor is this said on man's authority, for this was one of the very sins committed and condemned at Corinth. "For first of all," says St. Paul, v. 18, "when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it." Of these divisions it is important to remark that they were not such as led to any outward and visible separation, for they came together to the same church, and knelt together at the same table; but they did not love each other; there was strife and party temper amongst them; an inward spirit of unkindness combined with the outward act of love; and so they came together not for the better but for the worse. Here, therefore, we have a simple answer for inquirers. If they are living in strife or enmity, harbouring the spirit of revenge, unable to forgive some offending brother, or giving way to a party spirit, they will then eat and drink unworthily, and they had better refrain till they can obey their master's precept—"First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

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(2.) A second character to which the words apply is the man who can receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper *without regard to the sacred nature of the service*. Such characters are clearly described in v. 20, 21:—"When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken." In the present day it is quite impossible that any person should commit the actual sin here described. The mode in which the sacrament is administered and the laws of society alike prevent all risk of such an outrage. But the state of heart which led to it is perfectly possible, and, rightly to understand the meaning of the passage, we must consider not so much the outward acts, which were peculiar to the Corinthians, as the inward motives and dispositions, which by nature may be common to us all. Now these are described in ver. 29:—"Not discerning the Lord's body." They ate and drank without regarding the deep solemnity of the holy sacrifice which the communion was appointed to commemorate; nor did they come there with any desire, as hungering and thirsting souls, to feed upon their Saviour by faith. They lost sight of his grace and sufferings in the pursuit of their own ends, and the gratification of their own appetites. When, therefore, persons come to the Lord's table in a light, frivolous, or careless spirit; either that they may not appear less religious than their companions; or because it is the habit of the family, the wish of their masters, or a becoming act in their rank and station; but without any deep feeling of the love and work of Christ Jesus; there is too much reason to fear that the text applies in all its awful force to them.

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And this suggests the extreme caution with which individuals should be urged to become communicants. Masters will, sometimes, show great zeal in persuading servants to attend the sacrament, and parents will bring their children thither as a matter of course, on their attainment of a certain age. Yet such children or servants may be unconverted persons, not discerning the Lord's body; in danger, therefore, of coming unworthily to the table. Begin, therefore, at the right end, and strive first for their conversion to Christ.

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(3.) So, also, it applies to those what are *living in presumptuous sin*,—drunkards, fornicators, unclean persons, dishonest men in trade, and such like. By allowing themselves in such practices, they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame. In coming to his table they profess that they know him, but in the allowance of their lust they by works deny him. In coming, therefore, to the Lord's table, they do but dishonour his holy name; nor can we avoid the sad conclusion that they come there unworthily, and according to the language of the text, "are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." We dare not, therefore, advise such characters to become communicants, for they cannot do so without imminent peril to their soul. According to the language of our Church, "If any of you be a blasphemer of God, an hinderer or slanderer of his word, an adulterer, or be in malice, or envy, or in any other grievous crime, repent you of your sins, or else come not to that holy table."

But we must not here leave the case of those unhappy men. They cannot come worthily to the communion. For what, then, are they worthy? To pray? to die? to appear before the Lord at his coming? How will that angry temper, or that darling sin, appear before the heart-searching God of Glory? Will it be less deadly than now? If it now excludes you from his communion, how will it then fare with you in his kingdom? If ye be now so in love with sin that ye cannot commemorate redemption, what interest do ye suppose ye have in Christ's atonement? If ye know so little of the cross of Christ, what can ye expect in his coming kingdom? We do not say that none can be saved who do not attend the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; but we do say, without the smallest hesitation, that none will be saved who are found so wedded to their sins that they cannot receive it worthily.

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But there are many tender consciences in the Church of Christ, and many hopeful persons who are apt to write hard things against themselves. Such persons will sometimes so deeply feel the solemnity of the warning, that they tremble at the thoughts of communion, and because they see in themselves great defects, are afraid lest possibly they should come unworthily to that sacred feast. Such a conscientious spirit must be respected greatly, and treated tenderly; it is much more hopeful than when persons regard the thing without a fear. It is, important, however, to

avoid a mistaken dread, and great care is needful lest such characters should be debarred from that which is designed for their especial benefit. It may be well, therefore, to examine a few of those cases to which the words are sometimes applied in practice, though not in Scripture.

(1.) They do not apply to persons *actively engaged in the business of life*. It has pleased God to place us in a world in which we are surrounded by various cares and duties. Some are in business, and have their minds constantly occupied by its management; some are servants, and required to work hard throughout the week; and others have so much to do in the maintenance and management of their families, that their hands are completely full, and their thoughts engrossed by the necessary engagements of the day. In such cases persons often feel that they had rather wait until they are more at leisure. They have little time for meditation; they find that their pursuits tend to make their minds secular, causes of irritation frequently arise, and they are led, it may be, into conduct which they fear might be unbecoming the communicant of the Lord. They, therefore, postpone the communion in the hope of greater leisure; the usual result of which postponement is, that one delay follows another till the whole desire becomes extinct within the soul. The servant, for example, waits till she is settled; she then waits again till she is less harassed with a small and increasing family; and then she waits till freed from the cares of providing for their entrance into life; till at length the infirmities of old age creep rapidly upon her, and she goes to her grave having spent her whole life in waiting. Now all this waiting is founded on a wrong principle,—a principle often strengthened by a misunderstanding of the words of St. Paul. If it were wrong to attend to life's engagements, there would then be some force in the objection. But the Scripture says that diligence in business as a duty, "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." It is plain, therefore, that attention to a lawful calling can form no barrier to the means of grace. Thus many of the holiest saints of God have been engaged in active life. Enoch had his family; Moses was the leader of Israel; and David had the charge of a nation's government. There, is, we know, a tendency in the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches to choke the word, that it becometh unfruitful. But this should rather draw a man to the means of grace than keep him from them. If we are exposed to great temptation, then we need great strength; and if harassed by the world's influence, we need the more peculiar help, that we may not be infected by its spirit. The question, therefore, comes to this, Do you intend to abandon yourself to the spirit of the world? If you do, by all means abstain from the communion. But if it is your heart's desire, in the midst of the world, to walk with God; then neglect no means of seeking him, but in the way of his judgments wait on him, that he may give you grace to overcome, and by his own mighty Spirit set you free from its snares.

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(2.) The words of St. Paul do not apply to *young and inexperienced believers*. There is sometimes a tendency in devoted persons to discourage beginners, and hold them back from the communion until they reach a certain point in spiritual attainment; until, for example, they are able to recognise a full and experimental knowledge of the great principles of the Gospel. So young Christians of a tender spirit are often ready to fall in with such advice; and because they know they would come, to a certain extent, ignorantly, they fear they might therefore come unworthily to the sacrament. What, then, is the most scriptural course for such persons to pursue? Our Lord's command says plainly, "Come;" and we must not allow his supreme authority to be checked or impeded by any artificial standard of our own creation. Especially in this instance, when we have his example to illustrate his command. For consider those to whom he himself administered the first communion. There was not in the whole company one advanced believer. Peter was then so ignorant of the Gospel, that he had just dissuaded him from the cross, and so weak a follower, that that same night he denied him thrice. Thomas knew so little, that he could not believe the resurrection, even when he saw his risen Lord; and the other apostles were still so far from what they afterwards became, that, without one single exception, they all forsook him and fled. Do not these facts prove clearly that he did not intend his sacrament for advanced believers *only*? and that none must check the first yearnings after better things? It is milk for babes as well as strong meat for those who are of full age; and by deterring beginners, we may rob them of the portion which God has provided for their growth in grace. If we do not perceive a full knowledge of the Gospel, let us at least rejoice in the desire to do the Saviour's will; and let us never forget that the desired knowledge is more likely to be gained in obedience than neglect. And if there be any poor and uninstructed person, who is no scholar, and has little knowledge even of the things of God, who has still the desire to act as Christ appointed, let not such an one be for a moment discouraged by his ignorance; the feast is for him; the invitation to him; and the welcome sure when he kneels as a guest at the Father's table.

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(3.) Still less do the words apply to the person of *tender conscience, who knows and mourns the burden of his sin*. There are those in the Church of Christ whose earnest desire it is to be God's servants, but who are so conscious of deep corruption, that they can scarcely hope they have an interest in their Saviour, and can therefore scarcely venture on the enjoyment of his sacrament. They have felt their sin, but their sorrow is that they have not felt it more; they hope they believe, but are obliged to confess their unbelief; they have known something of repentance, but yet it has been so feeble, that they can scarcely think it real; and the longing of their soul has been fixed upon their Lord; but still there has been such apathy and coldness, that they cannot presume to call that longing by the holy name of love. Now, how should such persons act? Should they wait till their repentance has become deeper, their faith stronger, and their love more worthy of a Saviour's grace? or should they come at once as poor, guilty, helpless creatures, and so cast themselves for a full and free salvation before the Lamb of God? The question involves the whole doctrine of Christ's Gospel. If he had required preparatory fitness before the sinner could be pardoned through his blood, then we must have answered, "Wait till you are better." But since, on the other hand, he grants a pardon first, and then adds holiness as its consequence; since the

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pardon promised under the Gospel is immediate and free, granted because Christ Jesus was the sinner's perfect substitute upon the cross, and because the work he then wrought was perfect, it follows thence as the sure and certain consequence, that the broken-hearted sinner must not wait till he is better; but as he is, and without a moment's delay, must throw himself before an All-sufficient Saviour, and cry, "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise."

It forms the very essence of the Gospel; that as "they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," so Christ "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." As sinners, therefore, we trust his grace, and as sinners come to his communion, longing for holiness, but yet not waiting till we gain it; striving to love him better, and therefore not standing distant from his mercy-seat, but rather keeping close to it, that we may gain a fuller knowledge of his love; earnestly praying for a greater fulness and strength of faith; but meanwhile commemorating his work with what we have, in the earnest and humble hope that he may perfect that which is lacking, and fulfil the work of faith with power.

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There is a great difference between coming unworthily and being unworthy to come. The pharisee and publican were both unworthy; but the pharisee alone went unworthily to the temple. The halt and the lame and the blind, who were gathered out from the streets of the city, were all unworthy of the marriage supper; but the man without the wedding garment was the only one who sat down unworthily. So the noblest saint that ever joined in heaven's happy hymn, was utterly unworthy of the blessed feast of his Redeemer's love, and could best appreciate the heart-stirring language of our Liturgy,—*"We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy table;"* but the careless man, who knows nothing of the broken heart, who is living in strife, and does not discern the Lord's body, he is the person that comes unworthily. If this be your character, stay not to the communion, but go home and repent. But if, on the other hand, you know your sin, and hate it; if you know your Saviour, and long to love him; if you are looking to him as your only hope of life eternal; then, as a guilty sinner redeemed by blood, remain, believe, rejoice, obey; and may the God of all grace fill your heart with overflowing peace!

p. 24

Just as I am—without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bid'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—though tossed about
With many a conflict—many a doubt;
"Fightings within, and fears without,"
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—poor, wretched, blind,
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Macintosh, Printer, Great New-street, London.

FOOTNOTES

[4] The sixth chapter of St. John is not mentioned in the list, because, although it contains a description of the inward and spiritual grace, of which the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a sign and mean, it cannot refer to the sacrament itself; for that was not appointed when the words were spoken; and the persons our Lord was addressing were unconverted and unbaptized Jews, who were following him simply for the loaves and fishes. It would, indeed, have been unintelligible, had he said to such characters, at such a time, "Except ye receive the sacrament, ye have no life in you." The passage refers, therefore, to the spiritual grace, and not to the outward sign—to the feeding upon our blessed Lord by faith, and not to the act of communion in

the sacrament.

[13] This is yet more evident in the Greek than in the English. The word for chastisement is κρῖμα, that for final judgment κατάκριμα. But the word in ver. 29 is κρῖμα, and the only verse in which κατάκριμα, or its equivalent verb occurs, is the latter part of the 32d.

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