

From the editor

For this issue, let us share "Enter the Mystery of the Lord's Supper" by Pastor Peter written in 2004, before the *Church of the Wind* was built.

Now let us proclaim the Lord's perfect healing and thanksgiving of the Cross to all the lands, especially the places affected by natural disasters and wars.

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## Enter the Mystery of the Lord's Supper

Peter

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

(1 Corinthians 11:23-26 NAS)

The Holy Communion, or the Lord's Supper, is the ceremony "to proclaim the death of the Lord Jesus." It is not an ordinary ceremony which is a mere formality or meaningless, but a specific ceremony to proclaim the cross of Jesus Christ, which has a great mysterious power.

Before your eyes are only a piece of tiny bread and a small cup of grape juice.

Nevertheless, here is the mystery of God hidden in the simple bread and the cup.

The Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks first. Thanksgiving or appreciation to God means the same as praise to God. There is something you can see only when you first give thanks. There is truth you can never see without praising God. In Greek, Eucharist is “gratitude or appreciation,” and the Roman Catholics have called the Lord’s Supper “the Eucharist (appreciation).” This is the memorable truth for us as well.

Feeding thousands of people in the wilderness, the Lord Jesus first gave thanks for the bread which one little boy offered. Then, the amazing miracle had taken place. Small loaves of bread had never run out no matter how many times people broke them. All the more, they increased in quantity to feed thousands of hungry people.

Before eating meal, Japanese people say, “Itadakimasu (Thank you, I will have this).” “Itadakimasu” expresses all kinds of gratitude and appreciation not only to the people who prepared the meal, but also to farmers who produced products for the meal, and to my good luck that I can have this meal. In the same token, before eating Christians give grace, a short prayer to the Lord. Their gratitude for the meal means to give thanks to God, which is good, too. There is all the difference in the world between eating with gratitude and without thanksgiving. The former changes meal to blood and muscles, yet the latter has no good effect, but harms the health because it is just stuffing the stomach rather than eating.

There is no God’s intervention without thanksgiving. The Lord’s Supper or the Holy Communion is the holy ceremony that we do every day. You should take your

everyday meal as the Eucharist of Christ Jesus. This is a holy ceremony that you can do just by yourself. Here is the Lord Jesus with you, thus you are not alone.

Miracles are always born out of our thanksgiving to God. Our church have been praying for obtaining the land for the new sanctuary, the *Church of the Wind*. We have brought out every offering we received before the Lord with our deep appreciation. Just as God multiplied bread from tiny pieces in the wilderness, he will multiply these offerings tens of times because of our thanksgiving and trust in the Lord. We certainly believe that His miracles will happen by our thanksgiving to the Lord.

“This is My body, which is broken for you. Do this to remember Me,” said the Lord Jesus. A tiny piece of bread contains the body of Jesus Christ that is the size of the universe. It has a condensed holy life. It is a capsule for the devine life.

Not only all mankind but also all of His creatures are condensed in the cross of Jesus Christ. The mystery of God is condensed in a piece of bread and a cup of grape juice at the Lord’s Supper. Therefore, the Lord’s Supper is a reenactment of the cross of Jesus Christ.

The Contemporary Japanese Version of the Bible (kougo-yaku) says, “Watashiwo kinen surutame konoyouni okonainasai (Do this in order to commemorate Me.)” Since the word, “kinen (commemoration or in memory)” sounds stale nowadays, I think Japanese New Revised Version (shinkai-yaku)’ s “Watashiwo oboete (in remembrance of Me)” or “Watashino kotowo oboete okinasai (Remember Me)” is preferable, because remembering what the Lord Jesus has done for us is to know the presence of the Lord now.

The bread represents the body of Christ, and the grape juice the blood of Jesus Christ. “Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.” (Hebrews 9:22 RSV) The blood of the Holy One purifies all and opens the door of reconciliation with God. The blood stands for a new covenant. Covenant means promise.

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.” (2 Corinthians 5:17) Everything that is absorbed into the cross of Christ Jesus will be renewed. “Newness” in Christ will be renewed now by partaking in the Lord’s Supper.

The Lord Jesus said to us, “Be a bearer of My promise.” I believe that this becomes true in the Lord’s Supper in the purest sense, because we are united with the cross of the Lord Jesus when we partake in the Lord’s Supper. “If we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection,” (Romans 6:5) This is a secret ceremony of Baptism, and it will be reenacted every time in the Lord’s Supper.

“To bear the promise” is to participate in the pledge, as well as to be identified with the cross of Christ and His risen life.

Whenever we partake in the Lord’s Supper, we are incorporated into the greatest and the deepest mystery of the universe. Here, as old life is absorbed into the cross of Jesus, my miserable life is all sublimated to the cross without leaving anything behind. Anxieties and worries, sickness and wounds, ugly sins and everything dark are absorbed into the cross. When the Lord Jesus says, “Remember Me,” I see that not merely my family and friends but also all the people are absorbed into the body of the Lord Jesus Christ. Everything in the natural world is also absorbed into Him. Sorrows and

hatred of this world are all absorbed into the body of Christ Jesus.

The Lord's Supper reenacts the uttermost and deepest mystery of God. Therefore, to partake in the Lord's Supper is the important ceremony "to proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." This spiritual proclamation renews my being completely. Moreover, it renews all the people and everything I am praying for. This is the ongoing act of God.

I will proclaim the mystery of the cross to those who are far away and to the land, since I believe the Lord's perfect forgiveness and healing. Whenever I partake in the Lord's Supper, I will be renewed and the land will be healed.

Praise be to the Lord of the Eucharist.

March 1, 2004

***Kohitsuji no Mure Christian Church***

3-25 Yoko-cho, Ashiya, Hyogo 659-0034 Japan

URL:<https://kohitsuji.com/english>