

## IGNORANCE AT THE TABLE

From two pieces of wood formed into a cross our Lord Jesus made seven utterances. Some of these seven are more well-known than are the others. His utterance recorded in *Luke 23:34* is one of the more familiar. *"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."* Ignorance killed Jesus.

Later, after His resurrection and the creation and inauguration of His church, the Apostle Peter preached to a crowd of Jews assembled on Solomon's porch in

*Acts 3*. Peter preached, *"The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and killed the Prince of life..."*

And then he went on to say, *"Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers."* Ignorance killed Jesus.

Ignorance is a terrible, horrible, and potentially deadly sin. There is nothing more terrifying than ignorance in action. Someone has written that "No one gives advice with more enthusiasm than an ignorant person." There is no zeal so intemperate and cruel as that which is

stimulated and energized by ignorance. And with all the zeal and enthusiasm they had, the chief priests, the rulers, and the people cried out, *"Crucify Him, crucify Him."* The darkest ignorance of all is man's ignorance of God. Ignorance killed Jesus.

The church is not exempt from ignorance. As a matter of fact, most of us have met a few people in the church who have doctorate degrees in ignorance. The Corinthian congregation had several

Doctors of Ignorance. Proof of this is evident when one reads Paul's first epistle to them in which he reprimanded them concerning the manner in which they observed the Lord's Supper.

*"...I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse,"* he wrote in *11:17*. And to this uncomplimentary charge he

added in *11:20-21*, *"...when you come together in one place, it is not*

*to eat the Lord's Supper. For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others."* Like those at the cross of Calvary, these Corinthian brethren knew not what they were doing at the Lord's Table. They actually were replicating the same sin that killed Jesus: ignorance. Had they known what they were doing they would have shared this sacred supper worthily. Had they known what

# Communion *at the* Lord's Table



*"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.' Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you.'"*

*(Matthew 26:26-27)*

Ignorance killed

they were doing they would have examined themselves. Had they known what they were doing they would have discerned the Lord's body. Had they known what they were doing they would have judged themselves. But they did none of these things because of ignorance. Ignorance killed Jesus at Calvary on the wooden cross in Jerusalem; and, at His "wooden" table in Corinth ignorance dishonored the Christ.

How many of us have come to the wooden Lord's Table at one time or another in ignorance knowing not what we were doing and in like manner needing the same prayer request to be offered on our behalf by our Great High Priest as that which was offered by Him for those at the wooden cross? *"Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do."*

It is at the sacred supper that that which forgives our trespasses is also offered as was offered at the cross – the blood of Christ. Oh, we do not receive the forgiveness of our sins at the table. As Christians we are forgiven of our sins and cleansed from all unrighteousness whenever we confess our sins. *(I John 1:9)* But what we do receive at the table is the reminder of what has forgiven us of our sins, including our sins of ignorance – the blood of Christ. The One's whose blood is at the table said, *"For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."* *(Matthew 26:28)* We are redeemed not with *"corruptible things, like silver or gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."* *(I Peter 1:18 – 19)* His blood washes away all sin, including those committed in ignorance.

It is written that it was at the wooden cross that *"His garments"* were *"divided"* among those who in ignorance participated in the crucifixion of Christ. At the weekly wooden table His body, the bread, is also *"divided"* – broken – and given to those who remember His sacrifice at the hands of ignorant people and who, like those at Calvary, frequently *"do not know what they do."*

Each week there is a meeting that takes place at the table of the Lord. It is a meeting – a communion – of ignorant people with their infinitely wise God. On the one hand the superiority of their God is recognized. *"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.'* *(Isaiah 55:8-9)* On the other hand the condescension of their God is observed and His grace is received. *"Come now, and let us reason together," says the LORD. 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'* *(Isaiah 1:18)*

At the table there is no room for haughtiness but humility is welcomed. At the table there is no room for rewards but repentance is welcomed. At the table there is no room for pride but prayer is welcomed. At the table there is no room for superiority but submissiveness is welcomed. At the table there is no room for ignorance but introspection is welcomed.

From the wooden cross sounded the prayer, *"Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do."* And in like manner, from the wooden table issues the

same cry of our Lord who we remember.  
*“Father, forgive them for they do not know what they do.”* Thank God for His grace both at the cross and at His table.

May the words of the Apostle Paul found in *I Timothy 1:13-14* also be on our hearts as we approach and gather around His table at this time: *“...although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; . . . I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.”*