



Today's Message

Date: November 19, 2023
Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas
Title: ***An Old Conflict that Still Matters***

Text: 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 (ESV)

Introduction: Article 30 of the Baptist Confession of Faith explains the Lord's Table, or Communion. In order to make the issues clear and understandable, we will set our discussion the context of a conflict that arose between two Reformers in the 16th century. From a brief survey of their significant disagreement, we will identify a few of the important issues that gave the conflict lasting significance. Finally, we will turn to Paul's famous recitation of Christ's inauguration of the rite of the Lord's Table to see what the Scriptures say about the controversy.

- I. **A historical conflict: Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli separated over differing views of the Lord's Table.**
 - A. Agreement: Both opposed the Roman Catholic view of the Lord's Table. (Transubstantiation)
 - B. Disagreement: They could not reach a consensus.
 1. Luther simply modified the Roman Catholic view. (Consubstantiation)
 2. Zwingli rejected Luther's modified version, favoring symbolism. (Memorial view)

- C. On going disagreement: Many Reformed churches hold another view and still oppose Zwingli. (Spiritual presence)

II. The theological issues: The old conflict included several important matters of theology.

- A. What is the nature of the incarnate Christ?
- B. How does one receive grace from God?
- C. How do those who affirm *sola scriptura* determine its authoritative message?

III. The biblical teaching: The final say in all matters is the clear teaching of Scripture.

- A. Christ is the authoritative source of teaching about the Lord's Table. 23
- B. Christ taught that the elements of the Lord's Table are symbolic. 24, 25
- C. Christ taught that the Lord's Table memorializes his death. 24, 25
- D. Christ taught that the Lord's Table portrays our union with him and each other. Cf. 10:16-17
- E. Christ taught that the Lord's Table continually proclaims his death (and our trust). 26

Today's take-home truth: The Lord's Table is a collective gathering of Christ's body to remember Christ and proclaim the cost of our salvation, thereby deepening our faith, hope, and love.