

tion of this rite, furnished by inspiration itself, and, we conceive, it will be found to include all the most important views that can be taken of it. Let us consider, then, this forenoon, what are some of the thoughts, which the term before us suggests, and may He who instituted the ordinance so assist our meditations that our observance of it may be honoring to Him, and attended with much comfort and edification to ourselves.

By the term used in the text, we are taught, in the first place, to view the supper as an *entertainment provided for us*. Everything connected with the rite suggests this idea. The table spread, the bread and wine provided, the seating ourselves round the table, the partaking of the elements—these are all significant to us of the nature of the ordinance, pointing it out to us as a feast prepared for our use. Of course, it is not a feast in the literal sense of the term. To look at it in this light—to use it as a means of appeasing the hunger or pampering the appetite, was the great fault of the Corinthians—this was the eating and drinking unworthily which drew down judgments on their heads. Still, the carefulness shewn, to embody the idea of an entertainment, in the rite itself, clearly indicates that this was the chief light in which it was intended that we should regard it, though the feast was to be spiritual, and not literal, in its nature.

Though we are all familiar with the view of the ordinance to which we have been referring, I fear we do not think of it sufficiently in this light. I fear there are not a few among us who look forward to it with fear and trembling, as if in it Christ were seated sternly as a judge, on his tribunal, waiting to reckon with us on account of our transgressions, and who are really thankful when the ordeal which they feel must be passed through is over. Such men, instead of wishing that this ordinance should be often dispensed among them, would really be glad could they get rid of it altogether. When they are led to observe it at first, it is not as a high privilege, but as one of these Christian obligations which, though imposing on them a severe trial, must be got over; they must summon to their aid all the resolution they are possessed of, in order to their complying with it; they observe it, not in the spirit of adoption, but in the spirit of bondage; and on every return of it, they require to summon up a more than ordinary degree of nerve; they must, in fact, be content to be uncomfortable for a time, till the duty is over, and glad are they when its various services finished, they can breathe more freely.

Are these, my friends, the feelings with which to enter on an entertainment? No wonder, when such views are taken of the ordinance, that so many hold back from observing it. But why should we feel in this way? It is of what we are to get, and not of what we are to do—it is of the good things

in store for us, and not of the painful before us, that we should think. Christ calls us together to-day, not to sit in judgment on us,—not to condemn us, but to feast on us,—not our services he demands. This is a work-day, but a holiday. This is not time for gloom, but for rejoicing,—a time welcoming our Saviour among us, and rejoicing in his love. The favors are all on our side. It is His to give; it is ours to receive. Fear, on such an occasion, is completely out of place. Rather let our expectations and desires be vividly excited. We are to-day with the Prince, and doubtless the entertainment will be one of princely magnificence.

This leads me to notice, more particularly as the second fact implied in the text, that the entertainment provided is *Christ's*. It was instituted, it is furnished by, it is honored with the presence of Christ.

We have already seen how much the fact that it is Christ himself who has provided the entertainment for his people, is fitted to remove their fears, and to lead them to approach the table with confidence. No less a matter for sincere gratulation to the Christian must it be to know that Christ is spiritually present at this ordinance. We know that wherever two or three are met together, in His name there is Christ to bless them and to do them good, and we cannot doubt that he is especially present with his people, when they are met together to commemorate his dying love. The ordinance is well fitted to suggest the presence of Christ on this occasion. An entertainment naturally leads us to think of the entertainer. We naturally recall the night of its first celebration, and feel that as Christ is at the head of the table then, so does he now in spirit. The care which the apostle has shewn to preserve the very words which our Saviour used on the occasion, and the evident intention that these words, on each renewed celebration, should be repeated, word for word, as if still coming from, still uttered by himself; this was evidently done purposely in order that we might still see Christ with us, might still hear his voice among us, might still receive from his hands—his ministering servant being the mere medium—the precious blessings with which this table is spread.

We are not, indeed, left to conjecture the matter. Our Saviour expressly promises to be present on the future great occasions of the celebration of the Supper. In Matthew he says, speaking of the cup. "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until that day, when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." By his Father's kingdom here, our Saviour evidently does not mean heaven; for with propriety, could Christ be said to drink with his disciples there, and in no sense could Christ be said to drink it new, with them there. There is, indeed, a peculiarity in the wording of this verse, which is deserving