

THESIS ABSTRACT

Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies

Adventist University of Africa

Theological Seminary

Title: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF LUTHER'S AND ZWINGLI'S
UNDERSTANDING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

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Luther's and Zwingli's understanding of the Lord's Supper is the main focus that forms the framework of this research. Prior to the Reformation, several divergent views had been expressed among scholars to resolve the controversy over the substance of the Lord's Supper. However, it was in the Marburg debate between Luther and Zwingli that the doctrine met the needed consideration in scholarship. This study reviewed the theology of Luther and Zwingli in relation to the Lord's Supper. The purpose of the study is to compare and contrast the views of the reformers, namely, Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper, and to examine their influence in the theological enterprise and Christian denominations as a whole.

Theologically, the study has revealed that the words of Jesus "this is my Body" should not be viewed in the context of its literal sense, but rather in a symbolic or figurative sense. The body of Christ has been crucified once for humanity and it

makes no sense for Christ to be crucified again at the Lord's Supper. This can be clearly discerned from the words of Jesus Christ "do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). This fixes the biblical doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Thus, the bread is a figure (sign), which points to the death of Christ. Therefore, Christians celebrate this ordinance to commemorate the death of Christ.

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UNDERSTANDING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

A thesis

presented in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies

by

Solomon Osei Kwadwo

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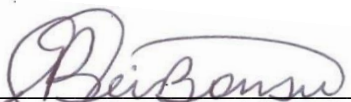
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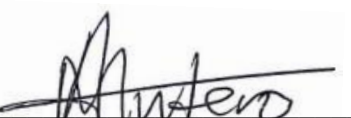
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To the Glory of God

This research is especially dedicated to my lovely wife, Nancy Osei, for her immense contributions, prayers, and patience toward the development of this work

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The sixteenth century was a period marked by varied discussions on the major dogmas of the Church. The Reformation challenged the Western Catholic Church's hegemony over certain belief systems, which were considered non-biblical, papal supremacy and clerical corruption. One of the sacraments that the Reformation confronted was the Eucharist. The Eucharist was a Christian commemorative ceremony of Christ's death (Luke 22:19),¹ which became a divisive debate among the reformers.

The reformers abandoned the Catholic theory of the *transubstantiation*, which designates a belief that upon the priest's consecration of the bread and wine, the substance of the *Eucharist* is mysteriously transformed into the physical body and blood of Christ.² The reformers, in contrast, denied this theory as non-scriptural and mystical. However, they [reformers] were divided among themselves concerning the substance of the Lord's Supper.

In 1529, at Marburg, the reformers, namely, Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli³ met for the first time to resolve the theological understanding of the Lord's

¹ All the Bible references are from the New King James Version (NKJV), unless otherwise stated.

² William R. Crockett, *Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation* (New York: Pueblo, 1989), 130-133.

³ John Calvin could not attend this meeting because of ailment.

Supper. Both Luther and Zwingli had divergent views concerning the substance of the Lord's Supper. According to Luther, the body of Christ is present "in, with, and under" the substance of the bread, and thus, the words of Christ, "this is my body" should be taken literally, hence a phenomenon called *Consubstantiation*.⁴ Zwingli on the other hand, held that Christ is locally or physically present in heaven at the right hand of God (Mark 16:19; Luke 24:51). This presence is circumscribed because He may not be present in heaven and in the Eucharist at the same time. Therefore, Zwingli considered the elements as symbolic.

Though the meeting in Marburg was meant to resolve the theological differences among the reformers concerning the substance of the Lord's Supper, both Luther and Zwingli could not come into agreement on the nature of the Lord's Supper. These reformers seem uncompromising because of their individual differences and theological perspectives. Yet, it was with the advent of the writings of Luther and Zwingli that the subject of the Lord's Supper was given a special attention.⁵

Historically, the doctrine of the Lord's Supper has undergone various interpretations in terms of meaning, purpose, and results of its observation.⁶ The Lutheran church continues to adhere to the theological position of Luther, that is, *consubstantiation*. Many Christian Churches, such as the Seventh-day Adventists and the Evangelicals, believe that the elements used in the Lord's Supper are symbolic.

⁴ J. T. Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics: A Handbook of Doctrinal Theology* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1934), 519.

⁵ Donald J. Ziegler, ed., *Great Debates of the Reformation* (New York: Random House, 1969), 78-80.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 81.

A vast number of denominations (e.g., Reformed and Presbyterian Churches) also advocate the Calvinistic view of the spiritual presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper.⁷ According to this view the bread and wine are not empty symbols but contain the spiritual presence of Christ.⁸ Thus, Christ is not present literally in the elements, but spiritually.

The influences of Greek philosophy in the fourth century, and the introduction of scholasticism in the medieval theology, have significantly influenced the major views of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Some of these presuppositions resulted in theological debates and disputes in the medieval periods.⁹

Augustine of Hippo (AD 354–430) who emphasized the biblical and covenantal understanding of the Lord's Supper asserts that it is an “external sign of an inward and spiritual grace and visible word.”¹⁰ Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) argues that “it is the sacred sign of the invisible sacrifice.”¹¹

In the Modern era (1900s), contemporary scholarship considers the ordinance of the Lord's Supper as a “gift which God makes to sinners through the power of the Holy Spirit.”¹² Some of the proponents are Lietzmann, Bultmann, and Schuermann.

⁷ John Calvin, *Institute of the Christian Religion: Library of Christian Classics*, vol. 2, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. F. I. Battles (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1960), 1371.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 1372.

⁹ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1998), 1035.

¹⁰ Martin Luther, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, ed. James Atkinson (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1970), 133. See also Huldrych Zwingli “The Lord's Supper” in *Zwingli & Bullinger*, ed. G. W. Bromiley (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1953), 197.

¹¹ Jaroslav Pelikan, *Reformation of Church and Dogma: The Christian Tradition*, vol. 4 (London: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 52-59; Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 308-320; G. C. Berkouwer, *The Sacraments* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1968), 188; Rob Staples, *Outward Sign and Inward Grace* (Kansas, MI: Beacon Hill, 1991), 571.

¹² Herbert Kiesler, “The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord's Supper” in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, ed. Raoul Dederen (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald, 2000), 602.

They further explain that the Lord's Supper is a thanksgiving to the Father and a memorial of Christ's sacrifice.¹³

Pannenberg in the twenty first century also suggests that "by union with the divine personalities Christ's human nature is taken on the divine attributes of majesty, including omnipresence so that the 'exalted' Christ can be present in the elements used for the Lord's Supper."¹⁴ It appears that the views regarding the Lord's Supper among the reformers and contemporary scholarship were increasingly at variance with the position of the Catholics doctrine as explained above.

Traces of both radical and conservative views have been demonstrated by these theologians in their articulation of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. However, it is in the debate around its biblical and historical context that the theology of Luther and Zwingli on the Lord Super will be considered.

Statement of the Problem

This study elucidates the concept of the Lord's Supper in the theology of Luther and Zwingli, the two magisterial reformers. The problem is embodied in the question:

1. What is the meaning of the Lord's Supper? That is, what does the Christian need to know about the doctrine of the Lord's Supper?
2. How is the doctrine of the Lord's Supper understood in the theology of Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli?
3. Is "*hoc est corpus meum*" that is, this is my body, literal or symbolic?

¹³ Kiesler, "The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord's Supper" in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 603.

¹⁴ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 321.

4. What is the role of faith in the practice of the Lord's Supper in the life of the believer?

The study will further explore where did the two theologians differ in their theological perspectives on the Lord's Supper and where did they agree in common? What were their respective views? These questions seem to have received not much attention from scholars, thus, it remains a theological conundrum that calls for further probing.

Purpose of the Study

The study compares Luther's and Zwingli's concept of the Lord's Supper to ascertain its significance for the Church today. The study seeks to understand and identify the differences in the theoretical framework of the Lord's Supper from the perspective of the chosen theologians, and seeks to rationalize their theological temperaments. The study further analyzes the degree to which their theology of the Lord's Supper was influenced by other theologians before them. The study also sets the two authors in the context of their time by analyzing the different sources that influenced their theology of the Lord's Supper.

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study lies in establishing the background and framework of the teachings of Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper. The study will also provide a framework for an understanding of a key biblical concept—the Lord's Supper. The two magisterial reformers have been chosen from a significant period in church history in an attempt to explore the meaning of their views on the Lord's Supper and its significance for the Christian church today. Furthermore, the relationship between the views of the two theologians on the Lord's Supper and its impact on the church has not yet been explored.

This study will form part of the ongoing discussion on the Lord's Supper and the major role it played during the Reformation and currently. Further, the study will be relevant to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in relation to its concept of the Lord's Supper. From the above views, it is clear that there is a gap in knowledge that this study seeks to explore, hence the importance of the present study.

Delimitations

The doctrine of the Lord's Supper gained root with different historical and theological perspectives in the Reformation era. However, within the brief compass of this paper, the study will limit itself to a comparative study between Luther and Zwingli on their understanding of the Lord's Supper.

Methodology and Procedure

The study is mainly a comparative analysis. This research employed a critical content analysis of the writings of Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper to understand their underlining concepts of their theology, and to further decipher their point of departure or convergence. The information for this research was obtained by the use of relevant scholarly materials such as books, articles, journals, periodicals, and other relevant Internet sources.

Organization of the Study

The work is organized into four chapters. The first chapter deals with the general introduction which sets out the thesis for this study. Chapter two deals with the review of relevant scholarly materials related to the study. The third chapter focuses on comparison and evaluation of the concept of the Lord's Supper in relation to the views and theological positions of Luther and Zwingli. Finally, chapter four deals with the summary, conclusion and implication of the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Biblical, Historical, and Theological

This chapter focuses on the review of related literature on the subject under discussion. The biblical, historical and theological perspective of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper is vital to this study since the doctrine appears to be characterized with controversies. This chapter is limited to the review of Old and New Testaments perspectives of the Lord's Supper and Pauline epistles to the Corinthians. Further, it will also consider the historical narratives of the Early Church, the Medieval, and the Reformers views on the subject matter. There are a lot of scholarly works on the subject because of its centrality in the Christian Religion.

Biblical Perspective of the Lord's Supper

According to Franz Pieper, "if an article of faith becomes a matter of controversy between Christians, it must be examined in the light of Scripture, not in the light of some 'interpretation' of a Scriptural statement but in the light of the bare word of Scripture itself."¹ The above statement presupposes that every Christian doctrine must be based on scripture, which includes the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

¹ Franz Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, trans. Siegbert Becker (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1924), 3:345.

Old Testament Perspective of the Lord's Supper

The Old Testament concept of the Passover meal seems to have provided a background to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament (Matt 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20).² John C. Collins agrees that there is a connection between the Lord's Supper and the Passover.³ The English word Passover comes from the Hebrew translation of *Pesach*, which suggests an event that marks the deliverance of Israel from the Egyptian bondage.⁴ It is a meal or feast, that the Israelites celebrate every year to commemorate the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt.⁵

According to B. Witherington, the Passover was a seminal and constitutive event in the formation of Israel's identity as a nation (Exod 12: 1-13; Deut 16:1-8).⁶ Kory Capps in his expositions on the Lord's Supper argues that, all the three gospel accounts that contain the institution of the Lord's Supper agree with one another that it was celebrated in the context of the Passover meal.⁷

Craig L. Blomberg, also suggests that the Passover, which is often accompanied by a meal and a covenant, reflects a typical intimacy of a family, including friends and neighbors with a host (Exod 12, 13; Gen 14:18; 18:1-8; 27:19;

² Andreas J. Kostenberger, "Was the Last Supper a Passover Meal?" accessed 11 April 2016, http://www.biblicalfoundations.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Supper_6-30.pdf.

³ John C. Collins, "The Eucharist as Sacrifice: How Patristic Authors Can Help Us Read the Bible," *Westminster Theological Journal* 66 (Spring 2004): 11, accessed 13 February 2016, <http://www.galaxie.com/article/wtj66-1-01>.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Kory Capps, "The Lord's Supper: A Feast of meaning," accessed 21 July 2016, <https://korycapps.files.wordpress.com/2012/11/lords-supper-a-feast-of-meaning.pdf>.

⁶ Ben Witherington, *Making a Meal of It: Rethinking the Theology of the Lord's Supper* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 2-10.

⁷ Ibid., 11.

Num 7:2; Deut 16:1; Ezra 6:19).⁸ On this part, Hughes Old posits that the act of partaking the covenant meals suggests the idea of entering into a covenant with the Lord (Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; Heb 9:20).⁹ In order to connect the idea to which the Lord's Supper gained its root from the Passover, Robert H. Stein discovers six major components or elements of the Passover.

1. The Passover Lamb: This sacrifice reminds the children of Israel God's angel of death passing over them as a result of sprinkling the blood of the lamb on the door post. Benjamin B. Warfield adds that the most fundamental feature of the Passover meal is the lamb slain. He argues that the lamb was responsible for the atoning sacrifice of the celebrants.¹⁰ The lamb slain according to him represents Jesus Christ who died for the sins of men (John 1:29).¹¹

2. The Unleavened Bread: This reminds the children of Israel the fleetness of how God delivered them and their inability to make bread because of time that necessitate their hasty departure from Egypt.

3. The Bowl of Salt Water: This is a reminder of the tears of Israel shed whiles in captivity and the crossing of the Red Sea.

4. The Bitter Herbs: This also reminds the children of Israel the bitterness of being in slavery.

5. The Charoseth: A type of fruit reminding them of the clay that they used to mould bricks whiles in captivity in Egypt.

⁸ Craig L. Blomberg, *Contagious Holiness: Jesus' Meal with Sinners*, ed. D.A. Carson (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 165.

⁹ Hughes Old, *Worship: That is Reformed According to Scripture* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2004), 114.

¹⁰ Benjamin B. Warfield, *Selected Shorter Writings of Benjamin B. Warfield*, ed. John E. Meeter (Pittsburgh, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1970), 77.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 79.

6. The Four Cups of Wine: These reminded them of the promises of Exodus 6:6-7. The third cup was known as the cup of blessing and the fourth cup was followed by singing.¹² Considering the above assertions of Robert H. Stein, Robin Routledge infers that at the Lord's Supper, Jesus broke the bread and gave it to his disciples in reference to the unleavened bread. He further explains that the cup Jesus gave to his disciples to drink echoes the third cup of blessing in Exodus 6:6-7.¹³

It is noteworthy that during the Passover meal the youngest son was given the privilege to ask the head of the family some questions pertaining to the gathering. For example, why is this night different from other nights? In response to the question, the head of the family would interpret every part of the meal that was before them and lay emphasis on God's deliverance of his people out of Egypt.¹⁴

Charles F. Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison suggest that since Jesus was the central figure of the Passover meal which was typified in the Lord's Supper, it is possible that He gained control over the activities as the head to address His disciples. In other words, Jesus was the head at the Lord's Supper while the disciples were the recipients. According to them, Jesus did not reinterpret the Exodus event, rather, He explained to his disciples, the symbols of redemption to which the shadow of the Passover typified.¹⁵

¹² Robert H. Stein, "Sufficiency and Efficiency of Christ's Death," *The InterVarsity Press Dictionary of the New Testament* (IVPDNT), ed. Daniel G. Reid (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 1:670.

¹³ Robin Routledge, "Passover and Last Supper," accessed 3 June 2016, http://www.tyndalehouse.com/tynbul/library/TynBull_2002_53_2_03_Routledge_PassoverLastSupper.pdf.

¹⁴ Capps, "The Lord's Supper: A Feast of meaning," accessed 5 January 2016.

¹⁵ Charles F. Pfeiffer and Everette F. Harrison eds., *Exodus*, The Wycliffe Bible Commentary (WBC) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1962), 1064.

Again, Jesus explained the liberating experience or freedom as epitomized in the Passover. In comparing the Passover to the Lord's Supper, Robert Stein enumerates the following parallelism:

The Passover	The Lord's Supper
God remembers His covenant	God enacts a new covenant
Slavery in Egypt	Slavery to sin
Blood of Passover Lamb	Blood of Christ the Passover Lamb
Interpretation of Elements	Interpretation of Elements
Call for Continual Celebration	Call for Continual Celebration. ¹⁶

Ferris Roger agrees with Stein's parallelism and tries to posit that the Passover pointed backward to the deliverance of the Children of Israel, and was also typical, pointing to Christ, the Lamb, slain for the redemption of man. He argues that the blood sprinkled upon the doorposts of the Israelites was to prefigure the atoning blood of Christ, and also the continual dependence of sinners upon the merits of that blood to save humanity from the power of Satan. Christ ate the Passover Supper with his disciples just before his crucifixion, and the same night instituted the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, to be observed in commemoration of his death.¹⁷

It appears that the type has met with the antitype when Christ the Lamb without blemish was crucified on the cross to leave a commemorative event for future generation.¹⁸ Some scholars hold contrary views that the Passover was not connected to Jesus' Lord's Supper. According to Scot McKnight, one of the arguments is based on the premise that the actual historical meal of the Passover did not occur on the

¹⁶ Stein, "Sufficiency and Efficiency of Christ's Death," *IVPDNT*, 1:671.

¹⁷ Roger H. Ferris, "The Ordinances of Foot Washing and the Lord's Supper in the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination," *Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1957), 11.

¹⁸ Kiesler, "The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord's Supper," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 607.

night of Jesus' Lord's Supper.¹⁹ He argues that had a lamb been used as a meal in the Upper Room, it would have been theologically sensible for Jesus to say something like "this lamb is my body" rather than "this bread is my body."²⁰ It appears that the two objects; lamb and bread are diametrically opposed.

Furthermore, Jeremais supports the fact that the early Christian Church celebrated the Lord's Supper, ("the breaking of bread") daily while the Passover was celebrated annually (Acts 2:42).²¹ Jeremais clearly distinguished the Lord's Supper from the Passover. By doing so, he asserts the fact that the Passover was not one and the same as the Lord's Supper. If they were to be ontic, how did faithful Jews, who were taught from early years to celebrate the Passover annually, could legitimately do so on a daily basis and not annually? It seems that the frequency in which both the Passover and the Lord's Supper were celebrated seems to contradict itself. Therefore, the Passover may not be the premise to set the background of the Lord's Supper.

Benjamin Wisner Bacon also has a different dimension about the Passover. He contends that the ritual observance that the Lord's Supper gained its root was not the Passover, rather, the *Kiddush*,²² a common Jewish ritual on the eve of every Sabbath and of every feast day. The word *Kiddush* suggests that the day for the Passover was made holy. He explains that in this ritual sanctification, the elements used are simply a cup of wine and a loaf of unleavened bread and the ministrant is the head of the family. In his view, Jesus, according to the Lucan account, employs this

¹⁹ Scot McKnight, *Jesus and His Death: Historiography, the Historical Jesus, and Atonement Theory* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2005), 295.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 296.

²¹ Bastingius Jeremais, *The Eucharist, Commentary on the Catechism of Christian Religion (CCCR)* (London: Edinburgh, 1591), 66.

²² Benjamin W. Bacon, "The Lukan Tradition of the Lord's Supper," *The Harvard Theological Review*, vol. 5. No.3 (July 1912): 322-348.

ritual of sanctification. To him, there is no connection of the ceremony to Jesus' death as argued by other scholars.²³ Critical analysis of the arguments made by McKnight, Jeramais, and Bacon, that there is no connection between the Lord's Supper and the Passover, seem to pose the question, why did Christ eat the Passover with His disciples and on the same night, instituted the ordinance of the Lord's Supper?

Summing up the Old Testament perspective of the Lord's Supper by the above scholars, it appears that the Passover sets the platform to which the New Testament doctrine of the Lord's Supper was established, though some scholars disagree with this assertion.

It must also be stated that Jesus did not originate any element but just used the symbols of the Old Testament to explain the meaning of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament. This does not also imply that the Lord's Supper replaces or serves as a continuation of the Passover but its only connection to the Lord's Supper seems to suggest that it is symmetrically interrelated (came at the same time). On the eve of His crucifixion, Christ ate the Passover with His disciples and on the same night, He instituted the ordinance of the Lord's Supper in commemoration of His death.

Therefore, it must be understood that the Passover pointed backward to the deliverance of the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage, and it was typically, pointing forward to Christ's death which delivers the sinner from the bondage of sin.

New Testament Perspectives of the Lord's Supper

This section will focus on the Synoptic Gospels, Pauline epistle to the Corinthian Church on the practice of the Lord's Supper and a glimpse of John's Gospel as regards to foot washing and its significance on Christian experience.

²³ Bacon, "The Lukan Tradition of the Lord's Supper," 348.

Although connected to the Passover, the Lord's Supper is seen to be a new and unique institution in the New Testament, one that has become an integral part of Christianity down through the centuries.

The institution of the Lord's Supper appears in four different accounts in the New Testament, one in each of the synoptic gospels (Matt 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20) and the other in the Pauline Epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor 11: 23-29).²⁴ According to Louis Berkhof, John makes reference to the eating of the Passover (John 6:53), but does not mention the institution of a new ordinance.²⁵

Herbert Kiesler agrees with Berkhof and seems to suggest that John's Gospel places much emphasis on the foot washing.²⁶ These New Testament accounts complement one another to formulate the most vital Christian teachings and principles that shape the understanding of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament.²⁷

The Synoptic Gospels

The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) are unanimous that Christ instituted the Lord's Supper himself on the eve of his crucifixion (Matt 26:26-29; Mark 14: 22-25; Luke 22:14-20). The evidence is the fact that it appears in "the oral traditions of the early Christian Church."²⁸ Again, all the three Synoptic Gospels refer to the institution of the Lord's Supper from the words of Jesus (Matt 26:26-29; Mark

²⁴ Joachim Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), 68-71.

²⁵ Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1958), 647.

²⁶ Kiesler, "The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord's Supper," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 595.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 604.

²⁸ Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 71.

14: 22-25; Luke 22:14-20).²⁹ This initiative recorded by all the synoptic gospels, seems to suggest that there are two elements, thus, the unleavened bread and the cup of wine (the fruit of the vine) coupled with thanksgiving and a covenant that foreshadow common practice in every Jewish homes during the Passover meal.

The Gospel account of the Last Supper begins with the search for a venue and the Lamb.³⁰ The use of Lamb in this context is significant since it has a theological connotation. However, the familiar terms Paschal Lamb and Passover Lamb may mean different things. *Pascho* is Greek for “to suffer” whereas *Pesach* means “to Passover.” Apparently, Pascha is a Greek transliteration of the Aramaic or Hebrew for “Passover.” Whether this was a jousting or a linguistic error, the association of a Passover Lamb (Exod 12) together with the suffering Lamb (Isa 53) has a theological significance. Although Lambs were also part of Jewish practice for the atonement for sin, however, it appears that the synoptic gospel writers were more familiar with the use of bread and therefore made reference to the bread instead of the lamb.

The Unleavened Bread and Unfermented Cup of Wine

In reference to the Jewish custom of removing all leaven from every home prior to Passover celebration (Exod 12:15, 19; 13:7), it presupposes that the bread expressed by the Synoptic writers was also the unleavened bread of the Passover.

The Synoptic accounts record that Jesus took bread, blessed it (Matt 26:26; Mark 14:22) or gave thanks as Luke puts it (Luke 22:19), broke it, and offered it to the disciples. Similarly, Jesus took the cup, gave thanks, and bids the disciples to

²⁹ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 1035.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 1036.

drink from it (Matt 26:27; Mark 14:23; Luke 22:20). The content of the cup is modified as the fruit “of the vine” (Matt 26:29, Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18).³¹

The narratives in Matthew and Mark as well as first Corinthians mention the sharing of bread first, followed by the cup of wine. However, in Luke’s account the cup is shared first before the bread.³² Lehmann Helmut agrees that Jesus shared the bread with the disciples before the cup. He further suggests that Jesus himself explained the significance of both the bread and the cup.³³ According to him, the bread represents the body of Christ and the cup of wine, His blood.

Samuele Bacchiocchi explains that Paul compares leaven with sin (1 Cor 5:7, 8), which the text clearly indicates that nothing (sin) was found in Christ. Bacchiocchi unequivocally describes the cup or wine (fruit of the vine) of Lord’s Supper in the synoptic as the true representation of the blood of Christ.³⁴

The word “wine” according to Bacchiocchi is not applicable to what Jesus meant (wine or cup) for the Lord’s Supper since alcohol is a product of a fermented wine, and therefore does not fit the symbolism of redemption or Salvation.³⁵

The above assertions of Bacchiocchi suggests that the use of fermented juice or alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the Lord’s Supper since it negates the essence of Christ’s death, thus the gift of Salvation shared for all humanity. Christ is without sin and therefore nothing fermented is to be used. Christ’s body and blood are without

³¹ Kiesler, “The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord’s Supper,” in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 602.

³² *Ibid.*, 603.

³³ Helmut T. Lehmann ed., *Meaning and Practice of the Lord’s Supper* (Philadelphia, PA: Muhlenberg, 1961), 163.

³⁴ Samuele Bacchiocchi, *Wine in the Bible: A Biblical Study on the Use of Alcoholic Beverages* (Berrien Springs, MI: Biblical Perspectives, 1989), 56.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 57.

blemish but pure and clean, thereby, making it a true representation of the Lord's Supper. Had a fermented wine been encouraged, the true essence or meaning of the Lord's Supper would not have been materialized. Other scholars support the salvific significance of the cup.

Howard Marshall concurs that the reception of the bread and the cup indicate a reception of the death of Christ on our behalf for the forgiveness of sins.³⁶

Benjamin Witherington describes that the ordinance cup of the disciples was the cup of wrath, but the cup they actually drank was the cup of salvation (Ps 116:13).³⁷

Here, it appears that in all the three gospels the idea of drinking the "cup or wine" follows the last supper (Matt 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42; Luke 22:39-46).³⁸ Just as a cup played a central role in the supper narrative, so it does in the garden narrative.

The cause of Christ's agony is the cup of wrath of the father which through love the wish that Christ drinks the cup.³⁹ According to A. R. Millar, the Old Testament uses the metaphor of drinking the cup to portray absorbing God's wrath, giving us the backdrop for understanding this narrative.⁴⁰

Another aspect that the gospel writers unanimously agreed to is the "new covenant" perspective (Matt 26: 28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20), which is eschatological in nature. Marshall again posits that the sharing of the bread and cup, which are the

³⁶ Howard I. Marshall, *The Last Supper and The Lord's Supper* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1981), 84-85.

³⁷ Dale R. Stoffer, ed., *The Lord's Supper* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1997), 109.

³⁸ Craig Blomberg, *1 Corinthians, The New International Version Application Commentary* (NIVAC), ed. Terry Muck (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 230.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 231.

⁴⁰ A. R. Millard, "Cup," in *The New Bible Dictionary* (NBD), ed. J. D. Douglas (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1962), 3: 225.

symbols of participating in the new covenant, point to the inauguration of the new covenant.

The broken body and the shed blood of Christ are the substance of the symbols and therefore the means of establishing and affirming the new eschatological covenant with His disciples. With His promise not to drink of the “fruit of the vine” again until He would drink it with his disciples in the kingdom, Jesus gave the assurance that he would be reunited with his disciples (Matt 26:29; Mark 14:25). This promise suggests that Jesus will participate with the disciples in the Messianic banquet (Isa 25:6-8) in the kingdom of God (Matt 22:1-10; Luke 14:15-24) and in the final day of consummation (Rev 21:3-5).

Palmer Robertson gives three important suggestions to the meaning of the covenant initiation in the Lord’s Supper. According to him, the new covenant is a promise that God will forever own his people, and He will forever be their God. Further, it is a guarantee that all his faithful people across the globe will know him intimately. Finally, the new covenant is a pledge that God will forgive iniquity and forever forget sin.⁴¹ A closer look at his exposition suggests that in the Lord’s Supper, there is the idea of ownership, fellowship, and forgiveness.

Herbert Kiesler elucidates the meaning of the covenant and suggests that, the celebration of the Last Supper was not intended for only a backward look or a reflection on the redemptive action of God through the death of Christ, rather it was also a forward look into the future, to the moment of His glorious return (John 14:1-

⁴¹ Robertson O. Palmer, *The Christ of the Covenants* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1980), 611. See also William J. Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning: Revelation 21-22 and the Old Testament* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1985), 82.

3).⁴² The above discussions appear that in the synoptic gospels, Christ employs the emblems of the Lord's Supper to represent His own unblemished sacrifice.

Again, its covenantal aspect in the synoptic gospels suggests that there is going to be a reunion with all faithful Christians at Jesus' return when all will sit around God's table in his kingdom. Finally, each time a believer participates in the Lord's Supper, it portrays theologically, a vertical dimension of Salvation, thus, God gives (bread and cup) and man receives them by faith.

Pauline Epistles to the Corinthians

This section will take into consideration, the occurrences of the Lord's Supper in the Epistles of Paul to the Corinthian Church and also considers the meaning of the elements that typify the Lord's Supper and its theological significance. Further, this section will also look into key terms such as fellowship, proclamation of the Gospel, and the anticipation of the second coming and their inherent connection to the Lord's Supper. Paul's warning to the Church of Corinth at the Lord's Supper is also of vital importance to the conclusion of this section.

The Lord's Supper becomes perceptible for the first time in the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians shortly after the middle of the first Century CE.⁴³

Paul addresses the subject of the Lord's Supper on two occasions and both instances, are recorded in the epistle to the Corinthians (1 Cor 10:16-21; 11:17-34). Evidence of Paul's perspective of the Lord's Supper in the epistle to the Corinthians clearly portrays a pastoral advice to a church that was violating the essence of the ordinance

⁴² Kiesler, "The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord's Supper," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 597.

⁴³ Henk Jan de Jonge, "The Early History of the Lord's Supper," accessed 26 July 2016, https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/961/279_123.pdf?sequence=1.

of the Lord's Supper and therefore needed to be reminded of the meaning and the theological implications of it.⁴⁴

Gregg R. Allison adds that Paul communicated divinely received instructions about this rite to the Church at Corinth (1 Cor 11:23-26), and firmly rebuked the Corinthians for their abuse of the Lord's Supper, while dealing with how this practice should be observed (1 Cor 11: 27-32).⁴⁵ Louis Berkhof suggests that Paul employs several names for this rite. He states, while there is but a single name for the initiatory sacrament of the New Testament, there are several for the sacrament now under consideration, all of which are derived from Scripture.⁴⁶ Berkhof suggests that Paul uses the following names relevant to its meaning.

For instance, *Deipnon kuriakon* (the Lord's Supper) can be found in 1 Corinthians 11:20. To Berkhof, *Deipnon kuriakon* is the most common name in the Protestant circles.⁴⁷ It seems that in this passage, Paul tries to make the disparities between two main practices, thus, the *sacrament* and the *agapae*, which the Corinthian Church mistakenly joined them together and abused the theological meaning of this rite. It is noteworthy that the name Lord's supper suggests that it belongs to the Lord. Here, it is not an ordinary Supper or feast of any noble person (rich), inviting the poor to attend. Rather, it is the Lord who invites sinners and provides meritorious grace.

Secondly, Paul employs what is called *Trapeza kuriou*, which means, the table of the Lord (1 Cor 11:21). Berkhof explains that the Corinthian Gentiles (idolaters of

⁴⁴ F. F. Bruce, *Paul, Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 130.

⁴⁵ Gregg. R. Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 636.

⁴⁶ Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 646.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 647.

Corinth) offered to their idols, sacrifices and sit on tables to enjoy meals, prepared for the idols. It appears that some of the Corinthian believers understand that the idea of taking meat for food (flesh) is to satisfy hunger; hence joining together with Gentile Christians in such table may mean nothing. Paul, in this perspective, suggests that sacrifice to the idols implies sacrifice to the devil, and a believer joining in such sacrificial meals is establishing communion with the devil.⁴⁸ Since the table is the Lord's, believers are advised to form allegiance only with Him.

Thirdly, according to Berkhof, Paul uses the word *Klasis tou artou*, which means the breaking of bread (Acts 2:42; 20:7) to refer to love feasts and not exclusively to the Lord's Supper. However, he asserts the fact that Jesus uses this explanation to consolidate his intention on the custom of bread breaking during the Passover feast.⁴⁹ Finally, Paul employs the word *Eucharistia*, thus, thanksgiving, and *eulogia*, blessing (1 Cor 10: 16; 11:24) interchangeably to refer to the "consecrated cup" that Jesus took and blessed.⁵⁰

Kiesler opines that Paul's reference to the Lord's Supper in the Epistle to the Corinthians relates to the act of worship.⁵¹ He suggests in 1 Corinthians 10: 16-21, that partaking of the Lord's Supper makes the Corinthian participants in the body of Christ, likewise, participating in pagan sacrifices suggests fellowship with demons.⁵²

Paul, following the traditions of the Jews on the use of bread and wine (meal) for Passover celebration, points to the need for using the idea of the same elements for

⁴⁸ Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 990.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 992.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 993.

⁵¹ Kiesler, "The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord's Supper," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 603.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 604.

Lord's Supper. Since it has to deal with a meal, Thomas Watson explains that the Lord's Supper (11:20) was a real meal, thus, it was certainly meant to satisfy the participants' hunger.⁵³ But it was also more than just an ordinary meal, it established the unity of the congregation: "Because there is one loaf, we, though many are one body; for it is one loaf of which we all partake" (10:17).

This exposition of Watson seems contradictory to the intention of Paul in 1 Corinthians 11: 20. The food for the Corinthian Church was a love feast, that follows the Lord's Supper (1 Cor 11: 33-34). The Lord's Supper is not meant to satisfy the participants' hunger but a symbolic rite to commemorate the death of Christ.

Again, one thing is noteworthy; that the meal in Corinthian is the Lord's meal. Paul identifies the table as the "table of the Lord" and the cup as the "cup of the Lord." Jesus continues to be the host of this meal and the church becomes the guests.⁵⁴ Further, Paul explains that the cup and the bread indicate and augment our ongoing participation in the benefits of Christ's saving work on our behalf.⁵⁵ He suggests that "the Supper is a *Koinonia*, thus a communal participation, a sharing together' in Christ's redemptive work, identity and solidarity."⁵⁶

The term "fellowship," "participation, or solidarity" is used elsewhere by Paul to describe his "fellowship" in the sufferings of Christ and conformity to His death (Phil 3:10). Wayne Grudem agrees with Smith and infers that Paul uses the term (koinonia) to describe the way the Macedonians shared with the saints by their generous gifts (2 Cor 8:4).⁵⁷ Participating in the body and blood of Christ then, would

⁵³ Thomas Watson, *The Lord's Supper* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2004), 47.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁵⁵ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul, Apostle of God's Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 380.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 381.

appear to point to the union with Christ in His death and resurrection (Gal 2:20; Eph 2:5-6).

This seems to suggest that those who drink the cup and break the bread are celebrating their participation in Christ's death and resurrection, hence, providing a benefit of Salvation to sinful human beings (1 Cor 10:16).⁵⁸ Moreover, since they are united to Christ, they are also united to one another thus; believers are "one body" partaking of "one bread" (1 Cor 10:17). This means that the celebration of the Lord's Supper enacts the solidarity of the members of the church and her Messiah, in whose body and blood, death and resurrection, she participates.

C. K. Barret affirms that this solidarity with Christ encompasses the solidarity of the members of the church with one another in the body of Christ as they partake of the one bread. It affirms faith and unity of the members⁵⁹ Millard Erickson, integrating Paul's statement on fellowship concurs that this unity came as a result of the participants' drinking from the cup and eating the bread and their recognition that, in doing this, they became one body with Christ (10:14-17).⁶⁰

Another chapter of Paul which has received notable attention by scholars is 1 Corinthians 11:17-34. Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 explains that the Lord's Supper is synonymous with the proclamation of the gospel made by those who embrace the gospel, and those whose identity are shaped by the gospel.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith* (England: InterVarsity Press, 1999), 388.

⁵⁸ Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith*, 389.

⁵⁹ C. K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Black's New Testament Commentary (BNTC) 1 (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 260.

⁶⁰ Millard Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), 1036.

⁶¹ Thomas Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2008), 730-734.

According to F. F. Bruce, the gospel is the death of Christ which typifies the true sinless body (bread) and blood (wine) of Christ.⁶² Bruce further explains that there is a general agreement among all Christian denominations that the Lord's Supper is, at least, a representation of the meaning of Christ's death which needs to be proclaimed before Christ returns.⁶³ Erickson, sharing the same view with Bruce asserts that Paul specifically stated that the Lord's Supper is a form of proclamation which obliges the participants to spread the gospel and at the same time anticipate the second coming whenever they celebrate (1 Cor 11: 26).⁶⁴

It seems that the act of partaking the bread and the cup is a graphic display of what Christ's death has accomplished.⁶⁵ Further, there is an aspect of command to "remember" the death of Christ in the passage of Paul. This segment of Paul's teaching on the Lord's Supper, thus, the statement of command "Do this in remembrance of me" is an imperative that only occurs in Luke's gospel and also in first Corinthians.⁶⁶ The command to remember God's redemptive work and greatness has always been the epitome of faith and assurance in biblical history and its connection to the Lord's Supper is quite enormous.⁶⁷ The people of Israel were to remember the deliverance of God from the hands of the Egyptians.

⁶² F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT), rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 384. See also E. J. Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004), 414.

⁶³ Bruce, *Acts*, 386.

⁶⁴ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1037.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 1038.

⁶⁶ Marshall, *Last Supper and Lord's Supper*, 89-91. "Do this" in the Greek text is imperative mood (poiete). "In remembrance of me" may also refer to or portray the manner in which the command is to obey. Apparently, the pronoun "this" in the text grammatically refers back to the bread, but theologically the whole of the Lord's Supper is remembrance of the death of Christ.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 92.

Melvin Tinker suggests that the constant directive to remember God's deliverance together with the Passover meal was intended to remind and keep the people of Israel about their own Salvation.⁶⁸ Similarly, the Lord's Supper provides a sort of hope that draws its participants to the cross.

Raoul Dederen, however, argues that the apostle declares that in the case of the Corinthian Church, the celebration was not a true remembrance of Christ because the Corinthians had forgotten the true essence of Christ's life and death as embodied in the Lord's Supper. Paul is more emphatic on his statement of warning to the Church: "this is not the Lord's Supper." By their actions they were actually despising the church of Christ and making a mockery of the Lord's Supper.⁶⁹

Finally, Paul concludes the passage with an exhortation, moving from the tradition he has just explained, to self-examination of the Corinthians lest they continue to partake of the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner and face the severe discipline of God.

In summary, Paul rebukes the Corinthian Church in the context of 1 Corinthians 11 for their selfishness and inconsiderate conduct when they meet in fellowship as a Church (1 Cor 11:20-21). This helps to understand Paul's statement on those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ (1 Cor 11:29).

It appears that the problem at Corinth was not the failure to understand what the bread and cup represented. The problem rather was their selfish, inconsiderate conduct towards each other while they were at the Lord's Table. Wayne Grudem emphatically states that whenever believers come to worship they should be sure that

⁶⁸ Melvin Tinker, "The Last Supper/Lord's Supper: More than a Parable in Action," *Themelios* 26, no. 2 (Spring 2001): 21.

⁶⁹ Peter J. Leithart, *Blessed are the Hungry: Meditations on the Lord's Supper* (Moscow: Canon, 2000), chapter 19, accessed 5 June 2016, <http://canonpress.com/content/K-104.pdf>.

their relationships with others are right, and if they are not, they should act quickly to make them right and then come to worship God.

Grudem's admonition seems to augment that the same admonition applies to believers whenever they come to the Lord's Table.⁷⁰ In essence, the Lord's Supper in Pauline's perspective not only has a vertical dimension, thus, our relationship with God, but influences the horizontal, our relationship with each other.

Foot Washing in the Old Testament

The practice of foot washing is indispensable to the practice of the Lord's Supper.⁷¹ It complements the celebration of the Lord's Supper to unfold its biblical, historical and theological meaning, and the significance or impact on Christian experience.⁷² However, in the contemporary world, this ordinance has not received the needed attention in many Christian denominations.⁷³ In this section, a survey of some Old Testament references will help explain the re-enactment of the history of the Lord's Supper as reflected in the New Testament in general and John's Gospel in particular.

Foot Washing, from the Latin, *Mandatum, Muandy, or Mandicare* is a religious rite performed in most ancient Near Eastern civilization.⁷⁴ It occurs frequently in the Old Testament as a farewell or hospitable act on the part of the host

⁷⁰ Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith*, 998.

⁷¹ Ferris, "The Ordinances of Foot Washing and the Lord's Supper in the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination," *Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary*, 88.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Peter C. Bower, ed. *The Companion to the Book of Common Worship* (Louisville, KY: Geneva Press, 2003), 127.

who on humanitarian grounds demonstrates a warm reception and respect to his guests.⁷⁵ This service was an integral part of the Jewish custom.⁷⁶

According to Hebert Kiesler, of the eight Old Testament references to foot washing, six of them refer to this customary act (Gen 18: 4; 19:2; 24:32; 43:24; Judg 19:21; 1 Sam 25:41), one refers to humiliation (Ps 58: 10), and one seems to be basically a matter of cleanliness (2 Sam 11:8; Cant 5:3).⁷⁷

It appears that the Old Testament references show that it was a custom of that time and an act of courtesy and hospitality which aimed at offering water to visitors to wash their feet. Apparently, no spiritual meaning was attached to this type of foot washing.⁷⁸ It was an act of service which shows humility.⁷⁹ In the book of Exodus, however, the priests had to wash their hands and feet before serving at the sanctuary (Exod 30:19, 21; 40:31). In this case, the idea of cleanness and purity is present, which allowed a priest to serve his people in the presence of God.

According to Ekkhardt Mueller, this kind of purity seems to have surpassed mere bodily cleanliness.⁸⁰ A holy God was to be approached by pure people. With few exceptions, people during Old Testament times seemed to have washed their own feet after having received some water (Gen 18:4; 2 Sam 11:8). Sometimes the act may

⁷⁵ Ibid., 128.

⁷⁶ Peter C. Bower, ed., *The Companion to the Book of Common Worship*, 129.

⁷⁷ Kiesler, "The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord's Supper," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 592.

⁷⁸ R. L. Vaughn, *Material Toward A History of Foot Washing among the Baptists* (Mount Enterprise, Texas: Waymark, 2008), 7.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 9.

⁸⁰ Ekkhardt Mueller, "Seventh-day Adventists and the Lord's Supper," accessed 23 February 2016, <https://www.adventistbiblicalresearch.org/sites/default/files/pdf/SDA%20and%20Lord's%20supper.pdf>.

have been performed by a servant who is obliged to wash the feet of his master. In first Samuel 25:41, the wife of Nabal was willing to wash the feet of David's men.⁸¹

Foot Washing in the New Testament: John's Perspective

Washing feet is commonly found in the New Testament. It serves as the sign of gracious hospitality from a host to a guest (Luke 7:44; 1 Tim 5:10). Opinions are divided over whether or not these passages refer to the ordinance of foot washing. Whereas S. Horn holds that foot washing was practiced in the early church, as attested by Paul, and indicates humility or spiritual cleansing (1 Tim 5:10),⁸² Kiesler seems to understand the rite of foot washing as a gracious mark of hospitality (Luke 7:44, 45).⁸³ The emphasis on washing the feet of "saints," or God's people, seems to suggest the idea of hospitality and cleansing (1 Tim 5:10 and Luke 7:44).

Kiesler again explains that the only biblical reference to foot washing as an ordinance is found in John 13:1-20.⁸⁴ To him, Jesus set an example of humility and true servant hood by washing the feet of the disciples.⁸⁵ The Greek *opheilete*, in John 13:14, thus, "you also ought to wash one another's feet" is very significant. The verb *opheillo* has both a literal and a figurative meaning.⁸⁶

In the first place, the word means "to owe," as having a debt. Secondly, it suggests, to have an obligation, with the idea of "ought, or must" and is followed by a

⁸¹ Mueller, "Seventh-day Adventists and the Lord's Supper," accessed 23 February 2016.

⁸² Siegfried H. Horn, *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Dictionary* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1979), 386.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 387.

⁸⁴ Kiesler, "The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord's Supper," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 592.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 594.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 595.

second verb that shows what one is obligated to do, thus the servant's duty to his master.⁸⁷ The above explanation of Kiesler suggests that this initiative is a moral obligation which compels the disciples to do same. It is also a continuous or repeated action rather than a one-time duty. Significantly, the theological understanding of this rite may be deduced systematically in the epistle of John.

Ekkhardt Mueller, in his article on foot washing, suggests five points to explain the theological implications of the rite of foot washing. Firstly, in John 13: 1, foot washing stresses the act of sacrificial love of Jesus. The paragraph containing the account of how Jesus instituted it is encircled by the principle of love.⁸⁸ Secondary, the ordinance of foot washing points to the act of service and humility of participants (John 13:4, 5).

The Old Testament references to foot washing do not report a single case in which a superior washed the feet of an inferior. In the case of Abraham, it seems, he did not wash the Lord's feet but did at least provide water for His feet to be washed (Gen 18:4). However, in the case of Jesus, it was directly opposite. He performed the act himself and exhibited the act of service and humility to his disciples. Thus, Kiesler, says, the ordinance of foot washing is designed "to wash away all feeling of pride, selfishness, and self-aggrandizement."⁸⁹

Thirdly, foot washing expresses equality of all believers before God and fellowship with one another (John 13:13-16). Although Christianity does not do away with all social distinctions, before God all differences of rank, status, race, gender,

⁸⁷ Kiesler, "The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord's Supper," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 596.

⁸⁸ Mueller, "Seventh-day Adventists and the Lord's Supper," accessed 23 February 2016.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

and age no longer count.⁹⁰ In this sense, foot washing encourages intimate fellowship among all the members of the church.⁹¹

Fourthly, foot washing suggests an act of cleansing (John 13:10). It is evident from the way Jesus spoke to His disciples about the act of washing their feet that symbolic cleansing is intended rather than a mere cleansing from the dust of the road. The end of verse 10 shows that Judas was not clean because he had made the decision to become the traitor. Thus, the concept of cleanness deals with moral purity and moral defilement. Even after having been washed completely at the beginning of our walk with the Lord, further cleansing through the act of foot washing is necessary. The figurative language of John 13:10 seem to refer to baptism and compare it to foot washing.⁹² The Greek *Louo* (“to bathe,” “to wash”) is used in Hebrews 10:22 to describe baptism.⁹³ Believers of the Christian community commit sins even after having been baptized. These post baptismal sins require forgiveness. It seems that foot washing points to the fact that Jesus is willing to wash away these sins and cleanse us, hence, ensuring forgiveness to all participants.⁹⁴

Finally, foot washing portrays a sort of blessing to its participants (John 13:17).⁹⁵ In this passage, Jesus declares those blessed, fortunate, and happy who

⁹⁰ Mueller, “Seventh-day Adventists and the Lord’s Supper,” accessed 23 February 2016.

⁹¹ R. V. G. Tasker, *John*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (TNTC) 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974), 155.

⁹² Kiesler, “The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord’s Supper,” in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 593.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 594.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 595.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 597.

participate in foot washing. It is not a mere ritual but brings blessings to the participants, when members begin to wash each other's feet.⁹⁶

In summary, in the context of John's epistle regarding foot washing, it appears that the rite of foot washing is not meant to substitute baptism (washing the entire body from sin) and defilement. It seems that the purpose of the ordinance of foot washing as appeared in the writings of Mueller and Kiesler, and other scholars suggest an act of cleansing to purify the believer from post baptismal sin.

Therefore, it is symbolic of a higher cleansing that washes away all feelings of pride, selfishness, and self-aggrandizement. Thus, it is an ideal preparation for the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

The Theological Meaning of the Lord's Supper

The scriptural meaning of the Lord's Supper seems to be complex, rich, and full in its theological sense.⁹⁷ Several things derived from the study of the Bible are symbolized and affirmed in the Lord's Supper.⁹⁸ Wayne Grudem suggests seven scriptural meanings, essential to the Lord's Supper. According to him, the Lord's Supper connotes the following:

1. *The Death of Christ*: The participation of the Lord's Supper symbolizes the death of Christ. Presumably, when the bread is symbolically broken, it represents the breaking of Christ's body, and when the cup is poured out, it symbolizes the pouring blood of Christ shed on the cross for humanity (1 Cor 11:26).

⁹⁶ Kiesler, "The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord's Supper," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 599.

⁹⁷ Grudem, *Bible Doctrine: Essential Teachings of the Christian Faith*, 990.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 991.

2. *It suggests man's participation in the benefits of Christ's death:* Individuals taking or holding the cup of Christ indicates that they share the benefits of Christ's death which obliges them to proclaim this Salvation (Matt 26:26).

3. *It provides spiritual nourishment:* The bread and the wine provide spiritual nourishment and refreshment, and also prepare the soul for eternity. This spiritual nourishment, so necessary for human souls, is both symbolized and experienced in the believers' participation of the Lord's Supper (John 6:53-57).

4. *The Unity of believers:* Christian believers, coming together to participate in the Lord's Supper indicates a sign of unity (oneness) among them. This unity mitigates anything that brings disunity among believers (1 Cor 10: 17).

5. *Christ affirms His love for humanity:* Participating in the Lord's Supper reminds believers the assurance of Christ's love to mankind.

6. *Christ affirms His blessings of Salvation for Humanity:* Christ reserves abundant blessings for those who come into union with him in His banquet. It calls for obedience, faith, and acceptance of salvation on the part of the believer.

7. *Affirmation of faith in Christ Jesus:* When one takes the bread and the cup, the fellow affirms his faith in Christ, thus, the suffering Saviour, who has overcome the world and has control over human suffering. For this reason, sorrow, joy, thanksgiving, and deep love for Christ are richly intermingled in the beauty of the Lord's Supper.⁹⁹

Theology of the Lord's Supper in Church History

This section deals with the theological development of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper in the context of the perspective of the Early Christian Church, the

⁹⁹ Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 650-51.

Medieval Period, and the Reformation.

The Lord's Supper in the Early Christian Church

The Lord's Supper in its earliest appearance is found in the epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, possibly written in the year 55 CE (1 Cor 11:23-26; Acts 2: 4) and the *Didache* (ca. 120 CE). "Didache" is an early Christian document or treatise that shows the moral teaching and practice of the twelve apostles during the early Church. These moral teachings were exemplified in the writings of Paul, when he challenges the Corinthian Christians' behavior on the abuse of the "love feast" (*agape*) intended to assist the poor.¹⁰⁰

The liturgical sections of the *Didache* (9, 10), gives specific instructions on how the Lord's Supper should be observed. It provides models of prayers that had to be offered before and after the meal, and spells out clearly those who qualify to partake.¹⁰¹

According to Henk J. de Jonge, only baptized Christians who are in good relationship with the Lord could participate in the Lord's Supper.¹⁰² This aims at ensuring unity among the participants who come into fellowship with one another at the Lord's Supper. Jonge's assertion appears to mean that those who have not been baptized are definitely forbidden to participate in the Lord's Supper.

¹⁰⁰ Frederick E. Vokes, *The Riddle of the Didache, Fact or Fiction, Heresy or Catholicism* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1938), 177. See also Daniel Powers, *Salvation through Participation: An Examination of the Notion of the Believers' Corporate Unity with Christ in Early Christian Soteriology* (Leuven, VA: Peeters, 2001), 179-180.

¹⁰¹ Frank Hawkins, "The Didache" in *The Study of Liturgy*, eds. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1978), 55.

¹⁰² Henk J. de Jonge, "The Early History of the Lord's Supper," in *Religious Identity and the Invention of Tradition: Studies in Theology and Religion*, eds. J.W. van Henten and A. Houtepen (Assen, The Netherlands: Royal Van Gorcum, 2001), 222.

Cyprian concurs the same view of Jonge, and suggests that “for by baptism the Holy Spirit is received and thus, those who are baptized, and have received the Holy Spirit are allowed to drink of the Lord’s cup.”¹⁰³ The views of Jonge and Cyprian seem to suggest “close communion” a phenomenon which calls for exclusiveness, thereby, denying or disqualifying members from taking part of the Lord’s Supper.

Presumably, practicing “open communion” will suffice. It will allow all believing Christians to participate without any exclusiveness (1 Cor 11:27-32). However, Self-examination, thus, the attitude or motive of members, during the Lord’s Supper must be encouraged. In addition to who qualify to participate in the Lord’s Supper, is the issue of how the early Church understood the elements used for the Lord’s Supper.

Justin Martyr in the mid second century observes that the use of wine mixed with water and bread, indicates “the flesh blood of Christ” through “the prayer of the word.”¹⁰⁴ He further explains that in the Lord’s Supper, the participants at the table associate their sinful bodily nature with the righteousness of Christ; and thus, making salvation meaningful through good Christian living. He regards the Lord’s Supper as the cultic form, par excellence, in which Christians give shape to, and express, their religion.¹⁰⁵

Kiesler explains that early in the history of the Church, the elements used for the Lord’s Supper were symbolic in nature. However, as time drew near, divergent views among some prominent Church fathers argued that the elements are to be considered literal, thus, the “true body and blood of Christ.” Iranaeus, (2nd Century c.

¹⁰³ Cyprian, *Letter 62.8* (ANF, 5:360, trans. G.W. Clark).

¹⁰⁴ Justin Martyr, *First Apology 66* (ANF, 1:185, trans. Marcus Dods and George Reith).

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

AD 130-200) holds that the bread produced from the earth, “when it receives the invocation from God, is no longer common bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of two realities, earthly and heavenly.”¹⁰⁶ For Irenaeus, partaking in the Lord’s Supper indicates the participants’ incorruptibility and their perspective of eternal life.¹⁰⁷ To him, the elements (substance) are to be considered literal.

Ambrose (AD 339-397) and Cyril of Jerusalem seem to agree with Irenaeus. They advocated that by the efficacy of holy prayer of the priest, the bread and wine are mysteriously changed into the physical body and blood of Christ.¹⁰⁸ Taking part at the Lord’s Supper, nourishes the human flesh of the participants and makes them part in the resurrection of Christ.

Further, Hippolytus (AD 170-c. 236) drawing inspirations from Paul’s warning to the Corinthians, suggests that “no crumb of the Lord’s Supper should fall. He states, “for it is the Body of Christ which should be eaten by them that believe and not to be thought lightly of.”¹⁰⁹ The above discussions of Irenaeus, Ambrose, and Hippolytus in the early history of the Church, advocate the literal meaning of the elements used for the Lord’s Supper, though Kiesler disagrees and subscribes to the symbolic view of the Lord’s Supper.

Another facet of how the early Church understood the celebration of the Lord’s Supper is the idea of sacrifice. This conception appears to be in the context of sacrifice found in the prophecy of (Mal 1:10-11) in contrast with the true and

¹⁰⁶ Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.18.5 (ANF, 1:486, trans. Roberts and Rambaut).

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 4:18.6 (ANF, 1:487).

¹⁰⁸ Saint Ambrose of Milan, *The Sacrament* (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1960), 31.

¹⁰⁹ Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition* 32.2.3 (ANF, 1:68, trans. Peter G. Cobb).

worthless offerings among the Jews and the Gentiles. Since Jews form part of the gift of God (sacrifice), they express love and gratitude when partake the Lord's Supper.

Iranaeus commenting on this sacrificial view infers that it was tied to the words of Jesus regarding one's gift on the altar (Matt 5:23-24). According to Dom Gregory Dix, Tertullian (c. 155-AD 240) is explicit that the Eucharist is a *sacrificium*.¹¹⁰ Tertullian uses the term sacrifice to mean the bread and the wine. His explanation seems to suggest that the elements were not just empty symbols, rather the true physical body and blood of Christ.¹¹¹

Theodore of Mopsuestia (AD 350-428) in Catechetical Homilies also opines that upon the Priests presentation of the bread and wine, Christ was being laid on the table to be sacrificed.¹¹² Cyprian (c. AD 200-250) agrees with Mopsuestia that as the Priest offers the wine, he was just repeating the sacrifice of Christ, the reality of his body on the cross.¹¹³ For him, Christ has first offered himself a sacrifice to the father and he has commanded this to be done in remembrance of himself.¹¹⁴

John Chrysostom (AD 347-407) describes the Eucharist as "the dread and awesome sacrifice, the unutterable mysteries."¹¹⁵ This assertion of the early Church fathers presupposes that they all agree to the fact that the idea of sacrifice was by no means peripheral, hence, central to the understanding of the Lord's Supper.

¹¹⁰ Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (Westminster, London: Dacre Press, 1945), 115.

¹¹¹ Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh*, 8 (ANF, 3:351, ed. Alexander Souter).

¹¹² Theodore of Mopsuestin, *Catechetical Homilies* 15, 16 (AIR, 211, ed. Mingana).

¹¹³ Cyprian, *Epistle* 62 (ANF 5:362-363, trans. G.W. Clark).

¹¹⁴ Cyprian, *Epistle* 62 (ANF, 5:364).

¹¹⁵ John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Acts 21* (NPNF, 1:111-141, trans. J. Walker, J. Sheppard and H. Browne). See also R. J. Halliburton, "The Patristic Theology of the Eucharist," in *The Study of Liturgy*, eds. Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1978), 205.

Further, the early Christian Church identifies several benefits that come out as results of one's participation in the Lord's Supper. For Ignatius (c. AD 115), the bread used for the *Eucharist* is "the medicine of immortality, the antidote one takes so that he will not die, rather to live forever in Jesus Christ."¹¹⁶

Iranaeus and Orogen synthesize Ignatius' view of the Lord's Supper seem to agree that the Lord's Supper nourishes the body of the believers and encourages them to give thanks and worship to God.¹¹⁷ Clement of Alexandria accentuates the benefits of the Lord's Supper.

He suggests that the act of participating in the Lord's Supper sanctifies the sinner from sinful activities.

The views of the above scholars of the Early Christian Church seem to agree in common the fact that the elements used for the Lord's Supper, *Eucharist* as they call it, appear to be the real physical body and blood of Christ. This happens mysteriously immediately after the priest's consecration on the bread and wine. For them, it is not symbolic, rather the actual presence of Christ that manifests itself in the Lord's Supper.

Hence, the early Church fathers regarded the literal meaning "this is my body, and this is my blood" and practiced it as such as they understood, though scholars such as John Meyendorff, Alex Schmemmann, and Eric Svendsen challenged this literal meaning of the Church fathers. Again, the early Church understood that only those who have received the Holy Spirit through baptism and in right position with God qualify to participate, however, different opinion like "open communion" have been expressed.

¹¹⁶ Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 639.

¹¹⁷ Iranaeus, *Against Heresies* 4:18.5 (ANF, 1:486, trans. Roberts and Rambaut).

The Lord's Supper in the Medieval Church

Augustine (AD 354-430) offered two perspectives on the Lord's Supper. On the one hand, he holds the true physical presence of Christ present in the elements, and on the other hand, he maintained a symbolic approach in accordance with the view that the Lord's Supper is "an outward and visible of an invisible sign yet genuine grace."¹¹⁸ While he understood the bread and wine as the body of Christ, he placed a dichotomy between the "sign" and the thing signified, and did not believe in a change of substance (element). He encourages unity of members, stresses on the commemorative aspect of the Lord's Supper, and challenges them to live genuinely as members of the body of Christ.¹¹⁹ To him, the elements (bread and wine) should be received in faith.

The Augustinian view of the Lord's Supper, (a visible of something invisible) which needs to be taken spiritually in faith, lasted for quite a number of centuries. However, during the Medieval Age in the ninth century, another controversy of profound magnitude arose on the presentation of Christ in the Lord's Supper.

As it has already been noted from the beginning that *transubstantiation*, the traditional position of the Roman Catholic Church was a subject matter for a theological discussion and debate, Lanfranc who supports this view states that "the very body of Christ was truly held in the Priest's hand, broken and chewed by the teeth of the faithful" was considered much significance.

¹¹⁸ Saint Augustine, *On the Catechizing of the Uninstructed* 26.50 (NPNF, 3:312, trans. E. Phillips Barker).

¹¹⁹ Augustine, *The Works of St. Augustine*, vol. 7, *Sermon 272*, ed. John E. Rotelle and trans. Edmund Hill (Hyde Park, NY: New City, 1993), 300.

This view was clearly defined by Hildebert of Tours around 1134, and eventually adopted by the fourth Lateran Council in 1215.¹²⁰ Thomas Aquinas (AD 1225-1274) agrees to this point and seems to emphasize that after the consecration “the whole substance of the bread is converted into the whole substance of the body of Christ and the whole substance of the wine is changed in the whole substance of the blood of Christ.”¹²¹

Paschasius Radbertus (c. 785-865), a Frankish saint, appears to agree with Aquinas, and affirms the real presence and identification of Christ in the Lord’s Supper. He states “Though the body and blood of Christ remain in the figure of bread and wine, yet believers must understand the elements as simply figure and, after consecration, they are nothing else than the body and blood of Christ.”¹²² His explanation could be interpreted as that the elements do not undergo any metaphysical change rather, “the figure” (substance) still looks and tastes like bread and wine, but “the reality” is the body and blood of Christ.¹²³ Berengar of Tours in 1050 also adds that the elements were not actually changed, but represented the bodily presence of Christ. For him, the elements feed the soul in a spiritual manner since they are received in faith.¹²⁴

This assertion of Radbertus met with much stiff opposition from the Rabanus Maurus and Ratramnus. According to Gregg R. Allison, Ratramnus asserts that reality

¹²⁰ Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 645.

¹²¹ Kiesler, in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 601.

¹²² Paschasius Radbertus, “On the Body and Blood of the Lord,” in *Documents of the Christian Church*, ed. Henry Bettenson (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1:162.

¹²³ Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 642.

¹²⁴ Kiesler, “The Ordinances: Baptism, Foot Washing, and Lord’s Supper,” in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 601.

is empirical reality that is perceived by the senses, a “representation of clear fact, not obscured by any shadowy images.” He further explains that “figure is a kind of overshadowing that reveals its intent under some sort of veil.”¹²⁵ His philosophical expositions seem to contend that the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord’s Supper appears to be a figure and not the real body and blood of Christ since the “Eucharist Mystery” demonstrates one thing outwardly to the human senses and proclaims another thing inwardly to the minds of the faithful.

Again, in the Middle Age, another view on the Lord’s Supper called *impanation* became a subject for discussion. Guitmond of Aversa (c. 1090-1095) holds that while the substance of the bread and wine remain, “the body and the blood of the Lord are contained there in a way that is true but hidden.”¹²⁶ He explains that while the elements still look like, taste like, smell like, and feel like bread and wine, their substance is transformed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ.¹²⁷ Thomas Aquinas being apologetic in nature seems to maintain the Catholic’s orthodox position of transubstantiation and urged its celebrants to hold this doctrine tenaciously and not lightly.

In the closing years of the Middle Age, the Church’s position on the Lord’s Supper became standardized.¹²⁸ Many things were regularized. One of the issues which received attention during the later part of the Middle age has to do with the Lord’s Supper (Eucharist) giving to infants right after their baptism. San Bonaventura

¹²⁵ Ratramnus of Corbies, “On the Body and Blood of the Lord” in *Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrines*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, 1978) 76-77.

¹²⁶ Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 643.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 644.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 645.

(1221-1274), an Italian Medieval philosopher suggests that one of the elements, thus the *cup* only must be given to Children, a view called *concomitance*.¹²⁹ According to this view, only a segment or the cup in particular could be given to children at the Lord's Supper.

This is due to the fact that since the whole body of Christ is present in each of the elements, receiving one segment of it still provides the celebrant, the whole body of Christ. The Catholic Church believes that "it is not possible for anyone to enter into life without baptism, so is it not possible without this life-giving (Lord's Supper) to those in mortal danger."¹³⁰ It appears that since children has the propensity to sin and are part of mortal human beings, they need a life-surviving mechanism, hence the concept of concomitance to free them from death punishment.

In the thirteenth century a new modification of the idea of concomitance swayed for centuries. The Church in the medieval age started to give the bread but not the cup to the laity. Allison's attempt to explain the theological exposition of Bonaventura seems to comment that the Church feared that the frequent serving of the cup to the laity could result in some of the wine being dropped down, and thereby desecrating the blood of Christ. For this reason, the drinking of the cup was restricted to the Priests who only could celebrate the Mass.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Von Bonaventura, "Breviloquium," 6.9, in *Breviloquium of St. Bonaventura*, trans. E. E. Nemmers (London, St. Louis: B. Herder Books, 1946), 199-200.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 211.

¹³¹ Allison, *Historical theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 645. This idea of giving *one kind* of the elements to the laity was also challenged by John Hus. He later encouraged the Church to practice communion of both elements (bread and wine), backing his views with the belief that the practice should not be a custom, but the example of Christ must be held supremely.

The Lord's Supper in the Reformation

The Theology and practice of the Lord's Supper is of pre-eminent importance when one traces the history of the Reformation.¹³² Gordon A. Jensen, agrees that the controversy over the Lord's Supper was “the Achilles heel of the Reformation.”¹³³ It was an era pregnant with experiment and change among the Reformers over the Roman Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation. In other words, this Catholic doctrine was subjected to a lot of change and modifications. Its nature appears to be both political and theological.

The attempt of the Reformers to shape the biblical meaning and purpose of their understanding of the Lord's Supper evolved progressively during this period, though they never agreed on a common position because of their individual theological perspectives and presuppositions.

Martin Luther, following the Augustinian principle of the Lord's Supper, thus the essence of “faith” seems to emphasize that the Lord's Supper is a “pure gospel” thus, a gift from God and a solemn convocation of fellowship with Christ and believers.¹³⁴ He further explains that the words of Jesus “this is my body” be taken literally. In his works on “the Babylonian Captivity of the Church” in 1520, Luther condemns the idea of *concomitance*, thus the Church's position on denying and withholding the cup from the laity (common people), and the administration of the

¹³² Collins D. Smith, “The Sacramental Theology of the Reformers,” accessed March 2016, <http://www.colindsmith.com/papers/The%20Sacramental%20Theology%20of%20the%20Reformers.pdf>.

¹³³ Gordon A. Jensen, “Luther and Bucer on the Lord's Supper,” in *The Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology*, eds. Robert Kolb, Irene Dingel, and L'ubomir Batka (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 18.

¹³⁴ Martin Luther, “The Babylonian Captivity of the Church,” in *Three Treatises* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1970), 127-131.

Lord's Supper in one kind.¹³⁵ He unequivocally stressed on the need that the cup be drunk by all and not the priests only since Jesus gave it to all his disciples, hence its theological significance is salvation for all sinful human beings.

Again, in "the Babylonian captivity" Luther rejected the Church's position of transubstantiation and argued for the view called consubstantiation. According to him, the body of Christ is present "in, with, and under" the substance of the bread.¹³⁶

Philip Melanchthon seems to agree with Luther. He emphasizes "that the true body and blood of Christ are really present in the Supper of our Lord under the form of bread and wine."¹³⁷ On the other hand, Zwingli contends that the elements used for the Lord's Supper are just signs and symbols, which theologically represents the spiritual truths or blessings that the believer receives through faith.

Notwithstanding, John Calvin seems to disagree with Luther and Zwingli. He distinguished himself from the traditional position of the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, the Lutheran view of consubstantiation, and the Zwingli's symbolic or memorial approach to the Lord's Supper. He seems to maintain an intermediate position between Luther and Zwingli and tries to emphasize on the real, though spiritual, presence of the Lord's Supper. Calvin further explains that the act of the Lord's Supper is an expression of God's gracious gift to man, and a divinely appointed means to strengthen the faith of the believer.¹³⁸ It appears that Calvin's assertion suggests that Christ himself is spiritually present in the Lord's Supper,¹³⁹

¹³⁵ Martin Luther, "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," in *Three Treatises*, 137.

¹³⁶ Tuomo Mannermaa, *Christ Present in Faith: Luther's View of Justification*, ed. Kirsi Stjerna (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2005), 24.

¹³⁷ Kiesler, in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology*, 602.

¹³⁸ Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 646.

¹³⁹ Allison, *Historical theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 653.

though the elements remain unchanged. The above contributions of the reformers appear to suggest that each has his own presupposition and perspective on the Lord's Supper, yet never agreed.

Synthesis of Major Themes of the Lord's Supper

The major themes that are of theological significance to the Lord's Supper deserve to be taken into consideration in this section. To be specific, this section will deal with the issue of "who should participate" in the Lord's Supper.

Themes such as regeneration and baptism will be taken into consideration.

The Regeneration

The issue of regeneration (repentance) as prerequisite to the Lord's Supper is paramount in the theology of the Christian Church. According to Daniel L. Bock, the early church believed that only regenerated believers were associated with the local church as followers of Christ, and thereby qualify to share in the new covenant (Lord's Supper) that Jesus instituted just before his crucifixion (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 17: 30; 5:31; 8:22, 26:18; Luke 3:3; 24: 47).¹⁴⁰ He further explains that Luke, in the Book of Acts records that it was only those who were saved that were added to the church each day and engaged in the community's lifestyle which included the breaking of bread.¹⁴¹ This means that the participants who benefit from this fellowship (breaking of bread) receive blessings from God.

Wayne Grudem also believes that only those who believe in Christ should participate in the Lord's Supper since it is a sign of being a Christian. By participating

¹⁴⁰ Darrel L. Bock, *Acts, Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (ECNT)* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 141.

¹⁴¹ Bock, *Acts*, 142.

in the Lord's Supper, one renews and strengthens his faith in Christ and experience the gift of salvation which is an act of Grace bestowed on man without works.¹⁴² This seems to suggest that only those who come in faith at the Lords Supper will experience the blessing that come as result of repentance and constant trust in Jesus.

Baptism

In addition to regeneration, baptism, an initiatory rite of the Christian faith demands attention. Wayne Grudem again suggests that many Protestants would argue from the meaning of baptism and the Lord's Supper that "only those who have been baptized should participate in the Lord's Supper."¹⁴³ This is because baptism is so clearly a symbol of beginning the Christian life, while the Lord's Supper is clearly a symbol of continuing the Christian life.

For this reason, Floyd H. Barackman concludes that since the Supper was given to Jesus' disciples, it is obvious that one must be saved and baptized to qualify to partake of it.¹⁴⁴ A sharp contrast of Barackman's conclusion demands attention. The question that comes to mind is who determines who a sinner is? Were all the disciples who took part of the Lord's Supper righteous or saved? Can baptism be the criterion for one's acceptance into the Lord's Supper? It seems that salvation is the act and a gift from God. Therefore, self-examination determines the participants.

The chapter so far has discussed the biblical, theological and historical perspectives of the Lord's Supper. It has taken into consideration, various theological

¹⁴² Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 955.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 997.

¹⁴⁴ Floyd H. Barackman, *Practical Christian Theology: Clear Discussions of Great Doctrines of Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1992), 389-90.

positions held by the early church, the medieval, and reformation eras respectively. Their views on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper were carefully examined.

CHAPTER 3
ANALYSIS OF THE ISSUE

Luther's and Zwingli's Understanding of the Lord's Supper

The reformers could agree on so many things except on the issue of the Lord's Supper. This controversy led to the meeting of the reformers at Marburg in the year 1529. This was the first time the reformers met to resolve this theological issue and also to have a united front to protest against the Catholic Church. Present were Luther, Zwingli, Philip Melancthon, Johannes Oecolampadius, and many others.¹

The German theologian Luther met on a heated argument with the Swiss reformer, namely Zwingli on the substance of the Lord's Supper.² This chapter therefore seeks to examine the main aspects of the theology of Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper.

Further, it will attempt to analyze their backgrounds and theological positions on the Lord's Supper and the extent to which their writings were influenced by other theologians. With the help of scripture as the standard for many theological analysis and discussion, the concepts of these reformers, in relation to how they understood the text, "this is my body" (Matt 26:26) and "the flesh profits nothing" (John 6:63) respectively will also be examined.

¹ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "Marburg Colloquy," accessed 25 July 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Colloquy-of-Marburg>.

² *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "Marburg Colloquy," accessed 25 July 2016.

The Background of Martin Luther

The early life of Martin Luther took place within the territories of Thuringia and Saxony in Wittenberg.³ On November 10, 1483, Luther was born into the family of Hans and Margarethe Luder in a small Saxon town called Eisleben.⁴

In the spring of 1501, at the age of nineteen, he was enrolled at the University of Erfurt, and in 1505, he received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Biblical Studies.⁵ He entered the monastery on July 17, 1505, took his monastic vows, and commenced his monastic obligations.⁶

In 1507, Luther was ordained into the priesthood ministry and in 1508, Von Staupitz, first dean of the Wittenberg University encouraged him to study theology at the University of Wittenberg.⁷ There, he received another B.A in *Sentences*⁸ in the year 1509 and was awarded a doctorate degree in theology in October 19, 1512.⁹ He then became a faculty member in theology at the University of Wittenberg.¹⁰ It was while teaching at Wittenberg that Martin Luther became exposed to many theological issues in the gospel.¹¹ In August 1, 1513, at Wittenberg, Luther started

³ Donald K. Mckim, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3.

⁴ Martin Marty, *Martin Luther* (New York: Penguin Group, 2004), 11.

⁵ Mckim, *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther*, 4.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther*, trans. James L. Schaaf (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1985-1993), 1:93. The *Sentences* was a compilation of sources. The importance of *Sentences* to the medieval theology and philosophy lies to a significant extent in the overall framework they provided to theological discussion. All the scholastic thinkers like Aquinas, Ockham, Bonaventure and Scotus, wrote commentaries on the *Sentences*.

⁹ Stephen G. Nichols, Andreas Kablitz, and Alison Calhoun, *Rethinking the medieval Senses: Heritage, Fascinations, Frames* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 200), 68.

¹⁰ Edwin L. R. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers* (Washington, D.C: Review and Herald, 1948), 249.

lecturing on the book of Psalms. In the fall of 1515, he began lecturing on Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Hebrews and the Epistle to the Galatians in the year 1516-1517.¹² Eventually, while lecturing on the book of Romans in 1517, he came across the issue of justification by faith alone, which became a pillar in Luther's soteriological worldview.

The intellectual climate, which fashioned the ideology of Luther is of much importance. The two competing philosophic systems of the late Middle Ages were scholasticism of Erasmus and nominalism of William Ockham.¹³ Both appear to have influenced Luther's theology, particularly in their insistence on logic as a basis of philosophical and theological inquiry. Further, Luther was introduced to Christian dogmatics through the works of Von Ockham, Duns Scotus, Petrus of Ailly, Thomas Aquinas and Augustine.¹⁴ In addition to the above scholastics, he also studied the German mysticism and humanism.¹⁵ As a "humanist," he encouraged education in eloquence by a study of the Greek and Latin classics.

Again, Martin Luther was indebted to Erasmus for making available a printed New Testament in Greek.¹⁶ This Greek-Latin New Testament became the primary reference source for Luther, and his translation of the New Testament into German was heavily dependent on it. This translation of the Bible became accessible to the Germans, and as a result, it provided a tremendous impact on the German culture.

¹¹ Brecht, *Martin Luther*, 1:93.

¹² Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1950), 60.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 61.

¹⁴ Mckim, *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther*, 6.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁶ D. L. Edwards, *Christianity: the First Two Thousand Years* (London: Cassell, 1998), 128.

Further, it also fostered the development of a standard version of the German language, added several principles to the art of translation including the English Tyndale Bible.¹⁷

Historically, Luther left an indispensable legacy in Christendom. Among his contributions were the publications of the first hymnal in 1524 and the theological work on “The Bondage of the Will” in 1525. His hymns influenced the development of singing in the Medieval Churches, and his marriage to Katharina Von Bora set a model for the practice of clerical marriage, inducing protestant clergy to marry.¹⁸

Notwithstanding, he also wrote the first mass which was delivered in the German language in 1526, and composed the hymnal “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” in 1527.¹⁹ In addition to the above contributions of Luther to the protestant movement was the impact of his theological themes in the theological enterprise. Among these theological themes are justification by faith alone, the sufficiency of scripture over all traditions, and the Sovereignty of God.²⁰

Luther appears to reject several teachings and practices of the late Medieval Catholicism in relation to the above mentioned doctrines and even more. He strongly disputed the claim that freedom from God’s punishment for sin could be purchased with money. In 1517, Luther proposed an academic discussion of the power and usefulness of indulgences in his Ninety-Five Theses. His refusal to retract all of his writing at the demand of Pope Leo X in 1520 and Emperor Charles V at the Diet of Worms in 1521 necessitated his excommunication from the Catholic Church.²¹

¹⁷ Stephen Nichols, *Martin Luther*, 46.

¹⁸ Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther*, 269.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 270.

²⁰ Timothy George, *Theology of the Reformers* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1988), 62.

²¹ Brecht, *Martin Luther*, 1:94.

He was very conservative due to his hermeneutical approach to scripture, thus, every word in scripture must be interpreted in line with its literary sense and not in a figurative manner. His conservatism influenced him to stand in a strong opposition to Zwingli on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. In many occasions, he often attacked the teachings of Catholicism, however, he still remained as close to the Catholic doctrine of the Lord's Supper (Transubstantiation), though in a slightly way (Consubstantiation).

Luther had wrought his time in a unique way by unfolding an incredible sphere of activity throughout the reformation and beyond the dawn of the contemporary world. He was a German professor of theology, a composer, priest, monk and a seminal figure who laid the axe to the root against the Catholic Church to commence the protestant reformation in 16th century. He died on February 17, 1546.²²

Martin Luther's Theology of the Lord's Supper

According to Christian Helmer, Luther's Theology of the Lord's Supper has for several centuries been understood in the context of German protestant perspective.²³ As a "paradigmatic reformer," says Helmer, Luther exceeds the geographical, theological and historical restrictions of the sixteenth century Catholic doctrine of the Lord's Supper that his personality and work emerge as a motivation of autonomy in global context.²⁴

²² Mckim, *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther*, 10.

²³ Christine Elmer, "Introduction to Luther's Theology in Global Context," accessed March 12 2016, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227679772_Introduction_to_Luther's_Theology_in_Global_Context.

²⁴ Christine Helmer, "Introduction to Luther's Theology in Global Context."

Luther understood the theology of the Lord's Supper as *Consubstantiation*, a view that the divine real presence of Christ is present in, under, and with the elements. In order to explain his concepts, Luther integrates his position of the Lord's Supper in the context of three major areas, that is, *sign, significance, and faith*.²⁵

Speaking of the Lord's Supper as a sign, Luther believes that the presence of Christ at the Lord's Supper was co-existent and as a result, it enjoins with the Bread and the Wine. Undeniably, this presence is due to the fact that Christ possesses a divine attribute—omnipresence and, therefore, He could be *ubiquitous* (everywhere and in many places at a time), including the Lord's Supper. This presence of Christ found in the bread and the wine helps the communicants reflect on the life and passion of Christ, and also motivates them to understand their own personal experience as sinners. Luther seems to suggest that in the participation of the bread and wine, the communicants accept that Christ and all saints are in one spiritual body. Therefore, receiving the bread and the wine may mean nothing else than to receive a *sign* of the fellowship and union with Christ when all saints gather at the table.

Secondly, the *significance* or the *efficacy* of the Lord's Supper should be understood against the backdrop of Luther's conception of sin, *fallenness* and *human despondency*. Thomas Aquinas argues that professing sinners should not be allowed to touch the Lords table.²⁶ In other words, only those who are in the right relationship with the Lord deem it fit to come to the Lord's Table and receive the Lord's grace.

On the contrary, Luther unequivocally explained this in his *Works and Theology of the Eucharist*. In this book, he expresses that: "Though I am a sinner and

²⁵ Martin Luther, *Luther's Works (LW)*, vol. 35, *Word and Sacrament 1*, ed. E. Theodore Bachmann (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1960), 103.

²⁶ Dan A. Botica, "The Eucharist in the Theology of Martin Luther and John Calvin," accessed 28 July 2016, <http://www.emmanuel.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/P-8.2-2010-Dan-Aurelian-Botica-The-Eucharist-in-the-Theology-of-Martin-Luther-and-John-Calvin.pdf>.

I have fallen, though this or that misfortune has befallen me, nevertheless I will go to the *sacrament* to receive a sign from God that I have on my side Christ's righteousness, life, and sufferings."²⁷ The nature of sin was clearly defined and dealt with in the entire theology of Luther. He argues that sin besets us as long as we live.²⁸ For this reason, Luther posits that the ordinance of the Lord's Supper is to offer grace to the participants and to bring them in contact with Christ for eternal fellowship.²⁹

The above statement appears to mean, since we all fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23), there is the need for all sinners to come to the Lord's Table for strength and encouragement against sin. Even though Luther does not offer any direct answer as to how everyone can participate in the Lord's Supper, he does well to offer a positive approach towards the Lord's Table where everyone can find solace to participate in the Lord's Supper.

The third aspect of Luther's theology, which is so consequential of the Lord's Supper, is *faith*. Faith, for Luther, is one's existential trust in the person of Christ, an attitude often borne out of the believers suffering or guilty consciousness.³⁰ In his assertion, faith is affirmed, and that the believer is encouraged to trust in Christ's ability to overcome the conflict of sin when the believer sincerely comes to the Lord's Table.³¹ Therefore, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper is a divine gift to be received in faith. Faith in Christ is the only thing the sinner needs to bring to the Lord's Supper.

²⁷ Luther, *Word and Sacrament 1*, 55.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ J. I. Packer, "Faith," *The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology (EDT)*, ed. Walter Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1984), 1: 401.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 402.

Other facets of Luther's Theology

Another facet of Luther's theology of the Lord's Supper was based on the issue of the Eucharist as a new sacrifice and works protests against the Eucharist as promise and grace.³² As Walter A. Elwell points out, Thomas Aquinas argues that the rite of the Lord's Supper is a *Mass of sacrifice* that has power to free sinners from all punishment and provides satisfaction to the human soul.³³ Conversely, Luther contends that the Eucharist is a promise of grace offered up by the priest on behalf of the people. For Luther, Christ has sacrificed Himself once (Heb 7:27; 9:25-26), henceforth, He will not be sacrificed by anyone else at the table, rather, believers receive him by grace and not works. This act of believing ensures the sinner, forgiveness of sin and the promise to evangelize.³⁴

Here, Luther asserts that since Christ died and atoned for sin once and for all, and since believers are justified by faith on the basis of that one-time sacrifice, there is no need for Christians, at the Lord's Supper to replicate sacrifice, which has already been done on behalf of humanity.³⁵

Luther again rejects the idea of *Sacerdotalism*, a view that the presence of Christ's blood and body is felt through the action of the priest. He seems to differ from this notion, however, tries to argue that it is the power of Christ that brings that mystical change and not any human mechanism.³⁶ As a result of this, Luther

³² Luther, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, 127-136.

³³ *Ibid.*, 140.

³⁴ Luther, (*LW*), vol. 36, *The Misuse of the Mass*, ed. Abdel Ross Wentz (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1959), 146. See also Wolfhart Pannenberg, and Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *Systematic Theology* (London, UK: T & T Clark International, 2004), 309; Pelikan, *Reformation of the Church and Dogma: The Christian Tradition*, 55.

³⁵ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1043.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 1044.

advocates a concept called *Manducation*.³⁷ This concept of Luther suggests that Jesus' real body is consumed or taken during the Lord's Supper without the action or effort of the priest. He literally explains the statement "take and eat; this is my body" (Matt 26:26) to affirm his theological position on the Lord's Supper.

Luther again explains that the words in Matthew 26:26 and John 6:53-56 "thus, whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life. ... For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink," do not suggest some spiritual reception of Christ's body or wine, but it suggests the exact consumption of Christ's real body and wine. Luther understood this concept because of his fundamental hermeneutical principle that "a text of Scripture had to be taken as it stood unless there was a compelling reason for taking it otherwise."³⁸

It appears that the elements (bread and wine) do not undergo into any metaphysical change, rather, they remain the same only that they contain the true body and blood of Christ in a mystical way. His interpretation argues that if one has to be faithful to the text and interprets accordingly, it should be understood in a literal sense.

Evaluation of Martin Luther's Theology of the Lord's Supper

This portion of the study summarizes, and evaluates the theological positions of Luther on the Lord's Supper. A critical look into his theology suggests that

1. Luther laid much emphasis on consubstantiation. This theology combines natural elements with Christ's physical presence in the elements of the Lord's Supper.

³⁷ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1044.

³⁸ Jaroslav Pelikan, *Luther the Expositor: Introduction to the Reformer's Exegetical Writings* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1959), 126.

He identifies the presence of Christ at the Lord's Supper to be co-existent with the bread and the wine.

2. The words of Christ "this is my body" should be interpreted literally without given allusion to any figurative or metaphorical perspective.

3. Scholasticism and nominalism of Erasmus and William Ockham might have influenced his theological positions on the Lord's Supper.

4. Luther's theology on the Lord's Supper avoids exclusiveness due to his conception of universal grace to all human beings.

5. Faith in Christ is the only thing the Christian believer needs at the Lord's Table.

6. Communicants who partake the Lord's Supper in faith, form an everlasting union with Christ, leading to the experience and assurance of Salvation, forgiveness, grace and the promise of the second coming of Christ.

7. Christ is physically present at the Lord's Supper because of His divine attribute, thus, omnipresence. His concept that refers Christ as *ubiquitous* (everywhere and in many places at a time) has influenced the theology of the Lord's Supper.

8. No human mechanism (effort of Priest) is needed to transform the elements into the mystical physical body of Christ. Rather, the presence of Christ is enough to perform the duty of the priest in a mysterious way.

9. He stands in opposition to Catholicism, however, his position on the Lord's Supper appears to differ slightly from the Catholics. Thus, his concept of the Lord's Supper is almost like that of the Medieval Roman Church.

10. Luther denied that the Lord's Supper was a new sacrifice of Christ for the remission of the sins of the participants and denied that partaking of it counted as a good work that helped render satisfaction for sins.

Ulrich Zwingli's Background

Ulrich Zwingli was born on January 1, 1484 in Wildhaus, a town in Switzerland. His birth was at the time of the emerging Swiss patriotism and increasing criticism of the Swiss Mercenary system. He studied at the scholarly centers of Renaissance humanism in Basel, Bern, and Vienna.³⁹ In 1504 and 1506, Zwingli received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees respectively in Arts and thereafter, entered into the Roman Catholic priesthood ministry in the same year.⁴⁰

In 1519, he became a priest in Zurich and decided to reform the Church according to the *Sola Scriptura Principle*. He was influenced by scholasticism and humanism (teachings) of Desiderius Erasmus during his University life.⁴¹ As a humanist and scholar, Zwingli promoted the assistance to the poor, whom he believed should be cared for by the Christian Community.⁴² He was a contemporary of Martin Luther and a predecessor of John Calvin.⁴³ According to Martin I. Klauber, Zwingli is credited to have started the Swiss Reformation in the 1520s.⁴⁴ In the spring of 1523, Zwingli protested against the Swiss Reformation in public disputation. His theses included the establishment of the Bible as the sole principle of truth. He, therefore, rejected the authority of the Pope, Clerical Celibacy, and the Catholic transubstantiation doctrine of the Eucharist.

³⁹ C. Fritz Schmidt and Jim West, *The Humour of Huldrych Zwingli: The Lighter Side of the Protestant Reformation* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2007), 312.

⁴⁰ William R. Estep, *Renaissance and Reformation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 162-163.

⁴¹ Willison Walker, *A History of the Christian Church* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1953), 360.

⁴² Gordon Bruce, *The Swiss Reformation, New Frontiers in History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 32.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 34.

⁴⁴ Martin I. Klauber, "Zwingli," *The Dictionary of Historical Theology (DHT)*, ed. Trevor A. Hart (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 2000), 4: 576-577.

Having developed his hermeneutical approach to the Eucharist in 1524-25, Zwingli understood the interpretation of Jesus' words "this is my body" as symbolic and memorial against the backdrop of Luther's physical presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper.⁴⁵ Among his theology or teachings he mostly dealt with are the concept of the Sovereignty of God, Church and State to be placed under the sovereignty of God, infant Baptism as a sign of Christian covenant with God, and finally, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper as symbolic.

Apart from the theological contributions he made, his political achievements in world history are noteworthy. According to Ulrich Gabler, the achievements of Zwingli can be grouped into five major periods, namely, the Awakening in Zurich (1519-1522), Breakthrough in Zurich (1523-1525), Church reorganization (1524-1526), Reformation in the confederation (1524-1529), and Conflict with the sacraments confessions and politics (1529-1531).⁴⁶ After his death in 1531, the Zurich council elected Heinrich Bullinger as his successor.⁴⁷

Zwingli's influence spread rapidly in Switzerland and nearby lands. His work influenced the following early Reformed leaders. Johann Oecolampadius (1482-1531) in Basel, Berthold Haller in Bern, Pierpaolo Vergerio in Italian-speaking Switzerland, Martin Bucer (1491-1551) in Strassburg (then Germany, now France), Guillaume Farel (1489-1565) in Geneva (French-speaking Switzerland), John Calvin, Theodore Beza (1519-1605), Pierre Viret in Lausanne, and Peter Martyr Vermigli (1500-62).⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Jacob J. Prahlow, "Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper," accessed May 2016, <https://pursuingveritas.com/2014/07/15/luther-and-zwingli-on-the-lords-supper/>.

⁴⁶ Ulrich Gabler, *Huldrych Zwingli: His Life and Work* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1987), 17.

⁴⁷ Gordon Bruce and Emidio Campi, *Architect of Reformation: An Introduction to Heinrich Bullinger, 1504-1575* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2004), 414.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 415.

In conclusion, as a humanist, priest, scholar, and a military chaplain, Zwingli was instrumental in bringing the reformation to Zurich and Switzerland. His Reformation ideas seem to elucidate the means of introducing moral and social reforms to Zurich. Regardless of his pivotal role and momentous achievements in the Swiss Reformation, Zwingli's movement could not evolve into a church as did Martin Luther.

Ulrich Zwingli's Theology of the Lord's Supper

The conceptual framework of Ulrich Zwingli's theology regarding the Lord's Supper is viewed in the context of its symbolism or memorial approach to Christ's death.⁴⁹ Like his contemporary Luther, Zwingli held a contrary view to the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, giving some arguments against it.⁵⁰ Zwingli argues against the concept of *ubiquitous* (Christ can be in several places at a time), and considered it a fallacy.⁵¹ He indicated that Christ is locally present in heaven at the right hand of God (John 17:11). He has to be in a particular place in heaven by reason of its nature as a true body.⁵²

Zwingli's conviction is based on the fact that since Christ rose from the dead, it is possible He is in a particular place—heaven. M. E. Osterhaven seems to agree with Zwingli on the same point that “The body of Christ is not in several places at one and the same time any more than our bodies are.”⁵³ He added, according to its proper essence, the body of Christ is true and naturally seated at the right hand of the Father.

⁴⁹ Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1952), 626-27.

⁵⁰ Allison, *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*, 653.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 654.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ M. E. Osterhaven, “The Lord's Supper Views,” in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (EDT), ed., Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books House, 1984), 1:653-654.

Since Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father, His body cannot, at the same time, be in the bread and wine. But Christ is spiritually present to the believer who receives Him by faith.⁵⁴

The most agitated question confronted by Zwingli is, Which kind of the body was ascended to heaven, and which one was present at the Lord's Supper? Making a distinction between Christ's natural body (which he had while here on earth), the glorified body He has in heaven, and the mystical body (which is the Church), Zwingli insisted that the words "this is my body" must be interpreted metaphorically.⁵⁵

This, he believed, is the only interpretation that "made Scripture plain, simple, reasonable and humanly intelligible."⁵⁶ As a result of this, the only means of receiving Christ, Zwingli argued, is by faith. This means that one cannot partake the Lord's Supper by merely eating the bread and drinking the wine of communion without faith. The above explanation seems to posit that the presence of Christ is local and circumscribed. Therefore, Christ may not be present in heaven and in the Lord's Supper simultaneously. From this point of argument, Zwingli concluded that the Eucharistic elements cannot be transubstantiated into the body and blood of Christ.

Another aspect of Zwingli's understanding of the Lord's Supper is the notion that it is a "sign" that "signifies" the holy thing. According to W. Peter Stephens, Zwingli declares that the Eucharist is not a sacrifice but a sign or commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ. There is a clear distinction between the sign and what it

⁵⁴ Geoffrey R. Elton, ed., "The Reformation: The End of the Middle Ages," in *The New Cambridge Modern History* (Cambridge, UK: University Press, 1990), 2:102.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁵⁶ G. R. Potter, *Zwingli* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 297.

signifies. The sign is the act itself and what it signifies is the meaning of the act.

Therefore, the Lord's Supper points to the sacrifice that Christ made on the cross.

In his letter to Matthew Alber in November 1524, Zwingli on the contrary refers to the word "is" as meaning "signifies" in "this is my body."⁵⁷ He argues that "this is my body" does not mean the real body of Christ, rather it signifies the bread (Christ's body crucified), shared among the communicants in a symbolic manner. Zwingli based his arguments on Christ's words in John 6:33 thus, "the flesh profits nothing but the spirit gives life" as an exegetical key to unlock Jesus' words at the Lord's Supper.⁵⁸

In his exposition of Zwingli, "The flesh profits nothing" reflects his philosophical commitment to a neoplatonist dualism between flesh and spirit.⁵⁹ Flesh and Spirit dualism suggest that physical eating of Christ's flesh cannot accomplish salvation. This is due to the fact that the body dies, but the spirit gives life. Zwingli at this point believes that God is spirit, and salvation involves a turning away from the physical, created world, to the realm of the purely spiritual. Therefore, to trust in anything created, like, for instance, the flesh of Christ is tantamount to idolatry. In agreement with Cornelius Hoen, Zwingli insisted that a better rendering of the words "this is my body" should be "this do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22: 19).

According to Zwingli, immediately Christ said "this is my body," He added "do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). He explains that the bread is only a figure of His body to remind us in the Supper that the body was crucified for humanity. This is why the word "this is my body" cannot be taken literally because

⁵⁷ W. P. Stephens, *The Theology of Huldrych Zwingli* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986), 254.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 255

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 257.

the bread is not and cannot be the body of Christ since it has been crucified once. Therefore, “this is my body” should mean the bread signifies “my body,” or is a “figure of my body.” Millard Erickson, sharing the same view with Zwingli, points out that:

As Jesus spoke the word’s inaugurating the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, he focused attention on the relationship between individual believers and their Lord. On many of the other occasions when he addressed this topic, he used metaphors to characterize himself: “I am the way the truth and the life,” “I am the vine, you are the branches,” “I am the good shepherd,” “I am the bread of life,” “I am the water of life.” At the Last Supper, He used similar metaphors, reversing the subject and predicate noun: “This [bread] is my body,” and “This [wine] is my blood.” In keeping with the figurative language, we might render Jesus’ statements, “This represents [or signifies] my body,” and this represents [or signifies] my blood.⁶⁰

Undeniably, the intention of Jesus was not meant to create an impression that He was actually a door (way), a vine, or water, in a literal sense, but He used this approach in a figurative sense. Understanding these words in a literal sense would be ludicrous. In view of this, Zwingli appears to suggest that the “sign” (Lord’s Supper) and what it “signifies” (memorial of Christ death) must be viewed in a symbolic way.

Another spectrum of Zwingli’s theology of the Lord’s Supper is viewed under the parameters of its theocentric nature.⁶¹ In his commentary on *True and False Religion*, Zwingli emphasizes that it is God who initiates the act of salvation and man just receives by faith. He admits that salvation is not placed at man’s disposal but God’s. In attempt to explain his point, Zwingli made a contrast between faith in God and anything other than God such as Lord’s Supper.

According to him, faith in anything other than God is considered

⁶⁰ Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1046.

⁶¹ Donald J. Ziegler, ed., *Great Debates of the Reformation* (New York: Random House, 1969), 78.

idolatry.⁶² It deprives God of his honor. He further observes that saving faith is faith in Christ who died for us. It is not faith in his bodily presence in the Lord's Supper that saves us. Therefore, putting faith in something or someone other than God is absurdity. It appears that the Lord's Supper at this point is recognized as a memorial, so the key to its observance is to be able to remember what Christ had accomplished on the cross, and this needs faith.

When he commented on John 6:47, Zwingli noted “that by eating His flesh and blood Christ simply means believing in the one who gave His flesh and blood that we might live. It is not eating or seeing or perceiving Him which saves, but believing on Him.”⁶³ The above explanation of Zwingli suggests that the Lord's Supper does not bring Christ to the communicants, rather, the believers' faith brings Christ to the Lord's Supper.

Again, as the position on the Lord's Supper developed, Zwingli considered the ordinance as the pledge of believers, “demonstrating allegiance” to Christ in the Church. Borrowing analogy from Cornelius, Zwingli presented the Lord's Supper as a pledge similar to a ring given by a groom to his bride as they marry. The ring is a sign of an indissoluble union and fidelity.⁶⁴

Similarly, the Lord's Supper is a symbol of that friendship by which God is reconciled to the human race through the death of Christ. Christ as the groom offered an indispensable sacrifice to his bride (Church) as a sign of commemoration on his death at the Lord's Supper.⁶⁵ It behooves the believer's

⁶² Alister E. McGrath, *Reformation Thought: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2000), 172.

⁶³ McGrath, *Reformation Thought: An Introduction*, 173.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 174.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

obedience to celebrate and continue with this eternal fellowship or union between God and man during the Lord's Supper. Zwingli from his humanist background maintained the memorial or the symbolic view.

Evaluation of Ulrich Zwingli's Theology of the Lord's Supper

This section evaluates and summarizes the theological expositions of Ulrich Zwingli. His concept suggests that

1. Since Christ ascended to heaven and seated at the right side of God, His human nature is confined, hence He cannot be present physically on the elements. His body cannot be in heaven and at the same time in the Lord's Supper. Zwingli does not exclusively deny Christ's divine presence but his human bodily presence at the Lord's Supper. This means Christ's omnipresence is communicated by His Spirit and not merely His physical bodily presence.

2. In the Lord's Supper, Christ's death is commemorated, not repeated, the elements are not a new sacrifice being made, but symbolic sign that points to the real, thus, the death of Christ.

3. The efficacy of what Christ had already accomplished on the cross is received by faith. Therefore, at the Lord's Supper the believer experiences the spiritual presence of Christ through faith.

4. Zwingli considered the ordinance, a sign that signifies the holy thing. That is pointing to the death sacrifice of Christ.

5. Zwingli again considered the ordinance to be a pledge which demonstrates the believer's allegiance to Christ.

6. Scholasticism and humanism of Erasmus had greatly influenced the theology of Zwingli on the Lord's Supper. These humanistic tendencies led to an abandonment of several Patristic and Medieval approaches to the theology of the

Lord's Supper of the Church. This allowed Zwingli to adopt a symbolic view of the Lord's Supper.

7. His hermeneutical approach to the "this is my body" renders, "do this in remembrance of me." This symbolic interpretation is in sharp contrast to Luther's literalistic thinking.

8. His understanding of "the flesh profits nothing" is influenced by Augustinian and Neoplatonist view of dualism.

A Comparative Study of Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper

The study conducted so far has brought out the theological positions of the two opposing medieval reformers, Luther and Zwingli with their respective views in relation to the Lord's Supper. Therefore, this section will compare, contrast, and analyze their views on the Lord's Supper. It will seek to bring on board the areas of agreement and disagreement of the Lord's Supper, in relation to what the Bible teaches.

To begin with the areas of commonality and agreements, both Luther and Zwingli got ideas from Erasmus on the need to reform the Medieval Catholic Church. They both questioned the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation and came out with their own respective approach that is consubstantiation and Symbolism respectively.

Again, both agree in common, the divine perpetuity of the Lord's Supper, the spiritual presence of Christ, and its efficacy as the act of worship and communion with Christ. Furthermore, both in several occasions agree that the Lord's Supper is not a new sacrifice, but it reflects what Christ had already accomplished on the cross. Also, both agree that those who participate receive blessings through faith.

The dividing line between Luther and Zwingli lies on hermeneutical and philosophical perceptives. They differ on three points, namely, the mode of Christ's

presence (corporal or spiritual), the organ of receiving (whether by mouth or faith), leading to literalism or symbolism, and lastly the extent of the reception (whether by all, or only believers).⁶⁶

First, the presence of Christ at the Lord's Supper was central to the theology of both Luther and Zwingli. Luther believed that the presence of Christ at His Table was co-existent with the Bread and Wine because a mysterious change does take place as the Presence of Christ joins the elements. The change happens not by priestly consecration as in the doctrine of transubstantiation, but by the power and word of God.⁶⁷ For Luther, the bread and the wine remain the same but there is a mystical real presence of the whole person of Christ in, with, under, and alongside the elements. This union according to him is incomprehensible.⁶⁸

Luther further admits that the Christ, who was locally present in the Lord's Supper, was not limited to space and time, for His flesh was not similar to human flesh. His flesh was sinless and significantly connected to His divinity.⁶⁹ He argues that since the human and divine natures are united in one person in Christ, it is not possible that the divine nature will be somewhere while the human nature is also somewhere else.

Arguing with Zwingli on Christ at the right hand of God, and therefore He is confined, Luther contends that the right hand of God is not a specific place in which a

⁶⁶ David S. Dockery, "Martin Luther's Christological Hermeneutics," *Grace Theological Journal* 4 (1983): 189-203.

⁶⁷ Thomas M. Lindsay, *A History of the Reformation* (Edinburg: T&T Clark, 1907-1908), 1:335.

⁶⁸ Lindsay, *A History of the Reformation*, 1: 336.

⁶⁹ George E. Scwiebert, *Luther and His Times: The Reformation from a New Perspective* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 1950), 703.

body must be or may be, such as on a golden throne, but is the almighty power of God, which at one and the same time can be nowhere and yet be everywhere.⁷⁰

In addition to the above explanation, Luther argues for direct communication of Christ's natures which suggest that whatever is attributed to Christ's divine nature can also be ascribed to his human nature. As a result, Christ could be *ubiquitous* (physically present anywhere, even in many places at once).⁷¹ Therefore, to suggest otherwise, according to Luther, would be to separate the divine and human natures, and so fall into Nestorianism.⁷² From this background, he infers that the whole body of Christ (physical and spiritual) is capable of being everywhere including the Lord's Supper without any separation.

In his argument with Zwingli, Luther further explains that the words of the institution of Lord's Supper are very important not to temper with. Changing the text, through figurative meaning may introduce tropes, and apply injustice to the text. He considered this to be a perversion of "*verba* and inconsistency of *Claritas Scripturae*."⁷³ In view of this, at the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, the communicant receives the actual historical body and blood of Christ. So in Luther's Christology, Christ cannot be confined at a particular place but everywhere including the Lord's Supper. Among theologians who share the same view with Luther is Philip Melancthon and Lutheran Churches.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Matthew W. Mason, "A Spiritual Banquet: John Calvin on the Lord's Supper," accessed 3 June 2016, <http://www.theologian.org.uk/doctrine/Calvinonthelordssupper.html>.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Mark D. Thompson, "Claritas of Scripturae in the Eucharistic Writings of Martin Luther," *Westminster Theological Journal* 60 (1998): 31.

⁷⁴ John H. Leith, *Creeeds of the Churches: A reader in Christian Doctrines, from the Bible to the Present* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox, 1982), 36.

Zwingli on the other hand considered Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper to be spiritual. He viewed Luther's Christology as basically Eutychian, involving a fusion of Christ's divine-human natures.⁷⁵ He therefore, denied the ubiquity of Christ's human nature.⁷⁶ For Zwingli, Christ cannot be in heaven and at the same time be in the Lord's Supper. He contends that a body that is located in a specific place and time is per definition necessary for being a human body; and, Christ with a human body is no longer amid in human realm.⁷⁷ However, Zwingli does not deny the divine spiritual presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper (Matt 18:20) because of His (Christ) divine attribute (Omnipresence), but he completely denies the physical human nature of Christ in the Lord's Supper. Zwingli's theology of the Lord's Supper, symbolic view has, for centuries, influenced many protestant denominations including Evangelicals, Baptists, Methodist and many more.⁷⁸

Again, the medium of receiving the body and blood of Christ is also significant to elucidate the disparities between Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper. Luther maintains the theory called *manducatio oralis*, which means that those who partake of the elements of the Lord's Supper do so by eating and drinking the actual body and blood of Christ "with the bodily mouth," and not merely that they appropriate these by faith.⁷⁹

Luther argues for this assertion by alluding to the analogy of gold and prostitute. He explains that as "gold remains gold even when festooned by a

⁷⁵ Mason, "A Spiritual Banquet: John Calvin on the Lord's Supper," accessed 3 June 2016.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Richard A. Muller and John L. Thompson, eds., *Biblical Interpretation in the Reformation Era* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 166.

⁷⁹ Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 652.

prostitute; Christ is present in the bread and wine even when taken by a faithless participant.”⁸⁰ This according to Luther does not mean that exercising faith at the Lord’s Supper is deemed insignificant. Rather, faith placed on the elements is considered vital, when taking the physical elements with the bodily mouth.⁸¹

Contrary to this view is Zwingli’s understanding of faith during the Lord’s Supper. Zwingli identified the symbolic eating body of Christ with faith and trustful reliance of the believer on Christ’s death. He believes that the communicant feels the spiritual presence of Christ at the Lord’s Supper by faith and not the *manducatio oralis* as argued by Luther (Eph 3:17). For Zwingli, Christ dwells in us by faith (Eph 3:17) and, therefore, He is present in a spiritual manner to the faith of the believer.⁸²

On the contrary, Luther who was influenced by scholasticism and nominalism of William Ockham argues that faith must be separated from reason, revelation from scientific exploration, and logic must be left out in theological discussion.⁸³ Therefore, Luther understood the words of Jesus “this is my body” literally.

His influence by Ockham made him believe that a metaphor differs from analogy in that it does not preserve the *ratio propria* of the original text.⁸⁴ For Luther, the Lord’s Supper is more than a memorial feast; in it is “the eternal food” of which Jesus spoke in John 6:33.⁸⁵ It is a pure gospel (grace) to sinful human beings

⁸⁰ John Dillenberger, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1941), 235.

⁸¹ Mason, “A Spiritual Banquet: John Calvin on the Lord’s Supper,” accessed 3 June 2016.

⁸² Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 653.

⁸³ Ben Witherington, *Making a Meal of It: Rethinking the Theology of the Lord’s Supper* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2007), 121.

⁸⁴ Herman Sasse, *This is My Body: Luther’s Contention for the Real Presence in the Sacrament of the Altar* (Adelaide, Australia: Lutheran Pub. House, 1977-1981), 93.

⁸⁵ John Dillenberger and Claude Welch, *Protestant Christianity* (NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1996), 166.

even if it is taken by faithless communicants.⁸⁶ Participating in the Lord's Supper brings grace to the communicant.

Zwingli on the other hand, influenced by humanism of Erasmus and symbolism of Cornelius Hoen, considered the words of Jesus as symbolic.⁸⁷ Because of this influence from the above scholars, Zwingli believes that his God given reason under the influence of the Holy Spirit must be applied to a text in a contextual way.⁸⁸

Therefore, for Zwingli, "this is my body" refers to a sign that signifies the real.⁸⁹ This means, the bread and the wine were used by Christ in a symbolic term, pointing to His death on the cross. Zwingli argues that the correct rendition of the text is "do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19) for this follows the words of Jesus immediately he said "this is my body."

Another dividing line of Luther and Zwingli is the extent to which the Lord's Supper is intended, or for whom it is instituted. Luther stressed on the need that the cup be drunk by "all sinners" and not only believers.⁹⁰ In his Formula of Concord, Luther maintained that "not only true believers in Christ, and such as worthily approach the Supper of the Lord, but also the unworthy and unbelieving receive the true body and blood of Christ."⁹¹ His concept of universal grace to all sinners seems to avoid exclusiveness at the Lord's Supper. For him, the communicants exercise faith and experience the grace of the crucified savior at the Lord's Supper.

⁸⁶ John Dillenberger and Claude Welch, *Protestant Christianity*, 166.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Stephens, *The Theology of Huldrych Zwingli*, 59.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, 656.

This act of receiving Christ ensures forgiveness of sin and the promise of his second coming. Not only did Luther disregard the idea of exclusiveness at the Lord's Supper, a way of promoting the "unworthy" to partake, he also commented on the unworthy communicants who also receive the elements, but to their condemnation.⁹² Here, it appears that Luther encouraged the need for "all sinners" to partake the Lord's Supper, however, self-examination, or conscience under the scrutiny of the Holy Spirit must be exercised (1 Cor 11:27, 29).

A contrary view is held by Zwingli on who is worthy to participate in the Lord's Supper. According to him, the Lord's Supper is intended for "only believers." Jesus administered it to His followers only; and those who believed in Him were baptized and continued in the fellowship (Acts 2:42-46). He believes that the Lord's Supper is a sign of being a Christian and continuing in the Christian life.⁹³

It was the practice of the visible church. Therefore, all who believe in the saving grace and faith of Christ are eligible to participate. Zwingli's understanding of "who qualifies to participate the Supper" suggests that outsiders cannot not partake of it, since they are not believers. Another qualification that Zwingli also pointed out is self-examination.

Heidelberg in his Catechism agrees with Zwingli that "those who are in the fellowship of Christ must earnestly repent from their sins, trust that these sins are covered by the atoning blood of Christ, are they to desire to increase in faith and grow in true holiness of life."⁹⁴ The discussions so far have shown that both Luther and Zwingli had a different view concerning the doctrine of the Lord's Supper when they

⁹² Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (InterVarsity Press, 2000), 997.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 998.

met at Marburg for the first time in 1529. While Luther maintained a literal view, Zwingli on the other hand, believed in the symbolic view.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

The study embarked on a comparative investigation of Luther and Zwingli on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Various theological positions held by the two magisterial reformers, on the subject matter have been scrutinized. This chapter, therefore, concludes the findings.

Summary

A keen perusal of this study has argued that the differences between Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper were due to the fact that they understood the words of Jesus, *hoc est corpus meum*, "this is my body" differently. Their understanding of Jesus' statement reveals that both of them had a different interpretive hermeneutical principle, which was a key to unlock the understanding of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

To this end, the research has shown that Luther subscribed to the literal position of Christ words. For him, any interpretation contrary to the literal meaning is considered a breach of scriptural truth. In the analysis of the theology of Luther and Zwingli, Luther believed that the presence of Christ was co-existent with the substance of the Lord's Supper due to the ubiquitous nature.

As a result, Luther came out with the doctrine called, *consubstantiation*. In the attempt to explain his view on the presence of Christ on the Lord's Supper, Luther concludes that the substance (bread and wine) remain the same but there is

mystical real presence with the whole body of Christ in, with, under, and alongside the elements of the Lord's Supper.

Taking into consideration, Zwingli's perspective of the Lord's Supper, the study has shown that Zwingli had a contrary view from Luther over the presence of Christ in the element of the Lord's Supper. Zwingli sought for a symbolic approach to Jesus' words. He denied the ubiquity of Christ's human nature.

A survey of his understanding indicates that Christ cannot be at the right hand of God and at the same time be at the Lord's Supper. His physical presence is circumscribed to a specific place. Therefore, "this is my body" suggests a "sign" that signifies the reality (the death of Christ). According to the study, the correct interpretation from Zwingli's perspective is "Do this in remembrance of me." This interpretation has influenced a vast number of Christians who celebrate this doctrine to consider it as a memorial of Christ's atoning death.

Conclusion

Considering the above discussions of Luther and Zwingli on the Lord's Supper, it would be helpful to suggest at least four biblical points to conclude the research.

Firstly, the symbolic approach is very close to the intention of Jesus' words, "this is my body." It is a commemorative act of service to remember the death of Christ. Jesus used physical objects (bread and wine) to communicate spiritual truth (1 Cor 11: 23-16).

Secondly, the communicants exercise faith in Christ and as a result, the spiritual presence of Christ is felt at the Lord's Supper. Faith is not found in the elements; rather, faith in Christ's saving grace is the focus of celebrating the Lord's Supper.

Thirdly, none should be excluded from the participation of the Lord's Supper. However, participants should examine their lives and make spiritual preparation prior to the service.

Finally, the Lord's Supper itself does not save. Rather, it is Christ who saves. Therefore, the whole act is a testimonial or remembrance of the death of Christ.

Implications of Luther-Zwingli Theology of the Lord's Supper

A critical look into Luther's perspective of the Lord's Supper results a conceptual difficulties. First, Luther's theology of *manducatio oralis* (those who partake of the elements of the Lord's Supper do so by eating and drinking the actual body and blood of Christ with the bodily mouth), seems to portray an idea of "cannibalism" if one takes the words of Jesus literally.

Luther's position, thus consubstantiation and its parameters *ubiquity* and *manducatio oralis* promote "spiritualism." His concept throws a challenge of how can human beings eat the flesh and blood of Christ physically? It sounds illogical and weakens the sixth commandment, "thou shall not kill" (Exod 20:13). Holding on to a physical presence of Christ or metaphysics change of the elements seems very strange or even untenable to the contemporary mind.

Therefore, embracing this concept of "spiritualism," "cannibalism" or literalistic thinking will thwart or contradict the exact meaning or the essence of Christ in relation to the Lord's Supper. Again, a careful look into Luther's concept of the Lord's Supper suggests that faith is placed in the elements (bread and wine) rather than faith in Christ. Hence, the literalistic approach to the interpretation of "this is my body" possess so many difficulties. However, Luther maintains this position.

Second, to believe that Jesus was in two places at once is something of a denial of the incarnation, which limited his physical human nature to one specific

locality. This means, if the incarnation is questioned, then the death of Christ (salvation) to all humanity is also questioned. If salvation is questioned, then there is no hope for the future. These expositions devalue the essence of the Lord's Supper. Hence, it suggests that there is no need to commemorate the death of Christ (Lord's Supper).

Again, Luther's theology on the Lord's Supper has a wide range of misconceptions that whenever Christians celebrate the Lord's Supper, Christ's physical body is broken for them in a mystical way. According to this view, Christ is crucified again at every Lord's Supper. However, it must be noted that Christ was crucified once (Heb 9:28). The Lord's Supper is not another form of crucifixion.

Third, it appears that Luther fails to appreciate that Jesus was speaking of a spiritual reality, but using physical objects to communicate in a symbolic sense. For instance, in John 6:27-59, the context suggests that Jesus spoke to himself as the bread of life in a spiritual manner. However, Luther interprets this in a literal sense. This method of approaching scripture has tremendous negative effects on many Christian doctrines.

Looking at Zwingli's concept of symbolism, it reflects the intention of Christ's words of institution. Christ is always spiritually present whenever believers meet in his name (Matt 18:20; 28:18; 2 Cor 13:14; John 17:11; 16:28) including the Lord's Supper. His human body is no longer in the human realm since He ascended to heaven. Zwingli again, emphasized the memorial facet of the feast. Thus, in this supper the believer is invited to experience God's redeeming activity in Christ. Therefore, the Lord's Supper should not be regarded as a regular feast meant to satisfy the participants' physical hunger but a divine encounter with the Lord Jesus

Christ. The faith of the communicants is nourished at the celebration and this has a positive impact on Christian life.

It is noteworthy that the memorial feast itself does not bring grace to the participant, but it is an outward sign of the grace the believer has already received from Christ. Further, the communion service commemorates the deliverance from sin, which signifies a corporate communion with Christ, and the anticipation of the Second Advent of Christ. The Bible supports this view; thus, as often as the communicants eat the bread, and drink the cup, they should proclaim the death of Christ till He comes (1 Cor 11:26).

Taking a content analysis position, Zwingli's view of the Lord's Supper appears closer to the exact Words of Jesus "do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19).

Again, Zwingli's contribution on the Lord's Supper that it is a sign of being a Christian, and therefore it is intended for "only baptized believers" (Acts 2:42-46) contradicts with Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 11:20-29. His view suggests "close communion" and thereby advocates exclusiveness.

In this passage, Paul distinguishes properly between the elements used in the Lord's Supper as a symbol of the body and blood of Christ. He identified and warned against the spiritual condition of the Corinthian Church, thus, their relationship to God and their poor attitude to their fellow Christians when they come to the Lord's Supper. Here, Paul did not talk about exclusiveness or "close communion" only that he gave directives (self-examination) as to how the Lord's Supper be celebrated.

The researcher contends that open communion will suffice. In essence, it allows Christians from other churches to take part in the Lords Supper. However, participants should examine their lives and make spiritual preparation before they

come to the Lord's Supper. Again, they must also admit that they are sinners, who need the grace of God and therefore it behoove them to come to the Lord's Supper to affirm and nourish their faith in Christ.

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