

The Covenant of Salt: Eating Together

A Communion Comment

In order to sustain our physical bodies, we must eat. But eating is no chore for God made it pleasurable for us. It is such a pleasant experience that we find dieting for the sake of the waistline to be most unpleasant.

But eating food is more than just a physical activity. Eating involves a social aspect. We find that eating with family and friends bonds us together in peaceful trust and acceptance of each other. If we are not at peace with those at the table, the pleasure is diminished and the food may give us indigestion.

In numerous instances in Biblical history, when parties entered into an agreement, they then shared a meal together. The covenant meal sealed their peaceful relationship.

The Law of Moses makes mention of the covenant of salt in which all cereal offerings were required to contain salt. This precious commodity was in the sacrifice and in the meal of peace eaten together. Thus the salt symbolized peace. A person dare not offer worship to God without peaceful intentions.

Putting these two aspects together, Jesus urged, "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another (Mark 9:50). And also, "You are the salt of the earth." And Paul exhorts, "Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt." We are ambassadors of peace, God's peacemakers.

Jesus gave us his peace of oneness with the Father in a covenant of grace which he sealed with his life. Jesus ordained this covenant meal in which we share. Being reconciled to God, we participate in the communion, a covenant meal sealing and celebrating our inclusion in this happy relationship with God and one another. If we are at variance with God or with one another, the covenant of salt is mocked. Rejection of other covenant people is contrary to the happy, peaceful aspect of the covenant meal. It is no wonder then that by participating in the meal of agreement in such an unworthy manner, one may eat and drink condemnation to the soul.

What a happy thing we contemplate this morning. God has made a covenant with us, an agreement of peace, a covenant based on his goodness, not on our worthiness. As we eat the bread depicting oneness in Christ and drink the cup portraying the forgiving grace of God, let us praise God joyfully for reconciling us all in himself in Christ. []

