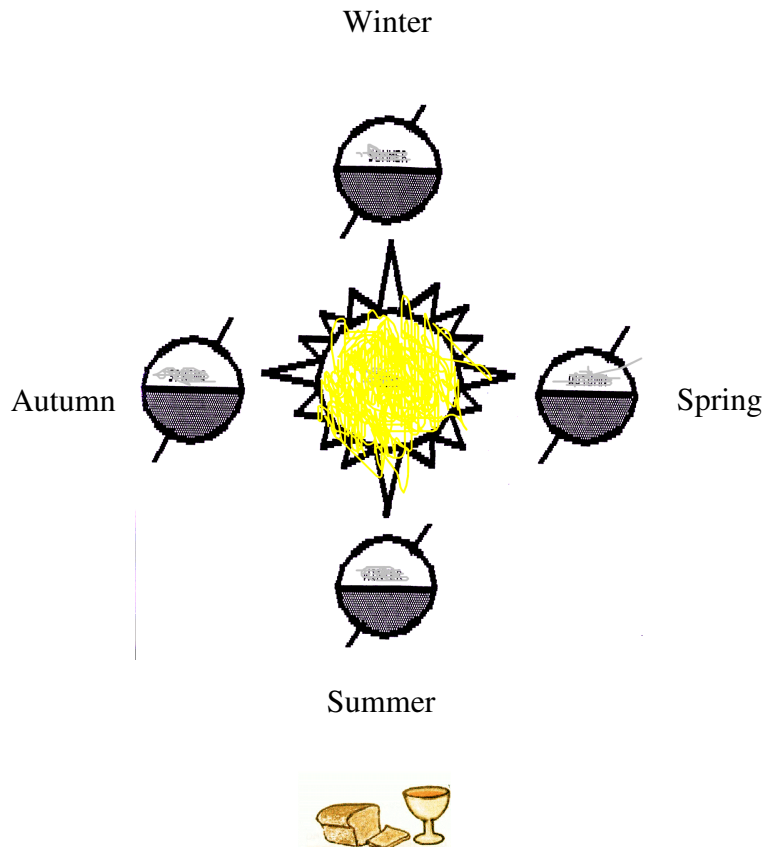


# QUARTERLY COMMUNION AT ANNUAL SEASONS



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## **ADDENDUM C: QUARTERLY COMMUNION AT ANNUAL SEASONS**

It is our thesis below that the four Seasons (Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter) and the human Feasts in which we are to thank the Triune God for them, are Creation Ordinances. They were re-affirmed after the Fall, and also right after Noah's Flood. They were progressively re-enjoined to the Ancient Israelites. They were all observed by our Example and Saviour Jesus Christ when He was here on Earth. And they carry over into the Church's Eucharist as the fulfilment thereof, which we suggest should be held optimally during such Seasons four times every year.

### **1. The Seasons and their annual Feasts root in formation week at Genesis 1:14f**

'Seasonal Communion' three or four times a year best harmonizes with the totality of Biblical teaching. Indeed, on the very first page of the Holy Bible, Genesis 1:14's "Seasons" or *Moo'a:diym* are not just climatic - but also liturgical (as further seen in Leviticus 23:4-37 *etc.*).

This is further evident, also because Genesis 1:14 - just like Leviticus 23:4-37 too - was infallibly inscripturated by God and through Moses. Mark 10:3-9 *cf.* Exodus 23:14f. This was done in the **Regulative Principle of Worship** for the true covenant people - and, indeed, for all time. Deuteronomy 12:32; Esther 9:22; Romans 15:2-4; First Corinthians 11:23-29; Hebrews 8:1-5.

Too, a quarterly 'season' elapsed - between the institution of the Passover in Egypt, and the festive re-promulgation of the Law on Sinai's altar apparently at Pentecost. Exodus 12:1-6; 19:1-2; 20:18-26; 24:1-18. Indeed, at Exodus 23:14-17, God yet again insists: "Three times you shall keep a Feast to Me in the year" - *viz.*, "the Feast of Unleavened Bread"; "the Feast of Harvest"; and "the Feast of Ingathering." *Cf.* at Exodus 34:23, at Leviticus 23:4-37, and at Deuteronomy 16:16.

Add to this the later Winter "Feast of the Dedication" at the Christ-time (John 10:22f *cf.* Esther 9:17-19 with First Maccabees 4:52-59) - and one sees 'Seasonal Communion' four times annually. In fact, these 'Seasonal Feasts' were widely known throughout the ancient world - and implicitly upheld by the First General Assembly of the Christian Church in the middle of the first century A.D. See: Acts 14:15-18 & 15:18-21 *cf.* 18:21.

Rabbi Dr. S.M. Lehrman is the author of the book *Our Festivals*. In his article 'Festivals' in the 1938 *Jewish Encyclopaedia*,<sup>1</sup> he writes about the "pilgrimage festivals [of] Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles (Exodus 23:14)" - that "they were originally pastoral in character, marking the Spring (barley), Summer (wheat) and Autumn (fruit) harvests respectively.

"Adult males...had to appear in the Temple, bearing gifts showing their gratitude to God Who blessed the Seasons with fruitfulness (Deuteronomy 16:16). This pilgrimage...is referred to in the Bible also as Moade Adonai [alias the Lord's Feasts], because of their celebration on fixed specified days....

"Festivals are mainly historical and religious in character. *Purim* celebrates Israel's deliverance from Haman's plot; *Chanukah* [the Winter 'Lights' Feast of Temple Dedication], the triumph of the Maccabees.... He who despises the festivals...has no share in the world to come."

In his article 'Chanukah' alias 'Dedication' - Rabbi Lehrman <sup>2</sup> refers to this Winter "Festival of Lights, celebrated on the 25th of *Kislev* [or December] for eight days." So, together with the other three Festivals, this then amounts to Quarterly Feasts annually - Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter - at each of the four Seasons or Mo'a:diym (cf. Genesis 1:14 & 8:22 with Exodus 23:14 & 34:23 and John 10:22).

Passages like these seem to be the germs of 'Seasonal Communions' each quarter, and each of them involve a whole week of spiritual preparation. Leviticus 23:6f & 23:34 with Acts 18:21 & 20:6-7 with First Corinthians 5:7-8 & 11:23-29 & 16:1-8.

Compare the remarks on Genesis 1:14f made by the mature Calvin in his 1563f *Commentary on Genesis*. "The sun," he explains, "by its nearer approach, warms our earth...; introduces the vernal seasons [each Spring]...; and is the cause of Summer and Autumn." Indeed, the following 'recession' of the sun preludes the advent of Winter. "The word Mo'a:diym...signifies both time and place and also Assemblies of persons.

"The Rabbis commonly explain the passage as referring to their Festivals [cf. Exodus 23:14-17].... I extend it further to mean in the first place the opportunities of time, which in French are called *Saisons* ('Seasons') - and then all Fairs and Forensic Assemblies" in the **Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter**.

"This passage teaches us that Sacrifices were instituted from the beginning [Genesis 1:26 & 3:21 & 4:3f to 8:20f].... When the Holy Fathers [alias the Pre-Abrahamic Patriarchs] formerly professed their piety towards God by Sacrifices - the use of them was by no means superfluous." Thus Calvin.

On the same verse Genesis 1:14, Rev. Matthew Henry comments : "Let there be lights in the firmament...for Seasons!...'... The creating of the sun, moon and stars...are here accounted for not as they are in themselves...but as they are in relation to this Earth to which they serve as lights....

"They must be for the **distinction** of times B of day and night, Summer and Winter, which are interchanged by the motion of the sun.... Its approach toward our tropic, makes Summer; its recess to the other, Winter.

"And thus, 'under the sun' there is 'a Season to every purpose.' Ecclesiastes 3:1.... They must be for the direction of actions," then - including **Sacramental** actions.

Now God ordained the four festive Seasons or *Mo'a:diym* -- Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter - not only in Genesis 1:14 (cf. Leviticus 23:4-27). For even Genesis 4:3-4's '**Offering**' at

the 'end of days' or *miqqeets yaamiym* -- again seems to indicate a **Harvest Festival** alias a 'Seasonal' celebration.

## **2. 'Seasonal Communion' in Genesis 8:20-22 and thenceforth at the four Seasons**

In Genesis 8:20-22, we are told that after the flood "Noah built an altar to the Lord and took of every clean beast and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the Lord...said in His heart...: 'While the Earth remains - Seedtime [alias Spring] and Harvest [alias Autumn]...and Summer and Winter...shall not cease."

Here, Dr. Calvin comments: "By these words, the World is again completely restored [back to its **Pre-Flood condition**].... The Deluge had been an interruption of the **order of nature**.... There was [during the Flood Year] no distinction of **Winter** and **Summer**. Therefore the Lord here declares it to be His pleasure that all things should recover their vigour and be **restored** to their functions" as **originally** given in the four **Seasonal Feasts** instituted at Genesis 1:14.

Rev. Dr. Matthew Henry too comments on Genesis 8:22: "As it is with the times, so it is with the events of time - they are subject to vicissitudes: day and night, **Summer and Winter** counter-changed.... On Earth, God hath set the one over against the other.... Yet never changed. It is constant in this inconstancy.

"These **Seasons have never ceased**, nor shall cease, while the sun continues such a steady measurer of time, and the moon such a faithful witness in Heaven. This is God's **Covenant**...which is mentioned for the confirming of our faith in the **Covenant of Grace** which is no less inviolable, Jeremiah 33:20."

Too, even after the great Noachic Flood - at Genesis 8:20-22, we find the celebration of a regular seasonal thankoffering. This was apparently to be re-celebrated quarterly, "while the Earth remains." That means: as long as this great straight planet Earth continues. It means: in the **Spring** and the **Autumn** (alias at 'Seedtime and Harvest'), and again during "Cold and Heat"(alias in **Summer** and **Winter**).

Nor was this a peculiarly 'Jewish' ordinance. For, as a **Noachic Law**, it was apparently instituted '**Pre-Judaically**' - for all people, and for all time. **The Apostles** reminded even the **Pagans** of this, when the latter brought them their Seasonal Offerings. Acts 14:15-18.

Thus also the First General Assembly of the Presbyterian New Testament Church, meeting in Jerusalem around 49 A.D., implicitly yet clearly decreed that these Noachic ordinances were to continue among the Gentile Christians. Indeed, even in the New Testament Church of the 'Heavenly Jerusalem' - the Noachic rainbow continues to remind all men everywhere of the Creator God's undeserved yet faithful Seasonal Blessings. Genesis 8:20-22; 9:1-17; Psalm 100:1-5; Acts 15:18-21; Revelation 4:3-11.

### **3. The progressive inception and development of the four Seasonal Feasts**

Regardless as to which Feast was inaugurated first at Genesis 1:14 - whether Spring or Summer or Autumn or Winter - the second in due time followed the first; the third, the second; and the fourth, the third. The same applies with the restoration of the Seasonal Feasts, after the Noachic Flood. Genesis 8:20-22.

The same applies later too, also as regards Ancient Israel's calendar of Seasonal Feasts. First, the Passover - in the Northern Hemisphere, the Spring Feast of Ancient Israel. Exodus 12:1-6*f*. Next, the Summer Feast of Pentecost. Leviticus 23:5-21. Then, the Autumn or Fall Feast of Tabernacles. Leviticus 23:22-36. And finally, the Winter Feast of Lights. First Maccabees 4:52-59 *cf.* John 10:22*f*.

Thus, some three months after the first Passover Feast in Spring, the Hebrews in the Summer received the Decalogue at Mount Sinai. Exodus 12:2*f cf.* 19:1 to 20:18. That occurred during the Feast of Pentecost, according to the A.D. 40 Jewish Scholar Philo.<sup>3</sup>

That was followed, in the Autumn, by the Feast of Tabernacles, "when you reap the harvest of your land" at the end of the Summer and in the Fall, preparing for the Winter. Leviticus 23:22*f*. And that in turn, ultimately, was followed by the Winter Feast of Lights (at the "Temple Cleansing") on December 25th.

Once more: "Three times you shall keep a Feast to Me in the year. You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread [the Passover]...and the Feast of...the Firstfruits [at Pentecost]...and the Feast of the Ingathering [or Tabernacles] which is...when you have gathered in your labours from the field." Exodus 23:14-16 (*cf.* 34:18-23).

The A.D. 93 Hebrew Historian Josephus wrote<sup>4</sup> that "in the seventh month [of the Hebrew Calendar or in October during the Northern Hemisphere's Autumn], they make...sacrifice.... When the season of the year is changing for Winter, the Law enjoins us to pitch *Tabernacles*.... In the month...called Nisan [alias April]...the beginning of our year..., [comes] that sacrifice which I before told you we slew...called the *Passover*.... On the fiftieth day which is *Pentecost*...they bring to God a loaf.... Nor is there any one of the Festivals but in it they offer burnt-offerings. They also allow themselves to rest on every one of them."

To the three above seasonal Feasts each year, during intertestamental times also the Winter Feast of Lights at the rededication of the cleansed temple was added. Regarding the latter, one reads that under Judas Maccabeus, the Israelites "rose early on the 25th day of the [Hebrews'] ninth month...Cheseleu [alias December]...and offered sacrifice according to the Law upon the new altar [in the cleansed Temple].... It was dedicated with songs and citherns and harps.... And they kept the dedication...eight days...with gladness." First Maccabees 4:42-60.

The name of this Feast of Dedication among the Jews, *Chanuwkaah*, is given by Josephus as *Phoota* (alias 'Lights'). John 10:22*f* (*cf.* 8:12) tells us that "it was at Jerusalem the Feast of the Dedication" when "it was Winter" - that Jesus the Light of the World "walked in the Temple."

Josephus wrote<sup>5</sup> that "on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the month Casleu [or December]...they lighted the lamps that were on the candlesticks.... From that day [during the middle of the second century B.C.] to this [at the end of the first century A.D.], we [Jews] celebrate this Festival and call it 'Lights.'"

All the above is very rich, also as to its New Testament fulfilment - at least symbolically. Thus, prenatally, Jesus would have been conceived at Easter in the Spring; and grew prenatally at Pentecost in the Summer. He tabernacled within His mother during the Autumn; and, as the Light of the World, was born from her, as His temple, during the Winter.

After His birth, during His earthly life, Jesus Himself kept all four of these Quarterly Feasts. He observed the Passover in the Northern Hemisphere's Spring (Luke 2:41*f* and John 2:13-23 & 11:55 to 12:12 & 13:1-26 & 18:39 and Matthew 26:2-19). He observed Pentecost in the Northern Hemisphere's Summer (John 14:15-29 *cf.* Acts 2:1-33 & 2:42*f*). He observed Tabernacles in the Northern Hemisphere's Autumn (John 7:2-14). He observed the Feast of Lights in the Northern Hemisphere's Winter (John 10:22*f cf.* 8:12). And in doing all the above, it is arguable He did so - also to set Christians an example as to when to observe His Own Lord's Supper which fulfilled and replaced the above

Also during His postnatal life Jesus regularly predicted: His death at Easter; His subsequent coming back in His Spirit at Pentecost always to tabernacle within us during the 'Fall'; and His final coming again back into the World at its 'Winter' (as it were). It was therefore appropriate that also His New Testament Church should commune with Him seasonally thus. Luke 22:1-20 & Acts 20:6*f cf.* Acts 2:1-42*f &* I Cor. 5:7*f &* 11:20*f &* 16:8, *etc.*) - as also His Early-Patristic Church certainly did (see later below).

No wonder, then, that also Calvin finally approved of the 1541 *Ecclesiastical Ordinances*:<sup>6</sup> "The Supper was instituted by our Lord for our frequent use.... It should be administered four times a year [Genesis 1:14; 8:20-22; Exodus 23:14-17 & 34:22*f*; Leviticus 23:14*f*; Deuteronomy 16:16 & John 10:22*f*] -- namely at Christmas [in the Winter]; Easter [in Spring]; Whitsun [or Pentecost, in the Summer]; and on the first Sunday of September in Autumn [or the Fall]."

#### **4. The Passover and the other Seasonal Feasts each held annually**

One reads that the Passover was instituted and first observed in Egypt the night before the exodus "in the first month of the year." Exodus 12:1-48 *cf.* Numbers 33:3. After that inauguration, the Passover was again observed "in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year" and at "the appointed **Season**." Numbers 9:1-2. And so on, ideally in every subsequent year.

Still in the book of Exodus, not long after the first Passover in Egypt and quite soon after the

Exodus 16:1-16 manna-gathering episode - it was again clarified that the Passover was to be an annual and a perpetual Feast. It was to be eaten by adult male Israelites alone - even after their arrival in Canaan.

Declared the Lord: "Six years you shall sow your land.... Three times you shall keep a Feast to Me in the year. Keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread..., and none [masculine plural] shall appear before Me empty.

"So too the Feast of Harvest, the first fruits of your labours...; and the Feast of Ingathering..., when you have gathered in your labours out of the field. Three times in the year, all your [mature] males shall appear before the Lord God!" **Seasonally**. Exodus 23:10,14-17.

Thus God, comments Calvin, "prescribed only **three necessary convocations** - lest the fathers of families...should be wearied by the expense and trouble of them." Indeed, right here in Exodus 23:15-17 - as too in the parallel passages Exodus 34:12-25 & Deuteronomy 16:16 - the '**adult-ness**' as well as the "male-ness" of the persons concerned, is clear. For these texts contain several prohibitions against appearing before the Lord with empty hands - and **children** could bring **nothing** from the **labours** of their own hands to these three Feasts.

Moreover, it seems that the annual celebration of each of these **three Feasts** was augmented later by a **fourth** - Esther 9:22f 's *Puwriym* (compare the *Westminster Confession* 21:5<sup>a</sup>).

This - coupled with the fact that God instituted the **four Seasons** before the creation of man, and re-instituted them again after the Noachic Flood (Genesis 1:14 & 8:20-22) - suggests a **seasonal frequency** to be most appropriate for celebrating also **the Lord's Supper** which replaced those Feasts at the inauguration of the Newer Testament of that same Covenant.

Thus, it would seem that the Lord's Supper is best re-celebrated neither several times nor even just once every day; nor once or twice every Sunday; nor fortnightly; nor monthly; nor once every six weeks - but rather but some four times per year, **seasonally**.

Thus John Calvin's *Ecclesiastical Ordinances*; thus his student John Knox's *First Book of Discipline*; perhaps thus too the *Westminster Standards* (and certainly so proposed to that Assembly); and thus too the early and enduring historical practices of the Swiss, French, Dutch, Scottish and American Reformed Churches.

## **5. Matthew Henry's comments on Israel's Seasonal Feasts**

Let us hear Rev. Matthew Henry's commentary on Exodus 23:14-17. Of the Church in the Older Testament, he writes about the Lord's Feasts that "solemn religious attendance on God in the place which He should choose, is here strictly required....

"Thrice a year - all their [mature] males must come together in a holy convocation, [so] that



they might the better know and love one another and keep up their communion.... They must come together 'before the Lord.....

"They must 'feast' together before the Lord, eating and drinking together in token of their joy in God and their grateful sense of His goodness to them.... They must not 'appear before God empty'.... The Passover, Pentecost, and Feast of Tabernacles - in **Spring, Summer, and Autumn**, were the three times appointed for their attendance." In addition, there was later "the Feast of Dedication" when "it was **Winter**." John 10:22.

Regarding that fourth Annual Seasonal Feast, Dr. Henry comments: "It was at 'the Feast of Dedication and it was Winter' [John 10:22]." It was "a Feast that was annually observed by consent, in remembrance of the dedication of a new altar and the purging of the temple....

"We have the prophecy of it, Daniel 8:13-14.... In remembrance of it, they kept an annual feast on the twenty-fifth day of the month...of December and seven days after...as a 'good time' - as in the days of *Purim*, Esther 9:18."

## **6. Sacrifices and Passovers in Leviticus**

In Leviticus (1:1f), "the Lord called to Moses and spoke to him out of the Tabernacle of the Congregation" (or the 'Feast' alias *Moo-<sup>^</sup>eed*). Compare the similar word *Eed-<sup>^</sup>aah* which, in the construct form, is used in the 'Passover passage' Exodus 12:3-6.

Note there the phrase *A:<sup>^</sup>dath Yisjraa'eel* (alias 'Congregation of Israel'). Observe too that the words *Moo-<sup>^</sup>eed* (or **Seasonal** 'Feast-Time') and *Eed-<sup>^</sup>aah* (or 'Assembled Congregation'), are both derived from the root *yaa-<sup>^</sup>ad* (meaning 'to appoint' and hence 'to meet together at an appointed time').

Indeed, it is in this very context that the Lord went on to command Moses (Leviticus 23:1f) to "speak to the 'Sons of Israel' (*B<sup>e</sup>neey Yisjraa'eel*), and say to them concerning the Feasts of the Lord (*Moo-<sup>^</sup>a:deey Y<sup>e</sup>hoovaah*) which you [masculine] shall proclaim.... 'In the fourteenth day of the first month at evening, is the Lord's Passover."

## **7. The second Passover in the desert: Numbers nine**

For "the Lord spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai in the first month of the second year after they had come out of the land of Egypt - saying, 'Let the "Sons of Israel" (*B<sup>e</sup>neey Yisjraa'eel*) also keep the Passover at its appointed **Season!** On the fourteenth day of this month, at evening, you shall keep it [masculine], at its appointed **Season**, according to all its rites and ceremonies." Numbers 9:2f [cf. Exodus 12:1-48].

Matthew Henry's comment on this first Passover after the Exodus - the second ever celebrated -

is full of instruction. He points out on Numbers 9:1-14 that "here we have...an order given for the solemnization of the Passover - the day twelve months after they came out of Egypt - on the fourteenth day of the first month of the second year....

"The Israelites in the wilderness could not forget their deliverance out of Egypt.... However, because the first Passover was celebrated in a hurry, and was rather the substance itself than the sign - it was the will of God that, at the return of the year when they were more composed and better acquainted with the Divine Law, they should observe it again [so] that their children might more distinctly understand the solemnity and the better remember it hereafter.

Passages like Genesis 1:14 & 8:20*f* and Exodus 23:13*f* & 34:23, then, seem to be the germs of 'Seasonal Communion' each quarter. As we have already seen above - this is corroborated by the Rabbis, by John Calvin, by John Knox, and also by Matthew Henry. And, as we shall see later below, this was also the view of the Early-Patristic Church in general - and of Tertullian, Hippolytus and Eusebius in particular.

## **8. No Easter Sunday Evening Sacrament just days after Eucharist was instituted**

Many sacramentalistic communionists quite wrongly imagine that when Christ broke bread at Emmaus toward evening and gave it to Cleopas and his friend on Easter Sunday (in Luke 24:29*f*) - this was a re-celebration of the Lord's Supper just instituted a few days therebefore. To the contrary, however, this Easter Sunday action was merely at a normal evening meal - accompanied by the Lord's Own personal blessing. Interestingly, as in the Lord's Prayer, there is here on Easter Sunday at Emmaus no mention of wine at all.

Thus the great Protestant Reformer and Bible Expositor John Calvin has observed here in his *Harmony of the Gospels* that some such [daily-eucharizing or weekly-eucharizing] Roman Catholics and Romanizers have there quite wrongly "thought that Christ gave the bread not as an ordinary meal but as the sacred symbol of His body - and...that the Lord was at length recognized in the spiritual mirror of the Lord's Supper.... But this conjecture rests on no probable grounds....

"I choose rather to view the words of Luke as meaning that Christ, in taking the bread, gave thanks - according to His custom.... He employed His peculiar and ordinary form of prayer, to which He knew that the disciples had been habitually accustomed.... Let **us** learn by the example of our Master, whenever we eat bread, to offer thanksgiving to the Author of life!"

Moreover, just a few hours after that meal at Emmaus, yet still on that same Easter Sunday - "the same day at evening" but several miles away in Jerusalem, Jesus did the same. There, He asked His disciples: "Do you have any food here?" Then "they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb. And He took it, and ate in front of them." See: John 20:1 & 20:19 *cf.* Luke 24:41-

43.

Once again, we have here a wineless action of simply eating food - not of bread but of fish and a honeycomb; and indeed this time, by Jesus alone. To try to read the Eucharist into this, is desperate *eisegesis* indeed!

But even if such could be done in respect of Luke 24:29f and 24:41f - it would lead not to weekly communion or to daily communion but *a fortiori* to hourly communion (*etc.*) several times per day. That road leads to Romanism, with her five o'clock Mass and her six o'clock Mass (*etc.*) - but not to any kind of Biblical-Protestant doctrine of Holy Communion at all.

### **9. No 'Daily Communion' or 'Weekly Communion' in Acts 2:42-46**

Now it might be objected that although the Passover (together with the other few Old Testament 'Seasonal Feasts') was observed annually - nevertheless the Supper which replaced them was commemorated probably daily, or at least weekly. *Cf.*: Luke 2:41 and Acts 2:46 & 20:7. For, it could be suggested, the Old and the New Testament Sacraments are not congruent - alias equal in every respect.

Now certainly, even the Passover itself was previously sometimes observed more frequently than but once a year.<sup>7</sup> Too, the Holy Communion indeed replaced not only the Annual Passover - but also the two or three other Old Testament Feasts.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, the Lord's Supper was probably held at least twice in the first half of the year in which Jesus died. Mark 14:22f & Acts 2:42-46.

However, there is absolutely no Biblical evidence whatsoever for the ritualistic and episcopalian practice of 'Weekly Communion' *etc.* Even less is there Scripture for the 'Daily Communion' yet practised in certain Eastern 'Greek Orthodox' churches.

Still less is there any ground at all for modern Romanism's several 'Masses' every day. For texts like Luke 24:30f & 24:42f and John 21:9 and Acts 2:46 & 27:35 are not referring to Sacramental Communion - but only to the frequent sharing of ordinary food.

Indeed, every single New Testament reference to the Lord's Supper without exception - is geared exclusively either to the annual Passover Feast at Easter-time and/or to the annual Feast of Pentecost fifty days later. Luke 2:41 & 22:1f; Acts 1:3; 2:1,42f; 12:3-4; 20:6-16; and First Corinthians 11:20f (*cf.* 5:6-8 & 16:8).

Early-Patristic passages like *Didachee* 14:1f and Pliny's *Letter to Trajan* 10:96 & Justin Martyr's *1st Apology* 65f, should therefore be interpreted in the light of prior and canonical Holy

Writ - and **not** instead interpreted in the darkness of later and non-canonical unholy ritualism. For the sake of convenience, however, the following is briefly stated right now.

The *Didachee* speaks of careful Communion Services held on Lord's Days [whether annually on Easter Sundays, or whether quarterly on Easter Sundays and Pentecost Sundays *etc.*]. It does not at all speak about Communion Services each week, and still less about daily eucharizing.

The pagan Pliny speaks simply of Christians in Bythinia publically partaking of 'good food' - at a time other than when they assembled for habitual worship 'on a certain fixed day.' And Justin, when pertinently referring to Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday, also refers to post-catechetical Eucharist Services specifically on Sundays - without discussing their frequency (whether annually or quarterly *etc.*).

### **10. Grover Gunn versus John Calvin on Acts 2:42f**

Now even the 'Weekly Communionist' Rev. Grover Gunn<sup>9</sup> all but capitulates to the very same 'Classic Calvinist Thesis' (on the frequency of Holy Communion) which he himself seeks to revise. For Gunn too rightly concedes: that "there is no Scripture passage which directly instructs the Elders to serve Communion to the covenant people every Lord's Day"; that "there are no direct statements on the issue" favouring 'Weekly Communion'; and that "the 'breaking of bread' can refer to a common meal (Acts 27:35)."

On the other hand, in his citations of "Acts 2:42" and "Acts 2:46-47a" - Gunn quite wrongly concludes<sup>10</sup> that "Acts chapter two gives evidence for not only 'Weekly [Communion]' but 'Daily Communion.'" That conclusion, however, is quite incorrect.

Indeed, Gunn further alleges that "in Acts 2:42 the 'breaking of bread'...refers to the sacramental meal." He also alleges that whereas "in Acts 2:46...the 'breaking of bread' is associated with a common partaking of nourishment" - therefore, "the best explanation...is that the Early Church combined the sacramental meal with a fellowship meal or love feast." Emphases mine.

Here, Gunn misconstrues matters. Furthermore, he rejects Dr. Calvin's interpretation of these passages - and also of First Corinthians 11:20-22 (see paragraphs below). More importantly, Grover Gunn here also adds his own misinterpretation (of Acts 2:42-46) - to Holy Scripture itself.

Gunn's is a misconstruction. For *cf.* First Corinthians 10:16-22 & 11:20-24; Second Peter 2:1,12-16; Jude 12; Revelation 2:14,20 & 19:9 (and also Ignatius's *Epistle to the Philadelphians* 4). Indeed, his misinterpretation amounts to **adding** to Scripture. And that is a very serious error. Proverbs 30:6 *cf.* Revelation 22:18f.

Dr. John Calvin's *Commentary on Acts* clearly comes down against such a sacramentalistic and frequentative misinterpretation of Acts 2:42-46. Explains Calvin:<sup>11</sup> "Some think that 'breaking of bread' [at Acts 2:42-46] means the Lord's Supper; others that it refers to alms; others again that the faithful had their meals together...."

Some think that '*koinoonia*' [here] is the celebration of the Holy Supper.... Some think that in this passage 'the breaking of bread' means the Holy Supper.... This seems to me far removed from Luke's meaning. He indicates to us [by the words 'breaking bread at home' (in Acts 2:46)] that they used to eat together [*cf.* First Corinthians 11:20abc & 11:22ab] - and to do so frugally [*cf.* First Corinthians 11:21abc & 11:22cdef]."

To Calvin, then - *versus* Gunn - the Early Church no way combined daily fellowship meals with the less frequent sacramental meal. See too in later paragraphs below.

### **11. No 'Weekly Communion' in Acts 20:6f**

Nor does Acts 20:6f teach 'Weekly Communion' - alias manducation of the Holy Sacrament once every seven days. It is true that First Corinthians 1:2 & 16:1-2 imply that the Corinthian Church and the Churches of Galatia - and indeed the Christian Church in every place - apparently took up collections "on every first day of the week" or *kata mian sabbatou hekastos*.

Yet Acts 20:6-7 does not teach weekly eucharizing. Instead, it simply states that the disciples came together to break bread upon the first day of the week right after the Easter "days of unleavened bread" - *meta tas heemeras toon azumoo...en de tee, mia, toon Sabbatoon suneegmnoon heemoon klasai arton*. Compare "the days of the unleavened bread" at "Easter" in Acts 12:3-5.

Thus, during a year subsequent to the one mentioned in Acts 12:3f, the 'infrequently-observed' Sacrament of the Lord's Supper had (in the Acts 20:6f year) been scheduled to be re-commemorated specifically at that same particular time of the year (namely right after Easter). For, among the Christians, it had replaced the 'annual' Sacrament of the Passover previously held by God's true people at that very time - yet even then (and now) still being held by the Jews precisely at that season of the year, and fifty days before the subsequent annual Feast of Pentecost (Acts 20:16).

Very strained indeed is the explanation proposed by the 'Weekly Communionist' Grover Gunn:<sup>12</sup> "The passage [Acts 20:7-12] says that the disciples came together for the purpose of partaking of the Lord's Supper, and that Paul was their preacher that Lord's Day. Was this use of both the preached word and the sacramental word their normal weekly practice - or was Paul there [on] one of the few Sundays each year on which this was done? Probability alone would point to the former."

Grover Gunn continues: "This conclusion is even more evident, when we consider that the

Holy Spirit gave us this unique account of a Lord's Day worship service.... The burden of proof is on those who argue that the worship service described in Acts 20 was exceptional - and not the normal weekly practice of the church at Troas....

"The early church," Gunn assures us, "**combined** the sacramental meal with a fellowship meal or love feast. **Both** the fellowship meal and the sacramental meal are mentioned in Luke's account of the Lord's Day service at Troas - where we learn that the church both broke bread and ate (Acts 20:7).... Corporate worship was no longer a daily experience, but a weekly experience on the Lord's Day (First Corinthians 16:2 *cf.* Acts 20:7). Here we find additional evidence that the early church normally partook of the Lord's Supper every Lord's Day." My emphases throughout - F.N. Lee.

## **12. Gunn's garbling of Acts 20:6f**

There are quite a few inadequacies in Gunn's above *eisegesis*. Let us now look more closely at several of them.

First, Gunn omits Acts 20:6 and 20:16. For he wrongly limits the context only to "Acts 20:7-12" - while the full context of the Bible passage referred to, is actually Acts 20:6-16. There, verse 6 clearly refers to the annual "days of the unleavened bread" alias the **Passover Feast**. Indeed, verse 16 equally clearly refers to the annual festive "day of **Pentecost**" one Season later. Significantly, Gunn here totally ignores both of these two annual Feasts.

Second, Acts 20:6-7 neither states nor implies (with Gunn) that the Church at Troas met every Sunday for the purpose of celebrating the Lord's Supper. It clearly teaches that when the Disciples at Troas came together in order to break bread on the first of the sabbaths after the days of the unleavened bread, Paul spoke to them. Says Luke the holy writer of Acts: *Meta tas heemeras toon azumoon...en de tee; mia; toon Sabbatoon suneegmenoon heemoon klasai arton, ho Paulos dielegeto autois.*

Indeed, in that particular year: the itinerant Paul spoke at the special seasonal scheduled Communion Service in Troas (Acts 20:7-11) which followed right after the annual Hebrew Passover at Easter in Philippi - from which place he had just sailed. Acts 20:6-7 *cf.* 12:3-4. That annual Eastertime Communion Service itself would then be followed by the annual Feast of Pentecost, just fifty days later (Acts 20:16).

Third - and for the first and second reasons already given above - Acts 20:7 does not (with Gunn) imply that "corporate worship" (and therefore the Lord's Supper too?) "was no longer a daily experience" as in Acts 2:42-46. (Indeed, a daily corporate worship even in Acts 2:42-46 is Gunn's own gratuitous assumption.)

Neither does it imply, by way of dispensationalistic differentiation, the celebration of the Lord's Supper as "a weekly experience on the Lord's Day" once every seven days. That would very obviously clash with the practice of **Jesus** between Luke 22:1-20 and Acts 2:42.

Fourth, Acts 20:7 does not teach (as Gunn claims) that "the church both broke bread and ate" in "Acts 20:7." To the contrary, there is no mention of eating (or even of tasting) at Acts 20:7, but only at Acts 20:11.

Finally, even at Acts 20:11, the Bible does not (with Gunn) say that "the church both broke bread and ate" even at a love feast. Instead, it teaches that Paul (as the officiating Minister of the Word and Sacraments) then "broke and tasted the bread" or *klasas ton arton kai geusamenos*.

Consequently, Scripture here makes no mention of both "the fellowship meal or love feast...and the sacramental meal" (thus Gunn) - but only of 'breaking and tasting bread' alias the sacramental Lord's Supper (see below). The passage states that this bread got broken and tasted only belatedly - very early on Monday morning, soon after the unforeseeable accident involving Eutychus. Acts 20:9-11. Troas's Communion Service was thus scheduled to be held specifically on the first Sunday after Easter. Acts 20:5-13.

### **13. Calvin versus Gunn on Acts 20:6f**

Calvin too sees this passage Acts 20:6-11 quite differently to Gunn. Here, the Genius of Geneva comments<sup>13</sup> "that Paul stayed at **Philippi** during the days of Unleavened Bread.... He had to take care that the ignorant might not think him a despiser of God - by disregarding the Feast Day" alias Easter-time during that year.

Geneva's genius then goes on to discuss the immediately subsequent Christian Sunday Sabbath. So he next renders Acts 20:7's Greek (*en de tee, mia, toon Sabbatoon*): 'on one day of the Sabbaths.'

Here, explains Calvin, the Spirit-inspired writer Luke infallibly means: "the 'First Day' of the week...or one particular 'Sabbath.'" Indeed, "according to custom," he concludes, "that day was most suitable for holding a meeting."

Luke further states that they then gathered there: 'to break bread.' Argues Calvin: "Although the 'breaking of bread' sometimes [elsewhere] means a domestic feast, in Hebrew - yet, two reasons prompt me to take it in this verse as referring [only] to the Holy Supper...."

Paul [here] took bread not at supper-time, but after midnight.... He took the food not for the

sake of filling himself, but only to taste it." For in Acts 20:11, the Greek word *geusamenos* - and the Latin word *degustasset*, in Calvin's translation thereof - means: tasted.

"Therefore," decides Dr. John Calvin, "I come to the conclusion that a solemn day...was appointed...for celebrating the Holy Supper of the Lord." That day was "the 'first of the Sabbaths' alias the first Christian Sunday after Easter."

This was no weekly 'love feast' or church conviviality alias "fellowship meal" in distinction to "the sacramental meal" as propounded by Mr. Gunn. To Calvin, it was precisely the "solemn [!] and seasonal Sacrament of the Lord's Supper - where Paul at Troas "took the food" but "only to taste it...for celebrating the Holy [!] Supper of the Lord."

#### **14. Calvin on Communion in First Corinthians 11:20f**

We have seen that the Trojan Church celebrated the Lord's Supper at Acts 20:7-11. That is found between Acts 20:6's "days of Unleavened Bread" at Easter, and Acts 20:16's "day of Pentecost" fifty days thereafter. Compare Acts 1:3 to 2:1, and Acts 12:3-4.

We also find precisely the same in First Corinthians 11:20f. That is found between First Corinthians 5:6-8's Easter Passover, and First Corinthians 16:8's Pentecost (fifty days later) - and, indeed, in relation to Feasts during the time of the Old Testament, as set out in First Corinthians 10:3f.

There in First Corinthians eleven, Paul rebukes the Corinthian Christians for their abuse of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He reprimands them for commingling it with the 'love feast' (in the way the Weekly-Communionist Gunn himself does in misunderstanding Acts 20:7-11).

For, in First Corinthians (11:20,21,22,34) Paul specifically distinguishes the Christians' communal conviviality - from the Holy Sacrament of the vastly different Lord's Supper. Sadly, the 'carnal Christians' in Corinth had been confusing and commingling their own communal convivialities or 'love feasts' - with Christ's solemn Sacrament of Holy Communion. First Corinthians 3:1-3 & 11:20,29 - *cf.* Second Peter 2:13 & Jude 12.

Further, First Corinthians 11:25-26's phrases "as often as you drink it" and "as often as you eat" - mean: "whenever you really do partake of the Lord's Supper" itself. They do not mean: "as frequently as possible" *etc.*

For the total context (First Corinthians 11:20-29) makes it quite clear that the celebration of the Lord's Supper at Corinth - over the years - should have been occurring much less frequently than



was actually then happening there. Indeed, the wider context of First Corinthians 5:6-8 and 16:8 - with 11:20-29 right in the middle of that wider context - seems to indicate that the Lord's Supper should have been celebrated precisely after Passover (and before the following Pentecost), apparently each year. See too: Acts 12:3-4 *cf.* 18:21 & 20:6-16.

In his comments on First Corinthians 11:20-22 and 11:33, Calvin observes:<sup>14</sup> "Paul now turns to condemn the abuse which had crept into the Corinthians' observance of the Lord's Supper - *viz.*, that they were mixing up ordinary banquets with the Feast that is Holy and Spiritual.... Paul condemns the inclusion of common things which have no relation to the Lord's Supper."

Now "the 'love-feasts'" were indeed "very ancient.... The origin...lay in the sacrificial rites common to both Jews and Gentiles."

However, the Lord's Supper is different. "Paul does not want this Spirit-ual Feast to be mixed up with ordinary feasts in any way.... How thoroughly dissatisfied the Apostle was with this custom of theirs, of feasting - even if there had never been that abuse which has just been mentioned....

"It seems quite acceptable for the whole Church to eat the Lord's Supper at one Common Table. Yet, on the other hand, it is definitely wrong to turn the gathering for worship into other practices that are quite foreign to its nature....

"Each person has a home of his own which is intended for him to eat in and drink in. It is therefore improper to do these things, in the gathering for worship....

"In the Lord's Supper..., each person may not celebrate his supper on his own.... This Sacrament should not be mixed up with ordinary feasts."

## **15. Gunn versus Scripture on Holy Communion**

Grover Gunn (see paragraphs above) not only 'anti-Calvin-ianly' combines the common 'love-feast' with the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He also disregards both the Biblical context of First Corinthians 11 as well as Calvin's commentary thereon. Instead, Gunn does not give an *ex*-egesis. To the contrary. He only "*eis*-egetically" elaborates upon his own fetish of 'Weekly Communion.'

Writes Gunn:<sup>15</sup> "Paul reminded the Corinthians that every time they partook of the Lord's Supper, they were proclaiming the Lord's death until He returns (11:26). Should we not be proclaiming the Lord's death every Lord's Day? ... I do not doubt...but that Communion also was a part of the weekly Lord's Day worship in the Early Church" - *viz.*, during the Apostolic Age.

Gunn's consummating castigation is extremely judgmental, and also quite Anti-Biblical. For Gunn challengingly concludes:<sup>16</sup> "What will we say when our Lord asks us why we deliberately neglected a primary means of grace in most Lord's Day worship services? Do we really believe He will be impressed with our 'special because infrequent' rationalization?"

We ourselves, however, must here respond to Gunn that Holy Scripture itself tells us what impresses our Lord at Communion Services. Compare: Exodus 12:43-48; Numbers 9:2-13; Luke 2:40-47; First Corinthians 5:6-8 & 10:16-22 & 11:20-32. Especially the latter passage, reveals Almighty God's dire displeasure at our participation in His Holy Supper whenever coupled with the simultaneous eating also of the 'love feast' apparently so pleasing to Grover Gunn.

## **16. 'All Scripture': versus fragmentative dispensationalism**

Paltry indeed are the portions of passages like Acts 2:42-46 & 20:6-7 & First Corinthians 11:25*f*, that are therefore here improperly appealed to by Grover Gunn. Indeed, they have, against conservative Classic Calvinism, been cited for countless centuries especially by Sacramentalists.

They have been misappealed to by Romanists, Anglicans, Plymouth Brethrenists, Church of Christ Campbellites and even Crypto-Episcopalian Presbyterians. Indeed, they have each been abused as a *deus ex machina* authority for their own erroneous positions.

Are such 'magicians' Gunn's ultimate mentors? Yet all such texts - once examined in their proper context - do not in any way authorize either two-monthly or six-weekly or monthly or bi-monthly or weekly or daily or multi-daily or hourly Communion Services.

The daily breaking of bread from house to house in Acts 2:46 after Pentecost Sunday (Acts 2:1*f*), is therefore not talking about the Lord's Supper just instituted the previous Easter when it replaced the annual Passover (1:3 *cf.* 12:3*f* & 20:6*f*). Nor is it suggesting weekly eucharizings. Instead, it is discussing the always-frequent and often-daily showing of Christian hospitality to other Christians (in the form of meals or refreshments enjoyed together in one another's homes).

Yet the later breaking and tasting of the bread during a subsequent year - on the first Christian Sabbath after Easter at Troas in Acts 20:6-11 - is referring only to the special Communion Service. Indeed, it is describing the 'seasonal' Sacrament right after the Passover (Acts 20:6) and before the next Pentecost fifty days later (Acts 20:16). It has no reference to the fictions of 'Daily Communion' and 'Weekly Communion' - and still less to 'love feasts' (whether frequent or not).

Indeed, in a still later year, we find precisely the conclusive First Corinthians 11:20*f* - wedged solidly between the annual Easter Passover at 5:6-8 and the annual Feast of Pentecost at 16:8. Self-evidently, this reprimands the confused Corinthians even for their cavalier 'communing' at that

very time.

### **17. Ante-Nicene patristic testimony as to the frequency of Communion**

The A.D. 75 Hebrew Historian Josephus gives a valuable description of two seasonal Hebrew Feasts in Jerusalem. The period he refers to, was after the beginning of the siege by the Romans in A.D. 66 and before their destruction of its temple in A.D. 70.

"Before the Jews' rebellion," chronicles Josephus, "when the people were come in great crowds to the Feast of Unleavened Bread..., a great light shone round the altar and the holy house.... Moreover, at that Feast which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner temple as their custom was to perform their sacred ministrations, they said that...they felt a quaking and heard a great noise."

Clearly, the annual Feasts of Israel - then being replaced by the Christian Lord's Supper so that the things that cannot be shaken would remain (Hebrews 12:22-27 cf. 13:10-16). Yet those Feasts were even then still being kept seasonally.

Perhaps around A.D. 95 (though some scholars think not until the early Post-Nicene Period), one encounters the *Didachee* alias the so-called *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*. In *Didachee* 14:1, it does **not** say: "Gather yourselves together and break bread on every first day of the week!" Nor does it here state that the Lord's Supper was then held 'on **every** Lord's Day' or '*kata heemeran kuriakeen hekasteen*.'

This 'apocryphal' word *hekasteen*, meaning 'every' - was erroneously (and indeed also sacramentalistically) **only much later fabricated** and inserted by falsifying Weekly-Communionists into at least one copy of the text. Apparently that was then done in an attempt to suggest the idea of a **eucharistic** action **every** Lord's Day - alias a ritualistic manducation at all of the Sunday Meetings of the Church, ever since apostolic times.

But the true *Didachee* 14:1f actually says "*kata kuriakeen de Kuriou*." This probably implies "*kata kuriakeen [heemeran] de [Deipnon] Kuriou*" - referring back to Acts 20:6f; First Corinthians 5:6f & 11:20-25; and Revelation 1:10. Indeed, it is very significant that the parallel passage in the *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles* (7:2:30), on the weekly celebration of the Lord's Day, makes no reference at all to the Eucharist thereon.

Also the *Didachee* 14:1f itself would suggest that the Lord's Supper - whether celebrated **annually** (like the Passover Sacrament), or **quarterly** (like the Old Testament Feasts collectively) - was usually so observed precisely in conjunction with the regular Sunday Sabbath weekly worship

service (and therefore on a weekly Lord's Day). But it would **not** suggest weekly **eucharizing every Sunday**.

The Primitive Church, in its Lord's Supper, therefore apparently continued this **annual** cycle of the three or four seasonal feasts of Ancient Israel. Thus the Ante-Nicene Eusebius in his *Church History* (III:8:2-6) cites Josephus's previously-mentioned *Wars of the Jews* (VI:5:3). This suggests that also the Ante-Nicene Church celebrated the Eucharist seasonally or quarterly - prior to the rise of ritualism and the resultant ever-increasing frequency of the 'Mass' in the Later Church (especially from about 350 A.D. onward).

Thus, for example, in chapter fourteen of his famous work *On Fasting* - around A.D. 200 Tertullian (the 'Father of Western Christianity') states that because "there is a new creation in Christ, our solemnities too will be bound to be new.... We celebrate the Passover by an **annual** rotation.... In the fifty ensuing days...we spend our time in all exultation" as regards also the annual Feast of Pentecost, *etc.*

The 230 A.D. Early Church Father Hippolytus accurately recorded the 'seasonal' frequency of Holy Communion - in the untarnished Primitive-Patristic Period. Hippolytus not only wrote a "treatise on *The Lord's Supper*." In his *Homily on the Paschal Supper*, he again dealt with Christ and His cup. And in his more famous book *Against All Heresies* he also wrote that because "Christ kept the Supper...., it is needful that I too should keep it in the same manner as the Lord did."<sup>17</sup>

Thus Hippolytus, in his *Discourse on Elkanah and Hannah* (at First Samuel 1-2), anti-dispensationalistically recognized the clear connection between the Old Testament Feasts of Israel and the New Testament Christian Eucharist. There, he explains: "Three seasons of the year prefigured the Saviour Himself - so that He should fulfil the mysteries prophesied about Him." In the Feast of Tabernacles, Christ's incarnation was prefigured. This foreshadowed the Season of His Advent (at 'Christ-mas'). Leviticus 23:37-43 *cf.* John 1:1-14 & 8:12 & 10:22. Then again, there was also "the Passover Season.... As the Apostle says: 'Even Christ...our Passover was sacrificed for us.'" First Corinthians 5:7 *cf.* Leviticus 23:1-8. "And at Pentecost - so as to presignify the Kingdom of Heaven - He, having first ascended to Heaven, brought man as a gift to God." John 3:13 & Acts 2:34 *cf.* Leviticus 23:9-22.

"It was heretofore tolerated in some places that Communicants should take each one his portion.... By our Lord's Own precept and example, it may be received at the hour of ordinary meals and alike by all the faithful whether men or women [but not children], yet we usually do this in our gatherings before daybreak...on the Lord's day and from the Paschal Feast to Pentecost."<sup>18</sup>

Note this still speaks of eucharizing at the annual Paschal Feast and the Feast of Pentecost, specifically on the Lord's day! But it does not speak of eucharizing on every Lord's day, and still less on every day of the week.

Also the A.D. 230 Christian Church Father Origen wrote something highly significant in this regard. He states<sup>19</sup> "it is objected to us" by the pagan Celsus "that we ourselves are accustomed to observe certain days - as for example **the Lord's day**, the **Preparation**, the **Passover**, or **Pentecost**....

"He who considers that 'Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us' [First Corinthians 5:7 f], and that it is his duty to keep the Feast by eating of the flesh of the Word - never ceases to keep the Paschal Feast. For the *Pascha* means a 'Passover' - and he is ever striving in all his thoughts, words and deeds to pass over from the things of this life to God....

"We are required by the Law of God to keep its Festivals by eating 'the bread of affliction' [Deuteronomy 16:3] or 'unleavened bread with bitter herbs' [Exodus 12:8].... We endeavour as much as we can to be partakers of the Lord's Table." Yet no greater frequency than that set out in the previous paragraphs above, is specified here.

### **18. Bingham's allegations that Early Church practised Weekly Communion**

The views of the 1668-1723 eclectic Anti-Puritan Pro-Paedocommunionistic Anglican Joseph Bingham, who was expelled from Oxford's University College for deological heresy, are well known. Against Puritanism, he tenuously argued<sup>20</sup> that in "the Ancient Church," it was an obligation for "all persons except penitents under censure...to receive the communion every Lord's day."

In favour of his view having been "the constant practice for the three first ages" or centuries - Bingham then (generally speaking improperly) cited Ignatius, Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Cyprian, and Eusebius. He also (by and large) properly cited various Post-Nicene authorities - such as the A.D. 343-81 Council of Laodicea, Basil, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, the Council of Antioch, the *Apostolic Canons*, Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustine, Socrates, and monk John Cassian.

To the Anglican Bingham, less-often-than-weekly eucharizing "is a great declension from the zeal and fervour of the primitive ages." We ourselves shall soon show the very opposite.

Yet even Bingham conceded that Seasonal Communion was Old-Testamentical ("The Jews have their annual memorials of Gods's benefits on their Festivals"). Indeed, he also conceded that the Early Church obliged the receiving of the Eucharist "three times a year, at the three Great Festivals - Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost" - at least from "the Council of Agde about the year 506." Moreover, he even admitted: "And so things continued to the time of Charles the Great, when the Third Council of Tours made a decree to the like purpose, *anno* 813."

With the rise of transubstantiation after that, however, ritualists like Rabanus Maurus and Bertram held that "the Sacrament was administered not only at the Paschal solemnity every year, but on every day throughout the year." Quite a concession - coming from a man like Bingham!

Then, however - lamented Bingham - came Calvin, who acceded "to a rule which requires the people to communicate only four times a year." Consequently, Bingham conceded, "communicating only four times a year continued to be the general standing custom in the French Church" of Calvin - till Bingham's own time (*circa* 1700). Then Bingham, as a broad-and-crazy and high-and-hazy Anglican, sought to strengthen mediaeval priestcraft once more - by urging a relapse into the weekly if not also daily eucharistic communion malpractices of the Post-Nicene Church.

Thus Bingham refers us to the *Epistle to the Ephesians* (chs. 12f), where the A.D. 107 Ignatius simply says: "You have been initiated into the mysteries of the Gospel with Paul...who in all his Epistle makes mention of you in Christ Jesus. Take heed, then, often to come together to give thanks to God and show forth His praise!"

Here, the Frequent-Communionist Bingham begs the question, and slyly suggests: "Ignatius exhorts the Ephesians to be diligent in assembling frequently to celebrate the eucharist[?!].... This frequency of communion may reasonably[?!] be supposed[?!] to be...according to the known practice once a week on every Lord's day." **Not clearly demonstrated**, but only "reasonably...supposed"! Emphases mine - F.N. Lee.

Bingham then moves on and gives the same spin to Justin Martyr. There, Bingham says he himself was citing from Justin's *Second Apology*. In actual fact, however, Bingham was there citing from Justin's *First Apology* 67 (which we have previously shown teaches *inter alia* eucharizing on the Lord's day (as distinct from on every Lord's day as Bingham misassumed).

It is not at all clear why the Pro-Paedocommunionistic Bingham cited the A.D. 190 Clement of Alexandria's *Stromata* in favour of his own weekly communionism - if not as support also for his own preference even of daily eucharizing. For that passage (I:1) requires all would-be communicants to "test themselves...in the dispensation of the Eucharist, according to custom" - inasmuch as "one's own conscience is best for choosing accurately, or shunning."

Indeed, insists Clement, "its firm foundation is a right life with suitable instruction. But the imitation of those who have already been proved, and who have led correct lives, is most excellent for the understanding (First Corinthians 11:27-28)." Moreover, I:10 even adds that after "breaking the bread" - Christ presented it "so that we might eat it according to reason, and so that knowing the Scriptures we might walk obediently." No room here for either Weekly-Communionism or Paedocommunion!

It is significant that the Pro-Paedocommunionist Bingham also avoids Clement's *Instructor*

II:2 like the plague. For that states: "To drink the blood of Jesus, is to become partaker of the Lord's immortality - the Spirit being the energetic principle of the Word, as blood is of flesh.... I admire those who have adopted an austere life, and who...flee as far as possible from wine.... Boys and girls should keep as much as possible away from this medicine. For it is not right to pour into the burning season of life the hottest of all liquids - wine - adding, as it were, fire to fire."

Bingham next refers repeatedly to Tertullian's *De Corona* chapter 3. That simply states: "We take also in congregations before daybreak...the Sacrament of the Eucharist...as often as the anniversary comes round.... We rejoice in the same privilege also from **Easter** to **Whitsunday**."

Rather than to see this as a reference to seasonal communion at Easter and at Whitsunday (during Pentecost), Bingham would perceive this to teach weekly and also even daily eucharizing. Indeed, Bingham was strangely silent about the eucharistic significance of the annual Passover and the Feast of Pentecost in chapter 14 of Tertullian's *On Fasting* (see above).

None of the 252 A.D. Cyprian's *Epistles* 12 & 34-39 to which the Pro-Paedocommunionist and Weekly-Communionist Bingham refers, has anything to do with the frequency of eucharizing. *Epistle* 12 in fact precludes Paedocommunion. *Epistles* 34-36 have nothing at all to do with the Eucharist. *Epistle* 37-39 deals with Felicissimus's excommunication (with no reference to the former frequency of his eucharizing). And Cyprian's *De Oratione Domini* - by which Bingham apparently means the sacramentalisticizing Cyprian's *Treatise on the Lord's Prayer* (IV:18), wackily applies its petition 'Give us this day our daily bread!' in a hypersacramentalistic way that no Weekly Communionists and indeed even few Daily Communionists would regard as responsible.<sup>21</sup>

We certainly concede to Bingham that in the Post-Nicene period, there was a syncretistic decline into Weekly Communionism and even Daily Communionism. Indeed, we will even concede that the seeds of that decline are to be found even in the time of A.D. 252 sacramentalisticizing Cyprian - when Paganism first started infecting the Church in Carthage.

But we categorically deny that frequent communion was the doctrine of the Pre-Cyprianic Church. And we also categorically deny that it was ever the practice of the Old Testament Church; the Church in the earthly days of Jesus; the Apostolic Church; and the Ancient-Patristic or the early Ante-Nicene Church.

## **19. The deformation of Communion in the Mediaeval Church**

However, after the 252<sup>f</sup> A.D. time of Cyprian - and more especially from about a century later onward - the Lord's Supper degenerated from its apostolic simplicity. On the one hand, under the increasing influence of a resurgent Paganism (also precisely within the Church), it gradually became credited - with assumed '**magical**' properties. This finally resulted, *via* the Mediaeval Mass

especially from the eighth century onward, in the promulgation of the iniquitous doctrine of transubstantiation (at the Fourth Lateran Council, in 1215 A.D.).

On the other hand, and because of this ‘magical’ mirage, those Masses were celebrated more and more frequently. Finally, they were ‘offered’ every day - and even several times daily. Ecclesiastical laws were also enacted, making it a ‘mortal sin’ for laymen not to ‘go to Mass’ - at least once a year.

In spite of that, however, the Ante-Nicene Early Church’s practice of communion at the great Christian Feasts thrice a year (at Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost) - still continued. This is seen especially in the British Isles after Patrick (A.D. 460), at a Gallican Synod in France (A.D. 506) and in Northumbria with the Venerable Bede (A.D. 730).

It is also seen even in the Late-Mediaeval Period in the *Gemeindekommunion* or Congregational Eucharist. That was practised for many centuries in Southern Germany and parts of Switzerland.<sup>22</sup>

That was because this practice was firmly rooted in the Feasts of Ancient Israel thrice annually, as well as thereafter in the New Testament and the Early Church itself. Genesis 1:14; 8:20-22; Exodus 12:14-17; 34:23; Leviticus 23:4-37; Deuteronomy 16:16; Esther 9:17-19 (*cf.* too First Maccabees 4:52-59); John 10:22*f*; Acts 2:1,42-46; 12:3-4; 14:15-18; 15:18-21; 18:21; 20:6-16; and First Corinthians 5:6-8; 11:20*f* & 16:8 with Tertullian and Hippolytus and Eusebius *etc.*

That was, of course, very different to the other Late-Mediaeval practice of minimal manducation at least once per year - against which Calvin rightly objected. Yet especially in Rome and elsewhere, the Eucharist was offered every Sunday, especially from the ninth century onward. Often, if not usually, it was then only the priests and other clergy who then manducated thereat.

The Reformation, especially in Switzerland, acted strongly against the daily Masses of the Late Middle Ages. Especially Ulrich Zwingli not only repudiated transubstantiation. He also reverted to the Seasonal Communion of Holy Scripture.

Thus in his work *Action and Fraction of the Lord’s Supper*, he wrote:<sup>23</sup> "This ordinance...we shall break four times annually - at Easter, Pentecost, Fall, and Christmas" in the Winter. This was done not only in Zurich, but also in Basel and Berne.

The well-known Swiss-American Theologian Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Schaff, in his famous *History of the Christian Church*,<sup>24</sup> thus describes the Pre-Calvinian Swiss "Reformed celebration of the Lord’s Supper" by Ulrich Zwingli: "The first celebration of the Communion after the Reformed usage, was held in...April, 1525.... The Communion Service was to be held four times in the year - at Easter, Whitsunday, Autumn, and Christmas."



This is the very view which also the later Calvin himself finally embraced. First, however, he over-reacted against the infrequent eucharistic practice of most Romanist laymen at that time. For then, they had very generally been attending Mass only annually - even though it was regularly 'offered' several times every day!

## **20. The young Calvin (1536-1540) on the frequency of Communion**

Opposing this, the young Calvin expressed the desire for more 'Frequent Communion.' This was chiefly in his own youthful protest against, if not in rash over-reaction to, Rome's false and ritualistic grounding of its own 'Communion Service' at that time upon the annual day of atonement (Leviticus 16).

Wrote the 27-year-old John Calvin, rather questionably, in his 1536 *Institutes*:<sup>25</sup> "Whether or not...the bread is to be leavened or unleavened, and the wine to be red or white, is of no consequence.... The Sacrament might be celebrated in the most becoming manner, if it were dispensed to the Church very frequently, at least once a week."

Calvin continued: "The Sacrament...was not instituted to be received once a year [only]...., as is now commonly the custom.... They say that Zephyrinus was the author of the decree....

"This holy man...had appointed a day, so that on it the whole of Christendom might give a 'Confession of their Faith' by partaking of the Lord's Supper. The ordinance of Zephyrinus, which was otherwise good[!] - posterity perverted, when they made a fixed law of [**but**] one 'Communion' in the year."

Worse yet. Some time after this has become customary, adds Calvin, it became a lifeless ritual. "Almost all, when they have once communicated, as if they were discharged as to all the rest of the year, sleep on secure.... They did not approach...at other times[!] of the year [too], even when prepared; but only at Easter, [even] though [they were then] unprepared."

At age twenty-seven, Calvin was wrong about the frequency of the Passover Communion - and also about the **required redness** of its wine (Genesis 49:11f & Numbers 9:11 & Proverbs 23:30-32). At that same young age, Calvin was wrong also - about the desirable frequency of enjoying Passover Communion.

The original Latin (and soon thereafter French) edition of his *Institutes* in 1536, had grown to almost five times that size in Calvin's own last edition thereof in 1559. For the differences between the several editions, see the works of J. Thomas, A. Schweizer and Koestlin.<sup>26</sup>

Be that as it may, one should **not limit** one's view of Calvin's doctrine of the Eucharist solely to his 1536-59 *Institutes*. One should consider also everything he wrote on the Eucharist (in his *Commentaries, Letters, Tracts and Treaties*), and especially what he wrote after 1559 till his death in 1564. Again, one should realize that he could have been clearer on some aspects of the Sacraments than he was, and that his student Knox (who reflects his more mature views) should not be discounted (especially regarding the frequency of the Eucharist *etc.*).

In his 1540 *Short Treatise on the Lord's Supper*, written when but thirty-one, Calvin further wrote:<sup>27</sup> "To prostrate ourselves before the bread of the Supper and worship Jesus Christ as if He were contained in it - is to make an idol of it rather than a Sacrament.... From the same source have proceeded other superstitious practices - [such] as carrying the Sacrament in procession through the streets once a year....

"We have shown the origin of the calamity which befell the Popish Church. I mean that of abstaining from communicating in the Supper for the whole period of a year."

Calvin continues: "They regard the Supper as a sacrifice.... Instead of distributing the Sacrament of blood to the people, as our Lord's command bears - they are made to believe that they ought to be contented with the other half." That is - the laymen are to receive the bread annually, and the wine never; while the clergy receive both, daily. Thus Mediaeval Romanism.

"Thus," comments Calvin, "poor believers are defrauded of the gift which the Lord Jesus had given them. For if it is no small benefit to have 'Communion' in the blood of the Lord as our nourishment - it is great cruelty to rob those of it, to whom it belongs." Here, Calvin very rightly advocated - against Romanism - giving the bread more frequently and also the then-withheld wine, to the laity too.

Yet here, at age 31, Calvin still over-reacted to Romish idolatry. For here, he still ignored the relevance of the infrequency of the Bible's own quarterly feasts such as the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles *etc.*

He overreacted here toward his initial preference for weekly (but not daily) communion - in much the same way the same young Calvin in the first edition of his *Institutes* initially overreacted against Romish feast-days and himself questioned even the sabbathness of the weekly Lord's Day. That latter, of course, he later corrected in his commentaries on Genesis (2:1-3) & Exodus 20:8-11 (in his *Harmony of the Pentateuch*) - and especially in his (1555f) *Sermons on Deuteronomy*.

## **21. Calvin's views on Communion matured, from 1540 to 1560f**

From 1540 onward, Calvin's mature views tend toward even more care and greater infrequency in manducating at Holy Communion. This is obvious, from considering many of his extant writings other than just his *Institutes*.

Thus, in a March 1540 letter to his friend Rev. Dr. Guillaume Farel, Calvin wrote:<sup>28</sup> "On Easter-day...., I gave out the intimation that we were to celebrate the Supper on **next** Lord's day [Acts 20:6-11 & I Cor. 5:6-8 & 11:20-32].... I announced at the same time that no one would be admitted to the Table of the Lord by me, who had not beforehand presented himself for examination."

Very clearly, this shows that Calvin was then neither advocating nor practising weekly eucharizing. For there was no communing in his congregation on that "Easter-day" - but only an "intimation" on that day that they "were to celebrate the Supper on **next** Lord's day" (as distinct from each Lord's day), and that " no one would be **admitted** to the table of the Lord by me who had not beforehand presented himself for **examination**."

Indeed, in his December 1540 letter to his colleague Rev. Nicholas Parent, Calvin declared:<sup>29</sup> "I am well pleased that you have **delayed** the Holy Supper for **another month** [and not just for another week!]. For at the present time, you could not administer it - without neglecting that order which...I earnestly desire to be carefully attended to."

Being delayable for **another month**, shows that the Lord's Supper had been specialy scheduled. It was certainly not to be offered weekly (nor even monthly) but only at a certain "month" - and, where necessary, was again delayable for and reschedulable at yet another month. Cf. Numbers 9:4-14 and Second Chronicles 30:2-13.

So by 1540, Calvin was favouring neither daily nor weekly but only monthly eucharizing - to be scheduled ahead of time, and also delayable and postponable.

In 1541, Calvin was to move away even from monthly eucharizing. Perhaps himself somewhat confused by this, Schaff remarks<sup>30</sup> that "when **Calvin** presented a formula of the ecclesiastical order to Geneva's Small Council - objection was made to the monthly celebration of the Lord's Supper, instead of the custom of celebrating it only four times a year.

"Calvin readily accepted this, and the Small Council adopted the order on October 27, 1541. The Large Council confirmed it on November 9, 1541; and the Citizen's General Assembly ratified it by a very large majority on November 20, 1541 (although the small minority included some of the leading citizens who were opposed to ecclesiastical discipline). The Articles were then definitely adopted by the three Councils on January 2, 1542."

Now even Schaff's remarks here, certainly suggest an established **Pre**-1541 custom in Geneva

of celebrating the Supper **four** times a year (and thus **not** either annually or weekly). Moreover, the notion that "the small minority...included some of the leading citizens who were opposed to ecclesiastical discipline" - might seem to suggest they opposed precisely the agreed-upon **quarterly** service because they "were opposed to ecclesiastical discipline." Indeed, where is communion discipline laxer - than precisely in the Anglican Church with its weekly eucharizings, and in the **modern** Romish Church with its Mass several times daily?!

Furthermore, Schaff here acknowledges it was **Calvin himself** who presented this formula of the ecclesiastical order to Geneva's Small Council of political Syndics. It is true that only after that presentation, the decision was made by the Syndics to finalize the *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* to require the Lord's Supper to be celebrated only **four** times a year - as had been customary. But it must not be forgotten that **Calvin himself** then swore to uphold the *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* regarding that frequency. Hence he too then endorsed the decision and order that the Lord's Supper "should be administered four times a year - namely at Christmas [in the Winter]; Easter [in Spring]; Whitsun [or Pentecost in the Summer]; and on the first Sunday of September in Autumn."

Calvin did **not** then bemoaningly wail: "The Council has decided, and - solely for the sake of **compromise** and **peace** - even **I** too, **sadly**, under protest have agreed to go along with its decision." No! Here, **Calvin himself** then **co-swore**: "**We** have **decided** and ordered that it [the Eucharist] should be administered **four** times a year - namely at Christmas [in the Winter]; Easter [in Spring]; Whitsun [or Pentecost in the Summer]; and on the first Sunday of September in Autumn."

"**We** have **decided** and **ordered**!" This was and is totally in agreement with the earlier Zwingli's communion practice "four times annually - at Easter, Pentecost, Fall, and Christmas." And that in turn was based on the Bible's own four seasons (Genesis 1:14 *cf.* 8:20-22 *etc.*).

So Calvin was by then fast approaching the earlier Zwingli's Biblical ideal of celebrating the Lord's Supper quarterly - which Zwingli in turn had received from Scripture *via* the Early Church and by way of the A.D. 460 Patrician and the A.D. 506 Gallican and the A.D. 730 Bedan and the Late-Mediaeval *Gemeindekommunion* in Germany and Switzerland. That is the ideal of 'Seasonal Communion' - each Winter, Spring, Summer, and Autumn.

Compare, in the Older Testament: Genesis 1:14; 4:3-4; 8:20-22; Exodus 12:1-6 (*cf.* 18:12 & 19:1-2 & 24:1-18); 23:14-17; 34:22-26; Leviticus 23:4-37; and Deuteronomy 16:16. And compare too, in the Newer Testament: Luke 2:41; John 5:1; 10:22; 18:28,39; 19:14,31; Acts 14:15-18; 15:14-21; 18:21; 20:6-7; 20:16; First Corinthians 5:6-8; 11:20-34; 16:8; & Revelation 4:3-11 *etc.*

Once again. In his 1541 *Ecclesiastical Ordinances*, Calvin **himself** declared:<sup>31</sup> "The Supper was instituted by our Lord for our frequent use.... We have decided and ordered that it should be administered four times a year [Genesis 1:14; 8:20-22; Exodus 23:14-17; 34:22-26; Leviticus 23:14-37; Deuteronomy 16:16] -- namely at Christmas [in the Winter]; Easter [in Spring]; Whitsun

[or Pentecost, in the Summer]; and on the first Sunday of September in Autumn [or the Fall]."

Thus: Christmas-Winter (Esther 9:17-19 *cf.* John 10:22*f*); Easter-Spring (Leviticus 23:4-8; Luke 2:42-47; 22:1-20*f*; Acts 1:3; 20:6-11; First Corinthians 5:6-9); Pentecost-Summer (Leviticus 23:9-21); Acts 2:1*f*; 20:16; First Corinthians 16:8); and Autumn-Fall (Leviticus 23:22-36; Acts 18:21; 27:9). Indeed, Calvin later re-affirmed this - in 1546 and again in 1555.

For, also in 1555, Calvin wrote to the Ministers of Berne - who then eucharized apparently three times a year.<sup>32</sup> Calvin there<sup>33</sup> advocated "a more frequent use" of Holy Communion - *viz.* the four times a year as per his own 1541 *Ecclesiastical Ordinances*. Too, he advocated this increase also in Berne from three to four Communion Services per year - in reaction to the then-Romish practice at that time (when the bulk of Rome's) non-clerical adherents usually partook of her idolatrous Mass "but once or twice a year."

Yet even then in 1555, Calvin's consistent conclusion is again clear: "We celebrate the Lord's Supper four times a year." This once again very clearly underscores the principle of quarterly or 'Seasonal Communion' - as indeed first presupposed at: Genesis 1:14; 4:3-4; 8:20-22; Exodus 23:14-17; Deuteronomy 16:16; Luke 2:41; John 5:1; 10:22*f* (*cf.* First Maccabees 4:52*f*); Acts 14:15-18; 15:18-21; 18:21; 20:6-16; First Corinthians 5:6-8; 11:20-33; 16:8; *etc.*

Calvin's 1560 Second Edition<sup>34</sup> of his *Commentary on Acts*, clearly comes down against a sacramentalistic and a frequentative misinterpretation of Acts 2:42-46 and 20:6-16. Significantly, and personally with his own full endorsement - it was the 'Seasonal Communion' practice of Calvin's *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* that was taken over by Knox and others in their own 1560 *First Book of Discipline* - just four years before Calvin's own death in 1564.

Rev. Professor Dr. J.K. Cameron, in his great work *The First Book of Discipline* [of the 1560*f* Presbyterian Church in Scotland], states the true position exactly. He explains: "Of the 'Reformed cities' of Switzerland, only Basel provided for a weekly celebration. In other German-speaking areas, three times a year was normal."<sup>35</sup> Moreover, it was John Calvin himself who first recommended that communion tokens be used in the churches.

In 1560 (four years before his death) tokens were implemented in Calvin's own native Reformed Church of France. This being the case, it would seem to follow that Calvin's view of frequency of the Lord's Supper indeed changed during his latter years.

## 22. Eucharistic frequency's train of events in Calvin's Switzerland from 1525-1564*f*

This is the appropriate place to rehearse the full train of events. As seen above, Schaff himself chronicles the Pre-Calvinian Swiss "Reformed celebration of the Lord's Supper" by Zwingli as

follows: "The **first** celebration of the **Communion** after the **Reformed** usage, was held in...April, **1525**" and "to be held **four times in the year** - at Easter, Whitsunday, Autumn, and Christmas."

Now Calvin was only converted from Romanism to the Reformation in **1533**. Only in **1536**, did he first publish his Protestant *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (which would be expanded to five times that length in his last edition of it in 1559). Only during 1536 did the Reformer Farel of Berne persuade Calvin to move to Switzerland, and only at the end of 1536 did the 27-year-old Calvin arrive in Geneva.

Let the Australian Anglican Reformed Scholar Rev. Professor Dr. Philip Edgcumbe Hughes continue the narrative:<sup>36</sup> "It should not be forgotten that when Calvin first came to Geneva, and was unwillingly held there by Farel, the city had already committed itself to the Reformation. Already, before his [Calvin's 1536] arrival, the State had not only overthrown the papal hegemony and outlawed the celebration of the Mass, but had also pronounced strict penalties against libertinism and made church attendance obligatory.... Thus in 1537 we find the [Geneva City] Council sanctioning the *Confession of Faith* that **Farel** had prepared, issuing statutes concerning the administration of Baptism and **Holy Communion**."

By Easter 1538, unruly elements in Geneva succeeded in getting Calvin expelled from his churches. By September, Calvin had settled outside of Switzerland in Strassburg, at which time he got to know the Zwinglian Bucer and the Lutheran Melancthon quite well. There, he expanded his *Institutes* and revised his liturgy.

In October 1540, the Geneva City Council invited Calvin to return to Geneva to become its Minister once more. By September 1541, he had accepted. By November, Calvin got his *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* accepted by the people, and by the political authorities. See Francis Nigel Lee's *The Godly Life of John Calvin*.<sup>37</sup>

Yet, as Hughes has observed, "there is no evidence to suggest that during Calvin's [1538-41] absence from the city-state, the people found themselves able to relax under a more indulgent regime.... During the years of Calvin's banishment - we see the magistracy maintaining a stern surveillance over the lives of the inhabitants, insisting on attendance at church **and at Holy Communion**, rigorously opposing all forms of Papistry, and imposing a strict censorship.... It is absurd, therefore, to speak as though the [1538-41] expulsion of Calvin was symptomatic of the State's lack of sympathy with the Reformation and of a longing for less exacting standards of religion and morality....

"The *Ecclesiastical Ordinances*, the foundation of the whole organization and discipline of the Church of Geneva, were promulg[at]ed by the General Council on 20 November 1541, scarcely more than two months after Calvin's return to Geneva (13 September)." It commences: "In the Name of Almighty God, we the Syndics, the Little and Great Council, assembled with our people at the sound

of the trumpet and the great bell, in accordance with our **ancient** customs, having considered that it is a thing worthy of commendation **above all else** that the doctrine of the holy **Gospel of our Lord** should be **carefully preserved in its purity** and the Christian Church properly maintained, that **the young should faithfully be instructed** for the future, and the hospital well administered for the succour of the poor - which cannot be done unless there is a certain rule and method of living by which each estate [viz. the **Church** and the **State**] attends to the duty of **its office**. For this reason it has seemed to us advisable that the **spiritual government** of the kind which our Lord demonstrated and instituted by His Word, should be set out in good order - so that it may be established and observed among us.”

Later, it continues: “Since the Supper was instituted by our Lord for our frequent use, and since also it was so observed in the Ancient Church until the devil overturned everything, setting up the Mass in its place - to celebrate it so seldom [as the mediaeval compulsory Lay Mass but annually], is a fault requiring correction.... We have decided and ordered that it should be administered **four times a year** - namely at Christmas, Easter, Whitsun, and on the first Sunday of September in the Autumn....

“On the Sunday before its celebration, an announcement shall be made that no child is to come to it before having made profession of faith in accordance with what is taught in the Catechism. And all strangers and newcomers are also to be exhorted to present themselves first in Church, so that they may be instructed, if that should be necessary, and thus that none should approach to his own condemnation.” Cf. Exodus 12:3,4,26-28,37 and First Corinthians 5:7-8 & 11:27-34 & 13:11 & 14:20 & 16:13.

Now then, continues Hughes: “The following July [1542], the form of **oath** to be required of all Ministers on their admission to the Pastoral Office was approved by the Council. The Minister had to swear that he would serve God faithfully, would observe the *Ecclesiastical Ordinances*.” Those Ministers included Calvin himself, who should hardly be suspected of perjuring himself!

Indeed, “on 24 January 1555 Calvin, who was accompanied by the other Ministers of the city, addressed the Assembly. And then the first Syndic, Amblard Corne, announced that it had been resolved that ‘the **Consistory** [alias the Church Session] should **retain** its status and exercise its **accustomed** authority in accordance with the Word of God and the [*Ecclesiastical*] *Ordinances* **previously passed**’ in 1541.

Calvin, in the last twenty or so years of his life, thus more and more accepted this position as correct. His mature views on this matter were taken over not just by the Scottish Presbyterians, but also by all of the mainstream Calvinists of Holland and Germany.

Why? Because they followed the predominant pattern already established not only in the Reformed Churches of France - but also in both French- and German-speaking Protestant Switzerland

itself.

Furthermore, it was in the very year of his death that Calvin's definitive statement appeared - in his 1564 *Commentary on Genesis* (1:14 and 8:20f). There, he implicitly opted for 'Seasonal Communion' each Quarter, four times a year - apparently even as a '**creation ordinance**' itself.

### **23. Calvin's student Knox continues 'Quarterly Communion'**

So in May 1560, **following his mature mentor Calvin**, the latter's **admiring student** and **acolyte John Knox** and the other 'five Johns'<sup>38</sup> decreed<sup>39</sup> for the Church of Scotland: "Four times in the year we think sufficient to the administration of the Lord's Table. This we desire to be distinced, [so] that the superstition of the times may be avoided so far as may be."

Such were "the first 'Sondays' of March, June, September and December"<sup>40</sup> - alias Quarterly Communion each Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. To the great Presbyterian Knox, with his high view of the great holiness of the Lord's Supper, quarterly alias 'Seasonal Communion' was therefore altogether adequate.

So too the 1978 *Reformed Book of Church Order* of the National Church Association of the Church of Scotland. It remarks:<sup>41</sup> "The Reformers in Scotland stated in the *First Book of Discipline* (1560): 'Four times in the year we think sufficient to the administration of the Lord's Table.'"

Two years later [in 1562], the General Assembly decided that four times a year in the towns and twice a year in the country were sufficient. As Knox's contemporary colleague the historian John Row (one of the 'six Johns') then declared - the Scots 'took not their pattern from any kirk in the world; no, not from Geneva itself; but, laying **God's Word** before them, made Reformation according thereunto - both in doctrine first, and then in discipline."

As M'Creie explains:<sup>42</sup> "From 1560 to 1564, there were three communions observed yearly in Edinburgh. Principal Lee's *History of the Church of Scotland*, Vol. I pp. 389-390.... In 1602, the Assembly arranged for the 'visitation of kirks' by commissioners, and one of the topics of inquiry in the case of 'ilk Pastour' was 'if he ministers the communion...with due examinatiouns preceeding?'....

"Even the prelatie Assembly of 1616 at Aberdeen...provided for quarterly communions in burghs.... The Session Records of Canongate, Edinburgh, for January 15 1613 ordains public intimation to be made from the pulpit next Sabbath 'of the holy communion to be celebrat the last Sabbath of January instant.'"



## **24. The Westminster Assembly's Gillespie on the frequency of Communion**

At the Westminster Assembly in 1643, George Gillespie, one of the most famous of the representatives from Scotland, objected to the proposal that there should always be at least four ministrations of the Lord's Supper per year. For, said he, **Scripture itself laid down no such rule**. Exodus 23:14f cf. 34:23; Leviticus 23:4-37 & Deuteronomy 16:16.

Hence, Reformational Scottish opinion was unfavourable to more frequent observance of the Lord's Supper than quarterly. As Scotland's Rev. Dr. J.D. Douglas of Fife states in his 1974 *New Bible Dictionary*<sup>43</sup> - even in the Church of Scotland today, 'the Lord's Supper [is] generally celebrated **quarterly**' - alias precisely at each **Season**.

Even from 'the light of nature' itself, such 'Seasons' can easily be determined. Indeed, we maintain that the Lord's Supper each Season - every Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter - is one of those several 'circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the 'light of nature' and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.'" *Westminster Confession of Faith*, 1:6.

Those 'general rules of the Word' agree also as regards the desirable (quarterly) frequency of going to the Lord's Table. Genesis 1:14; 8:20-22; Exodus 23:14-17; 34:22-26; Leviticus 23:4-44; Deuteronomy 16:16; Esther 9:17-19; Luke 2:42-47; 22:1-20f; John 10:22f; Acts 1:3; 2:1f; 12:3-4; 14:15-18; 15:18-21; 18:21; 20:6-16; 27:9; First Corinthians 5:6-9; 11:20-34; 16:8.

We affirm, then, the teaching on 'Holy Communion' of the thoroughly Biblical 1645-48 *Westminster Standards*. Though 'differently administered in the time of the Law and in the time of the Gospel,' and though 'the Lord's Supper' is to be 'administered with more simplicity' yet 'in more fulness' than 'the Paschal Lamb' which it replaced - nevertheless, 'there are not therefore two covenants of grace differing in substance, but one and the same under various dispensations.'" *Westminster Confession* 7:5-6.

Indeed, 'the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself.'" Accordingly, it is "so limited by His Own revealed will - that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men...or any other way not **prescribed** in the Holy Scripture.'"

So there is to be 'the due administration and worthy receiving of the Sacraments instituted by Christ..., thanksgivings upon special occasions which are in their several times and **Seasons**[!] to be used in a holy and religious manner.'" *Westminster Confession* 21:1-5. There, the words 'in their several times and seasons' are rendered "*suo quaeque tempore ac opportunitate*" in the 1656 Cambridge Latin translation of the English original.

Without doubt, Lord's Suppers are foremost among such "thanksgivings." Indeed, that is evident from their very name (*eucharistias*).

Note here that the "Sacraments" and "thanksgivings" ( *cf.* 'eucharists') are "to be used" on "special occasions" (as distinct from each Lord's day). Those occasions are then stated to be precisely at "their several times and Seasons" (from year to year).

On this point, the *Westminster Confession* 21:5 reads: "The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear; the sound preaching; and conscionable hearing of the Word in obedience unto God with understanding, faith, and reverence; singing of psalms with grace in the heart; as, also, the **due** administration and worthy receiving of the Sacraments [Baptism but once and the Supper frequently] instituted by Christ - are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God - besides religious oaths, vows, solemn fastings and **thanksgivings** [compare '*eucharistiai*'] upon **several** occasions which are in their **several** times and **Seasons** to be used in an holy and religious manner."

Interestingly, regard its latter statement, the *Confession* here footnotes "Esther 9:22" and "Psalm 107 throughout." Psalm 107, at its verses 8 & 15 & 21 & 31, repeats the phrase "O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men" - precisely four times. One for each of the "**several** times and **Seasons**" of "**thanksgivings**" [compare '*eucharistiai*'] ?!

Continues the *Westminster Confession of Faith*: "The Sacraments of the Old Testament, in regard of the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited, were for substance the same with those of the **New**.... The Lord Jesus hath...appointed His Ministers to...bless the elements of bread and wine and thereby to set them apart from a common" use [including the communal 'love feast'] - and instead to dedicate them "to a holy use" [such as at the 'Holy Communion'].

Thus Christ's Ministers are "to take and break the bread, to take the cup, and...to give both to the communicants [alone], but to none" other.... All ignorant...persons, as they are unfit to enjoy Communion with Him..., are...unworthy of the Lord's Table and cannot, without great sin against Christ, while they remain such, partake of these 'Holy Mysteries' or be admitted thereunto."

Indeed, all censured Communicant Members are to be given "suspension from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper for a **Season**." See the *Westminster Confession* 27:5; 29:3-8; 30:1-4. Carefully note that the *Confession* here refers specifically to the "**Season**"(!) of "the Lord's Supper" *etc.*

Here, the 1556 Latin translation has "*ad tempus aliquod*." Indeed, the use of the word "**Season**" at both chapters 21:5 & 30:4 of the *Confession* - is very significant.

## 25. The Westminster Standards: Communion not to be weekly

The *Larger Catechism* 108-113 & 171-177 clearly declares: "The duties required in the Second Commandment are...the administration and receiving of the Sacraments...; the disapproving, detesting [and] opposing all false worship; and, according to each one's place and calling, removing it and all monuments of idolatry....

"The sins forbidden in the Second Commandment are all devising, counselling, commanding, using, and any wise approving - any religious worship not instituted by God Himself...; all superstitious devices, corrupting the worship of God, adding to it [also as regards its **frequency**] or taking from it, whether invented and taken up of ourselves or received by tradition from others - though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretence whatsoever....

"The reasons annexed to the Second Commandment the more to enforce it...are, besides God's sovereignty over us and propriety in us, His fervent zeal for His own worship, and His revengeful indignation against all false worship as being a spiritual whoredom, accounting the breakers of this Commandment such as hate Him, and threatening to punish them unto divers generations."

"The Third Commandment requires that the...Sacraments...be holily and reverently used in thought, meditation, word and writing - by an holy profession and answerable conversation, to the glory of God.... The sins forbidden in the Third Commandment are...irreverent, profane, superstitious or wicked...using [of] His...ordinances.... They that receive [seasonally] the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper are - before they come - to prepare themselves thereunto by examining themselves of their being in Christ, of their...measure of their knowledge, faith, repentance....

"Such as are found to be ignorant... may and ought to be kept from that Sacrament by the power which Christ hath left in His Church, until they receive instruction and manifest their reformation.... The Lord's Supper is to be administered...only to such as are of years and ability to examine themselves." Emphases mine - F.N. Lee.

The *Directory for the Publick Worship of God* declares<sup>44</sup> that "the Communion or Supper of the Lord is frequently to be celebrated. But how often, may be considered and determined by the Ministers and other Church-Governors of each Congregation, as they shall find most convenient for the comfort and edification of the people committed to their charge.... The ignorant and the scandalous are not fit to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper....

"It is requisite that public warning be given the sabbath-day **before** the administration thereof." That public warning is to set forth "how great the danger to eat and drink unworthily..., [and thus] to warn all such as are ignorant...not to come to that Holy Table."

This suggests partaking of the Eucharist far less frequently than every week. For the "public warning" given on "the sabbath-day before the administration thereof" - clearly militates against 'Weekly Communion.' It proves the Westminster divines obviously opposed Communion Services on the Sunday before the specially-appointed Communion Sunday. It also proves they ordained that public warnings be given "on the sabbath-day before" - against unworthy manducation on the following Lord's Day alias 'Communion Sunday' itself.

Furthermore, in the 1647 *Act* adopting the *Westminster Directory for Family Worship*, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland resolved<sup>45</sup> to "appoint Ministers and Ruling Elders in each Congregation..., to make diligent search and enquiry in the Congregations...whether there be among them any...families which...neglect this necessary duty. And if any such family be found, the head of the family[!] is to be first admonished privately to amend his fault....

"In case of his continuing therein, he is to be gravely and sadly reprov'd by the Session. After which reproof, if he be found still to neglect Family-worship - let him be, for his obstinacy in such an offence, suspended and debarred from the Lord's Supper, as being justly esteemed unworthy to communicate therein till he amend." Cf. too the *Westminster Confession of Faith* 30:4.

## **26. Dutch Reformed 'Quarterly Communion' also in Colonial America**

Not just the French and the Swiss Churches and the Church of Scotland of the 'six Johns' have in general opted for eucharizing at the four Seasons. Also the great Dutch Reformed Church has, in general, followed this Quarterly Communion of Calvin's *Ecclesiastical Ordinances*.

Thus the 1563 Synod under the Cross in the Southern Netherlands decided on "every three months."<sup>46</sup> Moreover, also the National 'T-U-L-I-P' Synod of the Reformed Churches held at Dordt in 1618-19 advised it be celebrated "at Easter, on the Day of Pentecost, and on the Christ-Day."<sup>47</sup>

Indeed, it should also be remembered that precisely the French and Dutch Reformed Churches are the oldest ecclesiastical institutions in North America (1562*f*) - both in the Huguenots' St. Augustine (in Florida) and the Dutch New Amsterdam (alias New York), as well as further north in 'Canada' (both in Nova Scotia and in Quebec).

Wrote the great seventeenth-century theologian Rev. Professor Dr. Herman Witsius: "Our Lord only recommended 'frequent' Communion - not just once and for all, as in Baptism.... By that word 'as oft' (First Corinthians 11:25-26), a certain medium [usage]...should seem to be observed; lest...by the too frequent use...., this sacred food should be disesteemed, or we should slight...that august Table of the Lord."<sup>48</sup>

Writes the noted American Historian Dr. Winthrop Hudson:<sup>49</sup> "Peter Minuit, the first Director

of New Netherlands, had been a Ruling Elder of the French Reformed Church at Wezel." Thus he had been a Presbyter even before he came to what is now New York.

"In 1628, the first Minister - Jonas Michaelius - arrived" in New York. There, he "immediately organized a church. Michaelius reported that there were 'fifty Communicants - Walloons and Dutch' - at the first administration of the Lord's Supper." Indeed, observes Dr. Hudson: "Every four months...he did administer the Lord's Supper 'in the French language and according to the French mode.'"

It is precisely this 'French mode' (of Calvin) which, *via* Holland, got exported to North America - and also to South Africa. In the latter country, it was the standard practice of its great Dutch Reformed Church - that of the world-famous writer Rev. Dr. Andrew Murray.

Furthermore, from Switzerland *via* Knox, it took root in the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland. Thereafter, it was the practice wherever Scots went and settled - World-wide.

### **27. Rev. Robert Grossmann's excellent paper on communion frequency**

In 2001, Rev. Robert E. Grossmann, formerly Moderator of the (Old German Reformed) Reformed Church in the United States, sent me his excellent paper on the most desirable frequency of the Lord's Supper. I myself now abridge and paraphrase and expand it, as follows.

The fundamental principle of the Reformed Reformation is *Sola Scriptura*, not *Sola Scriptura et Sacramenta*. The Reformed, beginning already with Zwingli, improved the mediaevally-deformed worship by replacing a Sacrament-centred worship service with a Word-centered worship service. They realized the purpose of worship is the glory of God, and not primarily the salvation of man. The reading and preaching of the Word is the centre of worship, because in it we properly submit our hearts to the sovereign promises and commandments of God. The Word is essential for worship; the Sacraments are not.

Even Luther said: "Without the Word, the Sacraments are empty ceremonies." Therefore Baptism is to be administered only when needed; and the Lord's Supper only as an occasional confirmation of the Word, but not as an equal with it.

Abraham was saved by faith received through the Word and Spirit before he was circumcised, thus making circumcision a confirming but not a primary means of grace. Romans 4:10*f*. Too, Paul says: "Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the gospel....lest the cross of Christ should become of no effect." First Corinthians 1:17. Could he then not have said the same about the other Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in chapter 11? It is wrong to elevate a secondary means of grace

to equality with the primary means of grace. "Faith comes by hearing [not by feeling or tasting], and hearing comes by the Word of God." Romans 10:17.

The Lord's Supper replaces the Passover and the other two annual Feasts of Israel. Why would the Passover and the other two Feasts each be celebrated but once a year - but the Lord's Supper more than half a hundred times annually?

Why would Christ celebrate the Supper only once in three years of ministry - if He wanted His disciples to celebrate it in a weekly fashion? Paul gives full regulation for the New Testament weekly worship service in First Corinthians 14 (*cf.* 16:1*f*), giving great emphasis to preaching the word in the common tongue *etc.*, without there even mentioning the Supper. Furthermore, who ever heard of baptismal services every Lord's day?

It is specifically the Lutheran reformation that began with the issue of man's salvation, and through that finally saw *sola Scriptura*. Being primarily interested in man's salvation rather than God's glory, Lutheranism hung on to the mediaeval Romish practice of weekly communion. Lutheranism believes salvation is communicated through the Sacrament as much as through the Word.

Yet even Luther rightly said: "When the cups become golden, the preachers become wooden." He himself thus predicted what would become the achilles heel of the later Lutheran churches, once the Gnesio-Lutherans took over after his death.

The fact is that the Bible does not teach that the Early Church observed the Supper weekly. In Acts 2:42, the breaking of bread is mostly likely the use of hospitality, where it speaks of "breaking bread from house to house."

Acts 20:6*f* does not say that the church observed the Supper on the first day of every week. It says it did so in Troas, right after the annual Feast of the Passover in Philippi. [And that was followed by a week of preparation, before the Supper in Troas on the next Lord's day.]

Under weekly communionism, what becomes of the "publick warning" which the *Westminster Directory* says should "be given the sabbath-day before the administration" of the Supper? Under weekly communionism, the warning service itself becomes a communion service!

Regardless of frequency, whenever the Supper is observed - one should gear the sermon to the subject of Christ's atoning work. But, if we were then to serve the Lord's Supper weekly, we would need to preach the same subject every Sunday - and thus neglect the whole counsel of God! Thus the RCUS's Ex-Moderator Grossmann.

## **28. Scriptural ‘Quarterly Communion’ vs. Paedocommunion & ‘Weekly Communion’**

Calvin’s own and therefore the traditional Presbyterian practice of quarterly Communion Services - the Lord’s Supper served annually each Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter - corresponds to the four God-created seasons. It also corresponds to the Pre-Mosaic, the Mosaic, the Exilic, the Post-Exilic, the New Testamental and the Early-Patristic sacramental cycle for the Seasonal Feasts. It further corresponds to the mature views of both the mature Calvin and the mature Knox - thus becoming the standard Presbyterian practice ever since. It is therefore difficult, if not impossible - from Scripture - to justify a more frequent mandatory administration of Holy Communion for the local Congregation.

Note the bond between ‘Weekly Communionism’ and ‘Child Communionism’ on the one hand - and Episcopalianism on the other. Indeed, ‘Weekly Communionism’ and ‘Child Communionism’ in 1988 finally ‘transubstantiated’ the Tyler (Texas) ‘Westminster Presbyterian Church’ of ‘The Association of Reformation Churches’ in the U.S.A., into the ‘Good Shepherd Episcopal Church’ in the Anglican Diocese of the Southwest within the American Episcopal Church.<sup>50</sup>

As the good old proverb says: familiarity breeds contempt. And ‘Frequent Communion’ inevitably leads to a relaxation of discipline. Next, it lapses into a ‘free for all’ feed. And finally, it ends up by degenerating into magical and repetitious Romish and Greek-Oriental ‘Masses’ - if not ultimately also becoming the ‘Infant Communion’ for which especially the moribund ‘Ancient Oriental Churches’ and the Eastern-‘Orthodox’ are still notorious.

## **29. The earliest communion practices of the Scots-Irish Presbyterians**

It needs to be remembered that the Westminster Standards derived their doctrine largely from the Irish Puritan Anglican Archbishop James Ussher’s *Irish Articles*. Dr. Crawford Gribben, in his 2003 Evangelical Press book *The Irish Puritans*, has the following memorable lines regarding Scots-Irish Presbyterianism some twenty years **before** the Westminster Assembly:<sup>51</sup>

"In 1624...the neighbouring Ministers Blair and Robert Cunningham held eight communions between them" B viz. **four** each. "Despite their frequency [compared to the later Scottish and Irish models of often only once or twice annually], these ‘Communion Seasons’ were protracted events demanding an intense concentration of time and attention of the part of the participants. Preparation meetings would begin around the Thursday. On Saturday, the Preparation Sermons would last all day. On the Lord’s Day, the elements began to be distributed mid-morning - and the entire service might last twelve hours. Thanksgiving services would continue into the next week. All in all, the best part of seven days might be devoted to the worship"- cf. Leviticus 23:5-8.

Just imagine Weekly Communionists doing the above every week! "As time went on," Gribben observes, "Presbyterian worship...fell into the patterns it often assumes to the present day....

The practicalities of the farming calendar began to determine Presbyterianism's...Eucharist.

"Session records indicate that the period of May and early July was chosen because it was right after planted; and for the second celebrate of the year, November was chosen because it was right after harvest.. As society stabilized and the economy began to grow, those were the only times when the farmers could afford such extended periods off work."

Today, however, most Weekly Communionists have no Preparation or Thanksgiving Services. It seems too that most of them feel free to desecrate each Sabbath - even after their Weekly Communion Services!

### **30. Statement by North Pine Presbyterian Church on "Quarterly Communion"**

On February 17th 2002, it was my joy to preach in the North Pine Presbyterian Church in Brisbane Australia. At the end of the service the Minister, Rev. Neil MacKinlay, gave me his own Session's handout for his congregation at the door of his kirk. Frankly, Rev. MacKinlay's handout is so good, that I decided to incorporate it now at the end of this third edition of this article of mine on *Quarterly Communion at Annual Seasons*. States Rev. MacKinlay's Session's handout:-

'How often should the Lord's Church on Earth celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper? The mere fact that this question is raised, suggests that there is no direct statement in Scripture. Indeed, the closest thing to a direct statement as to frequency is given at the institution of the Lord's Supper as found in I Corinthians 11:26. **'As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.'**

'But how often is too often? How often is not often enough? What is the proper balance? Some churches opt for a weekly Communion. Citing New Testament passages regarding 'the breaking of bread' such as Acts 2:42 and 20:7 *et al.*, it is alleged that the established Communion frequency is weekly."

Yet "we are not...convinced that these verses teach weekly Communion. For example, we read in Acts 20:7a: 'Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread....' To be sure, the disciples held Communion, *i.e.*, 'broke bread\*on that particular Sunday. However, to suggest that this sets the precedent for weekly Communion is...to suggest too much.

'You may ask what is wrong with partaking of the Lord's Supper every Sunday? But you might as well ask what is wrong with celebrating it every day, or two or three times a day....

'The compilers of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* in *The Directory for The Publick Worship Of God*, as help, offer only these words: 'The communion or supper of the Lord is frequently



to be celebrated; but how often, may be considered and determined by the Ministers and other Church-Governors [alias the Elders] of each Congregation, as they shall find most convenient for the comfort and edification of the people committed to their charge. And, when it shall be administered, we judge it convenient to be done after the morning sermon.'

'It has been determined by the Session of North Pine [Presbyterian Church], that Quarterly or Seasonal Communion is the most convenient for the comfort and edification of the people in this Charge. We believe that this has a strong Biblical basis. The following is a brief overview of our reasoning:

'Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only Sacraments found in New Testament. These are signs and seals of the Covenant of Grace instituted by God in Christ. They replace the two Old Testament Ordinances of Circumcision and Passover respectively.

'Baptism, like its predecessor Circumcision, is a 'one off' ordinance. Circumcision can occur only once. Likewise, Baptism is administered once only per recipient.

'However, Passover and the other Old Testament Feasts were celebrated often, *i.e.* annually. Likewise, their New Testament replacement is to be celebrated frequently. We believe the traditional Presbyterian practice of four times yearly (quarterly) is often enough, as this coincides with the Seasonal Feasts established by God [in] the Old Testament.

'There were three major pilgrimage-feasts coinciding with the first, second, and third quarters of the year commanded by God in Scripture. At the time of Moses the Lord said to His people:

**'Three times you shall keep a feast to Me in the year.... The Feast of Unleavened Bread.... The Feast of Harvest.... The Feast of Ingathering.'** Exodus 23:14-16.

'Another feast was added, *viz.* the Feast of Dedication. This Feast also, like the three major ones, drew large crowds to Jerusalem.

'Thus it completed the annual cycle by placing a feast in the fourth quarter. Its title and season are mentioned in John 10:22, 'Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was Winter.'

'Hence, the three major feasts plus the great Feast of Dedication were as follows: **Spring** = Unleavened Bread/Passover (Matthew 26:1 7-20); **Summer** = Harvest/Pentecost (Acts 2:1); **Autumn** = Ingathering/Tabernacles (John 7:2); **Winter** = Dedication/Lights (John 10:22).

'We believe that all Old Testament Feasts are now fulfilled in Christ and are now incorporated in, and replaced by, the Lord's Supper. As the Old Testament Feasts were Gospel representations

of Christ and His work of redemption, so is the Lord's Supper.

Moreover, the Lord's Supper is also representative of Christ's Gospel blessings as promised to Abraham and repeated throughout the Old Testament. Peter, in Acts 3:19, refers to these blessings as "times [*i.e.* 'seasons' (ASV)] of refreshing. These 'seasons of refreshing' began at Pentecost and will continue throughout the Gospel Age 'till He comes.'

With this in mind, it is interesting to note what is written even in the very first chapter of the Bible: **'Then God said, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years....''** Genesis 1:14.

The Hebrew word here for 'seasons' is *moo'a:dim*. Not only has this word to do with climate, but it also includes the idea of festive gatherings or seasonal celebration. Therefore, the precedent for quarterly or seasonal Communion has been established from the very beginning.

Since there is no explicit instruction given in the New Testament regarding the exact frequency of administration of the Lord's Supper, we, the Session of North Pine Presbyterian Church, by the process of 'good and necessary consequence' [compare *Westminster Confession of Faith* I:6], deduce that the Scriptures teach quarterly or seasonal Communion." [Cf. too: Genesis 1:14; 4:3f; 8:20-22]

### **31. Statement by Rev. Bancroft of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.**

In July 2002, on the r-f-w e-mail group discussion list, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in America's well-known Rev. George Bancroft (of Westminster O.P.C. in Ocean City N.J.) argued that weekly communion, as practised by Anglo-Catholics and Paedocommunionists, is unbiblical. Thereupon, Mrs. A. Schwertley, wife of Rev. Brian Schwertley of the weekly-communionistic but antipaedocommunionistic Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States, responded as follows on July 18th 2002:

'Rev. Bancroft, you mentioned that Weekly Communion should be condemned by the O.P.C. and the P.C.A. [Presbyterian Church in America]. Would you please share the scriptural basis for this statement? I understand and agree that paedocommunion should be condemned. But I don't understand how weekly communion, just because practiced by Anglo-Catholics and Paedocommunionists, is unbiblical.

[The *Westminster Larger Catechism*] LC #175 says we should 'encourage ourselves to a frequent attendance on that ordinance' and references both I Cor. 10:25-26 and Acts 2:42-46. Moreover, the [Westminster Assembly's] *Directory for the Publick Worship of God* states that "the communion, or supper of the Lord, is frequently to be celebrated." Since the *Directory* also says

that it is up to the individual Session to decide the exact frequency, I can't see how Weekly Communion violates either our [*Westminster*] *Standards* or the Scripture."

On July 19th 2002, Rev. Bancroft replied as follows: "Let us first put this back into perspective. I had written regarding the O.P.C. and the P.C.A.: 'The practice of Weekly Communion coupled with Child Communion is Anglo-Catholic worship and needs to be condemned by the General Assembly by way of attempted Overture.'

"I do respect the R.P.C.U.S. and appreciate their public stand against the Auburn Conference Speakers; and this is not the first time the Church has made such a stand for the truth. The R.P.C.U.S. took a public stand against the writings of James Jordan and Ray Sutton (originally from Tyler, TX), after they began attacking the R.P.W. [Regulative Principle of Worship].

"In the 1980s, the Weekly Communion movement 'blew in' to the Presbyterian realm from the Tyler TX movement. Prior to this - the O.P.C., the R.P.C.N.A., and the P.C.A. tended to be either Quarterly (English Presbyterian), Twice-Yearly (Scottish Presbyterian), or Every Second Month (Dutch) Communion.

"The Tyler TX Anglo-Catholic Movement was quite clever in the way that they brought Weekly Communion into the 'Reformed' realm. They taught the movement very slowly, initially without attacking the R.P.W. or bringing in High-Anglican Worship, yet with an immediate sense of urgency. They also initially taught Weekly Communion separately from Child Communion.

"The attack on the R.P.W. came later, and the ushering in of High-Anglican Worship. Some people were locked in and kept going with the flow. Others stayed at Weekly Communion and a little more liturgy.

"The *Larger Catechism* and the *Westminster Directory for Public Worship* (1645) endorses the practice of due preparation for frequent (congregation with a Minister) and infrequent (vacant congregation)" Communion. "Preparatory Communion' and 'Weekly Communion' are two completely different concepts of Communion and Worship. Therefore, the term 'frequent' could not mean 'weekly.'

"The English Puritan Presbyterians certainly understood the difference between 'frequently' and 'weekly.' They had been practicing Weekly Communion in the Church of England. The term 'frequent' must be compromised terminology to respect the three historic Presbyterian and Reformed practices (8 times, 4 times, and 2 times a year). The arguments for Weekly Communion prove more than some of the advocates want to accept.

"The [various and specious] arguments for Weekly Communion - by implication teaches Every-Time-The-Church-Gathers-For-Worship-Communion, or one service per Lord's Day. Either

the Congregation has one service with Communion - or the other service is not a True Service, being short [of a Communion Service as] an allegedly-regular element of worship. So goes the implication of the argument for Weekly Communion.”

As Rev. Bancroft has rightly observed: “The arguments for Weekly Communion prove more than some of the advocates want to accept.” Thus, Acts 2:42-46 and 20:6-11 no way teach either Daily Communion or Weekly Communion. Nor does the word “often” in First Corinthians 11:25-26 [cf. 5:7f & 16:8]. If anything, such texts rather suggest Communion at the times of the Annual Feasts of Pentecost and Passover.

Too, Mrs. Schwertley has misunderstood the *Westminster Larger Catechism* 175 and the *Directory for the Publick Worship of God*. There, the *Catechism* does not with her cite First Corinthians 10:25-26, but First Corinthians 11:25-26. There too, it does not advocate either Daily or Weekly or Monthly Communion but only encourages “a frequent attendance on that Ordinance.”

Again, the *Directory*’s statement that “the Communion or Supper of the Lord is frequently to be celebrated” - is followed by an Antiweekly-Communion statement. Namely “that public warning be given the Sabbath-Day **before** the administration thereof” on a Sabbath that is not a Communion Sabbath [alias a Eucharistic Sabbath].

Why? So that “due preparation thereunto...be taught”; so that Communicants “may come better prepared to that heavenly feast”; and so that the unworthy “presume not to come to that holy Table.”

### **32. July 2002 Interaction between Shank and Lee on the *Directory for Public Worship***

Dr. F.N. Lee (on the subject: “Do the Westminster Standards encourage Weekly Communionism?”) responded to a Weekly-Communionist’s citation on the r-f-w Yahoo Group Discussion E-mail List about the word “frequent” in the *Westminster Larger Catechism* at Question and Answer 175. Dr. Lee stated that *Catechism* 175 does not advocate either Daily or Weekly or Monthly Communion - but only encourages “a frequent attendance on that ordinance.”

He also added that the statement in the *Westminster Directory for the Publick Worship of God* that “the Communion or Supper of the Lord is frequently to be celebrated” - is followed by the Antiweekly-Communion statements “that public warning be given the Sabbath-Day before the administration thereof” - so that “due preparation thereunto...be taught” so that Communicants “may come better prepared to that heavenly feast” and so that the unworthy “presume not to come to that holy Table.”

Jim Shank then wrote regarding the *D.P.W.* [*Westminster Directory for Publick Worship*]: “The

1645 *DPW* was clearly a compromise document. The wording received agreement from all sides (including Scots who practiced Quarterly Communion and Independents who practiced Weekly Communion). The first paragraph regarding the Lord's Supper says the Sacrament should be celebrated frequently, but gives power to the local Congregations to decide how often is most convenient.

“Frequent’ does not equal ‘Weekly’ or ‘Quarterly.’ The definition of ‘frequently’ is left to the prudence of the Minister and Elders of the local Congregations. The third paragraph is instructions on what to do if the Sacrament **cannot** be frequently celebrated. The so-called “Anti-Weekly Communion Statements” in the 1645 *D.P.W.* are in fact set in this context, ‘Where this Sacrament cannot with convenience be frequently administered...’

“The whole paragraph hinges on the first clause (**if** you can't celebrate frequently, **then** do this, *etc...*). This entire paragraph of the 1645 *D.P.W.*, is for instructions on what to do if the supper cannot be frequently administered (such as an area where there is a shortage of ordained Ministers). This hardly equates to normative practice (although it was for some). This paragraph presupposes that there are some places that **can** with convenience frequently administer the Sacrament (and therefore not require the remaining stipulations of paragraph three).

“Most American Presbyterian denominations do not hold to the 1645 *Directory of Publick Worship*. Therefore it is not a binding document such as the *Larger Catechism*. If the *WCF* and *Catechisms* do not specify how often the Lord's Supper must be observed, then I fail to see why Weekly Communion should be forbidden. Tradition, or practical considerations are not the same as solid biblical arguments. Neither is equating the practice with Popery a persuasive (although it is an emotional) argument. The Papists use real (alcoholic) wine too. Using real wine does not equate to a ‘Popish practice’ even though few Protestants use real wine today.”

Dr Francis Nigel Lee felt and feels that what is alleged to be American Presbyterian practice is irrelevant - and that all seven *Westminster Documents* and the totality of Scripture to which they refer - need to be construed together as a whole. Accordingly, he responded as follows.

“So tell me, Jim: 1) If you in fact practise Weekly Communionism - do you warn the wayward every Sunday not only to abstain from that Sunday's Communion, but also from next Sunday's? And do you warn the Communicants each Sunday to stay away from next Sunday's Communion if they lapse during the week? 2) Should also Daily Communionism be permitted (with an appeal say to Luke 11:3 & Acts 2:46)?”

To the above questions by Dr. F.N. Lee, Jim (Jim Shank) responded - and FNL (Dr. Francis Nigel Lee) rejoined - as follows:

Jim: I would appreciate it if you could interact with...my questions regarding the 1645 *DPW*: What is the difference between frequent celebration (in paragraph 1) and non-frequent celebration

(in paragraph 3)?

FNL: The *Directory of Publick Worship* was written in unsettled times (the English Civil War and the Anglo-Scottish and Irish Wars). Cf. the last four numbered paragraphs of the contemporaneous *Form of Presbyterian Church Government*. Some churches in the British Isles were then able to meet and to communicate frequently; others were not. That difference is reflected in your paragraphs 1 & 3.

Jim: If frequent celebration is twice or four times a year, how often would ‘infrequent celebration’ be considered?

FNL: Frequent celebration could be four times a year; infrequent, once yearly or even less so. Semantically, there would also be other possibilities. I find it interesting, though: that paragraph 2 links your paragraphs 1 & 3; that paragraphs 4ff receive far more stress (correctly so) than is seen in most churches today (especially those that commune more frequently than quarterly); and that eucharizing is not stated (on the next page) to be any aspect whatsoever ‘Of the Sanctification of the Lord’s Day.’

Jim: Do you see the requisites contained in paragraph 3 (‘Where the Sacrament cannot...be frequently administered...’) as applying to Frequent Communion (in paragraph 1) as well? If so, why?

FNL: As stated above, paragraph 1 is linked to 2 is linked to 3 is linked to 4ff etc. Are you saying that paragraphs 4ff have no application to Weekly/Fortnightly/Monthly Communion? If so, are you saying there need be no public warning at all on the Sabbath-Day before the Communion Service, where a Congregation has opted for Weekly Communion?

Jim: Do you believe all the drafters of the 1645 *DPW* were against the practice of Weekly Communion?

FNL: My beliefs on what each or all the drafters thought about this, are unimportant. What is important are the actual words of the *DPW* - read in harmony: with all seven of the *Westminster Standards*; with the flow of Church History from the Apostolic Age till then; and of course above all with a through grasp of the totality of canonical Scripture on this point.

Jim: If it can be shown that they were not, how would this affect our understanding of the ‘original intent’ of the words ‘frequently to be celebrated’?

FNL: Not much. We should be governed by the actual words formulated in the *DPW* etc. above. Attempts to establish a *mens rea* behind and beyond what is written - are futile, subjectivistic, and irrelevant to the point at issue.

Jim: Also, I'd like to hear a clear Biblical argument (as opposed to traditional or pragmatic) in favor of communion twice or four times a year (or at least against Weekly or Monthly Communion). Do you believe the problem in Corinth regarding the practice of the Lord's Supper only occurred twice or four times a year?

FNL: See *inter alia* my "Quarterly Communion at Biblical Seasons Annually" on my website.

Jim: I see no evidence that Communion at Corinth **should** have been conducted there on a weekly basis - whether, in its corrupted and practised form, it was; or whether, in its corrupted and practised form, it was not.

FNL: I myself do not believe Weekly Communion is required by Scripture. However, I do not think those who practice Weekly Communion are necessarily violating any Scriptural command or one found in the original *Westminster Standards* (including the 1645 *DPW*).

Jim: I believe the old Scottish Church held to the practice of Infrequent Communion (for whatever reason) and therefore correctly followed the stipulations of paragraph 3 (*i.e.* what to do if you cannot frequently celebrate).

FNL: It seemed, to the Old Scots, Quarterly Communion was "frequent" enough!

Jim: I have enjoyed your contributions against Paedocommunion and promoting Historicism. Keep up the good work!

FNL: Thanks, Jim. By the grace of God, I will!

### **33. September 2003 statements by Rev. Bancroft against Weekly Communionism**

To the above exchange, the following further explanations by the orthodox Presbyterian Rev. George W. Bancroft should be added. They were dated September 4 & 5 2003.

"September 4, 2003. Dear Mr. J. Shank & List, Mr. J. Shank asked: 'Can you explain what "cannot with convenience be frequently administered" means? I have never heard a good answer to this. This is just an exegetical question regarding the text and intent of the DPW (1645). Everyone who advocates mandatory preparatory services seems to ignore this phrase in the DPW but remembers all the rest of it as if this part didn't exist. Or does this phrase only refer to the "publick warning" that is to be given "the Sabbath-Day before the administration thereof"? I do agree that the DPW does not advocate Weekly Communion, but I don't think it forbids it either. If advocates of Weekly Communion could sign the DPW (1645), then it probably is within the language. Does anyone know if advocates of Weekly Communion signed the DPW?'

"This interpretation," responded Rev. Bancroft, "would not fit with the immediate context and the requirement in the *Directory for the Public Worship of God* (1645) of a Communion Season. The English Independents, who advocated Weekly Communion, did not sign. To sign they would have had to agree with a Communion Season every week and repent of prematurely starting Independent Congregations between 1643-45 and with Members from the Church of England.

"I quote from my book, which I believe Mr. J. Shank has a copy: 'The celebration of the Lord's Supper was to be appointed in advance by the Gospel Ministry and the local Congregational Session, so as to have specific Preparatory Communion Sermons. The *Larger Catechism* states that there is to be "serious meditation" and "fervent prayer." In Congregations with a Pastor and even in vacant Congregations, there was to be an additional Public Worship Service and preaching before the Lord's Day of administration of the Sacrament.

"Under the section *Of Prayer after Sermon* [withing the *Westminster Assembly's Directory of the Publick Worship of God*], there is the reference to a Communion Season - namely a Communion Week for the Lord's Supper: 'And whereas, at the administration of the Sacraments, the holding public fasts and days of thanksgiving, and other special occasions, which may afford matter of special petitions and thanksgivings, it is requisite to express somewhat in our publick prayers, (as at this time it is our duty to pray for a blessing upon the Assembly of Divines, the armies by seas and land, for the defence of the King, Parliament, and Kingdom,) every Minister is herein to apply himself in his prayer, before or after Sermon, to those occasions: but, for the manner, he is left to his liberty, as God shall direct and enable him in piety and wisdom to discharge his duty.'

"The reader should particularly note the words 'the holding public fasts and days of thanksgiving.' Such days are to be appointed and held during administration of the Sacraments.

"To have such days, there would need to be the appointment of a Communion Season, beginning by the Mid-Week Service. Only Periodic Communion [less frequently than once per week] can follow the requisite injunctions to have due preparation, a Preparatory Communion Sermon, and special occasions of public fasts and days of thanksgiving, *i.e.*, a Communion Season.

"The English Presbyterian Ministers had been ordained and ministered in the 'Episcopal' Church of England. In accordance with the [Episcopalian] practice of Weekly Communion, they were unused to preaching Preparatory Sermons. In the 'Presbyterian' Church of England, there was going to be an additional Service(s) and Prayer Meeting(s) [before celebrations of Communion]. These Gospel Ministers would now be preaching Preparatory Sermons before the Lord's Day and on the Lord's Day [on which the Communion Services would be held].

"From *The Apostolic Church and the Gospel Ministry*, pp. 200-201: 'Communion Seasons had been the old practice of the Church of Scotland and the on-going practice of those churches who hold to the *Directory for the Public Worship of God* 1645 (*e.g.*, Reformed Presbyterian Church of



Scotland and the Presbyterian Reformed Church of North America). It has been the long standing practice of the Free Church of Scotland (regular and continuing) and the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland as well."

On September 4, 2003, Rev. Bancroft added: "The Independents could not be trusted to take any vows to the *Westminster Standards* seriously. To them, Synodical Decrees were only advisory (see *Savoy Declaration of Faith and Order*, art. 26)!"

"The Word of God does not make a one-to-one comparison of the preaching of the Word and the Sacraments as a means of grace. Any one can sit under the preaching of the Word and any and all men are encouraged to do so; but only worthy partakers with an accredited profession of faith should sit at the Lord's Table.

"The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is only a means of grace to worthy partakers (First Corinthians 11:27-30). To teach that the Lord's Supper is a means of grace to adherents of the Christian faith, yet not confessing the reform fundamentals of the faith (including repentance unto life and submission to the Moral Law) - is to teach Roman Catholic sacerdotalism.

"The worthy partakers must be bearing fruit in the life displaying an accredited profession of faith. The Lord's Supper would not be a means of grace to those who are bearing grudges (*i.e.*, hate).

"If there is a serious doctrinal controversy in the Session or the Congregation, there should not be the Lord's Supper until discipline is administered by the Session. The Lord's Supper would not be a means of grace, until the suspensions are implemented."

#### **34. Subsequent response of Rev. Lanning to Weekly Communionist Whitmer**

Shortly after the above, Weekly Communionist Mr. Wayne Whitmer took public issue against Dr. Lee's Quarterly Communion views. Dr. Lee then responded by asking why Weekly Communionism should then be deemed frequent enough. In that case, why not further: Daily Communion, or even Hourly Communion ever day - such as the Romish five o'clock Mass, six o'clock Mass, seven o'clock Mass, and eight o'clock Mass *etc?*

To this, Mr. Whitmer responded rather negatively. Whereupon Rev. Ray Lanning, Pastor of an Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Grand Rapids (Michigan), rose to Dr. Lee's defence as follows:

‘Mr. Whitmer, you evidently have a lot to learn about Calvin’s views. And even more about Dr. Lee and his qualifications to speak on this topic.

‘Like Dr. Lee, I am weary of this endless discussion. Dr. Lee’s point is valid. If we must have a weekly Lord’s Supper, then why not a Daily Sacrament? There is ample precedent in the history of the Church for Daily Services and for Daily Sacraments. Dr. Lee’s mention of ‘Hourly Sacraments’ is merely an extension of the logic of the position. If so much is good, more (and more and more) must be better.

‘Dr. Lee’s point is, a Weekly Sacrament gives the Holy Supper a place it never had in Reformed Worship. In Reformed confessional and liturgical thought, the Sacraments are neither necessary for salvation nor central to our Worship.

‘As Dr. Lee has said, our Scottish fathers well understood the *Westminster Standards*, better in fact than many of today’s Weekly Sacramentalists. They understood, for example, that our *Standards* exclude the singing of songs of merely human composure, or the use of musical instruments, or the celebration of Feast-Days. In our rush to Anglicanize our Worship, we swallow all this stuff, perhaps to prepare the way for re-Romanizing ourselves.’

### **35. Dr. J.G. Vos on the importance of Preparatory Services Before Communion**

Weekly-Communionists need to take a fresh look at the *Westminster Larger Catechism*. At Question 171, its Answer states: "They that receive the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper are, **before** they come, to **prepare** themselves thereunto, by **examining themselves** of their being in Christ (Second Corinthians 13:5); of their sins and wants (First Corinthians 5:7 compared with Exodus 12:15); **of the truth and measure of their knowledge** (First Corinthians 11:29), faith (First [& Second!] Corinthians 13:5 and Matthew 26:28), repentance (Zechariah 12:10 & First Corinthians 11:31), love to God and the brethren (First Corinthians 10:16-17 & Acts 2:[42 &] 46-47), charity to all men (First Corinthians 5:8 & 11:18-20); forgiving those that have done them wrong (Matthew 5:23-24); of their desires after Christ (Isaiah 55:1 & John 7:37) and **of their new obedience** (First Corinthians 5:7-8); and by **renewing** the exercise of these graces (First Corinthians 11:25-28 & Hebrews 10:21-24 & Psalm 26:6), by **serious meditation** (First Corinthians 11:24-25) and **fervent prayer** (Second Chronicles 30:18-19 & Matthew 26:26)."

As Rev. Professor Dr. Johannes G. Vos wrote in his *The Westminster Larger Catechism* regarding Q. & A. 171 of the *WLC*:<sup>52</sup> "Why does the Church have **Special Services in preparation for the Lord’s Supper**? What is their purpose, and do they fulfill that purpose?"

"The purpose of Special Preparatory Services before the Lord’s Supper is **obedience to the command of First Corinthians 11:28-31**. Every individual Christian should examine himself and

make his own preparation individually, but for our greater encouragement and assistance it is **eminently proper** to have special services of the Church before the Lord's Supper is administered.

"Such Services are to impress upon us the wickedness of our sins, our great need of God's grace, and the urgent duty of **hearty repentance**, so that we may not add sin to sin by partaking in an unworthy manner. While as yet many can testify that such Preparatory Services have been a blessing to them and have been used by the Holy Spirit to bring them closer to the Lord - the general abandonment of such Preparatory Services in many denominations that formerly maintained them is one of the signs of the spiritual decadence of modern Protestantism."

### **36. Summary: Quarterly Communion at Biblical Seasons annually**

The author's own earlier practice of daily manducation at 'Holy Communion' - commenced when he was but a seven-year-old Roman Catholic child. The memory of it still haunts him, from time to time, more than sixty years later. He is fully convinced today, as a Bible-believing Protestant, that the traditional Presbyterian practice of Quarterly Lord's Suppers - alias 'Seasonal Communion' - is a far more blessed procedure.

Proper Sacramental Communion involves the most careful preparation.<sup>53</sup> It is to be administered strictly according to the infallible Word of God.<sup>54</sup> Accordingly, it should ideally be received - no more frequently than at the four seasons of the year.

"Three times you shall keep a Feast for Me in the year" - "the Feast of the Unleavened Bread" alias Passover (in the first quarter); and "the Feast of the Harvest" alias Pentecost (in the second quarter); and "the Feast of the Ingathering" alias Tabernacles (in the third quarter); and the later Winter "Feast of the Dedication" alias Lights on the 'Christ-day' (in the fourth quarter of the year). Genesis 1:14; 4:3-4; 8:20-22; Exodus 12:1-6 (*cf.* 19:1*f* & 24:1-18); 23:14-17; 34:22-26; Leviticus 23:4-37; Deuteronomy 16:16; Luke 2:41; John 5:1; 10:22*f*; 18:28,39; 19:14,31; Acts 14:15-18; 15:18-21; 18:21; 20:6-7; 20:16; First Corinthians 5:6-8; 11:20-34; 16:8; Revelation 4:3-11.

"Now the Feast of unleavened bread drew near, which is called the Passover...when the passover [ram] must be killed . And He sent Peter and John, saying: 'Go and prepare for us the passover, so that we may eat!'.... And they made ready the passover....

"And He said to them: 'I have greatly desired to eat this passover with you, before I suffer. For I say to you I will not any more eat of it until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.... I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God shall come.' And He took bread and gave thanks and broke it and gave to them, saying: 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me!' Likewise also the cup after supper, saying: 'This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you.'" Luke 22:1,7*f*,13,15*f*,18-20.

"'This cup is the New Testament in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me!' **As often** (*hosakis ean*) as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you show the Lord's death

till He comes." First Corinthians 11:25-26.

But just **how** often should that "often" be? In the light of all the above considerations, we would suggest, optimally:-

At Passover, the **Spring** Sowing ("This is My blood...shed for many," Mark 16:12-24). At Pentecost, the **Summer** Harvest ("I will...drink...this fruit of the vine," Matthew 28:29). At Tabernacles, the **Autumn** Ingathering ("You come together into one place...to eat the Lord's Supper," First Corinthians 11:20). And also at the Feast of Dedication, the **Winter** Judgment ("till He come" we are to "judge ourselves," John 10:22 *cf.* First Corinthians 11:26-31).

**Thus said the Lord** - in Biblical times. Is He then not suggesting something similar should be done by His Church - also today?

#### ENDNOTES

- 1) London: Shapiro Vallentine & Co. pp. X & 223. 2) *Ibid.*, p. 136. 3) Philo: *Dec. Orac.* 9-11.
- 4) *Antiquities of the Jews* III:10:2-6. 5) *Ib.* XII:7:6f.
- 6) Dankbaar, W.F.: *Calvin - His Way and Work* (Nijkerk: Callenbach), 1957, p. 85f.
- 7) Num. 9:5-14. See too P. Cooper's *Should Children be Allowed to Partake of the Lord's Supper?* (Oct. 1986); and J. Davies's *Are My Children Christians?* (Mar. 1987) -both in *Australian Presbyterian Life* (Sydney: PCA Pub.).
- 8) Waterland, D.: *Enquiry Concerning Infant Communion*, in *Works* (Oxford), 1853, II, pp. 41-72.
- 9) See his articles *Weekly Communion*, I-II, in *The Counsel of Chalcedon* (Marietta Ga.), Dec. 1986 & Jan. 1987.
- 10) *Weekly Comm.*, I, in *The Couns. of Chalc.*, Dec. 1986, pp. 8.
- 11) Calvin's *Commentary on Acts*, 2nd (1560) ed., Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, I, pp. v & 1 & 85f. 12) See n. 10.
- 13) *Op. cit.*, II, pp. 168f. 14) *Comm. on I Cor.* 11:20,22,34. 15) See n.10.
- 16) *Weekly Communion*, II, in *The Counsel of Chalcedon*, Jan. 1987, p. 20.
- 17) *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Eerdmans ed., 1971, V pp 238-40.
- 18) *Cf.* the Eerdmans edition of the *Ante-Nicene Fathers* (III:103). 19) Origen: *Against Celsus*, *Ib.*, VIII:22f.
- 20) J. Bingham: *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, XV:IX. 21) *Ante-Nicene Fathers* (1971 Eerdmans ed.), V.

- 22) G. van Rongen: *Zo Dikwijls.... De frequentie van die Avondmaalsviering in die Gereformeerde Kerken liturgiehistorisch gezien*. Doctoral Study for Prof. Dr. C. Trimp, 1979, pp. 21-27.
- 23) See C. Clemen: *Quellenbuch zur Praktischen Theologie*. Erster Teil. Gieszen, 1910, p. 49.
- 24) Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969 ed., VIII, pp. 60f. 25) *Inst.* VI:17:43-46.
- 26) All listed in Schaff's *Church History*, Eerdmans, 8:328.
- 27) In *Tracts & Treatises*, II, pp. 163 & 188. 28) See *Selected Works*, 1983, IV, pp. 175f. 29) *Ib.* p. 222 & n. 1.
- 30) Schaff: *Church History* 8:373f & 8:480.
- 31) Dankbaar: *op. cit.*, p. 85f.
- 32) Cf. J.K. Cameron: *The First Book of Discipline*, Edinburgh, St. Andrews University Press, 1972, at n. 14 - discussing the *First Book of Discipline* XI:9(1):5.
- 33) *Selected Works*, 1983, VI, p. 162. 34) *Op., cit.*, I, pp. 1-8. 35) *Op. cit.*, at n. 14.
- 36) P.E. Hughes: *The Register of the Company of Pastors of Geneva in the Time of Calvin*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1966, pp. 7f.
- 37) F.N. Lee: *The Godly Life of John Calvin*, Jesus Lives, Brisbane, 1985, pp. 3-9.
- 38) The 'six Johns' who wrote the *First Book of Discipline*, are: John Winram, John Spottiswood, John Willock. John Douglass, John Row, and John Knox. See *First Book of Discipline*, XI:5; in Bradshaw, F.M.: *Basic Documents of Presbyterian Polity* (Sydney: PCA Chr. Ed. Pubs.), 1984, p. 5.
- 39) *Ib.*, pp. 36f.
- 40) C.G. M'Crie: *The Public Worship of Presbyterian Scotland*, Edinburgh, William Blackwood & Sons, 1892, p. 443.
- 41) Edinburgh: Brunswick, 1978, pp.iiiif,1,5,27. Cf. too D.H. Fleming's *The Scottish Reformation*, Edinburgh: Scottish Reformation Society, 1960, p. 103.
- 42) *Op. cit.*, 444f. 43) Douglas, 1974, pp. 891 & viii.
- 44) See in *The Subordinate Standards...of the Free Church of Scotland*, Offices of the Free Church of Scotland, 15 North Bank St., Edinburgh, 1933, p. 295.
- 45) *Ib.*, p. 322.
- 46) J.H. Gunning: *Onze Eeredienst, Opmerkingen over het liturgische element in den Gereformeerden Cultus*. Groningen, 1890, p. 105f.

- 47) P. Biesterveld & H.H. Kuyper: *Kerkelijk Handboekje*. Kampen, 1905, p. 243.
- 48) H. Witsius: *The Economy of the Covenants*, Tegg, London, 12837, pp. 456-58.
- 49) W.S. Hudson: *Religion in America*, Scribner, New York, 1965, pp. 49f.
- 50) See Dr. F.N. Lee's original (1988) D.Ed. Dissertation *Catechism Before Communion!*, Lakeland Fla.: Dominion School of Education, Introduction, at its paragraphs 36-38.
- 51) C. Gribben: *The Irish Puritans: James Ussher and the Reformation of the Church*, Evangelical Press, Darlington, England, 2003, pp. 61f).
- 52) J.G. Vos: *The Westminster Larger Catechism*, p. 484.
- 53) Ex. 12:1-42; 13:6-10; Lev. 23:5-8; II Chr. 29:17-34; 30:13-19; Lk.2:40-52; I Cor. 11:28-32; the *Westminster Larger Catechism*, and all the relevant Bible texts there quoted.
- 54) I Cor. 11:23f cf. Mt. 28:19f; *Westminster Confession of Faith* 27:3 & 29:3, and all Bible texts there quoted.