SECTION 2

PROVING ONE CUP IS ESSENTIAL

To prove one cup (drinking vessel) is essential four things must be shown:

(a) That Jesus Himself used only one drinking vessel.

(b) That He commanded His disciples to use and share one drinking vessel.

(c) That one cup was consistently used in apostolic times with no deviation from this pattern.

(d) That one drinking vessel is a material, significant part of the communion service; the Lord's supper must be observed in this fashion because the Lord wanted it done in this fashion.

(1) Did Jesus use only one drinking vessel?

Matthew 26:27-29 (NKJV)
27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you.
28 "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.
29 "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

First notice that ***drinking*** was done by Jesus and His disciples. The thing that was drunk was called "fruit of the vine." [1] "Fruit of the vine" comes in two forms:

(a) A solid - in the form of grapes or raisins.

(b) A liquid - in the form of grape juice.

When Jesus took the fruit of the vine in His hands, we know it was in liquid form because:

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1 The Greek word is ampelos and means literally "grapevine." Jesus took something which the grapevine produces. He did not take fermented wine for that is not produced on or by a grapevine. To use fermented wine is sinful because it deviates from the pattern which Jesus gave. For further discussion on this point, see the rule for the Passover meal, "(4) No leaven was allowed," p. 36.

(a) He "drank" it; He did not "eat" it. [2]

(b) He commanded the disciples to "drink" not eat.

In liquid form grape juice must have a container. We know Jesus used a container because of the very nature of liquids. Very little is known about the container He took, but we do know some things:

(a) It was a container that was small enough for Jesus to pick up with His hands and pass around to others. [3]

- The grape juice He took He gave to the disciples and they drank from what He gave them (Mt. 26:27; Mk. 14:23).

- They did not drink from their own private stock of grape juice. They took what He handed them and drank from the juice He took and from the juice which He blessed. [4]

(b) It was a container that was ordinarily used at a dining table to drink from. [5]

- After all, Jesus and His disciples were sitting at a dining table eating when He picked up the fruit of the vine (Mt. 26:26ff; Mk. 14:22ff).

The drinking vessel Jesus used was called a "cup."

cup (poterion) -- "a cup, a drinking vessel," [6] "cup, drinking-vessel" [7]

The fact that cup is singular in all references to the Lord's supper proves that only a singular drinking vessel was used by the Lord.

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[2] See Donahue's response to question #7, p. 121. He believes a cluster of grapes may be passed around with each person plucking off a grape and eating it in remembrance of Jesus. This is an extreme position which is probably not widely accepted by cups advocates. Most admit Jesus took grape juice in liquid form.

[3] This eliminates the idea of a 55 gallon barrel being used as some argue. See the "ARGUMENT: Big church at Jerusalem," 105.

[4] See Donahue's answer to question #9, p. 122. He believes each disciple may drink from his own private stock brought with him.

[5] This eliminates silly questions often asked by people trying to justify themselves: Can we use a wheel barrow? Can we use a frying pan? Can we use an eyedropper? Can we use a boot? and such like questions. Such objects are not drinking vessels ordinarily used by people eating at a dining table.

[6] Thayer, Joseph H., Thayer's Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament, Zondervan, 1974 edition, p. 533. J. D. Phillips in his definitive work, The Cup of the Lord, published by Ronny Wade, 1976, on p. 5 cites 16 Greek-English lexicons which render the same definition.

[7] Arndt, W. F. and F. W. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, University of Chicago Press, 1975 edition, p. 702. See photocopy on p. 133.

(a) He picked up only one cup (Mt. 26:27).
(b) He gave thanks for only one cup (Mt. 26:27).
(c) He gave only one cup to His disciples (Mt. 26:27).

(2) Did Jesus command His disciples to drink from only one drinking vessel?

> *Matthew 26:27 (NKJV)*
> *27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "**Drink from it, all of you.***

"Drink from it" is a command. All the disciples present were expected to obey and share the contents of that one cup by each drinking from the same cup Jesus handed them. They understood exactly what Jesus said and obediently drank from the same cup:

> *Mark 14:23 (NKJV)*
> *23 Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and **they all drank from it.***

(3) Was one cup used consistently by the churches and disciples during apostolic times?

The answer is yes. In every reference available in the New Testament a consistent pattern may be seen: only one cup was shared by all disciples present in communion assemblies.

(a) Matthew states that only one cup was used (Mt. 26:27-29).

(b) Mark states that only one cup was used (Mk. 14:23-25).

(c) Luke states that only one cup was used (Lk. 22:17-20).

(d) Paul states that only one cup was used (1 Cor. 10:16-17; 11:23-29).

No deviation to this pattern is seen.

(4) Is one drinking vessel a material, significant part of the communion service?

Must it be done in this fashion? The divine record reveals that one and only one cup is significant.

(a) At least one cup is essential because, being in liquid form, the fruit of the vine must have a cup to contain it. [8]

(b) One cup is essential because Jesus commanded it (Mt. 26:27). This makes the use of one cup a "positive law." [9]

(c) One cup is essential because the word "communion" means "participation, sharing in something." [10]

1. If a disciple brought his own supper to services and ate what he brought without sharing, that disciple did not have communion. This, among other things, is what the apostle condemned in 1 Cor. 11:21.

2. True communion means being together with and sharing something with others.

- When plurality of loaves are used, some disciples may share a loaf with others, but not with those who eat from a separate loaf.

- When plurality of cups are used, [11] disciples that drink from the same cup are sharing something with each other, but they are not sharing with those drinking from another cup.

- When individual wafers and individual cups are used, no disciple is sharing anything with anyone else. Each disciple is merely eating "his own supper" (1 Cor. 11:21).

(d) One cup is essential because the cup itself represents the new covenant which God made with mankind.

Luke 22:20 (NKJV)
*20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, **"This cup is the new covenant** in My blood, which is shed for you.*

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8 Donahue, however, does not believe a container is needed at all. See his response to question #7, p. 121.

9 A "positive law" is a law made by God which appears to have no logic behind it, but is given merely to test loyalty. The first law given to man was a "positive law" (Gen. 2:16-17). There was no logical reason why Adam could partake of every tree except one. In this way God tested Adam to see if he would obey even if the command didn't make sense to human reasoning. For a fuller discussion of "positive law," see Benjamin Franklin, The Gospel Preacher, Gospel Light Publishing Company, Nd, vol. 2, pp. 195-217.

10 Arndt & Gingrich, op cit, p. 439-440; cf. Thayer, op cit, p. 352.

11 As in congregations which use two cups.

1 Corinthians 11:25 (NKJV)
*25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, **"This cup is the new covenant** in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."*

Thus, the symbol which God chose to represent the new covenant was the one cup used in the communion service.

A SYMBOL OF THE COVENANT

Every major covenant which God made with man had a symbol to represent it.

(a) The covenant with Noah had a symbol - the rainbow (Gen. 9).

(b) The covenant with Abraham had a symbol - circumcision (Gen. 17).

(c) The covenant with Israel had a symbol - circumcision (Lev. 12:3).

(d) The new covenant with spiritual Israel had a symbol - the cup in the communion service (Lk. 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25).

While the grape juice symbolizes the price paid to usher in a new covenant, the cup symbolizes the new covenant itself. The wisdom of God is seen in this simple arrangement:

A Cup and its Contents	***The Blood and the Covenant***
(a) A liquid is incomplete without a container.	(a) The blood of Christ is incomplete without a new covenant.
(b) A container is incomplete without a liquid.	(b) A new covenant is incomplete without the blood of Christ.

Because the new covenant is inseparable from the blood which ratified it, God chose two items that are also inseparable to symbolize His divine scheme of redemption: (a) a cup and (b) its contents. While both items are essential, neither item by itself symbolizes anything.

Hebrews 9:16-17 (NKJV)
16 For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.
17 For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.

A testament (covenant) without blood has no power. It takes both blood and a testament together to produce results.

Hebrews 9:18-20 (NKJV)
*18 Therefore not even the first covenant was **dedicated** without blood.*
19 For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people,
*20 saying, **"This is the blood of the covenant** which God has commanded you."*

Notice two important features from this passage:

(a) The blood which dedicated the old covenant was not the old covenant itself.

(b) The old covenant which was dedicated with blood was not the blood itself.

Clearly there are two distinct elements involved in a valid, covenant: (a) blood which ratifies the covenant and (b) the covenant itself which is ratified by blood. The blood is not the covenant and the covenant is not the blood. These two items cannot be confused, yet on the other hand, neither can they be separated.

God had a "problem" so to speak. He needed something that would symbolize two separate items: (a) the covenant and (b) the blood. Yet, at the same time, He needed to demonstrate the dependence of both items upon each other. In choosing a cup filled with grape juice, He chose two items that are distinct from each other and yet are dependent upon each other.

To picture the one new covenant between God and His people one and only one cup is essential.

(a) One loaf - symbolizes the body of the Lord. He had only one physical body (Heb. 10:5) and only one spiritual body (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4), therefore we must use only one loaf (1 Cor. 10:16-17). More than one loaf destroys the symbolism intended.

(b) Fruit of the vine - symbolizes the blood of Christ that was paid to "dedicate" or ratify the new covenant (Mt. 26:28; Mk. 14:24; Heb. 9:18-20).

(c) One cup - symbolizes the one new covenant between God and His people (Lk. 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:25). More than one cup destroys the symbolism intended. [12]

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12 See "ARGUMENT: Spiritual Significance," p. 74.

SECTION 3

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

When the Lord gave commandments, He would sometimes give specific instructions on how to obey those commands. When He explained exactly and specifically how to do something, no man was allowed to do it differently.

When it comes to obeying a command, any item will fall into one of three categories:

A SPECIFIED ITEM

(1) Things included because they are specified in the pattern.

UNSPECIFIED ITEMS

(2) Allowable items - although not specified, they are allowable because they do not violate what is specified.

(3) Unallowable items - not allowable because they violate what is specified.

INSTRUCTIONS	ALLOWABLE ITEMS	UNALLOWABLE ITEMS
(1) "Go buy ***a loaf*** of bread."	Size of loaf; Color of loaf; Price of loaf; Brand name of loaf [1]	Two or more loaves; [2] Anything besides bread [3]

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[1] Choices are allowed in any of these areas because they were not specified in the original command. If one buys a big, or small, white, or brown, expensive, or inexpensive loaf, he is still obeying the command. Had the command specified, "Buy a brown loaf of bread," then no choice would be allowed as to the color of the loaf.

[2] Because the command specified "a loaf" more than one would violate what was specified.

[3] Because the command specified "bread" getting something else would violate what was specified.

INSTRUCTIONS	ALLOWABLE ITEMS	UNALLOWABLE ITEMS
(2) Genesis 6:14, "Make yourself an ark of ***gopherwood;*** make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch."	Hours worked per day; Which tools to use; Construction site [4]	Another structure besides an ark; Another kind of wood than gopherwood [5]
(3) Ephesians 5:19, "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, ***singing and making melody in your heart*** to the Lord."	Song books; Four-part harmony; Pitch of the song	Mechanical instruments of music [6]
(4) 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, ". . . The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that ***one bread."***	Shape of the loaf; Size of the loaf; [7] Bread plate	Anything besides unleavened bread; Two or more loaves [8]

[4] Although none of these things were specified, still they are allowable because they do not violate what was specified.

[5] Although "pine" was not specifically forbidden, still it would be forbidden because gopherwood was specified.

[6] Although song books are just as unspecified as mechanical instruments, song books are allowed because they do not violate what was specified while mechanical instruments violate the specification that the melody be made in the heart.

[7] Although the exact size of the loaf is a matter of liberty, yet it must be large enough to serve everyone present, and small enough to pick up and pass around.

[8] Although a bread plate is just as unspecified as two loaves, a bread plate is allowed because it does not violate what is specified while plurality of loaves do violate the specification of "one loaf."

INSTRUCTIONS	ALLOWABLE ITEMS	UNALLOWABLE ITEMS
(5) Matthew 26:27, "Then He took ***the cup,*** and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."	Size of cup; [9] Shape of cup; Composition of the cup	More than one cup [10]
(6) Hebrews 10:25, "Not forsaking the ***assembling of ourselves together,*** as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."	Time of the day; Length of assembly; Order of services; Chalkboard; Charts; Maps; P.A. System	Dividing assembly into classes [11]

[9] Although the exact size of the cup is a matter of liberty, yet it must be large enough to serve everyone present, and small enough to pick up and pass around.

[10] No choice is allowed in the number of cups because one cup was specified in the pattern.

[11] When the Lord specified assembling together for teaching of the word, and when He remained silent about any other way of grouping the audience, classes were forbidden because they violate the specification of "assembling together."

GOD'S VIEWPOINT

If we have interpreted Biblical authority correctly, then any congregation using mechanical instruments, plurality of loaves, plurality of cups, or Bible classes is in error; they have left the divine pattern and in so doing have left God and Jesus behind (2 Jn. 9).

QUESTION: Does God Himself approve of this interpretation of authority?

Let us look into the Scriptures to find the answer.

NADAB & ABIHU

God gave a pattern for burning incense in the tabernacle. The fire for incense was to come from the brazen altar (Lev. 16:12).

Two priests, Nadab and Abihu, evidently began to think to themselves:

> *"What difference does it make?"*
>
> *"Isn't fire fire?"*
>
> *"Besides, it doesn't say we can't get fire from somewhere else."*
>
> *"I don't think God is so nit-picky that He cares where the fire comes from just so long as the incense gets burned."*

These men viewed God's silence as indicating liberty to do whatever they wanted to. The result of this thinking is recorded in Leviticus 10:

> *Leviticus 10:1-2 (NKJV)*
> *1 Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them.*
> *2 So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.*

KING SAUL

God told King Saul to destroy the wicked nation of Amalek:

> *1 Samuel 15:3 (NKJV)*
> *3 'Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.' "*

Evidently Saul began thinking something like this:

> *"What difference does it make how I kill them?"*
>
> *"If I sacrifice them on an altar they will be just as dead as if I destroyed them in battle . . . so what difference does it make?"*
>
> *"Can't I bring home some of the cattle and sacrifice them in burnt offerings?"*
>
> *"God never said, Thou shalt not offer the cattle in sacrifice."*

Saul viewed God's silence as indicating liberty to do whatever he wanted.

What did God think about all of this?

> *1 Samuel 15:22-23 (NKJV)*
> *22 Then Samuel said: "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams.*
> *23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king."*

LEARNING FROM HISTORY

Can we not learn a lesson from history? God was not satisfied when men substituted their own will for His.

> *1 Corinthians 10:11 (NKJV)*
> *11 Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.*

When it comes to the worship of the church people argue:

> *"I don't think God is really concerned about how many cups we use in the Lord's supper, just so long as we eat and drink."*
>
> *"What difference does it make?"*
>
> *"What could possibly be wrong with teaching little children in Bible classes?"*
>
> *"Besides, the Bible doesn't say you can't use individual cups."*
>
> *"It doesn't say you can't use a mechanical instrument."*
>
> *"It doesn't say, Thou shalt not use Bible classes."*
>
> *"I think it's being nit-picky and I don't think God expects us to follow His law so perfectly!"*

This is the same kind of reasoning used by Nadab, Abihu, and King Saul! [1] God's silence did not indicate these men were at liberty to do anyway they saw fit. The realm of God's silence could not be entered under the Old Testament, neither can it be entered today under the New Testament. Silence ***did not*** indicate liberty then, nor does it now!

> *Deuteronomy 29:29 (NKJV)*
> *29 "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.*

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[1] See also the cases of Uzza touching the ark of the covenant (1 Chron. 13:1-10; 15:1-15) and King Uzziah's entrance into the temple to burn incense (2 Chron. 26:16-20).

Only those things that have been revealed may be practiced. Things that God is silent about belong to God! If those violating the pattern were punished with death, now much more will violators of the New Testament pattern be punished?

COMMON ARGUMENTS

Let us now consider common arguments used by many to evade the force of these Biblical examples and lessons.

ARGUMENT #1: ***"This is nit-picking"*** -- With all the major problems in the world today (drugs, teenage sex, rape, murder, homosexuality, and war) how can anyone possibly be concerned about whether it's right or wrong to use instruments of music, plurality of cups, or Bible classes?

REPLY: This reasoning is designed to make those look like unreasonable fanatics who insist that we follow God's word. Let's turn this reasoning around for a minute: Do men really think they can keep "big" commandments when they can't even keep a little commandment? If they cannot sing, or assemble, or commune like God directed, will they do any better with bigger commands?

> *Luke 16:10 (NKJV)*
> *10 "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.*

The Pharisees are considered by most people as being "nit-picky," but Jesus did not condemn them for being "nit-picky." He condemned them for being hypocrites.

> *Matthew 23:23 (NKJV)*
> *23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. **These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.***

Consider the following passages:

Matthew 5:19 (NKJV)
19 "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

2 Corinthians 2:9 (NKJV)
9 For to this end I also wrote, that I might put you to the test, whether you are obedient in all things.

Hebrews 2:2-3 (NKJV)
2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,
3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

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ARGUMENT #2: ***"We are under the grace of God"*** -- We are not justified based on our ability to keep the law. We are saved based on God's grace. When you are saved on the basis of faith and grace you don't have to worry constantly about whether you're keeping God's law.

REPLY: In effect this argument is declaring that God's grace gives us license to violate His law.

Romans 6:1-2 (NKJV)
1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?
2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

God's grace does not give us the right to do things that are wrong. Let's apply this logic and see how well it might work:

(a) King Saul - "God, You know that we humans are prone to make mistakes and we cannot keep Your law perfectly, and we know that you are a merciful and gracious God, THEREFORE I am going to disobey Your law and spare King Agag."

(b) Nadab & Abihu - "God, You know that we humans are prone to make mistakes and we cannot keep Your law perfectly, and we know that you are a merciful and gracious God, THEREFORE we are going to offer strange fire which You did not command."

(c) ***Instrumental music*** - "God, You know that we are not saved by works of human righteousness, and You know that we cannot keep Your law flawlessly, THEREFORE we plan to ignore what You said about the music of the church, and we intend to substitute our own form of music."

(d) ***Individual cups*** - "God, You know Yourself that we humans make mistakes and we cannot keep Your law perfectly, therefore, we are going to change some things in the communion and do it differently than You commanded."

(e) ***Bible classes*** - "God, You know that we often make mistakes, but we know that You are merciful and gracious, therefore, we are going to ignore Your rules about teaching the word and we are going to substitute our own methods instead."

All of this reasoning is rebellion. It constitutes a blatant disregard for God's divine law.

Grace does not eliminate obedience. No one denies we are saved by grace, but we do deny that grace eliminates the need for exact obedience.

> *Luke 17:10 (NKJV)*
> *10 "So likewise you, when you have done **all those things which you are commanded,** say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.' "*

The saving grace of God is given ***conditionally.*** What is the condition? That men obey His will. This has always been the case in both the Old Testament and New Testament.

> *Matthew 7:21 (NKJV)*
> *21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.*

The apostle Paul, who wrote more about grace than any other New Testament writer, did not believe that grace eliminated exact obedience:

> *1 Corinthians 14:37 (NKJV)*
> *37 If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.*

When God gives a pattern He excludes all other methods not found in the pattern. We readily admit:

(a) God is silent about mechanical instruments, but He is not silent about vocal singing.

(b) God is silent about Bible classes, but He is not silent about one undivided assembly.

(c) God is silent about individual cups, but He is not silent about one cup.

(d) God is silent about loaves, but He is not silent about loaf.

Silence does not indicate liberty. We must respect God's silence, obey what He said, and not venture into realms unauthorized. God had the prophets of old record the disastrous results of violating the silence of God. If we repeat their same mistakes, we shall reap the same results.

SECTION 4

HISTORY

To begin this short section, it is necessary to emphasize that a practice is not wrong simply and solely because it is of recent origin. There are many old and ancient practices which are wrong just as some modern practices are wrong. Any practice or innovation is wrong, however, when the Lord's ***specific instructions*** are violated. (See "Specific Instructions," p. 13.)

The history of how many cups were used in communion is interesting and demonstrates several things:

(a) Church historians attest to the fact that only one cup was used by the early church.

(b) The introduction of individual cups was based, not on the fact that they were taught by scriptures, but because men became concerned about the sanitation aspects of drinking from one cup.

(c) The introduction of individual cups caused division within the church of Christ.

J. G. THOMAS
(Inventor)

Individual communion cups were first invented and patented by John G. Thomas who was both a preacher and doctor. He states the purpose of his invention:

> *"The object of this invention is to provide an individual or separate cup for the use of each person at the celebration of the Lord's Supper."* [1]

In a letter written to E. H. Miller the Thomas Communion Company wrote:

> *"Dear Sir: Your letter of April 17, 1950 has been received and we are pleased to inform you that the writers grandfather, John G. Thomas, who was both a physician and a*

[1] Quoted from John G. Thomas's U.S. Patent No. 516,065 for the Individual Communion Set, March 6, 1894; via Newberry, Alfred, The Divine Pattern Advocate, published by the author, 1987, p. 21.

minister invented the first individual communion outfits. The first patents were issued to him in 1894. The Market Street Presbyterian Church, of Lima, Ohio is believed to be the first church to used individual communion cups in a communion service. This also occurred in 1894. What is believed to be the original individual communion service used by this church is on display in the Allen County Historical Museum in Lima, Ohio." [2]

Until this time most congregations among denominations and churches of Christ used a single communion cup although some used two cups. No church, however, used individual communion cups before 1894 - the year J. G. Thomas invented them.

G. C. BREWER
(Innovator)

G. C. Brewer was one of the more prominent preachers who had a taste for innovations. It is difficult to tell whether he was the first one anywhere to introduce individual cups into the churches of Christ, but he claims to have been the first to introduce them in churches of Tennessee. Hear his own record of the account:

*"A good many of the **fights** that I have made have been with my own brethren on points where I believed them to be in the wrong. I think I was the first preacher to advocate the use of the individual communion cup and the first church in the State of Tennessee that adopted it was the church for which I was preaching, the Central Church of Christ at Chattanooga, Tennessee, then meeting in the Masonic Temple. My next work was with the church at Columbia, Tennessee, and, after a **long struggle**, I got the individual communion service into that congregation. About this time, Brother G. Dallas Smith began to advocate the individual communion service and he introduce it at Fayetteville, Tennessee; then later at Murfreesboro. Of course, I was **fought** both privately and publicly and several brethren took me to task in the religious papers and called me digressive. Brother Smith came to my rescue and, in the year 1915, Brother David Lipscomb wrote a short paragraph in the Gospel Advocate saying that he had changed his view in reference to the communion cup and that he did not believe it was any digression or in any way a corruption of the service to use as many cups as might be demanded by the occasion. This brought that **controversy** to an end and, from then on, the*

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[2] See photocopy of this letter on p. 152.

> *churches began using the individual communion cup everywhere."* [3]

The point to focus on is the fact that Brewer admits to fighting and struggling with brethren to force an innovation into the church which he himself believed to be a matter of liberty. He was willing to split the body of Christ for what he believed to be a matter of liberty.

All innovators take the same approach.

> (a) Advocates of church supported orphan homes claim that such arrangements are a matter of liberty and they will not give the practice up for the sake of unity. Their argument is that they will not allow someone to bind them with laws God did not make. [4]

> (b) Advocates of mechanical instruments claim their instruments are matters of liberty and refuse to give them up for the sake of unity. They refuse to be "bound" by people making laws. [5]

Compare this attitude with that of the apostle Paul:

> *1 Corinthians 9:19-23 (NKJV)*
> *19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more;*
> *20 and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law;*
> *21 to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law;*
> *22 to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.*
> *23 Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.*

Paul recognized his freedom, but for the sake of the gospel he would forgo his freedom that he might win men to Christ. He would not take anything that was a matter of liberty and push it upon others so as to cause division.

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[3] G. C. Brewer, Forty Years on the Firing Line, Old Paths Book Club, 1948, pp. xii-xiii, emphasis mine - GFB. See photocopy on p. 151.

[4] Cf. Woods-Cogdill Debate, A discussion on what constitutes scriptural cooperation between churches of Christ; Between Guy N. Woods and Roy Cogdill; Published by The Cogdill Foundation, 1976.

[5] Cf. The Highers-Blakely Debate on Instrumental Music; A debate between Alan E. Highers and Given O. Blakely; Valid Publications, Inc., 1988.

Some men had doubts about certain matters of liberty and if they participated with doubts they were sinning (Rom. 14:23). As long as the world stood Paul would not practice a liberty that would lead someone who doubted to participate against their better judgment.

> *Romans 14 (NKJV)*
> *19 Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.*
>
> *21 It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.*
> *22 Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.*

SECTION 5

THE PASSOVER

1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)
7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our ***Passover,*** *was sacrificed for us.*

Here we are introduced to the idea that Jesus is like the Jewish Passover lamb. Since both the Passover feast and the Lord's supper point the observer to Christ, a study of the Passover feast in the Old Testament is very revealing in regards to the Lord's supper.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

To convince Pharaoh to let Israel go God sent nine plagues upon the land:

(1) Water turned to blood
(2) Frogs
(3) Lice
(4) Flies
(5) Plague on livestock
(6) Boils
(7) Hail
(8) Locusts
(9) Darkness

As terrible as these plagues were, still Pharaoh hardened his heart and refused to let the people go. God declared there would be one final plague:

Exodus 11:1 (NKJV)
1 And the LORD said to Moses, "I will bring yet one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt. Afterward he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out of here altogether.

This final plague would be the worst plague that Egypt had yet experienced: ***The Plague upon the Firstborn!***

Exodus 11:4-8 (NKJV)
4 Then Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: 'About midnight I will go out into the midst of Egypt;
5 'and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the handmill, and all the firstborn of the animals.
6 'Then there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as was not like it before, nor shall be like it again.
7 'But against none of the children of Israel shall a dog move its tongue, against man or beast, that you may know that the LORD does make a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.'
8 "And all these your servants shall come down to me and bow down to me, saying, 'Get out, and all the people who follow you!' After that I will go out." Then he went out from Pharaoh in great anger.

God would send an angel forth to kill the firstborn in each house throughout Egypt. However, He provided a plan whereby Israel could escape disaster!

THE DIVINE PLAN

Let's examine this divine plan which God gave Israel. This plan contained eight distinct rules:

RULE #1: Each household was to take a spotless lamb and kill it!

Exodus 12:3-5 (NKJV)
3 "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.
4 'And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb.
5 'Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

God was very particular about this! Only the best lamb could be used. A diseased or crippled lamb would be totally unacceptable.

RULE #2: Each house was to kill only one lamb!

> *Exodus 12:3 (NKJV)*
> *3 "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father,* ***a lamb for a household.***

"A lamb for an house" meant ***one*** and ***only one*** lamb per house! Using more than one lamb would have been wrong because God specifically said one.

RULE #3: The lamb was to remain in one piece!

> *Exodus 12 (NKJV)*
> *4 'And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb.*
>
> *46 "In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house,* ***nor shall you break one of its bones.***

These regulations were designed so that one and only one lamb could be used in each house!

> It was okay to invite neighbors to come over and help eat the lamb, but it was ***wrong*** to cut off a portion of the lamb and carry it over to the neighbor!

Not one bone could be broken in that lamb's body! It was to be roasted and eaten whole:

> *Exodus 12:8-9 (NKJV)*
> *8 'Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.*
> *9 'Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire; its head with its legs and its entrails.*

God was so careful with these instructions! He did not want that lamb's body divided into pieces!

RULE #4: No leaven was allowed!

> *Exodus 12:18-20 (NKJV)*
> *18 'In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.*
> *19 'For seven days **no leaven shall be found in your houses,** since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land.*
> *20 'You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.' "*

Leaven is yeast! Nothing with yeast in it could be consumed during this Passover meal and for ***six days*** following no leaven could be consumed!

RULE #5: The blood from the lamb was to be caught in a basin and sprinkled on the door of the house!

> *Exodus 12:22 (NKJV)*
> *22 "And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in **the basin,** and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in **the basin.** And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.*

"The basin" means ***one*** basin! Each house had one basin with blood in it and each house was to have that blood sprinkled around the door posts!

When God specified one basin, He at the same time excluded more than one. Whether the basin had spiritual significance or not, each Israelite family could use only one because that is what God specified.

RULE #6: All the family members had to stay in the house!

> *Exodus 12:22 (NKJV)*
> *22 . . . And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.*

Only by staying in the house with the blood of a lamb on the outside could they be safe from death!

Exodus 12:13 (NKJV)
13 'Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

RULE #7: This Passover meal was to be repeated every year so no one would forget what happened!

Exodus 12:24-27 (NKJV)
24 "And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever.
25 "It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service.
26 "And it shall be, when your children say to you, 'What do you mean by this service?'
27 "that you shall say, 'It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.' " So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

This meal was a tool for teaching their children and the strangers within the land what great things the Lord had done for Israel!

RULE #8: Only God's people could eat this meal!

Exodus 12:43-45 (NKJV)
43 And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it.
44 "But every man's servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then he may eat it.
45 "A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it.

This was not a game! This was not a "tool" for evangelism. The Passover was very solemn and was for God's people only! Only God's people had been delivered from death! This meal was to remind them of how they were delivered! There was nothing for a foreigner to "remember" because no foreigner had been delivered from death like the Israelites!

- This meal was meaningless to foreigners.

- This meal was sacred and intended only for God's people!