

ADMINISTRATION OF THE WINE IN HOLY COMMUNION.

As the following points will be submitted for the consideration of the Select Committee, they are now sent on with great respect to the Members, in order to afford an opportunity for careful consideration and to save time at the meetings.

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Motion as Amended by Synod.

That in view of the Report presented to the General Synod by a Select Committee of Bishops concerning the use of separate cups in the administration of the Holy Communion, and the recommendation that in certain cases the use of the Common Cup should not be pressed, a Select Committee be and is hereby appointed, to consider and report to the next Session of this Synod, as to what is the law of the Church as to the administration of the wine

I. HISTORY OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

The Institution by our Lord.

A. Dr. Edersheim says "The use of Wine in the Paschal Supper was "strictly enjoined by tradition...even the poorest must have at" "least four cups though he were to receive the money for it from" "the poor's box." The Temple and its Services p. 202.

If each had to drink four cups of wine during the feast it is unlikely that only one cup would be used. For a party of twelve this would involve filling the same cup 48 times during the feast.

St. Luke's reference seems to suggest that the wine was poured into each disciple's cup XXII, 17 "Take this and divide (or distribute) it among yourselves" - They could not divide the cup itself. The question as to whether each of the disciples had a separate cup has been much disputed but

B. On May 26th 1909 a special Report upon this question was presented to the Church of Scotland, by a Select Committee numbering 56 members and including 16 Doctors of Divinity and 9 University Professors - the following is a quotation :-

"At the Passover according to the oldest available testimony ("Berakoth V. 9, circa 150 A.D.) it was the rule for each celebrant to have a separate cup, and, in the course of the feast, the cup of each person appears to have been filled at least four times (Ossterley and Box, Religion and Worship of the Synagogue pp. 358 ff; Schaff Didache p. 39 Hastings D of "B Art Passover)."

C. The well-known picture by Leonardo da Vinci - the most ancient extant picture of the Last Supper, painted A.D. 1480-1485 shows each of the Communicants with a separate cup before him - cf. Farrar's The Gospels in Art p. 214.

D. The late eminent Archaeologist - Sir Wyke Baylis wrote of the little cups

"These are found within the graves of the Church Martyrs of the first century which they had used at Communion during their lives and which had been buried with them as sacred things."

II. THE PRACTICE IN THE EARLY CHURCH :-

It is fairly clear from numerous writers that the first cups used in the early Church were the ordinary household cups, and as the Sacrament was connected with a meal each Communicant would have his own cup. cf. Acts II 42, 45 R.V.

Sir Wyke Baylis says "It is known beyond doubt that the early Christians engraved on their Sacramental vessels representations of Christ. It is known also that the use of glass for sacramental cups was forbidden in the Second Century.....
We do find cups and ornaments.....but they are so small, these glass and metal ornaments."

Rex Regnum by Sir Wyke Baylis, K.B., J.S.A. pp.43,55.

"Glass was no doubt in use from a very early date.
"St. Jerome.....writes of Exuperius Bishop of Toulouse as bearing "
"the Lord's blood in a vessel of glass."
"Platina asserts that Pope Lephyrinus (A.D.197-217) ordered that the "
"wine should be consecrated not as heretofore in a wooden but in a "
"glass vessel."

Dictionary of Christian Antiquities, Smith and Cheetham - Art.Chalice
Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels Article Cup.

A reasonable inference from the above is that individual cups were used in the Early Church and that they were usually made of glass.

III. MEDIAEVAL CUSTOM.

As regards the whole Christian Church there is no such thing as the unbroken tradition concerning the administration of the wine.

1. The Western Church (Roman).

The Chalice began to be withdrawn in the 12th century. In 1415 the administration in one kind only was so far universal that the Council of Constance decreed it as a law. This was re-affirmed at the Council of Trent 1551 Prayer Book Dictionary pp. 234-235.

2. The Orthodox Eastern Church (Greek). Intinction.

The people are communicated outside the screen, standing, the priest holding the chalice with the particles of the consecrated bread in it. He places both kinds together in the Communicant's mouths with the spoon, the deacon standing by and holding one end of the silk Purificator beneath each Communicant's chin, and afterwards wiping the Communicant's mouth with the other end..

P. B. Dict. p. 236.

3. Commixture is the name given to the ceremony of putting a particle of the consecrated bread into the chalice It must be distinguished from Intinction, the infusion of the whole contents of the paten into the chalice with a view to the communion of the people in both species at once.

Brightman Eastern Liturgies, p. 582.

4. Instillation.

Dipping a piece of bread or wafer, in the wine and then placing it in the Communicant's mouth.

In the 14th Century special pest chalices were in use for sick cases to avoid infection during the time when the plague was so rife. Also to avoid the risk of spilling, slender tubes or quills were used - the Communicants drawing the wine from the Chalice by suction.

Dict. of Christ and the Gospels, p. 401.

IV. THE LAW OF THE CHURCH.

Cf. The Preface concerning the Service of the Church - last 2 clauses. Rubrics in Communion Service, The Catechism, Articles XXVIII, XXX Canon 20. Communion of the Sick, Various legal decisions.

The reference to the Bishop of the Diocese in "Concerning the service of the Church" is as shown in previous paragraph concerning the various uses, and is only in case of "doubt" or "diverse use". No power is thereby bestowed upon the Bishop to alter the service in any way and no order taken by him can be "contrary to anything contained in this book". cf. also Lincoln Judgment.

A careful reference to the above shows :-

1. That the Cup is not to be denied to the Lay-people.
2. The bread and the wine are to be consecrated and administered separately.
3. A cup is to be used in administering the wine,
4. The wine may however be consecrated in a cup chalice or flagon.
5. There is no direction as to the number of cups to be used, nor as to their size or the material of which they are made.

As a matter of practice one two three or four cups have been used in the larger Churches for many years.

There is no direction anywhere in the Law of the Church that more than one Communicant must of necessity drink from the same cup although the minimum number to partake of the Sacrament is two.

V. COMPULSORY SHARING OF A COMMON CUP NOT ENFORCED BY PRAYER BOOK.

The attaching of a value or necessity to sharing the Common Cup is - it is respectfully submitted - based upon sentiment, and is not supported by the law of the Church.

Had such a view been held by the Compilers of the Prayer Book they might naturally be expected to have expressed it in some rubrical direction. No such rubrical direction is found.

On the contrary -

1. The Catechism places beyond all question the fact that the outward and visible sign or seal in the Sacrament is Bread and Wine - No more and no less.

cf. What is the Outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper?
Ans. Bread and Wine.....

The sharing of a common cup is thus no part of the symbolism and cannot be enforced as necessary without adding a third element contrary to the law of the Church.

The Sacrament has only two parts - the outward and visible sign and the inward and spiritual grace, and the common cup is neither the one nor the other.

2. This view is also supported by the looseness of language in both past and present rubrical directions.

A. In the direction to the Priest in the Order of Communion of 1548 we read "he shall bless and consecrate the biggest Chalice or some fair or convenient cup or cups full of wine with some water put into it. Brightman - The English Rite, Vol. 1 p. LXXIII.

Again "Putting the wine into the Chalice or else some fair and convenient cup prepared for that use (if the Chalice will not serve)

B. In the Prayer Book of 1549 (1st P.B. of Edwd. VI.) we read -

"Then shall the Minister take so much bread and wine as shall suffice for the persons appointed to receive the Holy Communion, laying the bread upon the corporas or else in the paten or in some other comely thing prepared for that purpose; and putting the wine into the Chalice or else in some fair or convenient cup prepared for that use. (if the chalice will not serve)."

N. B. It is worthy of notice that the above words "Chalice or else some fair or convenient cup" are followed later on in the service by the rubrical direction "Here the Priest shall take the cup into his hands" showing that administration could be made by means of either the chalice or cup.

It is also worthy of notice that in the same Prayer Book (1549) in delivering the wine the words are -

"And the Minister delivering the sacrament of the blood and giving every one to drink, etc....."

The reference is not to the cup but to that which the cup conveys.

In 1552 and onwards this is altered to "the minister that delivered the cup"

C. In the Prayer book of 1662 the direction is "here to take the cup into his hand."

"And here to lay his hand upon every vessel (be it chalice or flagon) in which there is any wine to be consecrated."

The above Note under B shows that either the Chalice or Cup could be used in administering. "The" cup is the vessel used in that part of the service about which the direction is given.. "The" cup may be a chalice - see above.

The words "every vessel" imply the possibility of there being several vessels, and presumably as before administration could be by means of cup or chalice or both.

It is not argued that this authorises the use of individual cups, but it is respectfully submitted that in principle such use is not excluded.

There is no direction as to sharing the cup with another or others, although such a result would naturally follow as a general rule in the ordinary course of administration.

Should all the wine be spent before reaching the last Communicant the Priest is to consecrate more.. It would be unusual but it would not be unlawful for the priest to use a separate cup or chalice for that last Communicant, who would in that case have the use of an individual cup especially if he were asked as is sometimes done to consume all the wine that was in the cup. No law would be broken by such an action. In any case it could be an individual portion of wine.

The last rubric in the order of Communion of 1548 has the following significant note.

"that if it doth so chance that the wine hallowed and
"consecrate doth not suffice or be enough for them that do
"take the Communion, the Priest, after the first Cup or
"Chalice be emptied, may go again to the altar and reverently
"and decently prepare and consecrate another, and so the third,
"or more, likewise beginning at these words....."

See the Prayer Book Dictionary Harford & Stevenson, p.650.

VI. The ORIGINAL GREEK does not support the view that all are to drink "out of" the one cup.

St. Matt. XXVI, 27. Having taken a cup (oldest MSS omit the definite article) "Of it (Ex autou) may here refer to the wine, not the cup. Ex. need not mean "out of" compare other passages where the same word is used, viz. ~

St. Matt XXVI, 29. I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine.

St. John IV. 12. Our father Jacobs... and drank thereof EX AUTOU.

In neither case could EX AUTOU be translated literally "out of"

This is the view taken in the report of the Presbyterian Divines previously referred to.

In 1 Cor. XI. 25. "As often as ye eat this bread and drink the cup" the words are "the cup" - yet manifestly they could not drink the cup. What St. Paul meant was that they were to drink the wine which the cup as a vehicle conveyed.

In this passage and in Article XXX and other places "the cup" is used as a figure of speech. When the cup was restored to the laity it obviously meant the wine which is one of the divinely appointed symbols and not the cup per se.

VII. COMMUNION BETWEEN CHRISTIANS.

It is sometimes urged that the use of individual cups would destroy the unity of the Sacrament.

I submit that the unity between Christian Communicants and the idea of Communion in this sense is only a secondary view of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper - the primary view is Remembrance, and consequently Communion with God.

Further, the idea of Christian unity is emphasised by St. Paul more in connection with the bread than with the wine.

cf. 1 Corinthians X, 16-17 "we who are many are one bread (R.V.M. loaf)
R.V.

One body, for we all partake of the one bread (loaf)

Here the Unity between Christians is expressed as symbolised by the one loaf or one bread. Yet we divide the bread into individual portions and administer to each individual separately. If this does not destroy the unity of the bread neither does it destroy the unity symbolised by the wine to administer it in individual portions. The cup being no part of the symbolism is merely a vehicle of convenience to convey that which is.

VIII. THE DECISION GIVEN by the late ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY and the late ARCHBISHOP OF SYDNEY.

The following is from The Church Directory and Almanack 1903

dedicated by special permission to His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury -

"The Archbishop of Canterbury has been asked whether on account of possible tuberculosis contamination during the administration of the

Chalice at the Holy Eucharist His Grace within the sphere of his jurisdiction was willing to allow each communicant to provide or be provided with a small glass into which a portion of the consecrated wine could be poured for individual consumption at the altar rails. His Grace through his Chaplain replied that there was nothing illegal in the suggested practice.

The late Archbishop Saumarez-Smith on being consulted on the same question replied through his Chaplain on 11th November 1904 that "The Archbishop ".....is not convinced of the necessity of such a change and distinctly disapproves of it. At the same time His Grace cannot actually forbid "the introduction of the new system, as there seems to be no contraven- "tion of the law."

It is not argued that these decisions have any binding effect, but they are at least worthy of respect and consideration.

IN CONCLUSION IT IS URGED THAT

1. The Committee is to give its verdict as to what the Law is, and not what it ought to be - Ruling of the Chairman.
2. That sharing a common cup is no part of the symbolism of the Sacrament.
3. That the cup is a vehicle of convenience only.
4. That in principle the number of cups is a matter of indifference.
5. That although the common cup has been in use for several centuries such custom is not binding where no principle is involved.
6. That the Lambeth Conference and Committee of Bishops admit that in certain cases a departure from the use of the Common Cup is necessary, and therefore any means whereby such difficulty can be effectively met without contravening Church Law should be candidly acknowledged irrespective of personal feeling or preference.
7. That the use of individual cups does meet effectively the difficulty above referred to, and their use in such special cases does not necessarily involve a contravention of Church law.