

opposed to viewing it as a common meal or profaning it by using it simply to fill one's stomach, or recognizing no spiritual symbolism beyond the outward elements and actions.

But what, specifically, does "discerning" or "recognizing" the body mean? I believe it has a twofold reference.

On the one hand it has a vertical reference. "Discerning the body" means to recognize with the eyes of faith the true spiritual significance of the bread and the cup as emblems of the broken body and shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the other hand it has a horizontal reference. "Discerning the body" means to recognize with the eyes of faith the true spiritual union that exists between all members of Christ's body, the Church, and the true Christian love which draws all members of Christ's body together in one holy bond, instead of viewing them as separate individuals with all of their natural dislikes and sinful attitudes.

In the Lord's Supper believers are called on to "discern the body" in both senses.

In the ordinance the elements of bread and wine are not transformed into the physical body and blood of Christ, nor do we eat the physical body and blood of Christ when we eat the bread and wine; nevertheless the physical elements truly signify, symbolize, and represent the body and blood of our Lord.

And when the participants commune together in the body and blood of Christ, they show that in their union with Christ they are united with each other. Although they are many members of the one body, they all have one Head; and when they commune with Him in the Lord's Supper, they also commune with one another.

The believers in Corinth were not recognizing the true spiritual significance of the bread and the cup, and they were not manifesting the