

“Thoughts from The Three Keys to the Kingdom” prepared by Ted Wood
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Matthew 16:18-20. “I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church ... I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Bruce Bickel. “When Christ gave the keys to the kingdom, he gave us three things. First of all, ... the preaching of the Gospel, the doctrines of grace ... Secondly ... the ordinances of the Lord’s Supper and Baptism. The third ... church discipline ... When you have a biblical view of conversion, you will preach all three of those.”

Belgic Confession (1561/62), “Marks of the True Church”: “The true church can be recognized if it has the following marks: The church engages in the pure preaching of the gospel; it makes use of the pure administration of the sacraments as Christ instituted them; it practices church discipline for correcting faults. In short, it governs itself according to the pure Word of God, rejecting all things contrary to it ...”

Bruce Bickel. “Who participates in the Lord’s Supper? What does it signify? What’s going on when it happens? ... The Lord’s Supper is the most intimate expression that the body of Christ can ever honor and participate in.”

1 Corinthians 11: 23f. “I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread,²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, ‘This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’²⁵ In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me’²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”

1 Corinthians 11:27f. “Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord.²⁸ Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.³⁰ That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.³¹ But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged.”

1 Corinthians 10:15-17. “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.”

Bruce Bickel. “Membership is essentially saying, would you hold me accountable to my spiritual sanctification? ... What does it mean to ‘equip the saints for the work of the ministry’? (Eph 4:12) ‘I want you to join your church because I want to be equipped to do the work of the ministry?’ Is that what people understand when they talk about membership?”