

McCay-Porter Debate

on

“The Communion Cup”

G. Earl McCay

&

Rue Porter



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McCay-Porter Debate
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E-mail: thomas.thrasher@att.net

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INTRODUCTION

The issue of the number of drinking vessels used in distributing the fruit of the vine in the Lord's supper has been an issue of importance to many Christians for several decades. Others consider this question to be trivial and unworthy of dispute. However, since disagreements over this matter have resulted in controversy and division within the body of Christ, God's people must confront it with a desire to understand what the will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:17). Truth has no reason to fear honest investigation!

This debate on "The Communion Cup" was a written discussion that took place about 1946. At the time of the debate, G. Earl McCay had been in the ministry for forty-five years and had done a considerable amount of public debating. He met Adventists, Seventh Day Church of God, Russellite, Baptist, and Christian Church debaters.

Roland Rudolph "Rue" Porter (1890-1967) was a gospel preacher for more than fifty years. He participated in approximately forty debates during his lifetime, discussing a wide range of issues with denominational preachers and with brethren.

The publisher's desire is that good may result from the reading and study of this discussion in book form. I hope that you will appreciate the fact that men can discuss their differences in a courteous way, without being hateful toward each other. Let us approach the study of religious questions with the attitude of the noble Bereans, who "searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:10-11).

— Thomas N. Thrasher

THE COMMUNION CUP (RUE PORTER'S FIRST ARTICLE)

Brethren:

It has been suggested by Bro. McCay that we should write two or more articles each, in which we set forth the differences between us with reference to the word "cup" as used in scripture relating to the Lord's Supper. Be it understood in the beginning that Brother McCay and I are friends, and that we do not propose to allow this difference to intervene in that friendship. I believe that Children of God may use their own judgment as to the manner of *distributing* the elements of the Supper, while he holds differently. His position will be set forth in his own words, and I shall not attempt to anticipate him. I have proposed as a Proposition, "The Scriptures teach that all children of God are to drink of the same 'cup' when partaking of the Lord's Supper." This is not an acceptable statement of the case to the opposition, since to them the word "cup" always means "container." My brethren are always willing, when faced with controversy, to define the terms we use and give good and valid reasons for such use of them. Let us now give attention to some definitions.

"And he took the *cup*, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For *this* is my blood of the new testament, *which* is shed for many for the remission of sins"—Mt 26:27-28. In this passage we have the noun "cup," and the pronouns "it" and "which" appearing. It is grammatically certain that the pronouns refer to the word (noun) "cup." This will not be disputed I am sure. Now let us look to the dictionary. "Cup—a small drinking vessel; something shaped like a cup; the contents of a cup; liquid contained in a cup." We now ask you to apply these definitions to the word as found in the passage. It will be seen at once that it is impossible to apply the first definition, for it is impossible for any one to drink a literal container. That the actual drinking of the "cup" is meant by the Lord is shown by the sense He gave it in saying, "THIS IS MY BLOOD." It is unreasonable for any one to say that the blood shed for the remission of our sins was a "solid container." We therefore conclude that it is imperative that we apply another meaning of "cup" here.

"The contents of the cup" is the definition which fits the word exactly. In fact, this is exactly what the Lord said he meant! Read now, "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of THIS FRUIT OF THE VINE, until that day when I drink IT new with you in my Father's kingdom"—Mt. 26:29. It is my firm conviction that no man can read these verses as the Lord spake them, without using the definition No. 2 as given here, viz.—the contents of a cup. You will remember of course the old rule of language which says, "The definition of a word may be placed in sentence in place of the word it defines, and the sentence still gives complete sense without change of meaning." Now we challenge your attention with this fact. Try it on these verses. Read it, "He took the *solid container*, and gave thanks, and gave *it* [the solid container] to them, saying, Drink ye all of it [the solid container]; For this [solid container] is my blood of the new testament, which [solid container] is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine [solid container!!!] until that day when I drink it [the solid container] new with you in the kingdom."

There is no rule of language known to me which can be invoked to deny me the right to

thus use the word and its definition. Take the definition I have set out as the true meaning of the word in these verses, and it makes complete sense all the way through. This then is positive proof of one point in my favor as we begin this study. The inspired penman was no fool. He wrote correctly, and his words have been correctly translated into our own tongue. We cannot fail to see that the Lord used the word “cup” in this passage to represent the contents of a container. So, when we partake of the Lord’s Supper as here exemplified, the stress is laid on WHAT is done, and NOT on *how* do we do it. There is no such thing as a specific ritual laid down in scripture for us to follow in this matter. Whether we use a container made of china, silver, wood, glass, or other material is of no consequence. Nor is it at all needful that we consider the number of containers used, for the emphasis is NOT on what contains it, but what is contained in it.

Shall we now turn to Paul’s account of this matter? Remember that Paul received his information by direct revelation from the Lord (Gal. 1:11). So we read, “After the same manner also he took the *cup*, when he had supped, saying, This *cup* is the new testament IN MY BLOOD: This do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and *drink this cup*, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and *drink this cup* of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup” (1 Cor. 11:25- 28). Now if language has meaning at all, and if Paul knew what he was saying to be true, we are again assured that the emphasis is upon the THING DONE. “In remembrance of me.” The word “manner” in the passage refers to the worthiness or unworthiness of the participant, and NOT to the method of distribution.

But in verse 25 we are plainly told what the “cup” is. “This cup IS THE NEW TESTAMENT IN MY BLOOD.” I declare to you that it was impossible for such language to refer to “a drinking vessel” or “solid container.” It could not possibly refer to anything other than the “fruit of the vine” mentioned in Matthew 26:29. All the argument as to the meaning of “cup” in other places, and when used under other circumstances may well be admitted without argument; but in these verses it is boldly affirmed and declared as an invulnerable truth that “cup” refers to contents. When Jesus took the bread of the communion, he said, “This is my body.” Roman Catholic theology says this means that the literal bread was changed into the literal body of Christ by the blessing pronounced upon it. That is an impossibility, and our good friends agree with us that the bread was used as a representation of the body of the Christ. When Jesus told the disciples as he took the “cup” that, “This is the new testament in my blood” [or, as Mark states it, “*This (CUP) is my blood* of the new testament, which is shed for many”], we well know that he did not take his literal blood, yet the thing he was talking about he called, “my blood of the new testament.” (Mk. 14:24). This could not have been said of a “drinking vessel.” It is a positive and inescapable certainty that he was talking about what was IN the container, and again my position is made certain.

Then, in Mark 14:25, Jesus again says that what he called his blood in verse 24, is the “fruit of the vine.” Read it. “Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the *fruit of the vine*, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.” Paul said to disciples, “This do” (1 Cor. 11:24-25). Do what? “Eat this bread” and “drink this cup.” But Paul, what do you mean by “drink the cup”? We are trying to learn what is meant by “cup.” Jesus answers for himself, “This IS MY BLOOD of the new testament.” (Mk. 14:24). It is certain, my brethren, that this is clear. Reference to the “container” is only incidental, and cannot properly be claimed as a

ritualistic form of procedure. The “fruit of the vine” is what the Lord said “is my blood of the new testament.” Whether it be in one container, or a number, is of no consequence whatever.

It appears to me as childishness for any man to set himself up as a definer of what inspired men NEVER DID SAY. The privilege of doing this is ours, but to say it must be done after any specific method or in any specific manner, is saying what the Lord and his authorized spokesmen never did say. I shall not be a party to any such procedure. I shall never try to make a law where God made none. I shall not regard as authoritative the law another uninspired man undertakes to enforce upon me as a child of God. The “table” of the Lord refers not to any particular form of the piece of furniture called by that name. There are many incidental items as to the Supper which have not one thing to do with its validity. I suggest that IF the word “cup” in the passages cited refers to the container, it did refer to the particular container the Lord held in his hand at the time! This cannot be true, for the whereabouts of that container is certainly not known. A container of some sort is always necessary where liquid is handled, but the sort of container is not claimed as a matter of importance by the opposition here. I maintain that the NUMBER of containers is on the same footing, and that while the group of worshippers at A—use one sort and those at B—use another sort, they violate no law of God by that difference. So, when a single group uses a number of containers, they violate no law by that act. The THING done is the important matter, NOT the method of doing it. We shall await the friendly and critical reply of Brother McCay.

G. EARL MCCAY’S FIRST ARTICLE

Brethren:

I do not head my article the same as Brother Porter because his statement of the difference between us is not strictly correct. The main difference is in regard to the number of cups that may rightly be used to contain the fruit of the vine.

I suggested to Brother Porter that he affirm that “the exclusive use of individual cups is right.” He declined. Then I suggested that I affirm “the exclusive use of individual cups in the communion is a sin,” and asked him to deny. He again declined. I believe that these propositions that I stated meet the real issue squarely.

But since Bro. Porter has dealt only with the question of what constitutes the “Cup of the Lord,” I will first notice that and then take up the question of whether exclusive use of individual cups is right. Much of what Brother Porter wrote in his first article is a waste of space. No intelligent person claims that a person can drink a “solid container.” But it might be well to define the Greek word from which we get cup. *Poterion*: A drinking vessel; by extension the contents thereof, i.e., a cupful (draught); figurative, a lot or fate:—Cup.

Excepting where it is used figuratively as in Matthew 26:42, it always includes a container and may include the contents of that container. I am a little surprised that Brother Porter would claim that 1 Cor. 11:25 in connection with Matthew 26:29 could not refer to “anything other than the fruit of the vine.” When he so writes, he virtually takes the position that “the cup of the Lord” is only the fruit of the vine. Read it carefully and see if you can arrive at

any other conclusion.

Now that position is as ridiculous as would be the position that we can drink a solid container, which latter position no one of my knowledge takes. I have a bunch of grapes. It is ONLY the fruit of the vine. Is it the “Cup of the Lord”? If it is not the cup of the Lord, then the cup of the Lord includes something “other than the fruit of the vine.” How would it appear in practice? I could take a bunch of grapes, offer thanks for them, then holding it by the stem and being careful not to touch any grape so as not to pass any germs from me to the members, each member could take a grape (of course being careful to touch only the one meant for him) and some way squeeze the juice from it and so drink the juice. Would they be drinking the “Cup of the Lord”? You say that is ridiculous. Yes, but no more than the claim that the fruit of the vine is the Lord’s cup. Now I wish to ask a question. When Christ instituted the Lord’s Supper, did he have the “Cup of the Lord”? If he did not, when was it first had? What did he have? Let us see. Matt. 26:27, “And he took a CUP and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins.” He had a container. In that container was the fruit of the vine. He gave thanks. He gave it to them and said for them to drink of it.

Now if we wish to be sure that we have the cup of the Lord, we must have a container. It must contain the fruit of the vine. We must offer thanks. Then we must give it to the ones who commune. We are following Christ when we do as he did. I am afraid to do it differently lest I be eternally lost. “Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man.” I quote from Brother Porter: “So when we partake of the Lord’s Supper as here exemplified, the STRESS (Emphasis G.E.M.) is laid on WHAT is done, and NOT on how to do it.” What inspired writer said where the stress should be placed? When my brethren have the exclusive use of individual cups, that is what they do. Should we put the stress on that?

I quote again, “The fruit of the vine is what the Lord said, ‘Is my blood of the new testament.’ Whether it be one container, or a number, IS OF no consequence whatever” (Emphasis G.E.M.). What I have emphasized is the question at issue, and Brother Porter has not yet proven his assertion correct. He should offer scripture to prove his conclusion. I quote, “It appears to be as childishness for any man to set himself as definer of what inspired men NEVER DID Say.” Correct, Brother Porter. You are one of those men. Nowhere are we told what is important and what is not important.

I quote, “I shall not regard as authoritative the law another uninspired man undertakes to enforce upon me as a child of God.” Right. But I shall present a law of Christ that will embrace the communion and make doubtful whether the individual cups are right.

Brother Porter’s reference to the exact container that Christ used is not worthy of as able a man as Brother Porter is when in the right. There is one point I wish to notice on the question of the element independent of the container of the element. The position taken by all that I have read after or talked with who hold to the individual cups has been that only the element is to be considered. This will apply to the bread or loaf. And the reasoning of those brethren has led some to say that it would not make any difference if brethren should have individual wafers also in the communion. That is the logical conclusion. Are the brethren ready to accept wafers? My married daughter said at one congregation in Alaska where she and her husband who was stationed there during the war worshiped, they did have individual loaves. They were at least consistent. Just as much authority for individual loaves as for cups. Now let us consider some

scriptures that keep me from endorsing exclusive use of individual cups.

Every religious teaching or practice is either righteous or unrighteous. It is either of faith or of man's opinion. It is either by Christ's authority or by man's authority. It is either prompted by love and directed by faith or it is the result of the desires of men. All righteousness of God is in the Gospel (New Testament), Rom. 1:16-17. No person has a promise of salvation unless he accepts the righteousness of God, Rom. 10:1-4.

All unrighteousness is sin, 1 John 5:17. Therefore, every religious teaching or practice that is not in N. T. is sin. Is the practice of the exclusive use of individual cups in the New Testament? It is not. Draw your own conclusion as to whether it is sin. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin, Rom. 14:23. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God, Rom. 10:17. Therefore, every religious teaching or practice that is not in the word of God is sinful. Is the use of individual cups in the word of God? If it is not, is it not sinful?

Everything that we teach or practice must be done in the name of Christ, Col. 3:17. Webster says, "In the name of" is "By the authority of." Christ only authorizes by precept and example. Therefore, any teaching or practice for which we cannot find either precept or example in the New Testament is a violation of a plain commandment of God's word. God's word states the Law. And when I or any man ask the brethren to respect that law, I am not making a law as Brother Porter seems to think. But I am urging every one to respect God's law.

The New Testament law is called "Truth." John 1:17, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Compare also John 17:17 and Heb. 10:10. Now as all that is called "Truth" is contained in the second will (New Testament), when people teach and practice what is not in that will, they have erred from the Truth. And it is the duty of every Christian to try to convert them from the error of their way that their soul may be saved from death (Jas. 5:19-20).

Exclusive use of individual cups is not in that will, and we err from it in the use of them.

I am not saying that all who use individual cups are going to the hot place. Neither am I saying to my Methodist friend that he is going to the hot place because he has "mourner's bench religion." But I am saying to all that the promise of going to heaven is not to "every one that saith Lord, Lord; but to him that doeth the will of Christ's Father which is in heaven." That Will includes neither the mourner's bench or the individual colors.

Both faith and love are necessary to meet God's approval (Heb. 11:6; Rom. 13:10; Gal. 5:13). Were brethren directed by faith and moved by love when they innovated individual cups and divided brethren? That which is not directed by faith and moved by love is not in harmony with God's word. Any teaching or practice that goes beyond the teaching of Christ is wrong, 2 John 9 (RV). If the practice of individual cups is not in the teaching of Christ, then those who engage in the practice go beyond the teaching of Christ and have not God. Is it safe to not have God? If we do not contend against any teaching or practice that is not found in the New Testament, we sin by omission, Jude 3. We should strive against sin even though it may bring bodily injury, Heb. 12:4.

If we take up with a teaching or practice that is not in the New Testament, we disobey Heb. 2:1-4. Disobeying one command is as bad as disobeying all. James 2:10, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

Kind reader, though I am not personally acquainted with Brother Porter, I have read

much after him in religious papers and respect him as a man. But God's word warns against thinking of an individual above what is written, 1 Cor. 4:6. For that reason I have appealed to "what is written." I commend you to the word of God, and what I have written to your careful consideration, trusting that it may do good and help to a better understanding of what God requires of us that we may spend eternity with him.

RUE PORTER'S SECOND ARTICLE

Brother McCay likes the heading above better than the one I gave, so we will use it. Brother McCay wants the word "exclusive" inserted into the proposition. I object because it doesn't fit. Anything that is exclusive is also specific and particular. Has to be *that way* and no other under any circumstances. This I do not believe about the administration of the Supper. He gives us the definition of the Greek term for "cup", and admits the "figurative use" of the word may mean "by extension, the contents of that container." This is exactly what I contend for, and declare to you that the primary use of the word in the passage relating to the Supper is impossible. It just doesn't make sense at all to make the word "cup" mean "a solid container," hence my argument stands untouched.

He says I argue that the "cup of the Lord" is only the fruit of the vine. Well, what does he think it is? Can he possibly believe that the "cup," which Jesus called the "fruit of the vine" and which the disciples drank, was a solid container? I am perfectly willing for honest readers to decide the correctness of my reasoning on this point. He has a bunch of grapes and says it is "only the fruit of the vine." Well, I take the bunch of grapes and squeeze the juice from them and I have "the fruit of the vine" in a form that can be drunk. The Lord's disciples DRANK the fruit of the vine, hence it was the juice extracted from the grapes, and Jesus called it "the cup"—Mk. 14:23, 25 and 1 Cor. 11:25-26.

He cites Mt. 26:27 and argues that "He had a container, and in that container was the fruit of the vine." Right. Now, Brother, which was it that they drank? The container or the contents? He says I lay the stress on "what is done, and not on how we do it." Well, what does he do? He lays the stress on HOW it is done. Can he not see that if I am wrong in laying stress somewhere he is doing exactly the same? I cite him to 1 Cor. 11:26, 29. If this is not laying stress on the WHAT, or the reason for doing it, what language could? He now proposes to present a law of the Lord which will make use of individual cups doubtful. We shall see.

He asks about "individual wafers." I might well ask in reply: Where is the law specifying the manner in which the bread shall be distributed to the partakers? Some men have argued that when Jesus "brake it" he broke it into individual bits for those who partook. I can see no reason for fussing about it. If my brother does, he will soon find himself in a class by himself. He is right when he says there is as much authority for the individual bit of bread as for the individual container. I insist again that the purpose of partaking is "Do this in remembrance of me." Each participant eats a bit of bread, and drinks a small amount of the "fruit of the vine." In this he "shows the Lord's death till he come." Whether he breaks the bit of bread from the whole wafer, or eats a bit that has been broken off is of no consequence in the minds of most of us. Certainly it does not matter to me. The same is true of the "fruit of the vine" that we drink. Whether it be drunk from the same container used by others, or from an individual container, is not and cannot

be of importance.

He cites several verses defining righteousness and sin, then argues that what is not found in the word of God is sin. He evidently means to say it must be mentioned by name in a specific manner, or it is sin. It that it, Brother McCay? Well we shall see. What about the linens on the table? What about the table itself? What about the particular form of vessel used as a “container”? Can he find any such mention? Does the man not know that there are a dozen or more items which simply have to be done in some manner when we partake of the Supper, and of which no rule is laid down by which we must be governed? Why in the name of all that is reasonable will he fuss about the sort, the number of containers used, when the Lord simply said “drink ye all of IT.” I ask him to give an honest answer to this question: Was the “it” in that verse (Mt. 20:27) referring to the “container” or to the contents? Please tell us. He argues about authority. Certainly we must act by divine authority to be right. When I baptize a man, I do it by divine authority, but I have no orders as to the specific manner in which I handle the person baptized. Right handed or left? In a pool? River? Lake? Ocean? Creek? Day time? Three o’clock? This is really childish. He doesn’t fuss about these items, but they are just as important as those about which he causes a stir.

“Exclusive use of individual cups is not in that Will [of Christ], and we err from it in the use of them.” So says my brother. Of course, he must mean that they are not specifically mentioned, therefore it is sin to use them. But the use of linens on the table of the Lord is not mentioned. Does he say it is a sin to use them? This is as pertinent as anything he has to offer.

The mourner’s bench is used as a parallel. But there is no sort of likeness between the use of individual containers and the practice of the mourner’s bench. When we drink the fruit of the vine, we are doing exactly what the Lord commanded. I declare to you here and now that if the salvation of his soul depended upon it, he can never find a command to drink this fruit of the vine from any certain sort of container. Unless he can, his cause is forever overthrown. The thing the Lord commanded was “drink this.” The idea that he meant for us to drink out of any certain sort of container just isn’t in the passage making mention of it. This was shown so completely in my first article that it is useless to repeat it here.

He asks, “Were brethren directed by faith and moved by love when they innovated individual cups?” I ask: By what authority does he call such a custom “innovating”? Does he say it was a new thing? Well suppose he tell us when the use of table with “legs” was first used and why? Shame on you, my brother; you surely know better than to argue so.

2 John 9-10 is brought in. He says the use of “individual cups is not in the teaching of Christ.” Let him tell us if the use of *linens on the table* is in it? I ask further: Is it either indecent or disorderly to serve a congregation as we do with individual containers? God did not give the gospel to people without understanding, but addressed it to the understanding of men. We just have to choose the PLACE where, the hour WHEN, the man or men WHO preside, the MANNER IN WHICH the command is carried out. I wish some of these brethren would give us the specific rules for conducting this memorial. I still want to know if a table with three legs is scriptural? Is a sin to use nice clean linens on the table? Is it sinful to “stand” while thanks is offered? Is it a sin to drink the fruit of the vine from a “mug”? I once drank it from a tin cup with a handle on it. Was that wrong? If that was right, then is it wrong to do it any other way?

Jude 3 is introduced. Certainly we must contend for the faith. We do that when we insist that all brethren should “drink this cup,” and we read that this which the Lord called the “cup” he

emphatically described as “the fruit of the vine”—Mt. 20:27-28. I have not found where the Lord or any apostle gave a detailed or specific set of rules as to the manner of the observance,

“Heb. 2:1, 4. Any teaching not in the New Testament is in conflict with this passage.” True, but the teaching for which I am contending IS in the New Testament. I am contending that brethren should partake of the bread and the fruit of the vine in memory of the Lord. My brother is contending for a CERTAIN MANNER OF DOING IT. There is a difference and the readers will readily see that my position is proved by every passage introduced, and not one of those he brings us has in any way conflicted with my affirmation.

No, Brother McCay and I are not personally acquainted, but are friends. It is a pity in my mind that a man so fine and good should get such a warped idea into his mind and make it a test of fellowship, and thereby cause division among otherwise contented brethren. We do exactly what He asked when we “drink the cup” in memory of his shed blood. He led Paul to write, “As often as ye eat this bread and drink THIS CUP, ye proclaim the Lord’s death till he come”—1 Cor. 11:26. I declare to you that it does not say “drink out of this cup.” What they DRANK was what the Lord called the “cup.” This could not possibly be the container.

I offer this additional advance argument. The rules of debating declare that an argument may be met by reducing it to an absurdity. I propose to do that now. Read, “And he took the CUP, and when he had given thanks, he gave IT [the “cup”] to them: and they all drank of IT. And he said unto them, THIS is my BLOOD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT which *is shed* for many”—Mk. 14:23-24. Then in verse 25 he declares that he was talking about THE FRUIT OF THE VINE. I declare to you that it is utterly impossible for this to be harmonized with the position of my brother. I capitalized the pronouns which he must admit refer to “cup,” and there is no grammatical rule known to men that will allow the word to be used in the sense of “container.” My position stands forever proved.

In the verse just cited, we have “cup” as the subject of the conversation. Then the Lord used “it” twice as a pronoun referring to “cup.” Then “this” is used once as a pronoun referring to “cup.” Jesus says this *cup* was to be drunk. He said it was “the fruit of the vine,” and said it “IS MY BLOOD of the New Testament.” My good friends you simply cannot fail to see that it is impossible for the language to be used in the sense of a “solid container.” IN EVERY INSTANCE WHERE THE WORD “cup” IS USED IN CONNECTION WITH THE LORD’S SUPPER, IT IS USED AS ABOVE. Not ONE TIME can he find it used in the sense of a “solid container.”

Now, of course, I know that a container was there. Liquids must have a container to contain them when passed from one to another as in this case, but that doesn’t militate in the least against the position I am affirming. I just finished lunch. We (seven of us) drank tea. It was all brewed in the one pot, but the same tea was served in separate containers to us. It was SINGULAR in quality, but MULTIPLE in quantity. So, the singular use of the word makes no difference at all. We are “one body,” but declared to be “many members.” One in quality; multiple in quantity. So with the “bread,” and with the “fruit of the vine.” There just isn’t any other way in which the words under dispute can sensibly be used. So far as I have learned from them, every argument and passage used by our friends who object to the individual container has been brought out in the articles already written, but of course other things can and will be said about them. We shall await the reply of Brother McCay, and his article affirming his position. It is a pleasure to discuss a difference with a man so clean and gentlemanly. I assure you my own

heart's desire is to be right. I shall accept any truth by any man for the simple sake of being right. If he can produce the proof that the Lord requires us to use a single container when we partake of the Lord's Supper, I shall accept it at once and without question. Until he does, I shall continue to be happy in serving Christ according to what I know to be true. May God bless us all.

G. EARL MCCAY'S SECOND ARTICLE

In his first article he says, "The word *manner* in the passage refers to the worthiness or unworthiness of the participant, and not to the method of distribution." It refers to neither. It refers to the condition of the mind of the person in regard to his thought of the body or blood of Christ. It uses an adverb and not an adjective.

Also, "It is a positive and inescapable certainty that he was talking about what was in the container, and again my position is made certain." He changed his position in his second article, so which position "is made certain," his first or his second? Both cannot be right. First, he said the cup was only the fruit of the vine. In his second article he says a container is necessary. His admission that a container is necessary is in the third paragraph of his second article. His second position is correct and what I contend for. When he changed he got nearer the truth. Maybe he will change some more and get in harmony with all the truth. I quote from his first article, "Whether it be in one container, or a number, is of no consequence at all." What inspired person said so? That is only Bro. Porter's opinion. To follow opinion is always wrong. He objects to the word "exclusive." His objection is not in harmony with facts or reason. There are three ways that I know brethren have the communion. One, the fruit of the vine is in individual containers before the services begin. That is the exclusive use of individual cups. Second, the fruit of the vine is in one cup all the time. That is the exclusive use of one cup. Then at some places the fruit of the vine is in one cup at the time it is blessed and then put in two or more according to what that particular congregation desires. There is no exclusiveness in that practice. Now the brethren who use one cup exclusively are following the example of Christ and absolutely safe. The ones who use individual cups exclusively have no authority for so doing and are not absolutely safe. The third are following the pattern at first and if the language, "Drink from it, all of you," will permit them to drink from it without placing their lips to the one cup, then they may be right. To be safe, the congregation where I live uses only one.

Let me illustrate the third way and see if you readers believe they may drink from it without each placing his lips to it. I wish ONLY to get the truth before my readers and am not trying as some to WIN a debate. When I was a boy back in Nebraska, the people who attended the 4th of July celebration were permitted to drink free lemonade from a large barrel. They drank FROM the barrel but did not put their lips to the edge of the barrel and drink. But they used either their own cup or the tin cup that was chained to the barrel. I do not believe any one would claim they did not drink from the barrel, though they used other vessels to take it from the barrel. But do not forget that it had to all be in the one barrel before they could drink from it.

The lexicographer of the *Literary Digest* in a letter to Brother Van Bonneau says, "To drink OF THE CUP, would not in the Greek, mean literally to drink from cup number one, as you phrase it, but to drink of the fluid that had its origin in—that emanated from—that cup."

Certainly in this quotation from a Greek scholar is no consolation for the individual cup brethren. It must be in one container before thanksgiving to be in any way near scriptural.

In his second article Brother Porter misrepresents what I said about the “figurative” use of the word. Read what we both said. I gave only the definition of *poterion* and accepted it as true. Then Brother Porter, after misrepresenting what I said, claims, “That is exactly what I contend for ... It just doesn’t make sense at all to make the word ‘Cup’ mean a solid container, hence my argument stands untouched.” Brother Porter built a man of straw by claiming I said what I did not say, then destroys the man of straw and draws the conclusion that, “My argument stands untouched.” I quote from Bro. Porter again, “He says I argue that the cup of the Lord is ONLY (emphasis G.E.M.) the fruit of the vine. Well, what does he think it is?” The word when not used figuratively always demands a container, and Bro. Porter admits it in his second article.

On the bunch of grapes question, the brother dodged again. He is going to press the juice from the bunch of grapes and put it in the form to be drunk. If the bunch of grapes (the fruit of the vine) alone is the cup of the Lord, it does not need to be squeezed out, but the individual grapes may be taken by individual members and they would be drinking the “cup of the Lord.”

I quote, “He asks about individual wafers.” I might ask in reply, “Where is the law specifying the manner in which the bread shall be distributed?” It was ONE loaf when the Savior gave thanks for it. That is the example for Christians to follow. I quote again, “He is right when he says there is as much authority for the individual bits of bread as for the individual containers.” Bro. Porter changed one word here and by so doing misrepresented what I said. I said there is just as much authority for individual loaves as for individual cups. Bro. Porter says I am right. Well every Bible scholar knows there is absolutely NO authority for individual loaves. Hence, according to Brother Porter, there is none for individual cups.

I quote again, “I ask him to give an honest answer to this question: Was the ‘IT’ in that verse (Matt. 26:27) referring to the container or to the contents?” I will let the readers decide. Matt. 26:27, “And he took a cup, and after a thanksgiving gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you.’” It would appear that they were all to drink from (it) *that which was contained in it*. I quote again, “I declare to you here and now [sounds a lot like the Book of Mormon declarations, G.E.M.] that if the salvation of the soul depended upon it, he can never find a command to drink this fruit of the vine from any certain sort of container.” Bro. Porter is cunning even if he is not fair. We are not discussing any certain “SORT” of container but the number. It was a *poterion*. It was only One. Matt. 26:27, “And he took a cup, and after a thanksgiving gave it to them, saying, Drink from it all of you.” There is Christ’s command for his disciples to drink from the ONE *poterion*. I find what Brother Porter said I could not find. By this time you have learned that he is greater on assertions than on facts. Christ took ONE loaf (not a lots of loaves and wafers) He took one cup (not a lot of individual cups), and when we do the same we are obeying Christ’s command. But when Bro. Porter takes many wafers, not one, and gives thanks for THEM, and does the same with the CUPS, not ONE cup, he is in rebellion against the law of Christ. Please read carefully 1 Sam. 15:23 and learn a lesson. The disciples who have one container and the fruit of the vine therein, have the Cup of the Lord. Those who have many cups have the CUPS of man as they originated in the mind of man. I prefer the Cup of the Lord.

Brother Porter asks for my authority for calling individual cups an innovation. Not being in the religion of the early Christians they are in the term *innovation*. And I believe the brother knows it. He asks about three-legged table, etc. That is the same course pursued by Christian

Church preachers more than forty years ago when I asked for authority for instrumental music. They had no scripture, so they resorted to sophistry and ridicule as Brother Porter has done. He asks, "Is it indecent and disorderly to use individual cups?" It is not according to Christ's *order*. I do not remember saying it was indecent. Brother Porter admits we should contend for the Faith. Does he do so when he contends for individual cups?

Brother Porter seems to think that because I accept one cup as taught by Christ that maybe I have a "warped" idea in my mind. And because I ask brethren to be satisfied with the way Christ did that maybe I am making a test of fellowship and causing division. Let us see. 1 John 1:5, "... God is light and in him there is no darkness at all." Verses 6-7, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin." The lack of fellowship is the result of some not walking in the light and to the extent that God is light. If all walked entirely in the light of God's word, there would be fellowship. But as long as some want something not in the word, there can be no Christian fellowship. God's word makes the conditions for fellowship. Don't blame me. Who is to blame for the division, the one who wants the innovation or the one who opposes the innovation? Who splits the log, the one who drives the wedge or the one who opposes driving it? Brother Porter is just as inconsistent in claiming that those who oppose introduction of individual cups are causing division as were Christian Church preachers in claiming that those who opposed instrumental music were the ones who caused division.

In the next to the last paragraph of his second article, Brother Porter admits that a container is necessary in the communion. He has improved so that he can no longer claim that the fruit of the vine alone constitutes the "Cup of the Lord."

In the closing paragraph of Brother Porter's second article he says, "We shall await the reply of Brother McCay and his article affirming his position.... If he can produce the proof that the Lord requires us to use a single container when we partake of the Lord's Supper, I shall accept it at once and without question. Until he does, I shall continue to be happy in serving Christ according to what I know to be true. May God bless us all." Now I shall examine this statement. It will not require an article for me to affirm my position. My position is: That if people did as Christ did, i.e., have the fruit of the vine in ONE container when thanks are offered for it, and then all drink FROM that container, they cannot possibly be wrong. But for people to have the fruit of the vine in individual containers at the time thanks are offered for it, they are not doing what Christ commanded them to do and are liable to be lost because they have rebelled against God's word. See 1 Sam. 15:23. Matt. 26:27 is the proof that the Lord required the early disciples to drink FROM the one cup. And as Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever, we have no reason to believe he will accept our doing it differently from the way he commanded it to be done in Matthew 26:27.

Brother Porter says, "Until he does, I shall continue to be happy in serving Christ according to what I know to be true." Neither Brother Porter nor any other man KNOWS that using individual cups is true. Paul thought he was right when he was killing God's people, but that did not make him right. Brother Porter feels that individual cups in the worship is right. But his feeling it does not make it right. He never will know it is right, because there is no divine testimony to prove it. The WORD says prove all things. They are to be proven by DIVINE testimony. Divine testimony says A (one) cup. One cup may be proven. Divine testimony does not hint at individual cups, so it is impossible to prove them right. God has promised to bless

those who do his will. His will contains one cup. So if Brother Porter really wants God to bless us all, he had better try to get all of us to stick close to God's word. Think on these things.

You may wonder why Brother Porter did not answer my question, "Did Christ have the 'Cup of the Lord' when he instituted the Lord's Supper?" He could have answered with one word. Had he said, Yes, he would be in a position of having to admit that we today would have the "Cup of the Lord" when we too have one container and its contents. That is what I believe. If he did not have "the Cup of the Lord," when did the brethren first get it?

Brother Porter seems to think that unless we are specifically told how to do anything we may use our own judgment regardless of how it may effect others. Let us see. In discussing Christian Liberty Paul says, "But take heed lest this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak," 1 Cor. 8:9. Then in the next four verses he tells us how our liberty may become a stumbling block. Then in the 13th verse he states his own conclusion concerning his own actions lest he make a brother to offend. Then in chapter eleven, verse one, he tells you and me, "Be ye followers of me even as I also am of Christ." If we are followers of Paul, we dare not do anything which we are not commanded to do, if it will cause a brother to offend.

Now let us see what love will not DO. Rom. 13:10, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Unless we love our neighbor as ourselves we are not living in harmony with the teachings of Christ. Love is greater than faith, 1 Cor. 13:13. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. If love does not prompt what we do, would we sin? Gal. 5:6, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." Faith directs all Christian acts. "For we walk by faith and not by sight." And love working in conjunction with that faith MOVES us to act. Thus Gal. 5: 6 is fulfilled. Let us not judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or occasion to fall in his brother's way. I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself: but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walketh thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" (Rom. 14:13-15). Rom. 14:20, "For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offense." That principle applies to everything we do that is a matter of liberty. In the brotherhood today there are members who, acting under what they consider the principle of Christian liberty, use individual cups in communion. There are also members who can not conscientiously use more than one cup. Dare those who favor individual cups, though they are greatly in the majority, so worship that the others way not worship with them unless the ones who oppose individual cups offend their own conscience. If they cause their brother to offend, though he be a weak brother, they are sinning against Christ, 1 Cor. 8:12.

Do you say that only applies to eating meats? Brother Kurfees thought it applies to all principles of liberty, so he applied it to the use of instrument music (pages 246 and 257 of *Instrumental Music in the Worship*). Every argument that can be advanced against instrumental music can be made consistently against the exclusive use of individual cups. Paul himself applied it to everything that is not of faith. Brethren, we are compelled to consider the conscience of every member. For myself, I will never preach or practice a religious principle that I cannot read in God's word, lest I lead someone else to disrespect that Word. That only is an absolutely safe way to do and is in harmony with Paul's instructions to Timothy. 1 Tim. 4:16, "Take heed unto thyself, and to the doctrine; continue in them: for in so doing this thou shalt both save both thyself, and them that hear thee." That is all I wish to do: save myself and them

that hear me. I again call your attention to each of the following references: Rom. 14:23; Rom. 10:17; Heb. 12:1-4; 1 Cor. 4:6 (RV); 2 John 9-10; Jude 3. Every one of these references is against the exclusive use of individual cups. Brethren, will we ignore God's word? Eternity is long. Heaven is grand. Hell is terrible. The way we treat the word of God will determine where we spend that eternity. May we be so careful that we will be sure of heaven.

RUE PORTER'S THIRD ARTICLE

As this friendly discussion draws to a close, we first offer a brief summation. We have shown by conclusive reasoning that the word "cup," as used by our Lord in connection with the Supper, cannot in the very nature of the case refer to the container, but always to the contents. I note here the definition of "cup" as given in *Funk and Wagnalls New Practical Dictionary*, the latest and most complete two-volume dictionary available. As a noun, the word has TWELVE meanings, "1. A small drinking vessel of glass, porcelain, wood, waxed paper, metal, etc. 2. A cupful. 3. The ornamental vessel used in administering the sacramental wine; also the wine itself." Other definitions are called figurative, and we need not cite them here. I submit that definition No. 1 is impossible as the meaning of the word in the passages under dispute. My friend will readily agree that No. 2 is NOT the meaning. Nor is the first part of No. 3. He does not believe that it must be an elaborately ornamented container; but the last half of No. 3 fits every demand: "the wine itself."

The "cup" was declared by the Lord to be "the fruit of the vine"—Mk. 14:24-25. Paul said, "... and drink THIS CUP"—1 Cor. 11:26. The "fruit of the vine" is NOT a container, but the contents of the container. Men cannot drink a container, but can drink the contents. Therefore, the "cup" is the contents. It is my solemn belief that no man can surmount this difficulty in the way of my friend and those who stand with him.

His criticism of my use of "worthiness and unworthiness" is useless. There is perfect harmony in the two statements to which he refers. His own definition of the passage under consideration is exactly what my statement says. He then says my admission that a container is necessary is an admission of my failure. Not so. Everyone knows that the container may be there yet NOT be the subject of the verb "drink." They do NOT drink the container. They did NOT give thanks for the container. The container was NOT "the fruit of the vine." The container was NOT an emblem or representation of the blood of Christ. The contents of the container was all of this. My position is established by these facts beyond doubt. He says those who use one cup (container) are following the example of Christ. That is an assumption, and the history of the case does not bear it out.

Brother McCay now sets forth the idea that all must "put their lips to the same container" when they drink the "fruit of the vine" in the Communion! His illustration of the barrel of lemonade is ruinous. THEY COULD DRINK FROM THE SAME BARREL, even though they drank from SEPARATE CONTAINERS. I declare to you that these brethren NEVER DRANK FROM THE SAME ORIGINAL CONTAINER of the fruit of the vine! They take it FROM the bottle, jug, or jar, in which it was originally kept, and drink it from another. Now can he not see that this is EXACTLY WHAT WE DO, and what he is fighting? We simply contend that the particular vessel which is placed to the lips of the participant is NOT the cup. The "fruit of the

vine” is what the Lord called the cup, and the vessel from which it is drunk is wholly and entirely indifferent.

His claim that I misrepresent his words, I leave for the reader to decide. I may not have stated what he *meant*, but certainly stated what he *said*. He objects to my wanting to “squeeze the juice from the bunch of grapes,” because the grapes are literally the “fruit of the vine.” True, but the “fruit of the vine” which our Lord gave the apostles was in a form to be DRUNK. One can eat grapes, but they cannot drink them. My point stands untouched.

The statement about the individual “wafers” is beside the point. He never did eat the same bit of bread his brother ate! His part or it is an “individual” part, and so with the cup. His portion is an individual portion no matter how hard he may try to make it appear otherwise. His words about the “cup of devils” turns against him if it has any bearing at all. If his cup is the cup of the Lord, whose is the cup his brethren use at the other end of the street? Maybe this will be explained for us.

“Innovation.” Brethren, I never heard of the “one container” idea in my life until after the individual containers were brought into use among us. I KNOW that I have met with and participated in the Communion where TWO containers were always used, and where the individual cups were condemned vociferously. Finally, they saw the inconsistency of their claim, and the “one container” idea was born. It is not *plurality* that they opposed at first, but how great a plurality!

“Walking in the light.” What does the light show? Simply the order to “eat this bread, and drink this CUP”—1 Cor. 11:26. And it doesn’t say “drink OUT OF THIS CONTAINER” either. We walk in the light when we do that. He walks in darkness when he insists that the “cup” which we drink is the container!

“Brother Porter does not know that individual cups are true.” Brother Porter DOES know that “do this in remembrance of me” was NOT an order to fuss about the container in which the “cup” was contained. “His will contains one cup.” True, but I have proved beyond doubt that the one “cup” is the fruit of the vine. Jesus positively and unequivocally declared that “THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.” It is a pity that any man will dare say, “Lord, you are mistaken, this cup is the solid container.” I beg you to be man enough to acknowledge the truth as Jesus sets it forth in his own words.

“Did Christ have the cup of the Lord when he instituted the Supper?” Sure. And he then and there declared it to be “THE FRUIT OF THE VINE.” You ruin your contention with every passage you introduce. Every one of them is positively against your contention.

“Them that are weak.” Yes, I know liberty might become a stumbling block to the weak. But Christ himself became a “stumbling block” to some!—1 Cor. 1:23. Shall I cease to preach Christ because some stumble at him? Rather, I shall try to strengthen them so they may overcome by faith in what is written. Does our brother admit himself being one of those who are so weak that he must always have “milk” and cannot yet take “strong meat”?

“Will never practice what is not found in God’s word.” Does he use a table with three or four legs? The liberty of the children of God includes the right to supply what is essential to the carrying out of any commandment. Song books for singing. Plate or platter for the “bread” and container or containers for the “fruit of the vine.” My brother insists upon the right to exercise liberty in everything except the “container.” He is inconsistent. The passages he cites are NOT

against the use of individual containers a whit more than they are against the use of a table with legs or linen covers on it! I challenge your attention with that thought as I bring my argument to a close. I have answered everything he has offered, and declare to you that my own affirmation stands unharmed and upright after all he has thus far said. He proposes now to close the discussion with another speech or article. No matter what he may say now, he cannot shake the argument presented in the affirmative of the proposition. I love the man, and pray that he may see the truth and accept it. I am certain that others will. All should see the folly of dividing the brethren over such a childish matter. The contention is equal to the demand for a ritual of procedure, when the Lord gave us no such thing. May we all be willing to follow every law laid down in scripture, and refuse always to make one where God made none. With every wish for blessings upon those who hold the error herein opposed, I beg the right to subscribe myself.

Your humble Brother in Christ,

Rue Porter.

G. EARL MCCAY'S THIRD ARTICLE

We come now to the closing article. Because of so many positive assertions of Brother Porter, and because the very positiveness of the assertions is liable to make people conclude that his assertions are correct, I will notice some of the same and let the readers decide whether his assertions are to be trusted. I quote, "Bro. McCay now sets forth the idea that all must put their lips to the same container when they drink of the fruit of the vine in the communion." I quote again, "I may not have stated what he MEANT, but I certainly stated what he said." Did he? Where did I say, "That all must put their lips to the same container"? I let the readers decide after careful examination of my former articles. I did not even HINT such an idea. I quote again, "His words about the 'cup of devils' turns against him if it has any bearing at all." Did you readers see anything in my articles about "the cup of devils"? You did not. Brother Porter made both those statements up out of whole cloth. I believe he needs to consider Rev. 21:8 and repent and ask God to forgive the thoughts of his heart and the words of his typewriter. You may feel that my rebuke is too sharp. Read Titus 1:12-15. The evangelist is COMMANDED to rebuke sharply. 1 Tim. 5:20, "Them that sin rebuke before all."

I did state that the individual cups are the "cups of man" because they originated in the mind of man and were INNOVATED by man.

Brother Porter implies that the one cup is an innovation. I quote, "Innovation.' Brethren, I never heard of the 'one container' idea in my life until after individual containers were brought into use among us." Maybe he had never read the N. T. carefully. The first time he read the N. T. carefully he got the idea of the one cup. But he, or no one else, ever got the idea of individual cups reading the N. T.

I quote again, "He [McCay] says those who use one cup [container] are following the example of Christ. That is an assumption, etc." Brother Porter KNOWS that a *poterion* means only ONE. He should know that *poterion* when not used to denote "Fate or lot" always REQUIRES a container. Brother Porter should pray to God again for forgiveness. Now let us see about drinking out of the container. Matthew 26:27, "Then taking a cup, and giving thanks, he

gave it to them, saying, Drink all of you out of it” (Diaglott Translation). Matt. 26:27, “And he took a cup, and after a thanksgiving gave it to them saying, ‘Drink from it’ all of you.” Every reader of that scripture KNOWS that the fruit was in the ONE container when thanks were given. Why will Brother Porter call it assumption? My second copy was from the Weymouth translation. ALL Translations teach the same fact but in different words.

Now let us consider Incidentals and Essentials. Things not mentioned are always incidentals. Things mentioned may be essentials. Things COMMANDED are ALWAYS ESSENTIALS. Let us make application. Linen and three-legged tables are not mentioned and are incidentals. One container and its contents are mentioned hence may be essentials. That we all drink from the fluid contained in the one container at the time thanks are given is COMMANDED and is ESSENTIAL. Can we disregard any essentials and be sure of salvation? If so, we can disregard many or even all. When we disregard one or all, we throw away God’s word and accept our own or some other’s opinion. We all know that would be wrong. Notice Acts 3:22-23, “... him shall ye hear in ALL things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.” We are to hear ALL things that Christ says. He not only said that the fruit of the vine was his blood, but he also said that they should drink it from the ONE cup. Those who will not hear (and heed) that command are to be cut off from among the people. Yet Bro. Porter is encouraging the readers to not hear or pay attention to that command. For 45 years I have been encouraging people to obey every command of Christ. I have done so in these articles. Why? Because I do not wish for you to be cut off from among God’s people.

I wish now to notice one more ASSERTION. I quote, “No matter what he may say now, he cannot shake the argument presented in the affirmative of the proposition.” A subtle way of saying: I have reasoned it all out for you and drawn the right conclusion so you just accept my conclusion and you will be right. That is the way the Catholic priest does for his members. But not God’s way. Is. 1:18, “Come now, let us reason together saith the Lord.” God’s word is the result of God’s reasoning. He expects us to use our intelligence in studying that word.

If we take all God says on a subject (not just a part, as Brother Porter has done) and then draw our conclusion, we will probably be right. Thus we get the promised result: “Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow.” I have shown that exclusive use of individual cups is contrary to Christ’s command. They are not of faith. They go beyond what is written. They are not authorized by Christ. The users of them go beyond the teaching of Christ. They are an addition to the things taught in the N. T. By using them, people take away from the command of Christ. They will bring upon the users the plagues written in the Book. And they will take away their right to the Holy City.

Because eternity is so long, heaven so great, hell so terrible, and because I love the truth and the souls of men and women, I have humbly submitted these articles for your consideration.

END OF THE DEBATE

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1705 Sandra Street S.W.
Decatur, AL 35601-5457
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