CUP

This is indeed a very small word, but designing men have caused untold trouble with the misuse of it. God uses it in his Holy word, both figuratively and literally, but it seems some poor deluded souls believe that the Lord must use a word only in one way. If they find a place where the Lord has used it in the figurative sense, they seem to think he is debared from using it literally; and if they find a place where it is used literally, they seem to think it can't be used figuratively in the Lord's word. When the Lord addressed us he did not use unfamiliar figures, coined for the purpose of entangling us mortals, but on the contrary, used plain, simple figures and literal expressions understood by all. You might not be highly educated and not able to tell what the figure is, but you know what it means. Take the expression "Then began Jesus to upbraid the cities in which he had done most of his mighty works..." (Matt. 11:20). In this expression "CITIES" are named, yet everyone knows that the PEOPLE in these PARTICULAR PLACES are meant, and NOT IN SOME OTHER PLACE. We all know that the people who did not live in those PARTICULAR CITIES were not meant, therefore, the CONTAINERS (cities) were essential as no one came under that special upbraid but the people in the CITIES (containers) mentioned. Then you do not have to know that the figure we have been dealing with is called a metonymy to understand what is meant. Metonymy is the name men have given to this figure we all understand so well. We can readily see when Jesus said "Woe unto thee, Chorazin" (Matt. 11:21) that he did not mean the people in St. Louis, Missouri, but he meant the people in the city of Chorazin. So we see the people must be in the town named, to come under that special upbraid, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin".

The same is true when we see the expression "... Drink the cup of the Lord" (1 Cor. 10:21). It would be very foolish to say that wine in just any old creek, lake, river or any other container not mentioned would be suggested by the word, cup.

If wine were in a bucket, a barrel, a jug, a bottle, and a cup, and I told you to drink the bottle, you would not begin on the barrel or the cup, but you would immediately take the bottle. Seeing this is a well established law, we all know, why will we contend that "drink the cup" would mean drink out of a barrel or a creek?

Hill's Rhet. Page 86, under the head of Metonymy, gives for example, "The house (that is, its occupants) are corrupt". Lockwood - Emerson Rhet., Page 438, gives for example, "The kettle boils (meaning the water in the kettle)". Tanners Rhet., Page 324, gives for example, "The kettle boils (that is, the water in the kettle boils)". Welsh Comp., Page 71, gives for example, "Drink the cup (the container for the thing contained)".

We can all see beyond a shadow of doubt, in the above examples, the liquid must be in the vessel named, to be suggested by the name of that particular vessel. Mr. Welsh gives the very expression "drink the cup" that is under consideration and shows the CONTAINER IS MENTIONED TO SUGGEST THE CONTENTS. So the contained must be in the vessel named before it can be suggested by the name of that particular vessel.

People must be in the masonic order in order to be called after that particular order, that is, masons. People must be in the methodist church in order to be called after that order, that is, methodists. But if there is a law of language that a thing can be suggested by the name of another object, without any relation to it, that is, if wine can be suggested by the word "cup" without any relation to a cup;

THEN

People can be called body, church, of Christ, without any relation to the body of Christ; that is, they can be the church of Christ without being in the church.

If volumes of wine in the different denominations of containers are the cup, one cup;

THEN

People in the different denominations of churches are the church, one church.

If wine is "cup" without being in a cup, and you can drink it of the container of your choice;

THEN

People are Christians without being in Christ, and you can join the church of your choice. Both are governed by the same law of logic.

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We drink the cup by drinking what is in the cup. Hill's Rhet. Page 86. Lockwood-Emerson Rhet. Page 438. Tanner's Rhet. Page 324. Welsh Comp.P.71. Thayer's Gr. Lex. Pages 533, 510.

-2-

But what is in CUPS or other VESSELS is not in "the cup".

-3-

Therefore, you cannot "drink the cup" by drinking what is in cups or other vessels.

But one might say: "How about Jacob's well? (Jno. 4:12) "Couldn't water be taken from it and be put in a pail and it still be said you were 'drinking the well' or 'drinking of the well?'" That is true but that involves another law we all know well, if we would stop and think. If you were born in Arkansas and moved to Texas, you would still be an Arkansawyer by birth but you would be a Texan by your relation to it. But if you moved from Texas to New Mexico, you would still be an Arkansawyer by birth, but you would no longer be called a Texan, but a New Mexican. The place of your birth or where you originated clings to you, but you are only called by the name of these other places because of your relationship to them. The same is true of the well. It is always "well water" but when you remove it from a barrel to a cup, it ceases to be called a barrel, and can be suggested by the word "cup". The use of wells and cups are not the same. A well is a hole in the ground where we get a supply of water while a cup is a drinking vessel. You would think me crazy if you saw me erecting a windmill over my cup, preparing to pump my water into my well to use it for a drinking vessel. But this would have to be permissible if we "drank the well" and "drank the cup" alike. Their uses would have to be interchangeable. Wine can be suggested by the word "jug" while it is in a jug, but when we put it into a cup, it can no longer be suggested by the word "jug" but would now be suggested by the word "cup"; but it is still "product of the vine" for it originated with the vine, but it was only suggested by the name of the various vessels while it was contained by either of them.

There is another common figure that some preachers imagine because there is no literal cup at hand; therefore, there is no literal cup in the communion service. Notable among these scriptures that are thus misapplied (Matt. 20:22) "But Jesus answered and said, ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of and be baptized with the baptism that I shall be baptized with...?" They argue thus: Since there is no literal cup in Matt. 20:20, therefore there is no literal cup mentioned in Matt. 26:27 where the communion was instituted. But if that be true, since there is no literal drink in Matt. 20:22, therefore according to their logic, there would be no literal drink (wine) in the communion service. And thus they would dispense with the wine just as they do the cup. And since there is no literal baptism (in water) in Matt. 20:22, therefore there would be no such thing as literal baptism (in water). And so we could give them to the methodist right away if the methodist would have them. When we have a literal drink, the vessel also is literal. And when we have a figurative drink, the vessel also is figurative. When we see "cup of suffering" or "cup of anger", the drink is as figurative as the vessel. And if we dispense with the literal cup in the communion because this cup is figurative, we dispense with the wine in the communion by the same logic, because this drink is figurative. But some will claim that "this" in Matt. 26:28 refers to "cup" in Matt. 26:27 and that it should read thusly: "This cup is my blood" (cupsman ver.). But Jesus said: "This cup is the New Testament in my blood..." (Lk. 22:20) and 1 Cor. 11:25. Therefore, "cupsmen" contradict both Paul and the Lord.J. H. Thayer says in his Greek lexicon, concerning both Lk. 22:20 and 1 Cor. 11:25, "The meaning of both are: This cup containing wine, an emblem of my blood, is rendered by the shedding of my blood, an emblem of the New Testament." So we see in their effort to dodge the idea that the "cup" is an emblem of the New Testament, they contradict Paul, the Lord and J. H. Thayer (See Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Page 15). Since we understand when Jewus said: "This (meaning the prepared bread) is my body," means it is an emblem of his body. And when he said: "This (meaning the prepared wine) is my blood", means it is an emblem of his blood; why can't we understand when the Lord said: "This cup is the New Testament...", that it is an emblem of the New Testament? Why put a different interpretation on the same form of language? We all came into the blood of Jesus Christ through the New Testament. But when we "show the Lord's death" (1 Cor. 11:26) we contact the emblematic blood (wine) through the emblematic "New Testament" (cup). We show the exact picture of our coming into the blood of Jesus through the one New Testament. The "show" or demonstration is only seen as far as the vision is not obstructed. Each local church makes the "show" or demonstration. Therefore, each local church should use but one literal cup, symbolic of the one New Testament.

We will admit for argument's sake that "this" in Matt. 26:28 refers to the word "cup" in Matt. 26:27. And we will put the "this" with "cup" and read it that way. Also there is another word that all will agree has "cup" for its antecedent, and that is the word "it" in the prepositional phrase "of it". The definition of "of" is "out of"; and the definition of "ek", the Greek word from which "of" in this passage is translated is "OUT OF". So here we go. Let's read: "This cup, Jesus took and for which he gave thanks and gave to the disciples, saying 'drink ye all out of the cup, is my blood of the New Testament...'. So we see they would have to drink their cup out of a cup anyway and would not gain a single thing by the argument, but lose.

The pedo baptists have always said that immersion was unsightly, especially where a lady was involved, and besides, was liable to lose one's life, especially in the winter when they had to break the ice, and one's health might be impaired for life; and many accept this as argument. Our brethren who object to the use of one cup in the communion service, join them in a parallel argument, saying "It is insanitary to all drink out of one cup, and our health might be impaired for life by some communicable disease. Nice parallel, isn't it? Jno. 9:6: "When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and annointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay." You who are too nice to drink after your brother, would you allow one to anncint your eyes with spittle? Or would you have said: "No, Lord, that's nasty, I might take a disease. Mk. 7:33: "And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers in his ears, and spit and touched his tongue....".You who will not drink after your brother, would you have allowed the Saviour to spit and touch your tongue? Wouldn't you have said: "No, Lord, that's nasty, and besides I might impair my health. Wouldn't you have gone away unhealed? Mk. 8:23: "And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, he asked him if he saw ought...". You, who will not drink after your brother, would you have allowed the Saviour to spit on your eyes? If you had been consistent with your argument on the cup, you would have said: "No, sir, not me; I am not going to take a chance of taking the "bugs" or some other nasty disease. Isn't it a fact when we use so many little cups on account of the "little Bugs", we are drinking in memory of these "bugs" and not in memory of the Lord (1 Cor. 11:26). Some argue that there were several thousands of Christians in the city of Jerusalem, and that they all kept the Lord's supper at the same time in the temple, and that one cup was inadequate to wait on such a host of people. Therefore, they used more than one cup in the assembly. The trouble with this argument is, there is no positive statement that they all kept the supper at the same place and time. Therefore, to draw an inference without a direct statement is a presumption. And besides, we have the statement. Acts 2:46: "...Breaking bread from house to house," so we see they did not all keep the supper at the same time in the temple as some claim; but "broke bread from house to house". But some will say: "Breaking of bread" (Acts 2:46) is not the Lord's supper. Then, if "breaking bread" (Acts 2:42; 2:46; 20:7 and 11) is not the supper, I defy any one to prove when to keep the Lord's supper. There is no excuse for interpreting one of these statements one way and the other another, only to bolster up a sinking cause.

But if "cup", "it", is wine, they are wrong anyhow. I do not believe the wine can be called cup, but by suggestion because it is in a cup. But to show that they are wrong anyhow, we will admit for argument's sake, "cup", "it", is wine.

1. Jesus said: "Divide it among yourselves" (Lk. 22:17).
2. But Jesus would not have said: "divide it" if "it" had already been divided.
3. Therefore, "Cup", "it" was undivided, one volume of wine.

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1. Jesus said: "Drink ye all of it" (Matt. 26:27).
2. But "cup", "it", was undivided one volume of wine. (see above).
3. Therefore, Jesus commanded them to drink of one VOLUME of wine.

1. Mk. 14:22. "And they all drank of it".
2. But "cup", "it" was one undivided volume of wine (Con. No. 1).
3. Therefore, they all drank of one volume of wine.

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And since wine must be in a literal cup to be suggested by the word, "cup", the inevitable conclusion is they all drank of one literal cup. And since Paul says: "This do', as oft as ye drink it" (1 Cor.11:26), therefore, we must all do as they did, drink of one cup. This kills the doctrine of a plurality of cups and lets them have their own way. When Jesus said: "A cup of cold water" (Matt. 10:42), we all readily see "cup" names the container, and "of cold water" names the contents. Paul says: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of the Lord?" (1 Cor. 10:16) Why can't we be fair with this context and understand it just as we do Matt. 10:42, that "cup" names the container, and "of blessing" names the contents? Isn't it a fact that some one has a theory to pet, and, therefore, rather than give up the theory, the Bible is twisted to fit that theory? THERE CAN BE NO OTHER REASON. Mr. Thayer, the standard Greek Lexicographer, on page 533 defines the Greek word, "poterion" (the word that is translated cup) as: A CUP, A DRINKING VESSEL. And he lists Matt.26:27; Mk.14:23; Lk.22:17 and 20; 1 Cor.11:25 under the proper (literal) use. Also on Page 510, speaking of the metonymy of 1 Cor.10:21 and 11:27, he says: "That which is in the cup". So we see it could not be that which is in the cup, if there were no cup for it to be in. Also on Page 510, under "pino ek" (Gr. drink out of) he says: "with a generative of the vessel out of which one drinks". "Ek tou poterion" (Gr. out of the cup). And he lists Matt.26:27; Mk.14:23. You CANNOT DRINK OUT OF A "CUP" IF THERE IS NO CUP. Some time we are accused of binding laws where God has not bound, by those who want more than one cup. They say the cup is the wine and the vessel is not named. Hence, with them the vessel is a matter of indifference. While with us, we believe "cup" is a cup, just as our mothers taught us when they were teaching us to talk. Therefore, with us, it is a matter of conscience. God has done the binding and he has made the "not expedient" or indifferent TO GIVE PLACE TO THE OTHERS' CONSCIENCE. Rom. 14:13 "Let us not, therefore, judge one another any more; but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way". Since those who want cups claim that the "container" isn't so much as mentioned, therefore, there is no occasion for them to stumble or fall at one cup. But since cup is cup with us and ONE CUP is a matter of faith with us, we could not, without self-condemnation, use more than one; and, therefore, we would be sinning as taught by Paul in Rom.14:23. "He that doubteth is damned if he eats, because whatsoever is not of faith is sin". In our case it is "cups" instead of meats, but the rule is the same. We doubt the use of more than one cup; therefore, if we use more than one we are damned. Why can't we all get on the safe grounds, the only grounds for union, the grounds set by the Lord, the one of faith, ONE CUP. Rom. 14:20: "For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil to that man who eateth with offense". With us it is "cups" instead of meats, but God's law is the same. "It is evil to that man who eateth with offense". Those who use more than one cup do it with offense, Therefore, it is evil to HIM. Can you be saved and do that which is evil to you and not repent? But hear the next verse, Rom.14:21: "It is good neither to eat flesh nor drink wine nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak".

Using a plurality of cups in the communion service is "a thing whereby brethren are offended". Therefore, it is included in that "Anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended...". Therefore-God has made a law, things wherein we have liberty. We are not to do them if they OFFEND. We do not believe they have liberty relative to the number of cups, but they do. And if they are right, they MUST leave them off when they OFFEND, and many are offended. 1 Cor.10:31-32: "Whether therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God; give none offense neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God". Here we are commanded to "give none OFFENSE", "cups" offend. Are we going to leave them off and obey God? Can we go to heaven and disobey? So we see God has BOUND a law and there is no way around it. 1 Cor. 8:12: "When ye sin so against the weak brethren and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ". Can you "wound the brethren's conscience" and thereby "sin against Christ", and go to Gloryland? How anyone can think they can sin against Christ, and yet be saved is beyond me. There is but one ground of unity on this subject. One cup is a matter of faith, conscience, with us, while they claim the plurality is not mentioned, but admit one is all right. Therefore, one cup is the grounds of union.

When these brethren try to prove the use of two or more "containers" (this is what they call their cups), theyuse the most inconsistent and illogical line of socalled proof, that any sectarian ever was guilty of. In order to try to prove lots of "containers" they begin by trying to prove that the Lord never so much as mentioned even one. They usually deny that "cup" in Matt. 26:27; Mk. 14:23; Lk.22:17 and 20; and 1 Cor. 11:25 means a drinking vessel. They will try to affirm that "A church of Christ can be scriptural in its communion service and use two or more vessels to distribute the wine of communion" and yet deny that even ONE is mentioned. Now if this is logic, the way to prove instrumental music in the worship is scriptural, is to prove it isn't even mentioned. Swell logic. If you wish to prove that the ladies aid is scriptural, according to cupsmen's logic, just prove the Bible doesn't mention it. If their logic is good, then everything not mentioned in the Bible is scriptural. You see they are between a rock and a hard place. If they admit "cup" is a drinking vessel, they are already whipped before they start. So rather than get on Bible ground, they try to prove two or more "containers" are scriptural, by showing the Bible doesn't mention them. And to make bad matters worse, they will even affirm that "containers" are essential to drink the wine, thus insinuating that God had some essentials NOT MENTIONED IN HIS WORD. Consistency, thou art a jewel. Yes sir, "containers" are so ESSENTIAL that they will divide a church or have them. YET THEY WILL SAY THEY ARE NOT EVEN MENTIONED IN THE INSTITUTION OF SUPPER. Think about it. You will be damned for using things that are not in the Bible. Can a man go to heaven and not obey essentials? Since "containers" in the communion service are not mentioned, and yet they are essential, perhaps instrumental music in the worship, ladies aid, Methodist churches, and a host of other "not mentioned things" are essential. If not, why not? Where will they draw the line on "not mentioned essentials"? It's sure they won't let God draw the line, for they have their "containers" in the communion service, and they say they were not mentioned when the communion service was instituted. Gospel legislators, eh?

2 Tim. 3:16-17: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works".

2. But we need a vessel or vessels, to handle the wine in the communion service, and the only one in "the scriptures given by inspiration" in the communion service is "cup" in the singular number.

3. Therefore, "cup" in the singular number is the vessel "given by inspiration" to make "the man of God perfect, throughly furnished" in the "good work" of the communion service.

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1. Phil. 4:19: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus".

2. But we need a vessel or vessels to handle the wine in the communion service, and the only word "by Christ Jesus" that was mentioned when the communion service was instituted, that meant a vessel, was "cup" in the singular number.

3. Therefore, "cup" in the singular number is the vessel "by Christ Jesus", which God has supplied in the communion service.

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1. 2 Jno. 6: "And this is love that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, that as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it".

2. But, nowhere in the beginning when the communion service was instituted, have we a record that they used a plurality of cups in the communion service.

3. Therefore, we cannot use a plurality of cups in the communion service, and obey the command "As ye have heard from the beginning so walk in it".

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1. We are to "hold forth the faithful word as we have been taught". Titus 1:9.

2. But nowhere in "the faithful word" are "we taught" they used a plurality of cups in the communion service.

3. Therefore, we cannot use a plurality of cups in the communion service and obey the command "Hold forth the faithful word as ye have been taught".

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1. Phil. 1:27: "Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospal of Christ.

2. But nowhere in the gospel of Christ have we a record that they used a plurality of cups in the communion service.

3. Therefore, we cannot use a plurality of cups in the communion service and obey the command "Only let your conversation be as becometh the gospel of Christ".

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1. Phil.4:9: "Those things ye have both learned, received, heard and seen in me, do and the God of peace shall be with you".

2. But nowhere have we learned, received, heard or seen, from Paul, the use of a plurality of cups in the communion service.

3. Therefore, we cannot obey the command: "Those things ye have learned, received, heard and seen in me do" and use a plurality of cups in the communion service.

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Submitted in love of the truth and for the unity of God's people.

Yours for the whole truth, J.S. Bedingfield, Yuma, Arizona.

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