The Apostle Paul exhorted his brethren at the church of Christ in Philippi to "join in following my example, and not those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern." There is nothing wrong in patterning your life after the lives of men who have lived their lives that bring honor to Christ. And what better pattern do we have than the Apostle Paul? Well, we do have one better example and He is Jesus of Nazareth, the only begotten Son of God.

It is not possible for us to live our lives completely like His. We cannot heal anyone. We cannot walk on water. We cannot reveal heavenly truths as He did. These are things that are beyond our ability. But there are some things that we can and that we must do if we are to be considered as being one of His servants who is welcomed into His eternal, heavenly kingdom. Let me suggest just two such matters.

In the beginning of His ministry, after having been immersed by John, He was "led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil." It is written that after "He had fasted forty days and forty nights...He was hungry." The devil tried to feed Him some hellish hash that would feed His flesh, His lust, and His pride but He would have none of it. Each time Satan placed a serving of food from hell’s kitchen in front of Him He responded with the Word of God. "It is written...It is written...It is written." After it was all over, "angels came and ministered to Him," surely including giving Him food that we perhaps could call angel food.

We have come to this table prepared by the Lord. Are we hungry? Are we hungry for angel food? The world has offered us for the past six days all kinds of devil’s food. It has come to us in a variety of shapes and sizes and tantalizing colors. But it is the food of the world. We ought to have an appetite for some holy food from the holy Table. Are you hungry for the living Word of God, Christ Himself? Are you hungry to commune with Christ? Are you hungry to share a meal with a holy crowd? Are you hungry for something good? If you are, you have come to the right place. On the table before us is the loaf, the body of Christ. As we take it, as we hold it, as we look at it, and as we eat it we are reminded of Him and His sacrifice on our behalf. Our inner man hungers for being right with God and we can be if we will only avail ourselves to remembering Him in the way that He has ordained. At the beginning of His ministry "He was hungry."

At the end of His ministry, because He had eaten with sinners and said and done some other things that did not meet the approval of religious hypocrites, He was nailed to His cross. This happened not...
in "the wilderness" as did His immersion but on the top of a hill easily visible to all. On that cross it is not written that He was hungry, but that He was thirsty. "I thirst," He said in John 19:28. It was a "thirst" that any man would have who was being put to death in the way that He was. His body was dehydrated. His tongue was parched. His throat was burning and dry. He thirsted.

It was not the only time that He had thirsted. He sat at a well in the early part of His ministry and asked "a woman of Samaria [who] came to draw water" for a drink. "Give Me a drink," He said. It opened a conversation with a woman who had had five husbands and was living with another man. Before the account ended, she was a convert and tried to convert others to Him also.

We are here at this table because we too at one time in our lives began to have an overwhelming thirst for the things of God. Some who approach this Table have had many drinks during their lives – maybe one too many that resulted in some really bad things happening. There are many drinks that the world has to offer. You can drink at the fountain of fitness and worship your own body if you would like. You can drink at the well of wealth if you would like. You can drink at the lake of lust or the pond of prosperity or the fountain of fortune and fame. But eventually there comes a point in time in everyone’s life that all of this drinking leaves a person dry, longing for a drink from the "fountain of water [that springs] up into everlasting life." If a person thirsts long enough and gets fed up with thirsting he will seek something that gives him lasting satisfaction.

There is another kind of drink at this table. It is the "cup" that is the blood of Christ. This is the "cup" of the New Testament that makes it possible for a man or woman to have everlasting life. There is nothing magical or especially physically fulfilling in this little cup. It is a physical cup with a spiritual meaning. It reminds us of how spiritually dry we once were. We thirsted to hear a word from God. We thirsted to know God. We thirsted for being right with God. We thirsted for having a reason to hope for something better than what the world tried to pour down our throats. Christ came along, just as He did in the case of that woman in John 4 and told us that "whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst." We have found that to be true.

I wonder if the woman of John 4 heard Jesus say at His cross, "I thirst?" Was she one of the several women who were at the cross? What would have gone through her mind had she heard those words? Perhaps she would have recalled the time when this man on the cross came by her path of life and gave her water that was living water. Had she been asked she would have testified that the water He gave to her had quenched her thirst forever.

The loaf and the cup on this table are certainly not enough to fill our stomachs. But they fill our spirit, our inner man with a meal that no restaurant or supermarket can sell us. It is not prepared food, or frozen food, or health food. It is spiritual food and all of us need to have this meal every Lord’s Day. We can only ask God to accept our thanks for the loaf and to bless the cup before we eat. And we do.
Prayer

Father in heaven, we see in Your Word that Jesus, like us, was at times both hungry and thirsty. But unlike us at times, His greatest hunger and His greatest thirst was to do Your will. Father, forgive us of our falling short of Your will so many times and create in us an insatiable appetite to live in a way that is pleasing in your sight. We thank You for Your longsuffering and we thank You for allowing us to once again commune with Him here at His Table. We ask that you receive our thanks for the loaf and we ask that you bless the cup in Jesus’ name. Amen.