

From Sinners to Saints

1 Corinthians 11:17-34

- Paul after speaking on the importance of God ordained headship and how that affects the natural order of things from creation to the Church. Now he will address the conduct expected of believers during the practice of communion, and how it is meant as a celebration to honor and glorify the sacrifice of our Lord, thus bringing unity to the Church, but in this case the opposite was occurring.

V17-34

- **V17-18** when it came to the traditions in **V2** Paul praised them as they kept them as long as they were in line with scripture, but when it came to the communion table and coming together and fellowshiping in this he doesn't give them praise but a stern rebuke why? Because of the division that existed among the believers in the Church, and because of this when they came together confusion and chaos followed instead of peace and unity, so Paul will correct this sinful behavior.
- **V17** can be said of many so called Christian get togethers; when they come together, it is not for the better but for the worse. I've heard of single fellowships becoming like dating apps, as people go to these things to get a mate and not to draw closer to the Lord, and if it doesn't work out they move on to the next person, and after a while having gone through a slew of failed hook ups they just leave that church and go to the next, in the end they blame the church for it not working out.
- It doesn't say that particular thing was happening here, but it does say it was the same wrong attitude that fueled their problem, and that is (selfishness). In **Acts 2:42,46**, we read that it was customary for the early church to have what was commonly called "**Agape feasts, or love feasts**", and at the end of the meal they would celebrate communion together, this was part of their worship to The Lord.
- But some serious abuses had crept in as we'll see later in the chapter where people began to get drunk at the communion table, while others only ate with a certain crowd, and what was supposed to be a get together that fostered unity turned into a flesh party that encouraged sinful attitudes and behaviors.

- History tells us that those who were rich would bring plenty of food for themselves and their friends, and didn't share it with the poorer members of the church, who would then go hungry causing a tremendous rift in the body. Paul, even though he wasn't there physically, says he believes it knowing their history > **1:10-11**.
- **V19-22** we read about drunkenness occurring as people used this as an opportunity to have their own little parties all the while snubbing their noses at certain Church members. One good thing came from this Paul says, it exposed exactly where people were with The Lord, those who were doing this and their friends proved that although coming to Church they hadn't truly surrendered to The Lord, and those who despised this and didn't participate were commended by The Lord.
- **V23-26** Paul reminds the believers that communion is a sacred time, one in which we remember all that our Lord has done for us, where we were supposed to draw nearer to The Lord, and not farther away from The Lord. But the Corinthian church had reduced it to the haves and have-nots dinner, indulging in fleshly and carnal activities where one has steak and caviar while the others have beans and franks.
- **V27-30** to show how serious we should be taking communion the Apostle Paul says before we partake we need to examine ourselves. He is not saying "that we should be worthy to partake" for none of us are worthy of salvation or sanctification, but "that we should partake in a worthy manner" meaning in thankfulness and humility and not pride or selfishness, so we're to treat The Lord's supper with reverence.
- Irreverent behavior during communion invites God's corrective discipline, for if you are practicing sin, with an unrepentant heart, and refuse to repent, and take communion you disrespect all that The Lord sacrificed for you and me at the cross.
- The results can be devastating, as Paul says people have become sick because of this and even died at the Hand of The Lord's correction for disregarding the communion table. The remedy for this Paul says is if we examine ourselves, give an honest appraisal of our hearts, and where needed be repent and then all is well.
- **V31-32** illustrates what David said in **Ps 51:17** "That the sacrifices of God are a broken and a contrite heart, O' God, You will not despise".

- True repentance and humility is always accepted by God, which is why no unsaved person is to take communion, it's only for the Believer, as only we can repent before The Lord being accepted by The Lord > **Heb 4:15-16. V33-34** when you come together for a love feast in preparation for communion make sure your heart is right before The Lord, and you'll know this by how your heart is toward your brethren.