



Lord's Supper

The Purpose of the Lord's Supper

Week 35 **1 Corinthians 11:23-26**
September 7, 2025

LIFE LESSON:

The Lord's Supper is to be a time of reflection and anticipation. Celebrate the fact that His love held Him to the cross for you and that He will return in all His glory to receive you for all eternity.

I. VV. 23-24

We see in verses 17-22 that Paul was not praising the people of the church of Corinth for how they were observing the Lord's Supper. The hearts of some of the members were not in the right place. The reverent time had become more like a tailgate party than a time of worship and remembrance. People were bringing food and feasting while others had nothing. This could be an opportunity for those who had plenty to show off their wealth while others had to watch and do without. Of course, this goes against the teachings and example set by Jesus who came to serve and not be served, but once sin enters a situation usually the people involved are not too concerned over what Jesus has said.

The heart behind what was supposed to be celebrating what the Lord had done had gotten so bad in some that Paul said that it had caused a faction or separation in the congregation that was so apparent that it was obvious who was doing right and who was taking advantage of the situation in such a way as to make it a personal party. This obvious faction implies that the people who were abusing time at the Lord's table were not trying to hide it. They were doing their deeds out in the open and seemed to be enjoying it. The wine was being used, not to share with those who had nothing for the Lord's Supper, but as a way to get drunk and which of course was not holding to the commands of what Paul had referred to in Ephesians 5:18 when he said "And don't get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless living, but be filled by the Spirit."

Verse twenty-three reveals why this was such a serious time of irreverence. The proper practice and attitude of the Lord's Supper had been given to Paul by the Lord, and he had passed those instructions on to the people of Corinth. So, the people were blatantly disobedient, and it was without the excuse of being ignorant. Paul had received this straight from the Lord, so the authority came from Him and not from Paul. The proper taking of the Lord's Supper is not an act of legalism, rather it is a strict command from God recorded in Scripture that was to be obeyed in Paul's time as well as today.

What Paul had received about the Lord's Supper was the account of what was happening in the upper room on the night of Jesus' betrayal. The fact that this ordinance began on the last night of the Lord's life (before the resurrection of course) shows the importance and reverence of the circumstances. It was a solemn occasion but also a reminder of the redemption that is made possible by what was about to happen to Jesus on the cross. Because the Lord's Supper was taken at night and at a table, some believe that should be when and how God's people should observe it today. But protestants have not help to this view. It is not that the exact actions should be taken but the precept should be honored. So, no matter where the Lord's Supper is taken it is to be with the same attitude and reverence that was achieved on that sacred night in the upper room.

The bread which was broken at the table would have surely been unleavened since it was taken at the time of Passover. Passover was and is the remembrance of when God passed over the houses of the Jewish people in Egypt that had the blood over the door of their houses. Those that did not have the blood on their door would have the life of their first born taken by God. It was the blood that saved them not the fact that they were sinless. As Jesus broke the bread, some Greek manuscripts say, "this is my body which is broken." Other manuscripts leave out "broken." It is important to bring this up so that there is no misunderstanding of what is being relayed in this saying. The body was broken in the sense that the skin was torn open by the whips, undoubtably some of the internal organs were damaged and obviously the hands and feet were punctured by the nails. But we must realize that no bones were broken. This is important because scripture had prophesied that

no bones in His body would be broken. This was the case for the Passover lamb when it was originally prepared in Egypt. Exodus 12:46 reads, "It is to be eaten in one house. You may not take any of the meat outside the house, and you may not break any of its bones." Psalm 34:20 refers to the crucifixion when the psalmist writes, "He protects all his bones; not one of them is broken." The crucifixion was carried out exactly like it was prophesied in scripture. So the Lord's Supper is a picture of the crucifixion and a reminder of what Christ did for us in His redemptive work.

II. VV. 25-26

Leviticus 17:11 reads, "For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have appointed it to you to make atonement on the altar for your lives, since it is the lifeblood that makes atonement." The pouring out of blood on the cross is a reminder that the life of Jesus left His body. In other words, Jesus literally died on the cross and it is that death that paid the penalty for our sins. Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Because of His death we can have the life that is a gift from God paid for by Christ. Hebrews 9:22 makes this clear when it says, "According to the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness." It was the blood over the door of the Jewish people in Egypt that saved them. It wasn't the condition of the house or the people inside that made the difference; it was the blood.

When Jesus offered up the cup there are two things that come to mind. First is the obvious element of blood that is represented by the wine. Jesus would spill His blood on the cross and die for the sins of the world. But what may not be as obvious is the cup that holds it. John 18:11 says, "At that, Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword away! Am I not to drink the cup the Father has given me?" When James and John's mother approached Jesus and asked Him to let her sons sit on His right and left hand, Jesus responds in Matthew 20:22 by saying, "Jesus answered, "You don't know what you're asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" The cup that Jesus drank was the wrath of God poured out on His only Son that was our wrath to endure. Jesus

PERSONAL REFLECTION:

- 1. What are some things that you need to confess before taking the Lord's Supper today?**
- 2. How does the death of Jesus in the past make you hopeful for the future?**
- 3. Is your heart and mind in a place where you are ready to partake in the Lord's Supper today?**

took that wrath for us so that we could have peace with God.

The Lords' Supper is a reminder of what Jesus did for us, but it is more than that. It is also an act of anticipation as we wait and look for the return of Jesus. It is good to remember the birth of Jesus and His resurrection, but it is His death that we are commanded to remember and His return that we are to live with anticipation for. Today as we partake of the Lord's Supper, keep in mind all these things and treat it as the reverent occasion that it is. He died voluntarily for our sins to show His love for us. In speaking of His life, Jesus said in John 10:18 "No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own. I have the right to lay it down, and I have the right to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father." Also, Paul writes in Romans 5:8, "But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

COMMENTARY USED:

Gaebelein, Frank E. 1976. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary. Volume 10, (Romans-Galatians)*. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Regency Reference Library.