

Call to Worship.

Psalm 51:1-18 (Self-examination of sin and the Holiness of God)

1. Leaning on the Everlasting Arms
2. The Old Rugged Cross
3. Be Thou My Vision

Doctrinal Teaching.

2 Sam. 12:1-15 (A brief understanding of the importance of self-examination)

Take My Life and Let it Be

I Need Thee Every Hour

It is Well With My Soul

Offering Prayer.

Pastoral Prayer.

Sermon Text.

Romans 7 |The Means of Grace Pt. III, The Lord's Supper

Intro.

I. The Lord's Supper.

I wish I had a few hours to explain the importance of The Lord's Supper but I don't today. So what I'm going to do is take you through a broad overview of the importance of The Lord's Supper and hopefully connect the meaning of Romans 7 and how it has direct application to taking the Lord's Supper.

But what I really want to do today is not give you a high-minded, scholastic view of the Lord's Supper. There's nothing wrong with that. But what I want to do is far more practical.

We live in an age where people think they can continue to live a life of sin and get away with it.

That's called Antinomianism. Its direct opposite is called Legalism which should be equally discouraged and condemned. Both of these views are destroyed through Romans 7 and the application of the Lord's Supper.

There is a type of person that wants the good results of God but does not live the Good Will of God.

They like the works of God, but don't want to live within the ways of God.

The reality is, people think they can be a Christian and continue to live a life of sin.

I'm here to say, that's not the case.

If you are reconciled to God, then you will still sin, but God **will not** allow you to live a life of sin.

You might ask how? How will God work to keep my life from sin?

The Lord's Supper is one of the Means used to demonstrate that to us. To be kept from sin is a matter of God's grace. To be forgiven of sin is God's grace. To become aware of sin, is a matter of God's grace. To move on from a life of sin, is a means of God's good grace.

God can work through other means as well.

God can work through car accidents. Emergency surgeries. Physical pain. Sick kids. Seemingly random weather patterns that cause catastrophes.

God can discipline through those means. God can also bring Divine Judgement through those means.

There is a big difference between God's Discipline and God's Divine Judgement. The same means can happen to two different people and have two different results and two different purposes.

One man's problem is another man's promise. One man's proclivity is the means of another man's productivity. One man's trash is another man's treasure.

And there have been many a man that has seen the Lord's Supper in an insignificant way. A petty way. A frivolous way. A ten minute tack onto a ten-week absence from Church.

These things should not be so.

These are very good reasons for why we should fear the Lord.

God doesn't only bring discipline and judgement through means God also brings protection through means.

'He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty'
Psalm 91

Listen to this...God can also protect from these means.

God can protect your travel and have mercy on your 'coming and going'. You might not travel in luxury but you travel with the Lord.

God can sustain your body in grace and what was once a medical problem is now under His Divine control.

God can build a hedge of Sovereign protection around your children. What is a problem down the street is not a problem at your home because of what is written on the doorposts of your home.

God can cause the rain to fall, the winds to blow, and the waves to crash and you sit in enjoyment watching His power on display, while another man gets thrown overboard contemplated in the belly of a sea creature; Why didn't I just obey in the first place. God can cause the entire timeline of your day to work in a peaceable pattern, like He did with King Hezekiah.

This would be an example of God's grace to you.

Why the Lord's Supper? Because even prophets turn left when they are told to go right.

Why the Lord's Supper? Because even anointed Kings stumble after successes.

Why the Lord's Supper? Because God wants to give you and I a means to remember His ultimate grace in Jesus Christ.

As a Christian you can live in God's discipline or you can live in God's grace. But you cannot live in anything else. God will not allow you to do otherwise.

God will rack your psychology with unmitigating depression, that will not be solved by being told you are important.

God will insult your ego, to let you know that you do not matter as much as you think.

And things like this all point to the Lord's Supper, which points to the Cross, which points to Christ, which should be to establish our IDENTITY. Who we are.

AND, Even the reality is God's discipline is also a part of His grace as well. Because God disciplines those whom He loves.

A true view of Christianity, centers around the True work of Jesus Christ, and shows a true understanding of ourselves.

That true understanding is seen in Romans 7. That true understanding is resolved at the Lord's Supper.

Before we get to that, please look at Paul's final application in **Rom. 8:1 'therefore, there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus'**

Now that's the cherry on top of the dessert. Paul spends an entire chapter talking about his own condemnation, then says in one verse, he doesn't have any condemnation.

Here's the thing for a Christian, you feel spiritual condemnation now, BUT you do NOT for Eternity.

Non-Christians, live in no condemnation now, BUT have Condemnation for ETERNITY.

But the Christian life is also central to having a true understanding of our own sin. This is what Paul talks about in Romans 7.

A true Christian worldview is being convicted of sin, forgiven of sin, waging war in your life against on-going sin, and the result is sanctification from sin.

John says, The man who says he has no sin is 'a liar' 1 John 1

The man who does not consider his own sin, violates both Jesus' mandate to 'pull the plank out of your own eye', God's mandate to 'be careful to obey' (Deut. 28), and Paul's acknowledgment of this on-going spiritual battle.

All in all, we need regular attendance to the Lord's Supper for a number of reasons. The Lord's Supper has 3 words commonly used to describe the ordinance.

The Lord's Supper. Communion. The Eucharist.

The Eucharist is rarely used at Christian churches because of its usage by the Catholic church. But all Eucharist means is Thanksgiving.

Q: What would we be giving thanks for? The work of God through Jesus Christ.

'Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!' 2 Cor. 9:15

Communion is a more commonly used term to describe the Lord's Supper. However, even the term communion is often not fully understood its meaning and implications.

Communion comes from a Greek NT word, koinonia. The word means fellowship.

Rarely in our culture do we say that we lack communion in our relationships. You do not hear people say I lack communion with my spouse, or I do not have communion with my children, or I have fallen out of communion with my work.

But communion in its most basic understanding means **doing things together** or **mutual participation**.

Paul hammers home the importance of communion in **1 Cor. 10**. John drives home the point in his Epistles.

Transubstitution. Consubstitution. Memorial.

Transubstitution is the Roman Catholic view of The Lord's Supper.

It is the view that the priest, considered an *Alta Christo*, is an alternate Christ, and this alternate Christ, takes the wafer and the wine and turns it into the literal body and the blood of Jesus Christ.

To say nothing about the cannibalistic nature of that doctrine, it is also rife with many NT heresies given it violates many interpretive principles such as John 6 and the entire book of Hebrews.

The Lutheran view believes in **consubstantiation**, which is an increased spiritual presence of the Lord Jesus at the communion event. This position was resisted strongly in the Protestant Reformation. And despite many Biblical strong suits and merits of Martin Luther, this was not one of those.

The Memorial view, or the Zwinglian view (Ulrich Zwingli, a protestant reformer), re-established the original view of the Lord's Supper, which is that it is a memorial of the work of Christ on the cross and we **'do this in remembrance of Me'**.

I talked about church architecture in last weeks message about baptismals and maybe you have been at a church that has a large table in the front that says on the table '**do this in remembrance of Me**'

This view has been the normal Protestant view of the Lord's Supper. That we remember the work of Christ on the cross and we proclaim His death until He returns.

We are not re-instituting the death of Christ again, as the Roman Catholics heretically believe, and we are not projecting or expecting a supernatural spiritual experience in the Lord's Supper.

Instead, we are remembering and placing before our minds and our hearts the work of Christ and our life relates to that.

II. Romans 7: The Law, our Dual Nature About Romans 7.

Romans 7 is considered one of the most challenging chapters of the NT. Add to that it is placed in the middle of the most important Epistle in the NT.

This chapter has a central importance to the Gospel as well as our fellowship with God and one another.

Romans was not the first Epistle written but it is the first Epistle organized in the NT, because of the vital importance of understanding the content of the message.

Paul's, 16 chapter letter, is considered even among secular scholars to be one of the most important pieces of literature ever written.

Many US law schools use Paul's letter to the Romans as a concise way to make an appealing, cogent and systematic argument of important points.

As it stands today, many a judge and attorney would do well to read Paul's letter to understand the importance of justice, both civil and Divine.

I want to show you briefly this layout of Romans 7, as it integrates to the letter itself, and then how it applies to the Lord's Supper.

As I said in the introduction, Reconciliation and Baptism is about you. The Lord's Supper is about us.

Communion/koinonia; fellowship, doing things together, mutual participation.

The Lord's Supper is a matter of your communion with God but you demonstrate that by your communion with His local church.

'How can you love God whom you do not see, if you do not love your neighbor whom you do see' 1 John 4:20-21

God is love and God's love is completely distinction from what we see of the lust-filled, selfishly motivated love of the local Greek culture that had bleed into the Corinthian church.

I want to break it down into a few parts for you to be able to see chapter a little easier.

a. Two-parts of Romans.

V. 1-13.

About being United to Christ and the use of the Law.

V. 14-25

About the Dual nature of a Christian.

There has been a lot of debate about the meaning of what Paul is saying in this chapter, but suffice it to say, the normal take away is that Paul is talking about the dual nature of being a Christian.

Within the Context of Chapter 7, we have to see that Paul is addressing these two topics inside his defense of being justified by faith. Justified from sin by faith in Jesus Christ.

It has been said before that if you were recently converted to Christ read Romans 5-8 every day for a month.

The book of Romans is so important that John Chyrostom, the early church father, and preacher known as Golden Mouth, had the entire letter read to him twice a week.

Romans is so important that it has been considered to be the most important writing of literature in human history.

Consider this. Romans was not the first Epistle written, but it was the first organized in the canon of Epistles.

A proper understanding of the book of Romans is foundational to a proper understanding of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Gospel, and the purpose and work of the church.

Martin Luther begins the preface to his commentary on Romans with these words, "This epistle is really the chief part of the New Testament and the very purest gospel and is worthy not only that every Christian should know it word for word by heart, but occupy himself with it every day as the daily bread of the soul. It can never be read or pondered too much, and the more it is dealt with the more precious it becomes and the better it tastes."

Philipp Melancthon called Romans a compendium of Christian doctrine.

Historical literary scholars claim there are upwards of 14,000 noteworthy pieces of literature in written history and Romans ranks at the top of the list.

Yet so few people, even Christians, have a deficit knowledge of the book of Romans.

I told Anya the other day that the challenge in preaching these passages is not preaching them in themselves, but the challenge is not spending an entire sermon explaining only one prepositional phrase.

The Letter reads like a Systematic Theology, Biblical Theology and Gospel presentation all in one.

John Calvin wrote: “When anyone gains a knowledge of this epistle he has an entrance opened to him to all the most hidden treasures of Scripture.”

The English poet, **Samuel Coleridge**, referred to Romans as, “The profoundest piece of writing in existence.”

The noted scholar **F.F. Bruce** once said: “There is no telling what may happen when people begin to study the Epistle to the Romans.”

William Tyndale, who translated the Bible into English, believed that every Christian should memorize Romans.

Frederic Godet, a Swiss theologian, said: “Every movement of revival in the history of the Christian church has been connected to the teachings set forth in Romans...and it is probably that every great spiritual renovation in the church will always be linked, both in cause and effect, to a deeper knowledge of this book.”

Lest we think that these stories just happened long ago and far away, I heard of one man who visited a church service recently where the pastor was preaching through Romans. At the end of the service, the person sitting next to him asked him how long he had been a Christian. To which the young man responded, “About ten minutes.”

That is the overarching theme of Romans 5-8.

Romans 5. Reconciled to God.

Romans 6. Baptized/Immersed in Christ.

Romans 7. Dead to the Law of sin, yet the dual nature of sinful flesh that is made aware

b. Rhetorical Questions.

V. 1 ‘do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives?’

It’s entirely possible that a person is uninformed about sound doctrine.

It is entirely possible that a person has lived their life with errored views of God, rebelling against God and was unaware.

This is why we must teach the Bible, in a systematic and comprehensive way. It is the power of God to save souls.

V. 7 'What shall we say then? Is the Law sin?'

Paul uses this second question to explain the nature and utility of the Law.

V. 13 'did that which is good become a cause of death for me?'

Here Paul uses another question to make the application drive the point home about the use of the Law.

V. 24 'Who will set me free from the body of this death?'

Well it's good Paul presents the question, because it is not likely we would come to the conclusion on our own.

And that is what Paul transitions to in Romans 8. The Deliverance from sin and death.

Paul goes from expressing the law 27x in 25 verses, in chapter 7.

To express the work of the Holy Spirit, 21x in 39 verses in chapter 8.

c. Therefore statements.

V. 4 'Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God'

This is the same point Paul made in Romans 6, regarding death with Christ in baptism.

Now Paul is making the same point about being dead to the Law because of being united to Christ and Christ's work of accomplishing God's law on the cross.

V. 13 'Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me?'

Paul asks an obviously preposterous statement to show us that the law is good and holy, but it is personal sin, within himself, that tricks, confusing, and misrepresents God's good purpose of the law and the usages of, and its extent.

Rom. 8:1 'Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus'

Paul does not complete his point in chapter 7, he does in the first verse of chapter 8.

Paul makes the point that the law serves a purpose but it does not serve a purpose to condemn us eternally because we are in Christ eternally.

The law serves the purpose to condemn us temporarily, in order to sanctify us eternally.

The big difference between a Christian and a non-Christian, is that, a Christian is condemned in this life but free eternally. The non-Christian is free in this life, but condemned eternally.

Christians are aware of their sin, non-Christians are not aware of their sin.

This is a major point of the Lord's Supper. And it is a major point of Paul's in Romans 7.

It is a grace of God to make us aware of our sin, because that is what makes us aware of a need to repent, a need for Christ, the work of Christ, and a confidence in Christ.

God's grace secures us eternally to Christ.

d. Law. v. 1-13

V.1-3 'Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives? For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress though she is joined to another man'

This is not a passage about divorce and remarriage. It is an illustration about the extent of the law.

Paul is making the point that the law is not applicable to a person that is dead.

Let me give a cultural example.

There was a crime committed that was a murder-suicide. A man murdered another person and then committed suicide.

The families were irate and the community demanded justice.

The attorneys were hired. The evidence was collected. It was certain that this man murdered another man.

They presented the case to the judge. And said, 'Judge this man is guilty. He is guilty beyond any reasonable doubt. He must be tried to the fullest extent of the law.'

The Judge said, 'I cannot do anything. My hands are tied.'

The people said, 'What do you mean? He is guilty. You are the judge. You must uphold the law.'

The Judge said, 'Yes, you are right. I must uphold the law. But in this particular situation, I cannot do anything.'

The people said, 'Why? Why can you not do anything about this?'

The Judge responded, 'Because the man is dead!?!'

The Law does not apply to dead men!.

That's the point of the illustration. And though the law can condemn our flesh it has no warrant over our soul!

V.4-6 'Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit of God. For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.'

As a Christian, we are dead to the elemental things of this world. We are alive to Christ. Our minds are set on things above.

Yet you and I both know, we are not always so free from the law of sin and death.

You and I both know that the good, and holy law of God convicts us regularly.

We know that our inability to uphold God's righteous standard depresses us, suppresses us, and it is only right that we confess in us the inability to live fully in this newness of life.

Q: What will serve as a means of renewing your mind and commitment to Christ? To walking in newness of life? The Lord's Supper serves this purpose of God's grace.

V.7-13 'What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "YOU SHALL NOT COVET." But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead. I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful.'

The Law is Good, but its God that gave the Law. God is God over the Law.

Recently the state of Louisiana reinstated putting the Ten Commandments in public schools.

That's good. But that will not save anyone. It will show them their sin. And that's good too. But it will not save anyone.

We need the law but we do not need more law, we need more of the Lord. We don't need more statues, we need more of the Savior.

It is Jesus Christ that saves because it is Jesus Christ that fulfilled the Law with His very life.

It is Jesus Christ that was crucified because of God's wrath against those who do not fulfill the law, which is us.

He took on the wrath we deserve and as a result we take on the righteousness that He lived.

God treated Christ like He lived our life and because of that God now treats us like we lived Christ.

We are in Union with Christ. United to His death and His resurrection.

But you might think, that just sounds too good to be true. Does that mean that the law is irrelevant? Not at all.

As a matter of fact, what will happen now is not an Anti-view of the law, not a lawless life, but instead, the Holy Spirit will work in many ways to bring you into conformity to Christ.

The ironic thing about the Christian life is that you are dead to the law, but your life becomes more conformed to the law by the work of the Holy Spirit in you.

As a Christian, you begin to sin-less, but you feel worse about the very sin still residing in you.

Look at what Paul says about this.

e. Dual Nature. v.14-25

V.14-20 'For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if

I do the very thing I do now want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of good is not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

We should never forget that God is a spirit and He is to be worshiped in Spirit and Truth.

And God's law is spiritual, not in the sense that it cannot be made tangible, but instead, in the sense, that God doesn't need a human government to exercise or enforce His law, He can do it through any natural means He sees fit.

God controls all things through the counsel of His will. The same is the case with the judgments of His law. No human court, whether righteous or unrighteous can overrule the absolute nature of God's law.

To put it another way. God's law is not something you break, it is something that breaks you.

God's law is not something you uphold, it is something the Holy Spirit upholds in you.

And this is what Paul is experiencing by meditating on the law. It is breaking his psyche. It is humbling him.

Paul is realizing his utter inability to do anything righteous.

This is the path of grace and it is paved with the concrete of humility.

Paul sees this spiritual warfare against sin, not because he is bad in comparison to others in the church.

Paul sees this spiritual warfare against sin, greater, because the Holy Spirit is illuminating it to him.

Like I said, the biggest difference between a Christian and a non-Christian is their conviction of sin.

V.21-25 'I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my

members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.'

III. Back to the Lord's Supper. 1 Cor. 11

V. 23-33 'For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.

In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat and drink of the cup.

For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly.

For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.

But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged.

But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.

So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you will not come together for judgment.'

In Romans 7, Paul is a man judging himself rightly.

The reason Paul is judged rightly is because He is united with Christ.

Paul gives us 4 major components of the Lord's Supper and 7 applications of it in this passage alone.

Now theologically, there can be a lot more said about these components and applications.

But practically the overarching application is Holiness.

The Lord's Supper for you and I is a matter of practical holiness.

William Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, holiness has two phases; knowledge and inclination.

"Holiness has two sides or phases. It is perception and knowledge. As such it relates to the understanding of God and divine things must be apprehended in order to holiness' Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, p. 495

But knowledge and actualization is not the same thing.

I can know I need to eat vegetables but that does mean I want to eat vegetables. I can know I need to go to church and participate in the Lord's Supper. But knowing it is right to do and being inclined to do what is right is not the same thing.

'It is inclination and feeling. As such, it relates to the will and affections. God and divine things must be desired and delighted in order to holiness' Shedd, Dogmatic Theology, p. 495

If you know holy knowledge but do not desire to do holy actions, you lack in the grace of God.

This is what Paul is saying in Romans 7. I know, but I don't desire to do what I know.

The Law has taught me, but I need the Spirit to guide me.

The Law is right, but I need Christ to make me righteous.

The Law is good, but I'm not good enough to uphold it.

Why the Lord's Supper? It's God's grace to us to come back to this important concept.

That we live by the grace of God.

a. Components of the Lord's Supper.

1. This is My Body - Do this in remembrance of Me.

Jesus is God. Jesus is the Son of God. And yet the Son of God became man and has an actual body. A body like you and I, the only difference is, Jesus never sinned.

Jesus did not struggle with the law, Jesus fulfilled the Law.

Jesus did learn the law, Jesus delivered the Law.

Human Genetics studies show that human genetics is 99.9% similar in humans.

Jesus' human genetics were like our human genetics. Needing food. Sleep. Shelter. Yet within His body, was only the Holy Inclinations to obey His father.

2. My blood/New Covenant.

The Bible has numerous Covenants God has made with His people.

The Covenant with Adam to curse sin.

The Covenant with Noah to not flood the earth again.

The Covenant with Abraham to make a great nation out of his family.

The Covenant with Moses to establish the Law in Israel.

The Covenant with David, that a Messiah would come from His family.

Then there is the New Covenant.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Which is accomplished by His blood.

Not the blood in itself, but that blood is indicative of life. No blood, no life.

No shed blood, no payment for sins.

Jesus gave His very life, his body and His blood so that we would be saved by our inability to uphold this law.

3. Remembrance.

We do this in remembrance of the death of Christ on our behalf.

It is a Grace of God to the church.

It is not a Transsubstitution. It is not a Consubstitution. It is a memorial in remembrance of the once and for all sacrifice of Christ.

4. Proclamation.

We are to proclaim this life and this death until Christ comes again. In other words, preach regularly about this.

10x in the book of Acts it is recorded to proclaim these things.

Preach about Christ. Proclaim His life. Proclaim His death.

Now the Lord's Supper is a grace from God. But its grace is displayed in a particular way. It is seen in the person of Christ.

If Christ was judged on our behalf, it would only make sense that we should judge ourselves rightly now that we are in Christ.

b. Applications of the Lord's Supper.

1. Unworthy manner/guilty of the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Q: Who should take the Lord's Supper?

Should anyone take communion? Should it be restricted in access? Should the table be 'fenced'?

Of course a simple distinction should be between those who are Christians and those who are not. Non-Christians should take communion.

Not necessarily so much out of exclusion, but out of protection from their own judgment.

But it's more likely that Paul is referring to people in the church who were living on-going sinful lives.

In 1 Cor. 6 'do you not know the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God'

'Nor fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate/transgenders, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God'

Paul is listing the sins of church members here. Plus he adds himself to the list because in Romans 7 he says the Law convicted him of covetousness.

'Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified; but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of God.'

Washed - baptized. Sanctified - taught and confessed. Justified - the work of Christ imputed by faith.

But what about those who are in Christ but have on-going sin? God's law is spiritual.

In other words, it will find you out.

Ready or not, here I come, you can't hide. There is no judicial system that can exercise the legislative oversight of your life to the degree that God can. He sees it all. He knows it all.

People often think they want to get their fair shake. They don't know what they are asking for. You don't want fair, you want Grace.

You deserve fair, you don't deserve Grace. And if you are a Christian, YOU ARE NOT GOING TO GET FAIR, BECAUSE GOD is going to give you GRACE.

Grace comes to the humble, so I know what will happen to every Christian and non-Christian this upcoming season.

The Christians will be humbled and the non-Christians will grow in self-pride. One will serve toward grace and the other to condemnation.

If you think you deserve Grace you've missed the very merits and meaning of Grace.

Should the Lord's Supper be restricted? It certainly should.

How should it be restricted? In Truth and Grace.

The Lord's Supper is an on-going presentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To misrepresent it and to mis-take it, is to misrepresent the very Gospel we proclaim.

2. Must examine/then eat and drink.

Proper examination always leads to personal humility. It will be impossible to properly examine yourself before God and walk away pleased with yourself.

You will be pleased that God is patient. You will be pleased that God has been merciful to you. But you will not arrive at smug, self-satisfaction, if you have properly examined yourself.

It is after this that you are to take the Lord's Supper.

Really, the whole church body should be aware of the monthly schedule of Communion. It is not a surprise. As a long-term inventory of your own life should be taking place in prayer.

3. Judgment/ does not judge rightly.

There has been this steady talk in society about not judging. I hope for your sake you don't fall into that.

You must judge and it starts with yourself and that will probably be sufficient to occupy your time.

When you've judged yourself rightly, you most likely won't have the emotional energy or desire to judge others because you will be thoroughly distraught by your many failures, like Paul was in Romans 7.

You will be like a bruised reed. You will be thoroughly humbled. It will not be false humility.

It will ultimately lead to freedom and joy.

But people still take the Lord's Supper and fail to pursue this.

4. For this reason many are weak, sick, and a number sleep.

God will not tolerate impurity in His church long term.

God will chastise Christians for prolonged sin.
God will strike them with sickness and weakness.

There is even a 'sin which leads unto death.'

What is the sin that leads to death? All sin leads to death. So which is the one that God causes to kill a Christian off in the body of Christ? Any one that is not examined properly.

Weakness, sickness, and death has a built in humbling factor.

How could a person even remotely be so casual about God that they would take communion without thorough self-examination and confession?

5. Disciplined by the Lord.

God does not discipline children that are not His. God routinely disciplines children that are His.

Like a good father who gives his son good gifts, so your Heavenly Father will give you good things if you ask Him.' Jesus Christ

Did we think Jesus was talking about a new car? No, he was talking about new desires. Jesus was talking about the desire to grow in obedience.

God is not looking to change your life by giving you more worldly things. As a matter of fact, God might take those things to save your life.

6. Wait for one another.

Waiting for others. Putting others first is a very basic demonstration of humility.

'Esteem others above yourself' Phil 2

The pride of the Corinthians was on display by their on going impetuous behavior.

They were capricious, impetuous, whimsical, rebellious, licentious.

7. Come together for judgment.

Paul is telling them this so that they would come together for love and good works, not in order to receive judgment.

Holiness; Knowledge and Inclination.

IV. Conclusions on the Lord's Supper.

- 1. It is to be taken regularly.**
The pattern of that regularity is left up to the local church.
- 2. It is to be taken in the right manner.**
Being in reconciliation to God and reconciliation to your brothers/sisters, the local church.
- 3. It is a Gospel proclamation.**
- 4. It is a Eschatological statement.**
The Lord's Supper has end times emphasis.
- 5. It's personal application is growing in godliness.**
- 6. The church's application is growing in love and unity.**
- 7. It ultimately honors the work of God through Jesus Christ.**
- 8. The Lord's Supper is a way for us to grow in the grace of God.**

Let's close in prayer.

How Firm a Foundation
I'll Fly Away.

Benediction.

Isaiah 1:18

Small Group.

- 1. Can you see the struggle that Paul is going through personally in Romans 7? Do you have any commonality with this?**
- 2. What has been your religious experience with the Lord's Supper?**
- 3. How is the Lord's Supper a means of Grace to us as Christians?**
- 4. Why is it important to guard/fence the Lord's Supper? What does Paul say in 1 Cor. 11**
- 5. How can we 'wait for one another' and encourage one another to grow in humility that leads to grace?**