

1 CORINTHIANS 11:17-34

the Lord's Supper

Review / Preview

At the beginning of chapter 11, Paul introduces a new section of his letter where he focuses on matters of public worship. He commends the Corinthians for holding onto his instruction in general, but he must also rebuke and correct them where they have deviated from it. Head coverings at worship were one issue; the Lord's Supper was another.

Outline

- 11:17-22 The problem: the *Corinthians'* supper
- 11:23-26 Back to basics: the *Lord's* Supper
- 11:27-34 Examination, recognition, and judgment

Verses 17-22. How are these divisions different from those addressed at the beginning of the letter? (*follow Paul...Apolllos...Cephas...Christ.*) Which kind is a more prevalent source of division in the church today?

Were the Corinthians in fact receiving the Lord's Supper?

Corinthians: "My church...my supper." Paul: "God's church...the Lord's Supper."

Verses 23-26. When would Paul have received instruction about communion from the Lord?

Is there any difference between Paul's account of the words of institution and the version we are accustomed to in church?

What does it mean that communion is received in remembrance of Jesus?

Explain: The Lord's Supper points the Christian both to the past and to the future.

Verses 27-34. What difference in reception is there (and isn't there) between the "worthy" and "unworthy" recipient?

Verse 27: The problem

Verse 28: The remedy

Verse 29: The importance of heeding the remedy

What was the result of "unworthy reception" in Corinth? What was its purpose? (Note word play with *judge*.)

Note that Paul's instructions are not that they stop receiving communion, but that they receive it according to Jesus' institution.

Paul's line of thought in 11:17-34.

the perversion

You're making the Lord's Supper into your own supper, despising God's church by shaming poor.

the Lord's supper

It belongs to Jesus. Not normal food. By receiving his body and blood for forgiveness, you proclaim gospel to one another.

the solution

Receive worthily. Examine your need & your relationship with church. Recognize what you're eating and its purpose.

You are perverting this opportunity to receive and proclaim forgiveness into an opportunity to tear others down. You are sinning against the greater by sinning against the "lesser."

What insight do these verses give us into...

...the age at which someone should begin to take communion?

...our personal preparation for receiving communion?

...our responsibility toward those to whom we administer communion?