

17-34 I. MISUSE & REDIRECTION OF THE LORDS SUPPER

17-19 A. The Problem

“Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. 18 For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. 19 For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you”.

17a 1. They cannot be praised “I do not praise you”

17b a. Since they “come together not for the better but for the worse”

i. There’s enough division & competing in the world.

18-19 2. “For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you and in part I believe it”

a. We’ve already been told about this in Ch 1 & in Ch3. Paul had been told by those in Chloe’s household that there were divisions and contentions.

b. The word for “divisions” is the word “schismata” which means split or gap. Schisms.

19 3. “There must also be factions among you” The word “factions” is a little bit different term. We think of divisions and factions maybe as the same but actually the Greek word for ‘factions’ is the word describing a body of men separating themselves from others like a party or group.

a. So basically the 1st is what causes the 2nd.

b. We should always be mindful that our differences of opinion or misunderstandings doesn't begin to cause divisions that eventually lead to factions.

c. Jesus said it Himself **"every Kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation and every city or house divided against itself will not stand."** Matt 12:25

i. That's one of Satan's tools division. God adds, multiplies Satan divides.

ii. God hates division

19b

4. Paul says something interesting here **"that those who are approved may be recognized among you"**. At times God allows factions or divisions so that those who are **"approved may be recognized"**

a. Meaning so that, over time, those who really belong to the Lord would be made evident.

b. Some have said it to be like a shaking of a tree. The bad fruit falls and the good fruit stays.

i. **1 John 2:19** They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

c. It's inevitable that in the church some will encounter disagreements or misunderstandings but it's what we do with it that matters.

i. Are we willing to use the word as our plumb line?

ii. Are we willing to submit to the **"unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"**

iii. **Eph 4:1-6** I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. (Endeavor – to be diligent)

Can we endeavor to keep the unity?

d. In the Corinthian church they were not! And it showed up in many ways as we've seen over the course of this study. And one of the ugliest ways so far was here at the gathering together for the Lord's Supper. Which we call today communion.

i. Greek word (Koinania) intimate fellowship

e. There was an abuse happening

20-22 B. Manifestation Of The Problem

"Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper. 21 For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. 22 What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you."

20 1. It's shocking for us to read this but this is what was being reported to Paul.

a. That when they **"come together "**; it wasn't to eat the Lord's Supper.

b. **"coming together in one place"** What that meant was the custom the early church had of coming together not only to worship but to eat with one another.

i. In Acts 2:42-47 (you don't have to turn there I'll read it)

ii. This was started from Pentecost. From the beginning. And we see how through that love and fellowship the Spirit of God was free to move and began to add to the church. (vs46-47)

c. If only we could see just how much that meal with one another back then had broke through social and racial barriers.

i. What it meant to the early believers.

ii. Fast forward now 10-12 years. Look what it turned into in Corinth.

21

2. Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lords Supper. **"For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk."** So there's two different aspects to this. One is what's called the Lord's Supper which we know as communion. (Explain) The other is the gathering together in one place also known to them as the "agape feast" or "love meal".

a. (Explain how one goes before the other) One taints the other.

b. That's why Paul said when you come together it's not even to eat the Lord's Supper when **"one is hungry and another is drunk"**

c. (A little cultural background) Remember how many of the Corinthians came out of pagan idol worship. So it was common practice for them to have had wild, riotous banquets given in honor of a pagan god. So it's not so strange to get a little tipsy at church.

d. But also the culture was very "class oriented". Meaning they respected and divided under upper and lower class on everything.

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- i. So for the upper class to receive more food because they could afford to bring more was normal to them. But it grieved Paul.

22

3. He says **"What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing?"** The New Century Version says **"You can eat drink in your own homes, You seem to think God's church is not important, and you embarrass those who are poor."**

a. Think about that. To the rich, this may have been a social event. A time to show off your dish or your ability to spare no expense.

b. But to the poor, this weekly "agape feast" may have been the only decent meal they regularly had. But to embarrassed to admit it; they walk away hungry.

i. As a church we are to try to meet the needs of the less fortunate around us. Not exploit them.

4. Though this is a sad thing happening, Paul takes the opportunity to use it to redirect them on the importance of **"The Lord's Supper"** or communion.

a. He turns a bad moment, to a teaching moment.

b. Almost like saying let me show you how it's supposed to go.

23-26

C. **Re-instituting The Lord's Supper**

"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.' 26 For as

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

23a

1. "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you" This is not something Paul just came up with on his own. This is not even something he got through those apostles that were there that night with Jesus. He says **"I received this from the Lord"**

a. Let me ask a question how much of what we received from the Lord are we delivering to others?

b. If we don't receive from the Lord we really don't have much to deliver.

i. Maybe somebody else's story or experiences but they lack that power that comes from your experiences with the Lord.

c. We should be in constant prayer and communion with the Lord so we have something to deliver.

23a

2. But again here in Paul's case he's talking to them about the Lord's Supper and how this was instituted by Jesus Himself. Given by Jesus Himself to Paul who was a chosen apostle by the Lord. And he says **"The Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread"**.

a. This brings the meal right back into it's context. It was **"the same night in which He was betrayed"** For You!

b. The "night before" He was crucified! So this is what I believe Paul is doing here. He's setting the tone or spiritual atmosphere of the heart; so that when they partake it's not in an unworthy manner.

i. The Corinth Church had obviously no idea this was happening.

ii. The value of the experience depends on the condition of the heart.

3. So Paul is going to direct them (and us) in 3 different ways in this passage when it comes to correctly partaking the Lord's Supper. And the 1st thing we want to do is look back **"the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread. (24) and when He had given thanks He broke it and said "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."**

a. We want to look back. Jesus meant that when He said **"Do this in remembrance of Me"**. He meant for us to take this time seriously and reflect on His death.

b. Everything we have as Christians centers in His death. On His body being "given" and His blood being spilled.

c. He wanted us to take this time reflecting on this. Not just coming to this moment as if it's nothing.

i. Why? Well it's not the life our Lord lived or His wonderful teachings that can save sinners but His death.

d. The penalty for sin had to be paid, or God is not a Holy and just God. **Isa 53:6** All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

i. And **1 Pet 2:24** who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness — by whose stripes you were healed.

e. He also died for us willingly **Rom 5:8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

f. And so these things we want to remember as He's asked us to.

4. And so He wants us to look back; then Paul mentions that we also ought to ***look forward.*** “***For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes***”. This is something we do looking forward each time in our hearts, saying “He’s coming again”.

a. We’re proclaiming His death. What’s it mean to proclaim? To announce or declare in an official or formal manner.

i. It’s like we are announcing and declaring not only to ourselves but to the enemy our ultimate victory over him. Our victory over death, over sin, we’re declaring we’re not alone and one day He’s coming again.

ii. His death and sacrifice is our right to proclaim victory.

iii. So in this ordinance of communion we share it also becomes not only a way to look back; but to look forward to the promise He gave. That we’ll one day share this meal together when He comes.

iv. (It was Jesus’ fervent desire He said that night with His disciples) **Luke 22:15-16** Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16 for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

Also in **Matt 26:26-29** And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." 27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

5. The Corinthian Church was doing neither of these things when they came together to celebrate this meal. They were neither looking back nor forward but were even disregarding it's importance all together. So Paul had to counsel them not only should they be looking back and ahead, but they needed to look within aswell.

27-32 **D. Looking Within And Examining Yourself**

"Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world."

27 **1. "Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord."** Paul didn't say you had to be worthy to partake –noone will be. He said whoever did it in **"an unworthy manner would be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord"**

a. And that's exactly what was happening in Corinth. No regard for what Christ had done; no regard for what He promised to do. There was no regard for Him at all. And because of this there was reason to look inward.

i. That's what Christs sacrifice should do. Cause us to look withing.

ii. Where am I at because of this grace?

iii. Do I appreciate what HE's done? Is my life showing that?

b. All of us will find some point of sin when we look within, that's the point. To, as Paul said, **"examine ourselves", "and so let him eat the bread and drink the cup"**

i. This is a time to **"examine ourselves"**.

29-30

2. That's something they weren't doing in Corinth **1 Cor 11:29-31**
"For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep."

a. Obviously there were some that were reaping very serious consequences to their *non Shal aunt* / sinful way of approaching the Lord's Supper.

i. Sick and Dying

31-32

3. **"For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world."**

33-34

E. **In Conclusion**

33 Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. 34 But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come."