

THE LORD'S SUPPER

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January 30, 2022

1 Corinthians 11:17-34

1. From time to time it is important to examine what the Bible teaches about the elements of our worship and even what constitutes worship from a biblical perspective.
 2. Anyone who knows me well knows that I question the validity in God's sight of how much of the modern church defines and conducts what is referred to as worship.
 3. True worship has more to do with who we are than what we do.
 4. If we are not careful even things like participating in the Lord's Supper can become ritualistic rather than a real expression of worship.
 5. Baptists have historically taught that the Lord's Supper is an ordinance-conveying truth through a symbolic act.
- NOTE: Some liturgical churches see the Lord's Supper as a sacrament-conferring grace.
6. The same distinction can be made related to baptism.
 7. Paul's purpose in this passage was to correct the Corinthian's attitude toward and observance of the Lord's Supper.
 8. A proper observance of the Lord's Supper will include several important ingredients.

I. There will be a right spirit-a spirit of unity. 17-19

- A. Paul stated that the Corinthian Christians were wrongly motivated in the area of corporate worship. 17
- B. The Corinthian church was a divided church.
- C. Various factions identified with different men. 1 Corinthians 1:10-14
Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. 11 For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you. 12 Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ." 13 Has Christ been divided? Paul was not crucified for you, was he? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?
- D. When the church met the people would gather in their little groups.
- E. The Lord's Supper, portrays among other things, our oneness or unity in Christ.
- F. According to Ephesians 4:3 we are to be diligent in preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- G. The fact that various church members identified with various leaders indicated that factions existed in the church.

II. The gathering will be for the right reason. 20-22

- A. Paul stated, "Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper."
- B. What he meant was that the observance of the Lord's Supper was of secondary importance.

- C. Of first importance was the “Love Feast” that preceded the observance of the Lord’s Supper.
- D. Rather than promoting unity the Love Feast created further division within the church.
 - 1. For some it was an excuse to overindulge in both food and drink.
 - 2. The “haves” left out the “have-nots.”
 - 3. They despised the church and shamed those who had nothing.
- E. When our motivation is wrong we may observe the form of religion, but Christ has no part in it.

III. Those participating will possess a right understanding. 23-26

- A. Those who participate should be informed, baptized believers.
- B. Paul’s teaching here had been received by direct revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ.
- C. The Lord’s Supper:
 - 1. Was instituted by Christ and was not the invention of the church.
 - 2. Was intended to serve as a remembrance.
 - NOTE: Jesus said, “Do this in remembrance of Me.” (to call Me to remembrance.)
 - a. Remember what I did for you on Calvary’s Cross.
 - b. Remember that I ratified a new covenant with My blood. (A contract is signed and witnessed only once.)
 - 3. Is a proclamation of the Lord’s death. “You proclaim (preach) the Lord’s death until He comes.”
 - 4. Serves as a memorial, but it is a memorial that should make Jesus and His presence very real to us.

IV. Those participating should manifest a right attitude and understanding. 27-34

- A. The Lord’s Supper is holy-it has a God-ordained purpose.
- B. Because it is holy it should be partaken of in a worthy manner.
 - 1. With humility, reverence, and thoughtfulness.
 - 2. Not taken lightly.
 - NOTE: In Christ every true believer is worthy to participate in the Lord’s Supper provided they approach the Lord’s Table with a right attitude and in a worthy manner.
- C. There were those in Corinth who:
 - 1. Did not reverence the Lord’s body and shed blood.
 - 2. Did not examine their attitudes and confess their sins.
 - 3. Brought God’s judgment upon themselves (they were disciplined by the Lord).
 - a. “The Christian get all the sorrow, all the trouble, all the tears he will ever have right here. Every bit of pleasure and enjoyment that the worldling is going to know he has in this life.” H. A. Ironsides
- D. One of the things missing in the church today is what the Bible refers to as the fear of the Lord.

APPLICATION

1. The Lord's Supper should speak to unbelievers and reveal to them that Jesus' body was broken and His blood was shed for them.

NOTE: Hopefully it will lead them to repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. As professed followers of the Lord Jesus Christ we should ask ourselves.

- a. Do I have a right spirit this morning?
- b. Am I here for the right reason-out of love for and devotion to Christ?
- c. Do I understand the significance of the Lord's Supper?
- d. Do I have a right attitude?
- e. Do I have unconfessed sin in my life?
- f. Do I harbor wrong thoughts towards another?
- g. Have I obeyed Jesus Christ in the area of believer's baptism?