

1 Corinthians 11:23-34 *For I [Paul] have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: ²⁴And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, "Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me." ²⁵After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped [finished dinner], saying, "this cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. ²⁷Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily [unsaved or bad conscience], shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord [guilty as if they approved of Jesus' death sentence]. ²⁸But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. ²⁹For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body [not understanding that Jesus accepted your punishment in His own body]. ³⁰For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep [have died]. ³¹For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. ³²But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. ³³Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry [wait] one for another. ³⁴And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation [so you won't bring judgment upon yourselves when you meet together]. And the rest will I set in order when I come.*

I. Introduction

- A. The Corinthian Church was a carnal church, doing things as they did before they were saved. In these verses the Apostle Paul is trying to explain to them that the Lord's Table isn't just another opportunity to eat. It is a special, somber occasion

1 Peter 4:17 *For the time is come **that judgment must begin at the house of God:** and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God [if we fear God's judgment enough to change our lives, the unsaved will have no excuse for their behavior when they account for their lives before Him]?*

- B. The communion service is:

1. A time of worship before God for each local church
2. A time for each individual to examine their own life before God
3. A time to meditate on Jesus broken body and shed blood to pay the price for every time we fall short of glorifying God in our lives

- C. God often speaks to us most effectively when:
 1. Trials occur in our lives
 2. During times set aside for self-reflection; in particular, during communion
- D. Jesus Himself presided over the first communion service with His 12 disciples in the upper room just before His betrayal (Luke 22:17-20).

II. Communion is a time to Remember the Lord Jesus Christ and what He did for us

- A. Time to take our minds off of ourselves
 1. Our Pride: The fleshly desire for our lives to be easy, when God is working to make us holy
 2. Our Problems: To set aside our own troubles and focus on the eternity that waits for us because of what He did for our biggest problem, our separation from Him because of our sin
- B. The Bread (verses 23-24) symbolizes the body of Jesus, the pain Jesus suffered for us

John 6:33-35 *For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they.[a crowd in Capernaum following Jesus] unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, **I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.***

Isaiah 53:4-6 *Surely **he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.***

- C. The Cup (verse 25) symbolizes the blood of Jesus and the life it contained, which Jesus shed for us

Hebrews 9:22 *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and **without shedding of blood is no remission** [forgiveness].*

1. We are justified exclusively by the blood of Jesus. While the cup, containing the fruit of the vine (Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18), is symbolic of Christ's blood, the actual blood of Jesus is not symbolic. His blood must have been shed, and His life sacrificed, or we have not been forgiven.

Romans 5:9 *Much more then, **being now justified by his blood**, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*

2. We are purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ. The idea is that we are slaves to sin, being sold at an auction. Jesus paid the greatest price He could possibly pay to buy us as a slave and immediately, without us doing anything else, He gave us our freedom from slavery.

Acts 20:28 *Take heed therefore unto yourselves* [Apostle Paul is speaking to a group of pastors], *and to all the flock* [local church], *over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed **the church of God, which he*** [Jesus] ***hath purchased with his own blood.***

1 Corinthians 6:20 *For **ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's*** (see also 1 Corinthians 7:23).

III. Communion is a time to Renew our Church (verse 27-32)

A. The opportunity for repentance (verse 28)

1. God gives us this time to judge ourselves. We need to scrutinize our behavior and our motives to see if they align with God's desire for our lives.

Jerimiah 17:9 ***The heart is deceitful** above all things, **and desperately wicked: who can know*** [understand, predict] *it?*

Psalms 139:23-24 *Search me, O **God**, and **know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.***

2. God demands that we be worthy to participate in this time of remembering

- a. Saved: Knowing only God's grace has saved us
- b. Sanctified: Keeping anything from coming between ourselves and our Savior.

1 Peter 3:15 But **sanctify the Lord God in your hearts:** and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear

The Apostle Paul warns against the sins you do thinking no one sees.
1 Corinthians 10:21 *Ye cannot drink **the cup of the Lord**, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of **the Lord's table**, and of the table of devils. **Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?***

B. The opportunity to remember your new identity in Christ

1 Peter 2:9. *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:*

IV. Communion is a time to Prepare for the Jesus' Return (verse 26) Jesus is coming again to this earth.

A. God has set a time for Jesus' return and there is nothing anyone can do to change that.

Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;

B. God is allowing us to prepare ourselves for His coming

*1 John 3:1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon [given to] us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be [and we don't yet know what our life will be like when He returns]: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And **every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself**, even as he is pure.*