

High Expression and the Holiest Exercise

1 Corinthians 11:17 – 34



~ Our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God comes to the single-most revered liberty we have in Christ: the Lord's Supper. This outward expression of our Christian faith should be regarded as the most holy of sacraments. We're all going to gather around the Lord's Table in this report and partake in Him, spiritually speaking. Receiving communion in Corinth had sunk to a level of, well – blaspheme at the time in which we are studying. The Corinthians should have been coming together to receive a great spiritual blessing; but to them it was a time of fighting and arguing – mostly about carnal issues, of course.

In this section of Scripture, Paul presents God's instructions concerning the very bad situation that happened in Corinth. Interestingly, all four Gospel accounts record the institution of the Lord's Supper; whereas the birth of Christ is not found in the synoptic Gospels. The Lord's Supper speaks of Jesus death; and Jesus never commanded the apostles to remember His birthday; only His death, burial and resurrection....

17 Now in this that I command unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse.

18 For first of all, when ye believers come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.

19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

~ Paul knew there would be some who would split off in division; which explains all cults and isms. God permits false religion to draw the wicked away from the True and Living church — because He knows they would

harm it. The church today is jam-packed with members who are *rank* unbelievers. God allows them to be led astray and believe a lie and, my friends, that should be absolutely terrifying to you. Heresy flies every which way in religious circles today; and people separate into isolated cells. Even so, that which is genuine is revealed by the Spirit of God....

²⁰ When ye come together therefore into one place, it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper.

²¹ For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

²² What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.

²³ For I 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:

~ The Lord Jesus gave the apostles direct revelation from the Father Himself concerning the Lord's Supper; and Paul places the importance on par with taking the Gospel message to a lost and dying world. Paul had received direct revelation regarding the Gospel and direct revelation regarding the Lord's Supper, too. The Lord apparently gave Paul special instruction at some other time because, of course, Paul wasn't present with Him in the Upper Room. It can be difficult to interpret the relationship of the Lord's Supper to today's church because there is no parallel to follow. At the time in which we are studying, the Lord's Supper would have been preceded by a social meal, usually in someone's home.

Acts 2:⁴⁶ And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, ⁴⁷ Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Aristides, the Athenian philosopher from the early second century, described the way Christians of his day lived their lives saying, "...they praise Him always. If one of their own passes from this world they rejoice and give thanks to God! If a child chance to die in its infancy they praise God mightily and declare this is not their home and this earth is not their reward" ~

So, on the dying embers of the fading Jewish feast of Pentecost, the Lord Jesus taught the apostles something new in the Lord's Supper. By the time we are studying in Corinth rolls around, they had bastardized the meaning of the celebration until it had become perfectly meaningless. Fellowship was broken because they were not sharing proportionately or fairly. The result was tragic, because some people went hungry, and there was no one to help them partake in the sacrament of the church.

Worse than that, some were getting drunk, and perverted the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Lord's Supper by acting vile and obnoxious. Their understanding and comprehension retention was always fuzzy and hazy. Others wanted to perform the ritual exactly as the Lord had done. Well, for starters, that means it could only be done at night; and the forces of hell were present in the Upper Room against Jesus. Sin was knocking on the door, and it was demanding more than a pound of flesh. Interestingly, breaking bread automatically infers distribution; which crushed the Corinthian proverb of 'every man for himself.' The church in Corinth had big problems, friends....

²⁴ And 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.

²⁵ After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

²⁶ For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

34 And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

~ The Lord's Supper is a commemoration, but it is also a communion. The elements – bread and wine – are two of the most frail things known to man. Neither can be preserved more than a few days. Our present, vital relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ is a commitment that looks forward to the future – eternally. We show forth the Lord's death, my beloved. We're looking for our Blessed Hope, the glorious appearing of our Savior and Lord Christ Jesus, the Son of God.

Discerning the spiritual body of Christ is critical. Luther said, "*.... by, in, through, with, over, and under the Bread of Life, you get the body of Christ.*" Well, I'm not sure I understand that. What I do understand is that the Protestant view, taught by Swingly, is that the Lord's Supper is merely a symbol. I disagree, it's much more than that. There's meaning to life when

we discern the body of Christ. It's nice to have bread in our mouth; but it's better to have Christ in our heart. I pray He will reveal Himself to you and to me today and forevermore because, in our next report, we're going from carnalities to total and complete spiritualities ~

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