

THE LORD'S SUPPER; 1 COR. 11:17-31 (Ed O'Leary)

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY WE TAKE A BREAK FROM PHILIPPIANS.

▶▶ And since this is Communion Sunday, ~ I thought we would take a break from Philipians to talk about the Lord's Supper.

▷▷ My purpose in this is to refresh our understanding of the Lord's Supper ~ and also to refresh our understanding of how we are to approach and partake of the Lord's table.

▶▶ And here's how we're going to do that.

▷▷ 1st, ~ we're going to spend a few minutes making some observations about the Lord's Supper from [1 Cor. 11:17-31](#).

↳↳ Now, ~ obviously we're not going to study this passage in depth or look at all of the details.

→→ We're basically just going to breeze through this passage by briefly surveying it and making some observations which highlight some of the main points Paul makes here.

▷▷ And then, ~ after concisely looking at [verses 17-31](#), ~ I'll finish by sharing two very brief observations in passing about the Lord's Supper in general.

▶▶ Ok, ~ let's dig in.

IN 1 COR. 11:17-31, ~ PAUL GIVES A LENGTHY DISCUSSION OF THE LORD'S supper.

IN VERSES 17-22, ~ PAUL EXPRESSES HIS DISPLEASURE WITH THE CORINTHIAN church in the way they were conducting the Lord's Supper. ~~ Read

▶▶ Paul does not commend them in their celebration of the Lord's Supper.

▶▶ Why? ~ Well, ~ as we just read, ~ because their celebration was chaotic, ~ improper, ~ and did more harm than good.

▶▶ Here's the observation from these verses.

▷▷ The Lord's Supper should be celebrated decently ~ and in order ~ and in a way that is beneficial to all believers. ⇓⇓ 1/6

▶▶ Paul points this out in his discussion of orderly worship a few chapters later, ~ in 1 Cor. 14.

▷▷ In 1 Cor. 14:26, ~ Paul writes, ~ "What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up."

↪↪ IOW, ~ When believers come together it should be for the benefit of other believers. ~ Our gatherings should do more good than harm.

→→ So when we celebrate . . . it should be in a way that is beneficial for others.

▷▷ In 1 Cor. 14:33a, ~ Paul says, ~ "For God is not a God of confusion but of peace."

↪↪ God does not want us to be in disorder but in harmony and peace. ~ He wants everything to be done peacefully and in order, ~ including observance of Lord's Supper.

▷▷ And in 1 Cor. 14:40, ~ Paul writes, ~ "But all things should be done decently and in order." ~ The Lord wants everything done in a proper and orderly way, ~

↪↪ And we do that here

NOW LET'S TURN OUR ATTENTION TO VERSES 23-26. ~~ READ

▶▶ 6 brief observations from these 4 verses to refresh our understanding of the Lord's Supper and of how we are to approach and partake.

▶▶ 1st, ~ notice that Jesus instituted the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. ~ Not a church committee. ~ This shows some of the importance of celebrating it.

▶▶ 2nd observation. ~ (Display vv. 24-25) ~ Notice what Jesus says. ~ "Do this."

▷▷ This is a command. ~ This is not something optional for believers. ~ 2x

▶▶ However, ~ and this is the 3rd observation, ~ there is no set schedule for celebrating it.

▷▷ (Display vv. 25-26) ~ Jesus says, ~ "as often as you drink it." ~ And Paul says "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup."

▷▷ There apparently is no prescribed schedule for the observance of the Lord's Supper. ~ It's left up to individual churches as to how often to partake. ~ Do but you choose . . .

▷▷ Monthly ~ Weekly ↵ 2/6

▷▷ Christian liberty. ~ Even though Paul was talking about days, ~ the principle behind Rom. 14:5 applies here.

→→ "One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind." ~ Prefer 1/m

▶▶ Now let's note the 4th observation from verses 23-26. ~ More time on this than others.

▷▷ (Display vv. 24-25) ~ Notice in verse 24, ~ Jesus says, ~ "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

▷▷ And in verse 25, ~ He says, ~ "Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

▷▷ We observe here that twice Jesus says, ~ "Do this in remembrance of me."

▷▷ Jesus is emphasizing this. ~ He puts an emphasis on remembering what He has done for us. ~ Cross/bore sins.

▷▷ And let's think about this. ~ The L. S. is a constant reminder of at least two things.

↳↳ 1st, ~ it's a constant reminder that we could not and did not save ourselves.

→→ Every time we partake of the Lord's Supper it should prompt us to recall Paul's words in Eph. 2:8-9.

↳↳ "8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

↳↳ boast in the Lord.

→→ We should also be prompted to recall Paul's words in Titus 3:4-7

↳↳ 2nd, ~ the Lord's Supper is a constant reminder that our salvation was costly.

→→ In 1 Pet. 1:18-19, ~ Peter says, ~ LEB ~ "18 because you know that you were redeemed from your futile way of life inherited from your ancestors not with perishable things like silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb."

▷▷ Remembering what Jesus did for us, ~ and the constant reminder that we did not redeem ourselves & that our salvation was extremely costly to Jesus ~ 7

↳↳ should produce within us extreme gratitude for what Jesus has done for us. 11 3/6

▶▶ Whenever we celebrate the Lord's Supper, ~ Paul says in [verse 26](#) that we "proclaim the Lord's death."

▷▷ We observe here, ~ our 5th observation from [verse 23-26](#), ~ we observe here that every time we do celebrate the Lord's Supper the gospel is preached.

↪↪ Think about it, ~ the Lord's Supper is a visible, ~ wordless sermon that proclaims the message of the Cross.

▶▶ Now for a moment, ~ let's note the 6th and last observation from [verses 23-26](#).

▷▷ And after this, ~ we'll briefly turn our attention to [verses 27-31](#).

▷▷ Notice in [verse 26](#) Paul says, ~ "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

▷▷ The Lord's Supper is also a reminder that Jesus is returning.

▷▷ So we observe that, ~ in addition to focusing on the past and what Jesus has done, ~ Paul wants us to focus on the promise that Jesus is returning.

NOW LET'S BRIEFLY FOCUS ON VERSES 27-31. ~~ READ

▶▶ Observe that [verses 27-31](#) show us that we are to approach and partake of the Lord's Supper reverently and with the utmost respect.

▷▷ When we celebrate the Lord's supper, ~ I don't think it's too strong to say that we should be reminded of God's words to Moses [when He appeared to Moses in the burning bush](#). ~ Ex. 3:5.

↪↪ "Then he said, 'Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.'"

▶▶ Now let's briefly survey [verses 27-31](#) and note some additional observations.

▶▶ In [verse 27](#), ~ Paul says, ~ "Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord."

▷▷ Participating "in an unworthy manner" entails, ~ I would strongly suggest, ~ [77](#)

↪↪ coming to the communion table in an irreverent, ~ ungrateful, ~ and sinful way and therefore sinning even more. [77 4/6](#)

▶▶ And observe in [verse 28a](#) that Paul calls upon us to examine ourselves.

▷▷ Paul says that before we partake of the Lord's Supper, ~ 77

↳↳ we are to look at ourselves to make sure we are approaching the Lord's Supper in a respectful and grateful way ~ and to make sure we are not harboring any sin in our heart.

▷▷ Jesus' words in [Matt. 5:23-24](#) apply

▷▷ After our self-examination, ~ Paul says in [verse 28b](#), ~ "and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup."

↳↳ The word "so" implies and emphasizes that we are to examine ourselves first and only then "eat of the bread and drink of the cup."

→→ NIV ~ "Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup."

↳↳ Which means if we don't examine ourselves first, ~ we are partaking of the Lord's table unworthily.

▶▶ Notice in [verses 29-30](#) the severe discipline God brought upon the believers who were partaking of the Lord's Supper in an irreverent, ~ ungrateful, ~ and sinful way.

▷▷ "29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.

▷▷ Show us 2 things. ~ I'll just give them to you and then you can think about them.

↳↳ 1st, ~ there are consequences for partaking in a disrespectful, ~ thankless, ~ and sinful manner. ~ God will discipline us.

↳↳ And 2nd, ~ God's severe discipline of the church in Corinth shows us that God takes how we approach and treat partaking of the Lord's Supper very, ~ very seriously.

▶▶ Finally, ~ i.e., ~ for [verses 17-31](#), ~ note what Paul says in [verse 31](#). ~ "But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged." ~ Point Paul's making is this.

▷▷ If we examine ourselves in advance in order to acknowledge and confess any irreverence, ~ ingratitude, ~ or sin, ~ & then partake of the Lord's Supper, ~ will avoid God's discipline. ↴↴ 5/6

AS SAID AT THE BEGINNING, ~ AFTER VERSES 17-31, ~ 2 GENERAL observations about the lord's supper.

I WILL JUST GIVE YOU THESE IN PASSING FOR YOU TO PONDER.

▶▶1st, ~ the bread and juice do not become the actual body and blood of Jesus. ~~ It's symbolic. ~~ It pictures the reality of what Jesus has done for us.

▶▶2nd, ~ the Lord's Supper is for believers. ~~ It is for those who have confessed with their mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in their heart that God raised him from the dead.

▷▷If that defines you, ~ you are welcome to participate in the Lord's Supper.

OK, ~ LET'S HAVE A WORD OF PRAYER AND THEN CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER.

TURN RECORDER OFF. ~~ 6/6