

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 24TH, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

DIVISIONS AMONG YOU (1 CORINTHIANS 11:17-22) STRONG CORRECTION

Paul, in the previous section, commended the Corinthians for "holding to the traditions that were taught." Paul now rebukes them for the way they are **doing more harm than good when they gather.**

- They were **corrupting one of the most sacred Christian practices: the Lord's Supper**, by not honoring Christ and each other.

"I BELIEVE IT."

With the reports that were being brought to Paul, he addressed the divisions that hindered the Church externally. Here he addresses the divisions that existed as they came together.

- Paul did not question the validity of what was being reported because historically the Corinthians had shown the propensity to divide where there should be unity.

NECESSARY FACTIONS

After speaking on these divisions that are dishonoring, Paul mentions that there are factions that are necessary in the Church.

- Paul is saying that there should be evidence (fruit) to distinguish those who are true believers and those who are false professors. These factions are not only necessary but are beneficial as well.

THE FOCUS MUST BE ON CHRIST AND NOT SELF

The gathering that Paul is referring to is known as the Love Feast, which would culminate in the Lord's Supper.

- During the common meal, some people would act selfishly while others got drunk. **The heart behind the Lord's Supper had been lost due to focus being placed on themselves while neglecting the poor among them.**

PAUL'S STRONG AND PLAIN ADVICE

Paul asks, **"Don't you have homes to eat and drink in?"** His advice to those who acted selfishly, practiced gluttony, and were getting drunk was plain: do it at home!

- He was not condoning the behavior but, was advising that these things be done in private as **not to damage the reputation of the church and disgrace the Lord's Supper.**

THE LORD'S SUPPER (1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-26) THE LAST SUPPER

Paul tells the Corinthians, that as for the story of Jesus teaching His disciples about Communion, Paul has **"received from the Lord what he has passed on to them."**

- While Paul was not there firsthand, it is still trustworthy because **it was the Lord himself that gave to him, either directly or indirectly.**

"ON THE NIGHT, HE WAS BETRAYED."

The Gospels point out that it was not some outside force that led to Jesus' arrest, instead he was betrayed by someone within his camp, one of his own.

- The Gospel of John emphasizes how Judas, who betrayed Jesus, was present as Jesus humbled himself, washed the disciples' feet, and shared a final meal.

NEW MEANING AT THE PASSOVER MEAL

Jesus led the disciples in observance of the Passover Meal in remembrance of Israel's deliverance from Egypt.

- He used the same elements of the Passover Meal, however at the Last Supper, he inserted himself and his death on a cross and how he was creating a new covenant with his people.

"THIS IS MY BODY."

In the Passover Meal, unleavened bread was served to remind them of the bread that was eaten as they left Egypt in a hurry. In addition, leaven, or yeast, had been the picture of sins corruption.

- At the Last Supper, Jesus attributed his own body to that of unleavened bread, uncorrupted and **given for us.**

"THIS CUP IS THE NEW COVENANT."

The Passover Meal would have been celebrated with several different cups of wine, each having a separate significance. The cup spoke of here was the cup of redemption, or thanksgiving, which was in remembrance of Israel's redemption in Egypt.

- At the Last Supper, Jesus taught that His blood sealed a new covenant that redeemed His people from the penalty of sin.

THE NEW COVENANT

Jeremiah 3:31-40, describes the new covenant because of Jesus' work on the cross.

- The new covenant brings **inner transformation, permanent cleansing from sin, God's word and will** be written on our hearts, and a new **close relationship with God.**

"PROCLAIM THE LORD'S DEATH UNTIL HE COMES."

While the Lord's Supper does look back and remember what Christ accomplished on the cross, it also looks forward to the coming of Christ and the marriage supper of the lamb (Revelation 19:9).

- In Matthew 26:29, Jesus spoke of longing to enjoy this feast with his people in heaven.

SELF-EXAMINATION (1 CORINTHIANS 11:27-34)

UNITY NOT EXCLUSION

Paul communicated that we are to approach communion with reverence and a spirit of self-examination.

- **Paul did not write this section of his letter to exclude people from coming to the table, instead it is said to prepare us to receive communion with the right heart.**

"IN AN UNWORTHY MANNER..."

This is not a self-checking diagnosis to see if we are worthy, because we are not!

- Instead, to evaluate if we are taking communion in a worthy manner is to first **prepare the heart to remember what Jesus did for us**, while we were unworthy, and **reflect on if we are honoring the Lord with our conduct.**

COURSE CORRECTION

Paul tells the Corinthians that if we approach the table in an unworthy manner, with irreverence and unrepentance, then we invite God's corrective discipline.

- If we humble ourselves and change ourselves based on our evaluation, then we have corrected the issues so that God will not have to with His own hand.

GOD'S JUDGEMENT

Paul asserts to the Corinthians that some of the illnesses and death they had experienced had been a result of discipline.

- We cannot think for a moment that this means all sickness and death is a result of irreverence and unrepentance. Matthew 5:45 tells us that the rain falls on the just and the unjust.

"SO THAT WE ARE NOT CONDEMNED WITH THE WORLD."

This judgment that Paul speaks of is a corrective judgment and not an eternal judgment since there is not an article "the" in front of "judgment."

- **"This chastising is not a judge condemning a criminal, it is a father correcting a disobedient child"** (David Guzik).

FINAL INSTRUCTION

Paul instructs the church to welcome, or wait, on one another. This puts the focus on honoring Christ through unity and placing others before yourself, thereby ensuring no one is left out.

- Furthermore, he encourages those who are hungry and have the means to eat at home, to do so, giving the opportunity to the less fortunate to get food.

HONEST EVALUATION

- Paul did not say that we have to be worthy to take communion, but that we should only take it in a worthy manner.
- **Are we honest in evaluating our relationship with Christ?** (John 14:15)
- **Are we honoring Christ in word and deed?**
- **Are we too busy examining everyone else while neglecting to examine ourselves?**

THE CENTRALITY OF CHRIST IN OUR WORSHIP

- **What is the focus of our worship?** "Show me where a man spends his time and money, and I'll show you his god" (Martin Luther).
- Though preparation for Communion starts with us turning our attention inward, the focus of Communion is on Christ and not self.
- **"Do this in remembrance of me."**