

Sunday, June 9, 2019—The Lord’s Supper, Part 2 (For I Have Received of the Lord)

Introduction

- During the month of June, we are going to be studying some things regarding the Lord’s Supper as a lead up to observing the Lord’s Table on June 30, the last Sunday of the month.
- Historically, the Lord’s Table has been a sticking point for many Pauline Dispensationalists for different reasons. The following is a short list of those reasons:
 - *Relevance*—did Paul intend the Lord’s Table to be a permanent observance for the body of Christ during the dispensation of grace?
 - *Mode*—how should it be done? Too religious and reminiscent of the Catholic Mass.
 - *Frequency*—how often should it be done?
 - *Fear*—what about the verses that talk about eating and drinking unworthily and damnation?
- In summation, last week we looked at the following points:
 - *Terminology*—“the Lord’s table” (I Cor. 10:21), “the Lord’s Supper” (I Cor. 11:20), “communion” (I Cor. 10:16).
 - Taken together, the saints gather at the “Lord’s table” to eat the “Lord’s supper.” Communion is the fellowship i.e., result that we together as saints around the Lord’s table.
 - *Ordinances*—the “ordinances” (I Cor. 11:2) and “traditions” (I Thess. 2:15, 3:6) that Paul “delivered” unto the Corinthians were for their “orderly” functioning as an assembly both personally and collectively.
 - *Coming Together*—last we looked at how the Corinthians were conducting themselves when they came together (I Cor. 11:17-18, 20-21).

Eating the Lord’s Supper

- I Corinthians 11:20—one problem that existed when the Corinthians came together was their attitude and conduct as it pertained to the “Lord’s Supper.”
- According to verse 20, the primary goal of the Corinthians coming together “into one place,” was “not to eat the Lord’s Supper.” Paul’s comments here indicate that many believed that it was.

- I Corinthians 11:21— *For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper*—the Corinthians were literally eating a meal when they came together. The English word “supper” means the following, according to *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary*:
 - “The evening meal. The dinner of fashionable people would be the *supper* of rustics.”
- The primary meanings of the Greek word translated “supper” are: “a formal meal usually held at the evening,” and “food taken at evening.”
- This “supper” was out of order. “Everyone” or all the Corinthians were looking out for themselves first in taking their own supper without regard for other people.
- *and one is hungry, and another is drunken*—the second half of the verse tells you the results of their conduct in the first half. Some didn’t get anything to eat and went away hungry while others partook to the excess and became drunk.
- This verse challenges our traditional understanding of the Lord’s Supper in the following ways:
 - The Corinthians were eating a meal not just crackers and juice. They were not practicing a sanitized version of the Catholic Mass.
 - Paul rebukes them for the manner in which they were eating this meal, as a gluttonous drunken feast.
 - I Corinthians 5:2, 8, 11-13—Paul told the Corinthians not to be with this fornicator and to put him out of the assembly. In doing so this person would not have eaten the Lord’s Supper with the Corinthians.
- I Corinthians 11:22— Notice that this verse is comprised of a series of questions that end with a statement.
- *What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in?*—yes, the Corinthians had houses to eat and drink in. They needed to use them for their rightful purpose.
- *or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not?*—their conduct was causing the less fortunate among them to experience shame. Imagine how those who were sent away from the church meeting hungry felt towards themselves as well as the conduct of others.
- *What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this?*—Paul gives his answer to these questions when he states, “I praise you not.” This statement takes you back to the beginning of the paragraph in verse 17 where Paul said, “Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better but for the worse.”

For I Have Received of the Lord

- I Corinthians 11:23— The first things to note about verse 23 is that it marks the beginning of a new paragraph that runs through the end of verse 25. As we have seen, the previous paragraph brought up the issue of the “Lord’s supper” and how the Corinthians were behaving with respect to it.
- *For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you*—the first phrase of verse 23 ought to take the reader back to verses 1 and 2.
 - Paul follows Christ.
 - Christ “delivered” “ordinances” unto Paul for the body of Christ to follow.
 - Paul “delivered” the “ordinances” to the Corinthians.
 - The Corinthians “remember” Paul by keeping the “ordinances” that Paul “delivered” unto them.
 - When the Corinthians follow Paul by keeping the “ordinances” he “delivered” unto them they are in fact following Christ.
 - Paul could “praise” them when they remember him by keeping the ordinances.
- I Corinthians 11:17, 22—Paul can’t praise them because they aren’t keeping the ordinances/traditions in the way Paul delivered them unto the Corinthians.
- I Corinthians 11:23—Paul says that he received the information regarding the Lord’s Supper from the Lord and then delivered that information to the Corinthians. The risen and glorified Jesus Christ gave Paul information regarding the Lord’s Supper as part of the body of truth given to the Body of Christ. Just as Christ gave Paul other revelations about the present dispensation of Grace included within that information was the issue of the Lord Supper.
 - Galatians 1:11-12—Paul received the contents of his gospel by the revelation of Jesus Christ.
 - I Corinthians 15:3—Paul delivered unto the Corinthians that which he also received. The language is the same.
- *That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread*—the reference here is clearly to what transpired in the upper room between the Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles the night before the crucifixion.

- Therefore, the meaning of the Lord’s Table transcends the significance of what happened in the upper room on the night before Christ’s crucifixion. The elements are the same, but their significance is now fully understood through the revelation committed to Paul.
- I Corinthians 11:24-25— Verses 24 and 25 are meant to summarize the critical aspects of what transpired the night Christ was betrayed as it pertains to what Paul delivered unto the Corinthians. They are not meant to be a complete retelling of the events in the upper room.
- Matthew 26:17-28
- Mark 14:12-24
- Luke 22:14-20
 - It should be noted that in all three of these accounts the apostles are eating Passover meal. Christ blessed the bread and wine as part of a meal they were already eating. It is important to further note that when Paul writes to the Corinthians, he does not call what he delivered unto them by its Jewish name i.e., the Passover but rather the “Lord’s Supper.”
- Acts 20:7—the phrase “break bread” is used throughout scripture to refer to eating a meal.
 - Luke 24:35
 - Acts 2:42, 46
 - Acts 20:11
 - Acts 27:35
- What did Christ mean when he held up a piece of bread and said this is my body? Is he literally saying that the piece of bread was his body or that it was symbolic of his body?
 - John 10:7—is Christ a piece of wood on hinges with a knob? Clearly not. If I hold up a map of Michigan and say this is Michigan you understand my meaning. It represents MI. It shows things about MI but it is not really MI.
- When Paul says, “take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you:” he is clearly speaking in a symbolic way. Despite what the Catholic Church says the bread and wine are not literally transformed into the body and blood of Christ.
- I Corinthians 11:24-25— it is important to notice that the Lord’s Supper is meant as a remembrance of what Christ did.

- Luke 22:19-20
- Matthew 26:28—Christ shed his blood for “many” for the remission sins.
 - Matthew 20:28
- Mark 14:24—once again, Christ shed his blood for “many.”
- I Timothy 2:4-7—Paul is the “due time” testifier of all that Christ accomplished on the cross. It is through Paul that the full understanding of what Christ accomplished on the cross is made known and revealed. Christ gave himself as a ransom for “all.”
 - Ephesians 2:13-18
 - Colossians 2:13-15
- When believers today observe the Lord’s Supper, they reinforce the truth of the mystery. The fact that God is today in the dispensation of Grace forming of body of both Jews and Gentiles that are being reconciled to God equally in one body by the cross. Observance of the Lord’s Supper as Paul delivered it not only reflects upon what Christ did on our behalf and in our stead; but also reaffirms before the principalities and powers in heavenly places the basis upon which God could for the body of Christ, the cross work of this son our savior the Lord Jesus Christ.