

Sunday, June 16, 2019—The Lord's Supper, Part 3 (Eating and Drinking Unworthily)

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.
- The last two weeks we have noted the following core issues pertaining to the Lord's supper:
 - I Corinthians 10:21—"the Lord's table" is the place where the saints gather.
 - *Counterpoint*—the table of devils where the lost gather.
 - I Corinthians 11:20—"the Lord's Supper" is eaten around the Lord's table with the saints. It is the breaking of bread done in remember of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - *Counterpoint*—the lost sacrifice and drink unto devils (I Cor. 11:20-21)
 - I Corinthians 10:16—"communion" is the fellowship that results from the saints gathering at the Lord's table to eat the Lord's supper.
 - *Counterpoint*—the lost via their religious observances have fellowship with devils (I Cor. 11:20).

I Corinthians 11:26

- I Corinthians 11:26—how often is an assembly supposed to observe the Lord's Table? As oft or as often as that assembly deems necessary. There is no set pattern for how often or when the Lord's Supper should be observed.
 - I Corinthians 11:17-20—recall from the context that the Corinthians were observing their unorderly version of the Lord's Supper every time they came together. Paul does not rebuke them for their frequency in observing the Lord's table but the manner in which it was being conducted.
- This verse also touches on the duration of the Lord's Supper during the current dispensation of grace. How long is this practice to be observed in verse 26? "Till he come."
 - I Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-18
 - Philippians 3:20
 - Colossians 3:4

- Has the Lord come yet to catch away the body of Christ unto himself? No. So is the Lord's Supper still for today? Yes, according to I Corinthians 11:26.
- *Ye do show*—the verb here is a present active indicative which means that observance of the Lord's Table shows the Lord's death in the present. This showing of the Lord's death in the present is to continue until the Lord comes.
- The Lord's Supper is to serve as an outward testimony of the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ for the duration of the dispensation of grace. The Lord's Supper not only reminds the believer of the great love wherewith Christ loved us but is also serves to remind the principalities and powers in heavenly places that their goose is cooked i.e., they are put to open shame via the cross work of Christ.
 - I Timothy 2:4-7
 - Ephesians 2:13-18
 - Colossians 2:13-15

I Corinthians 11:27-29

- These three verses have been the source of much confusion in the body of Christ even among Pauline grace believers. We need to understand these verses in light of the context we have already studied.
- I Corinthians 11:20-21—we already know that the Corinthians had been making a mockery of the Lord's Supper through their conduct. They had turned the remembrance of the Lord's death into a gluttonous/drunken party.
- Based upon these verses would you say that the Corinthians were eating and drinking in a worthy or an unworthy manner? I would say they were behaving "unworthily" as verse 27 states.
- Is drunkenness a sin? Yes.
 - Galatians 5:19-21
 - Ephesians 5:18
- So, where the Corinthians sinning in their observance of the Lord's Supper? Yes. What is the Lord's Supper designed to commemorate? Christ's death for sin. So, the Corinthians through their conduct, are acting in a manner that is contrary to event they are commemorating. They are sinning in their commemoration of Christ's payment for their sins.

- *Verse 28*—note the contrast “but” at the beginning of verse 28. The verb “examine” is a present active imperative. Paul is commanding the Corinthians to be examining their own conduct. Paul should not have needed to tell them to stop sinning during their observance of the very event designed to commemorate Christ’s death for sin.
 - I Corinthians 2:15—Paul is stepping in in I Corinthians 11 to judge the Corinthians on the matter of the Lord’s Supper because they had failed to judge the matter for themselves.
- Paul does not forbid these carnal Corinthians from eating the Lord’s Supper he tells them to eat and drink after they have examined themselves on the matter. This verse has a specific meaning in this context.
- *Verse 29*—those who were eating and drinking “unworthily” i.e., were gluttons and drunken were damming themselves. Does this mean that they were damming themselves to hell? No, it means they were damming themselves to the natural consequences of their actions.
- Note once again the Corinthians problem in verse 29 is a lack of discernment. It never occurred to them that it wasn’t becoming of them as saints to be sinning during they commemoration of Christ death for their sins.
- The context and content of this passage is very specific to what was going on in Corinth. The point of the passage is not to lord over all saints throughout the dispensation of grace whether they are partaking in the Lord’s Table “unworthily.” The Corinthians were partaking “unworthily” therefore Paul addressed them accordingly. His rebuke of their conduct would most certainly apply to believers today who were conducting themselves similarly to the Corinthians i.e., turning the Lord’s Supper into a gluttonous/drunken feast.
- The damnation of verse 29 is not coming upon them from God. Rather they are bringing it upon themselves via their own conduct. If they are going to eat, drink, and be merry to the excess are there going to be natural ramifications of that behavior? Yes.
- Are there any believers who are unworthy to partake in the Lord’s Supper? No! If you are in Jesus Christ are you worthy to partake of the Lord’s Table. If you have some sin in your life are you worthy? Yes, because the issue is not your worth or merit but the imputed merits of Christ to your account. We have a complete and perfect position in Jesus Christ that is unchanged by our faults and failure in this life.
 - Romans 3:24—we who have trusted the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the only total and complete payment for our sins are justified and have God’s very righteousness imputed to our account.
 - Romans 5:1—because we are justified and have God’s very righteousness imputed to our account, we have peace with God.

- Ephesians 1:7-9
- Colossians 1:14, 2:13—we have the total and complete forgiveness of all our sins in Jesus Christ.
- I Corinthians 11:27, 29—while every believer is worthy to partake in the Lord’s Supper based upon the finished work of Christ the Corinthians were doing so in an “unworthy” manner in terms of how they were conducting themselves.
- The very fact that the Corinthians were sinning in their conduct proves that their behavior was a sin for which Christ died for and for which the Corinthians had already been forgiven. Therefore, the damnation spoken of in verse 29 is not from the Lord with whom the Corinthians were at peace it was from themselves. They were reaping the fruit of their own sinful conduct.

I Corinthians 11:30

- For what cause? For the cause of the unworthy manner that they were eating and drinking in verse 29. How were they eating and drinking “unworthily” in the context? By allowing some to go hungry while others were drunken, according to verse 21.
 - I Corinthians 11:20-22
- Through their conduct some were weak and sickly among the Corinthians while others had died or sleep, according to verse 30. This is the damnation that the Corinthians brought upon themselves through their behavior in verse 29. God is not punishing the Corinthians with sickness and death for eating and drinking “unworthily.”
- I Corinthians 11:30—the reason some of the Corinthians are sick and dying is because of their own conduct not God’s judgment upon them.

I Corinthians 11:31

- This verse is simple and straightforward, if believers would judge their own thoughts, attitudes, and actions they would have no need to be judged by someone else.
 - I Corinthians 2:15
- Paul is stepping in in I Corinthians 11 to judge the Corinthians on the matter of the Lord’s Supper because they had failed to judge the matter for themselves.
- Notice that judgment and discernment go together.

I Corinthians 11:32

- The verb “are judged” is in the present tense. The reality is this, we are going to be judged either by ourselves or someone else, according to verse 31.
- When people read that “we are chastened of the Lord” they want to say, “see God was chastening the Corinthians with sickness and death on account of their conduct.
- Paul has been chastening the Corinthians throughout the duration of this passage. He has been seeking to correct their poor behavior through the word of God. Even in Israel’s program direct physical punishment was the not only form that chastening took.
 - Psalms 94:10-12—this type of chastening takes the form of correction via instruction. The law, God’s word to Israel provided correction which is a form of chastisement.
- I Corinthians 11:22—God is using the apostle of the gentiles to chasten i.e., correct the Corinthians through this epistle that he is writing unto them. Paul expects the Corinthians to correct their poor behavior and conduct on this matter because of reading this letter. Had they judged themselves on this matter there would have been no need to Paul to have addressed them on it.
- The word translated “chastened” in verse 32 is elsewhere translated as “taught,” “instructing,” and “teaching” in the New Testament.
 - Acts 22:3—Paul was “taught” the law by Gamaliel.
 - II Timothy 2:25—We are to be “instructing” i.e., correcting those who oppose themselves.
 - Titus 2:12—the grace of God is “teaching” us how to live Godly in Christ Jesus in this present evil world.

I Corinthians 11:33-34

- Even after everything he has said does Paul tell them not to eat the Lord’s Supper? No. He just tells them to do it in an orderly manner. They are to “tarry” i.e., delay or to defer “one for another.” This is the exact opposite of what they were doing.
 - I Corinthians 11:21
- Paul tells them that if they are hungry to eat at home. In other words, don’t come to church so hungry that you gorge yourself to death at the Lord’s Table.
 - I Corinthians 11:22

- If they would follow these principles, they would be following the ordinance the way Paul delivered it unto them and he would be able to praise them in so doing.

Final Thoughts on the Lord's Supper

- It is for today.
- It was a meal.
 - We are going to have a potluck style meal on June 30.
- It is for believers.
 - This is not an outreach event. It is a meal for us to enjoy together as members of the body of Christ.
- There is no set frequency in terms of how often it should be eaten.
 - We are choosing to observe the Lord's table four times a year on the 5th Sunday of every month.
- It shows the Lord's death till he comes.
- Every believer is worthy.