

# The Lord's Supper

Taken from studies in 1 Corinthians 11:17-26

*By Pastor Art Watkins*

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

When the church meets together it should be for the good of the members. Every service should in some way edify, comfort, teach, instruct, encourage and provoke the saints unto love and good works. We should be better off spiritually as a result of meeting together.

But, the church in Corinth met together for the worse instead of the better. They were not edified and encouraged or provoked unto love and good works. It was just the opposite, especially when it came to the Lord's Supper.

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

If you walked into the church at Corinth you would not have seen unity among the members. You would have seen division. There were at least 4 schisms in the church of Corinth. It was a carnal church divided up into 4 groups. See 1 Cor. 1:10-12

They failed to see that the members of the church are not only members of Christ's body, but member's one of another. You would get the idea in Corinth that the church had four heads. Today it is even worse. There are 100's if not 1000's of divisions among the members of the body of Christ today.

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

There were heresies in the church of Corinth such as denying the resurrection of the dead in chapter 15 and perverting the Lord's Supper in chapter 11 plus the rampant carnality throughout the church. Heresies always cause divisions. One side believes the truth and the other side opposes the truth by adding to it, subtracting from it or changing it. Heresies usually split the church. See Acts 20:29-30

The one good thing that comes out of heresies is that those who are approved of God and are true to the faith are made manifest. Truth wins out over error and those who believe the truth and are approved of God are

made manifest to the church and those who oppose truth are also made manifest.

See 1 John 2:18-19

**20 When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not 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.**

What the Corinthians called the Lord's Supper was not the Lord's Supper and bore no resemblance to it. They perverted it and turned it into a feast of gluttony and drunkenness.

\*The Lord's Supper is a common meal where everyone partakes of it at the same time, as Christ and the apostles did in Matthew 26:26-30. But they were divided up into at least four different factions eating and drinking among themselves and excluded those who were not of their faction.

\*The Lord's Supper is not a huge banquet or feast of food and drink. The only ingredients were a simple loaf of bread and a cup.

\*The Lord's Supper is a solemn assembly where the death and resurrection of Christ are remembered and honored. It was not a party, feast or a banquet or celebration of the flesh.

They had turned the Lord's Supper into a feast of gluttony and drunkenness just like the feasts they had in the idol's temple they came out of. It appears that they incorporated into the Lord's Supper the same heathen practices they practiced in the idol's temple. They turned the Lord's Supper into the same kind of feast of gluttony and drunkenness they held when they worshipped idols. What they did when they worshipped idols they continued to do when they observed the Lord's Supper. That is why Paul said; this is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

(Many times when people get saved they carry over into their Christian life the same habits and practices and beliefs they had when they were lost.)

**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:**

**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.**

Paul's description of the Lord's Supper bore no resemblance to what they called the Lord's Supper. It was the opposite of what they did. And they knew better, because he delivered it to them when he was with them in Acts 18. Therefore, they were without excuse.

\*The Lord's Supper is a chance for all the members of the church to affirm their faith in the death and shed blood of Christ together publically. It is a collective testimony of our faith in Christ's death and shed blood to save us and keep us saved. As we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus, we also confess the Lord Jesus when we partake of the bread and cup of the Lord's Supper.

\*The Lord's Supper is a solemn remembrance of the price Christ paid to save us. God's people often forget it, but the Lord's Supper makes us remember it. That is why the word remembrance appears twice in the verses that define the Lord's Supper. It makes our minds focus on his death and shed blood. You cannot partake of the Lord's Supper without remembering and focusing on the awful price Christ paid to save us.

\*The purpose of the Lord's Supper is to remind us that the cross of Christ is the power of God unto salvation. No one should ever think the Lord's Supper is necessary for salvation or plays any part in salvation. The purpose of the Lord's Supper is to remind us and the world that the death and shed blood of Christ is the power of God unto salvation. The Lord's Supper should direct our attention to Christ and not the bread and cup that symbolize him. Any so called supper that emphasizes the bread and cup instead of the Savior who is symbolized by the bread and cup, is not of the Lord. It is not the Lord's Supper, but the supper of man or the devil. See 1 Cor. 10:20-21

\*The bread and cup of the Lord's Supper are symbols and not the substance of Christ's flesh and blood. This is obvious when you consider

the first time the Lord's Supper was observed. It was observed by Christ and his apostles before he died. His body was not dead, but was alive and with them physically. His blood was not shed when they observed the Lord's Supper. The broken bread had to symbolize his broken body for his body was alive and seated next to them. The cup had to symbolize his blood, for it was not even shed. They were symbols and not the substance or actual body and blood of Christ. How could the apostles even think that by eating the bread they were actually eating Christ's body when his body was alive and seated next to them? How could they think they were actually drinking the blood of Christ when his blood was still flowing in his veins in his body seated next to them?

The bread of the Lord's Supper represents his broken body on the cross, but his body was then with them living and had yet to be broken. The cup represents his blood that was shed from his dead body, but his blood was still in his living body and had not been shed. And there is no greater absurdity than to imagine his "living body" there changed at once to a "dead body," and then the bread to be changed into that dead body, and that all the while the "living" body of Jesus was before them as the Catholics believe.

\*The Lord's Supper is a perpetual memorial. He said observe it till he comes again, but it does not end at his coming. It will be observed in his coming kingdom. See Matt. 26:29

This refutes the idea of people who say the observance of the Lord's Supper was transitional or limited to the "Acts period" and observed by Jews only and has passed away. Paul did not say it has passed away for he said to observe it till the second coming of Christ and the Lord says he will observe it in his coming kingdom. If a person will not observe the Lord's Supper today what are they going to do in the coming kingdom of God when Jesus observes it? Are they going to ask him to be excused? Are they going to get up and walk out when Jesus observes it in the coming kingdom of God as I have seen them do today?

\*The Lord's Supper is a memorial for those who Christ died and shed his blood for. If Christ's body was broken for all men and if his blood was shed for all men, then all men who believe this should observe the Lord's Supper for it is a remembrance of it. It's a supper for all sinners, Jew or gentiles, who have faith in the death and shed blood of Christ to save them. It's not a "Jewish ordinance" as some say; it's a sinner's memorial of Christ's body that was broken for them and his blood that was shed for them.

\*The Lord's Supper is a sign that a new dispensation has begun and the old dispensation has passed away.

See verse 25

When we partake of the Lord's Supper we are saying in a figure that our sins have been forgiven by the blood of the New Testament and not the blood of the Old Testament. The New Testament took force when Christ the testator died (Heb. 9:16-17) and it is obvious it is in force today by the fact we are told to observe the supper of the New Testament which is the Lord's Supper. Both Old and New Covenants have a supper. The Old Covenant supper was the Passover supper. The New Covenant supper is the Lord's Supper. If God told us to observe the Lord's Supper then it's obvious the Old Covenant and its Passover supper have passed away and the New Covenant with its Lord's Supper has taken its place. If the New Covenant has not taken force, why did God tell us to observe the supper of the New Covenant? If we do not partake of the blessings and promises of the New Covenant, why does God tell us to observe the Lord's Supper which is the supper that calls to our minds the New Covenant that took force when Christ died? (See Hebrews 10:9-10)

Keep in mind also Paul was a minister of the New Covenant (2 Cor. 3:6) and as a minister he preached the blessings and promises of the New Covenant. We also partake of the blessings and benefits of the New Covenant according to Romans 15:27, Gal. 3:29 and Eph. 2:12-13. The greatest blessing of the New Covenant is the once for all sacrifice of Christ which the Lord's Supper is a memorial and remembrance of. The New Covenant has many spiritual promises, but the Lord's Supper draws our attention to just one and it's the most important; the cross of Christ and the permanent forgiveness of sins by his death and shed blood.

\*By partaking of the Lord's Supper we preach the death, burial, resurrection and coming again of Christ. Paul said: ***ye do shew the Lord's death till he come***. The word shew is translated declare in Acts 17:23. It is also translated preach in Acts 17:3, 1 Cor. 9:14, Philp.1:16 and Col. 1:28.

When we partake of the Lord's Supper we are shewing, preaching and declaring publically that we believe Christ died for us and the fact we are told to do it till he comes again, also says we believe he is coming again and if he is coming again after he died, that means we believe he was resurrected.