

We Commune Together: (1 Corinthians 11:17-34 & other selected Scriptures)

- The church has been given two ordinances to practice by our Lord:
 1. **Baptism** which is a one-time ordinance (reference message on Oct 13)
 2. **The Lord's Supper** (1 Cor. 11:20) which is an on-going ordinance (also called "*the breaking of bread*"-Acts 2:42, 46; 20:7, 11; "*communion*" (1 Cor. 10:16; "*the table of the Lord*" (1 Cor. 10:21); "*thanksgiving*" (Mark 14:23 – Greek word is where the eucharist is derived)
- This supper was originally a Passover meal God ordained for His people Israel to commemorate regarding His deliverance from their Egyptian bondage and the death angel. Jesus transformed it into a feast about Himself.
- We learn **four vital ways** to look and practice the significance of the Lord's Supper.

1. **Look around and rejoice in your oneness together in Christ** (1 Cor. 11:17-22, 33-34; 10:16-17)

- Conflict undermines the oneness God desires we experience and rejoice in together (v. 17-22)
- This ordinance is designed to be practiced together as "*one body*" (1 Cor. 10:16-17), so we live unselfishly in the church (1 Cor. 11:33-34)

2. **Look back and remember Christ's saving work on the cross** (1 Cor. 11:23-25)

- Paul captures the importance of this ordination in these words: "*do this in remembrance of Me*" (v. 24-25) as Jesus said (Luke 22:19)
- As we look at the cross, we remember **two things**:

1. The “**bread**” commemorates “*His body*” (v. 23b-24). In the Passover, this bread was the bread of affliction (Deut. 16:34) and Jesus applies it to Himself as one who incarnationally lived a perfect life and was afflicted by suffering and death.
 - This fulfilled Isaiah 53
 - The breaking of the bread did not represent Christ’s broken body since John 19:36 reminds us not a bone of Jesus’ body was broken

2. The “**cup**” commemorates “*the new covenant in His blood*” (v. 25)
 - When Jesus drank the cup, Matthew records it depicted God’s forgiveness of sins (Matt. 26:28; 2 Cor. 5:21)
 - The Old Covenant sacrifices could never take away sins (Heb. 10:11), but Jesus’s could and would (Heb. 10:12).
 - The “*new covenant*” refers to the Lord’s promise that He would “*forgive their iniquity and their sin I will remember no more*” (Jer. 31:31-34)
 - The church has viewed Jesus’ statements (“My body” & “My blood”) differently
 - Roman Catholics view it as the literal body and blood of Jesus (called transubstantiation)
 - Lutherans view it as Jesus being “*with, in and under*” the bread and wine, but not the literal body and blood (consubstantiation)
 - Reformed or Presbyterians view it as Jesus being spiritual present in the elements (receptionism)
 - Baptists and other evangelicals view the emblems as symbols that represent the meaning of Jesus’ body and blood.

3. **Look ahead and regularly practice this celebration until Jesus returns** (1 Cor. 11:26; Matt. 26:29; Mark 14:25)
 - Practicing this ordinance reminds us that our resurrected Lord is coming again.
 - “*Until He comes*” (v. 26), we regularly commemorate this ordinance (Acts 2:46: 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:26: “*as often as you eat...and drink*”)

4. **Look inside and review your heart's spiritual condition** (1 Cor. 11:27-32)

- God calls for **holy introspection** and **serious reflection** as He made some sick and others to die due to their unloving, irreverent, self-centered ways.

- It matters to God how we practice His ordinance, so we must employ **two safeguards** for our participation:
 - a) Beware of **partaking “in an unworthy manner”** (v. 27) or not judging the body rightly (v. 29). We can't dismiss sin or excuse it as inconsequential (Rom. 6:1-2).

 - b) Be careful to “**examine**” yourself (v. 28, 31)
 - Check your repentance of sin (need to confess and address your sins?)
 - Check your faith (need to make sure you are trusting in Christ and none of your efforts?)
 - Check your love (need to address any sinful or selfish conflicts?)