

Series: 1 Corinthians

## **“An Exhortation Regarding the Lord’s Supper”**

(Sunday Morning July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2026)

### **Passage: 1 Corinthians 11:17-34**

**O.S. Several Years Ago, an Insurance Analyst Was Given the Task of Creating a Comprehensive Study on the Safest Places a Person Can be to be Protected From Physical Harm, and This is What He Came Up With; He Said...**

**...do Not Ride in Automobiles: They Cause 20% of All Fatal Accidents  
...do Not Stay at Home, Because 17% of All Accidents Occur in the Home  
...do Not Walk on the Streets or Sidewalks: 14% of All Accidents Occur There  
...do Not Travel by Air, Rail, or Water; 16% of All Accidents Occur While Using These Modes of Transportation  
...But Only .001% of All Deaths Occur During a Worship Service at a Church, and These are Related to Previous Physical Disorders**

**-> And So, in Conclusion, He Said, “Go to Church ... It Could Save Your Life!”**

**-> Now, I am Glad That This Insurance Analyst Determined That the Church is a Safe Place for a Person to be, But This is Not What the Bible Teaches**

**-> The Bible Actually Says That the Church is a Dangerous Place for a Person to be IF (The Qualifier) They are Not Willing to Conduct Themselves Properly**

**-> In Fact, There are so Many Examples of This That I Need to Limit the Number of Examples That I Can Mention in the Introduction of This Sermon**

**Ex = In *Leviticus 10:1*, for Example, We are Told About Two of Aaron’s Sons Named Nadab and Abihu Who Offered “Strange Fire” to the Lord**

**-> We Don’t Know Exactly What This “Strange Fire” Was, But We Know That It Greatly Displeased the Lord**

**-> And Consequently, We are Told in *Leviticus 10:2* That “...fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD.” (E...That Was Obviously Not a Safe Worship Service for Nadab and Abihu)**

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**T.S. Of Course, That Was in the Old Testament, and Things Were a Little Different; So, Let’s Look at a Couple of Examples From the New Testament**

Ex = In *Acts 5*, We are Told About a Couple Named Anannia and Sapphira, and They Committed a Very Serious Act of Hypocrisy

- > They Sold a Piece of Property, and They Wanted Everyone to Think That They Had Given All of the Money to the Poor When, in Fact, They Had Not Done So
- > When They Came to Church, Peter Asked Them if This is What They Had Done; and to Make a Long Story Short, They Lied and They Died
- > Peter Confronted Ananias First; and After Ananias Lied, Peter Said, "... *You have not lied to men but to God.*" (*Acts 5:4*)
- > And in *Acts 5:5*, We Read "*And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came over all who heard of it.*"
- > And About Three Hours Later, a Very Similar Thing Happened to Ananias' Wife Sapphira Which Proved That They Had Conspired Together – and She Also Died

Ex = There is an Account in the Book of the *Revelation Ch 2* That is so Bad That It Reminds Me of the Fact That the Truth is Sometimes Stranger Than Fiction

- > Our Risen Lord Calls This Woman "*Jezebel*", But I Don't Think That Was Her Actual Name; I Think That Describes Her Character
- > She Was Committing Adultery, and She Was Leading Some of the Church Members Into Idolatry; and So, Our Lord Chose to Judge Her Accordingly
- > In *Rev 2:21-23*, We Find This Statement From Our Risen Lord "*21 'I gave her time to repent, and she does not want to repent of her immorality. 22 'Behold, I will throw her on a bed of sickness, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. 23 'And I will kill her children with pestilence, ...*"
- > That is Called Divine Justice, and It Reminds Us of the Fact That the Church is Not a Safe Place for Those Who Choose to Infect It With Their Sin

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T.S. We Have Another Example Here in This Passage of Scripture, and I Believe That It is Here to Warn Us About Mistreating Our Fellow Believers and Showing a Blatant Disregard for Those Things That are Sacred

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## I. Paul Described Their Perversion of the Lord's Supper

## 1) They Were Selfish

-> Their Sin, as I Just Stated in My Introduction, Revolved Around Two Things, and the First Was the Fact That They Were Mistreating Their Fellow Believers

*vs 17-21 (Read)*

-> We Need to Understand That, in Those Days, It Was Common for Churches to Participate in What Was Called "*The Love (Agape) Feast*" on a Weekly Basis

-> It Was Very Similar to What We Might Call "*A Pot Luck Meal*" in Our Day, and It Was Intended to Serve Some Very Constructive Purposes

-> To Begin With, It Was Designed to Break Down Racial and Social Barriers

-> In *Gal 3:28*, Paul Said, "*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*"

-> And Listen, There Was No Other Place in That Ancient World Where You Could See Those Barriers Coming Down Except in the Church

-> And This Love Feast Was Specifically Designed to Bring These Different Groups Together for a Time of Celebration and Fellowship

-> In Fact, the Greek Word Used Here is "*Diepnon*," and It Referred to the Main Meal of the Day Which Was Designed to Include Social Interaction

-> In Addition to This, This Would be the Best Meal That Some of the Poorer Members of This Church Would Enjoy All Week (Ex = Lamb Chops, Barbecue)

-> But These Carnal Christians in Corinth Managed to Find a Way to Mess This Up by Dividing Up Into Factions Based on Social Status and Being Downright Selfish

-> For You See, the Wealthy Members Got Tired of Sharing Their Good Food With Those Who Were Less Fortunate; So, They Started Getting There Early and Eating Up All of the Good Stuff

-> And as a Result of This, Most of the Poor Were Being Ostracized, and They Were Even Having to go Home Hungry -*Verse 21 (Read)*

St = Now, Before I Move on to the More Serious of These Two Sins, I Want to Point Out That This One is Really Bad All by Itself

- > For You See, I Can't Speak for You, But I Can Speak for Myself and Say That I Can't Think of Many Things That Could Make Me More Angry Than for Someone to Hurt or Insult One of My Children (Can I Get a Witness?)
- > And Listen, Our God Feels the Same Way About His Children, and Our God Takes It Personally When Someone Insults or Hurts One of His Own
- > In *Zech 2:8*, for Example, We Read "*For thus says the LORD of hosts, '...he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye.'*" (That's Where That Phrase Comes From)
- > But Listen, That Phrase "...touches the apple of His eye" Literally Refers to the "*Pupil*" of His Eye; in Other Words, It is Just Like Poking God in the Eye
- > Moreover, We Should All Know That God Hates It When We Abuse or Neglect the Poor
- > And That is Why Paul Came Down Really Hard on Them Here by Essentially Saying That the Church Would Have Been Better Off if They Would Have Chosen to Stay Home (What if I Had Said Something Like That to Someone?...)
- > And in Addition to This, Paul Gives Us a Truly Unique and Strange Statement About Factionalism Here in *Verse 19 (Read)*
- > The Thing That Makes This so Strange is That the Greek Word Paul Used for "*Must*" is the Word That is Transliterated "*DEI*", and It Literally Means That "*It is Absolutely Necessary*"
- > This is the Same Word Jesus Used to Describe the Necessity of the New Birth to Nicodemus in *John 3*, and It is the Same Word He Used to Describe His Being Delivered Over to be Crucified and to Rise Again on the Third Day

Q.n = Is He Saying That These Inevitable "*Factions*" Serve a Divine Purpose?

Ans = Apparently So

- > And the Purpose is to Reveal Who the "*Dokimoi*" Who "*The Approved Ones*" Are

Q.n = So, Let Me Ask a Question This Morning, Which Side do You Want to be On?

Ans = I Want to be Among "*The Approved Ones*" Who are Working for Unity

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T.S. 1) They Were Selfish

2) They Were Sacrilegious

- > Their Second Sin Was More Serious, and It Involved Partaking of the Lord's in an Unworthy Manner

-> In the Early Church, It Was Also Common for the Believers to Finish This Love Feast by Observing the Lord's Supper

-> And by the Time They Came to This Point, Some of the Believers in Corinth Had so Overindulged in Food and Wine They Were Drunk

Q.n = Can You Imagine Someone Showing Up to Partake of the Lord's Supper Who Was Drunk?

Ans = This is What We are Told About Them Right There are the End of *Verse 19*

-> And I Believe It is for This Reason, More Than the Previous Reason, That Some of Them Were Sick and Some Had Fallen Asleep

-> And BTW That Phrase "*Fallen Asleep*" Was a Euphemism for Death, It Tells Us That God Had Put Some of Them to Death Because of This Sin

-> So, This is a Good Time for Me to Remind All of Us of the Fact That God Does Discipline His Children, and There is a Such Thing as "*The Sin Unto Death*"

-> In *1 John 5:16*, the Apostle John Said, "...*There is a sin leading to death;...*" and I Gave You Three Examples of It in My Introduction

Q.n = Does This Mean That a Believer Who Commits This Serious of a Sin Will Wind Up in Hell?

Ans = No, Because That is Impossible, and Paul Makes That Clear in This Passage

-> I Can Show You This by Having You Jump Ahead to *Verse 32 (Read)*

Q.n = The Point is This: Are You Listening?

-> A Believer Who Commits a Sin Unto Death Will Not be Eternally Condemned, But He Will be Taken Home to Heaven Early to Prevent Him From Bringing Further Dishonor and Disgrace Upon His Lord and the Church

-> And in This Case, I Can Say That Showing Up Drunk and Handling the Elements of the Lord's Supper in an Irreverant Way Turned Out to be a Really Bad Idea

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T.S. I. Paul Describes Their Perversion of the Lord's Supper

## II. Paul Describes the Lord's Purpose for the Lord's Supper

### 1) It is a Time of Celebration

-> The Lord's Supper Began When Our Lord Observed the Last Legitimate Passover Feast With His Disciples; and Then, He Transformed It

- > We Know That This Was God's Intention All Along, Because These Two Elements Were Present Way Back in the Time of Melchizedek
- > After Abram's Victory Over the Four Kings, in *Genesis 14:18*, We Read, *"And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High."* (Bread and Wine...Isn't That Interesting?)
- > So, There are the Two Elements of the Lord's Supper, and We Can Connect This to *Hebrews 5:6* Which Says That Jesus is From the Priestly Order of Melchizedek
- > And Listen, the Fact That the Lord's Supper Emerged From the Passover is Probably Why These Early Christians Had Connected This *"Love Feast"* to It
- > For You See, This Was the Pattern, a Feast, and Then, the Lord's Supper, and They Now Had an Even Greater Reason to Celebrate and so do We

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### T.S. 1) It is a Time of Celebration

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#### 2) It is a Time of Appreciation

- > The Word Greek Word *"Eucharist"* Appears Here in *Verse 24*, and This Word Literally Means *"to Give Thanks"*
- > And So, Our Hearts Should be Filled With Great Gratitude When We Come to the Lord's Table
- > And Listen, Two of Most Beautiful Words in This Passage are the Words *"For You"* Which Appear in *Verse 24*
- > These Words Remind Us of the Fact That Jesus Death on the Cross Was Vicarious in Nature; He Died There *"For You"* and for Me
- > That's Why Jesus Said This in *John 10:18*; He Said, *"No one has taken it away from Me (His Life), but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again..."* (E...Jesus Didn't Have to Die)

#### 3) It is a Time of Commemoration

- > There are Some Christian Groups Such as the Roman Catholic Church That Regard the Lord's Supper as a Sacrament
- > The Word *"Sacrament"* Implies That the Lord's Supper Itself is a Source of Divine Grace

-> In Fact, This Statement Comes From a Catechism of the Catholic Church; It Defines a Sacrament as, and I Quote *“An Efficacious Sign of Grace Instituted by Christ and Entrusted to the Church by Which Divine Life is Dispensed to Us”*

Q.n = Can You go Along With That?

Ans = I Can't

-> I Can't go Along With That, Because I Know That the Only Way Divine Life is Dispensed to Any of Us is by Grace Through Faith Alone in Jesus Christ

-> We Cannot be Saved, in Other Words, by Partaking of the Lord's Supper, We Can Only be Saved by Placing Our Faith and Trust in Jesus

-> This is Why We Have Chosen as Southern Baptists to Call This an Ordinance Instead of a Sacrament, and We View These Elements as Being Symbolic

-> Catholics, by Way of Contrast, Believe in Transubstantiation, and They Teach That the Unleavened Bread Literally Becomes Jesus' Body and the Wine Literally Becomes Jesus' Blood; Those of Us Who are Baptists do Not Agree

*Luke 22:19 (Turn and Read)*

-> That Verse Tells Us That Paul Did Not Dream Up This Word *“Remembrance”* Himself; He Got That Word From Jesus Himself

Q.n = What Does This Word *“Remembrance”* Refer to?

Ans = It Refers to a Memorial and a Symbol

-> In Fact, I Think It is Almost Impossible to Suggest That Jesus Was Not Speaking Symbolically, Because He Had Not Yet Been Crucified (E...His Body/His Blood)

-> And I Will Add That This is Not the Only Time That Jesus Spoke Metaphorically, He Also Said *“I Am the door to the Sheepfold”* (John 10:7) (E... = Was That Lit.l?)

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#### 4) It is a Time of Proclamation

*Verse 25-26 (Read)*

-> I am Convinced That the Lord's Supper is One of the Best Evangelical Sermons That Anyone Could Ever Preach, Because It Simply Presents the Gospel in a Very Clear and Tangible Form

- > For You See, the Unleavened Bread Represents the Physical Body of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: His Physical Life, His Physical Death and His Physical Resurrection
- > And These are All Some Very Important Features of the Unadulterated Gospel
- > This is Important, Because as We Have Already Learned in Our Study of *1 Corinthians*, the Greeks Viewed All Matter as Being Evil, and This Included the Body
- > This is Why Those Eggheads Up on Mars Hill Sneered at Paul When They Heard Him Talk About the Physical Resurrection of Jesus
- > And There Arose Some Mystery Cults That Directly Attacked This Reality by Suggesting That Jesus Did Not Have a Physical Body
- > The Apostle John Was Addressing This in 2 *John 1:7* When He Said, *“For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.”*
- > And Listen, There are a Lot of so Called Christians Today Who Have a Real Problem Saying or Singing About Anything Related to the Blood of Christ
- > But of Course, That is Ridiculous, Because the Writer of Hebrews Tells Us in *Heb 9:22* That Without the Shedding of Blood There is No Remission of Sins
- > Talk About the Blood of Jesus, of Course, I’m Going to Talk About the Blood of Jesus; Sing About the Blood of Jesus, of Course, I’m Going to Sing About the Blood of Jesus
- > If Jesus Had Not Shed His Blood to Make an Atonement for My Sins, I Would be Hopelessly Lost; So, of Course, I’m Going to Talk and Sing About the Blood

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T.S. I. Paul Describes Their Perversion of the Lord’s Supper

II. Paul Describes the Lord’s Purpose for the Lord’s Supper

### III. Paul Describes Our Preparation for the Lord’s Supper

#### 1) There are Some Qualifications

- > We Know That the Lord’s Supper is Only for Believers, and We Know This Because Jesus Deliberately Waited Until After Judas Had Left the Upper Room Before He Instituted It



-> Some People Think That Judas Was a Genuine Believer, But the Bible Makes It Very Clear That He Was Not

-> In *John 6:70*, for Example, Jesus Said This; He Said, "... *'Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?'*"

-> And Just in Case Someone Didn't Know Who He Was Referring to, the Apostle John Tells Us in the Next Verse; He Said, "*Now He meant Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him.*" (John 6:71)

-> And Finally, in *John 17:12*, Judas is Called "*The Son of Perdition*", This Means That He Went to Hell, and No Believer Will Ever Wind Up in Hell

-> This is Why I Always Make This Statement as We Begin to Observe the Lord's Supper in Our Church; I Say,

*"If you have not yet received Jesus Christ as Your Lord and Savior and Been Baptized, It Would be Inappropriate for You to Observe the Lord's Supper"*

-> And Listen, That Statement Makes People Stop and Think, and I Have Had Some Interesting Things Happen Over the Years, Because of That Statement

-> I Had a Youth One Time, for Example, Who Had Been a Part of Our Church for Three or Four Years Come Up to Me and Say "*Pastor, I'm Saved, But I Know Something is Missing in My Christian Life, and I Know That I Need to be Baptized*"

-> And I Have Watched as Fathers or Mothers Have Stopped Their Children From Partaking of the Lord's Supper, and This Has Led to Some Great Conversations

-> And Listen, It is a Beautiful Thing When a Christian Father or Mother Seizes Upon Such a Teachable Moment to Proclaim the Meaning of the Gospel to Their Child

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T.S. 1) There are Some Qualifications

2) There Should be an Examination

-> I Need to Confess That I Probably Don't Emphasize This Enough During Those Times When We Observe the Lord's Supper

-> And to be Honest, That is Usually Because It Takes Some Time to be Able to Complete This Process During a Morning Service

-> And So, I am Glad to Take the Time to Mention It This Morning; Paul Says That It is Important to Take a Moment to Examine the Condition of Our Heart Before We Partake of the Lord's Supper

Q.n = What Should We be Concerned About?

Ans = Any Unconfessed Sin in Our Life

-> Unconfessed Sin Cannot Separate Us From the Cleansing Power of Jesus Christ, Because This is Something That is Continual

-> And That is Why the Aposle John Said This in *1 John 1:7*; He Said, *"but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."* (E...Continual)

-> Unconfessed Sin Cannot Separate Us From the Cleansing Power of Jesus Christ, Because This is Something That is Continual, But It Can Effect the Quality of Our Relationship With Him

-> And That is Why the Apostle John Went on to Say This in *1 John 1:9*; He Said, *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

Q.n = What Should We be Concerned About?

Ans = Our Relationships With Others

-> In *Matt 5:23-24*, Jesus Said, *"23 Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering."* (Ex = Stop Holding a Grudge)

-> Now, Having Said All of That, I Feel Compelled to Say That the Lord's Supper is Not Just for Those Who are Self-Righteous, It is Also for Sinners

-> I Said That, Because We All Have Some Baggage, Right? And It's the Ones That Don't Think They Have Any Baggage That I'm the Most Concerned About..O.K.  
T.S. I Want to Make Two More Observations From This Passage, and Then, I Will Bring This Sermon to a Conclusion

a. First, I Want You to Notice That Our Lord Did Not Give Us a Specific Word Regarding How Frequently We Should Observe His Supper

-> In Relation to the Cup, for Example, in *Verse 25*, Jesus Simply Said *"...do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me"*

- > **It is Very Possible That Those in the Early Church Did This on a Weekly Basis, But We Cannot be Certain of This**
- > **Some Modern Churches Have Communion Every Week; Some Every Month, and Some Every Quarter, and There are Some Good Arguments on All Sides**
- > **And Listen, You Don't Need to Have an Ordained Minister to Observe the Lord's Supper, You Can do This as a Family in Your Home as Often as You Desire**
- > **The Important Thing is That Every Church and Every Christian Should Observe the Lord's Supper, Because Our Lord Has Commanded Us to do So**
- b. Second, I Want You to Notice That Paul Used an Important Greek Word That Appears Five Times in This Passage**
- > **It is the Greek Word "*Sunercomai*", and It Literally Means "*To Come Together*"**
- > **And to be More Specific, It Means "*To Come Together in an Intimate Way*" or We Could Say "*Come Together in Order to Enjoy Sweet Fellowship Together*"**
- > **This Word Appears in Verse 17, Verse 18, Verse 20, Verse 33 and Verse 34**
- > **After Noticing This, and Studying This, and Pondering This, and Meditating on This, I Came to an Important Conclusion, and That is That Our Lord Wants Us "*To Come Together*" (You See, Sometimes, the Lord Gives Me an Epiphany)**
- > **He Wants Us to "*Come Together*" Corporately, and He Wants Us to Maintain Our Fellowship and Our Unity**
- > **And I Believe This is Because Our Love for One Another and Our Unity With One Another Helps Us to Promote Our Message**
- > **And This is Our Message, It is Called "*The Gospel*" Which Literally Means "*The Good News*", Because It Tells Us How We Can Inherit Eternal Life (E...)**