Grace Fellowship EFC/Mt. Carmel BP /Grace Baptist/Crossroads/CIC Dr. Rick Griffith

28 June 87/ 2 Mar 97/ 3 Jan 99/27 July 08/ 17 Feb 13 Message #15 of 24

NLT 40 Minutes

**No Ordinary Supper**

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

**Topic:** Lord’s Supper

**Subject:** How can you honor God in the Lord’s Supper?

**Complement:** Look outward, look back, look forward, and look inward.

**Purpose:** The listeners will mend any hindered relationships with God and others to prepare properly to take the Lord’s Supper following the message.

**Introduction**

### Attention: Four-year old Sarah was just delighted one Sunday morning. Why? Because this was the Sunday she could attend “Big Church” with Mom and Dad. She was especially thrilled when the communion trays were being passed to her row…

Sarah

At this point her parents realized that they had not yet explained to her why she couldn’t take the elements. Mom and Dad got some but little Sarah was very upset that she couldn’t get any. Her parents intended to talk to her about it later, but, as often happens, they forgot.

A few months later Sarah attended “Big Church” again with her parents, but this time it wasn’t Communion Sunday. As everyone rose for the benediction and Sarah realized church was nearly over, she scornfully asked, “Aren’t you going to have your little snack now?”

### Need: We chuckle at this—but then I wonder how many of us can provide our own understanding of what this celebration is all about.

??

#### Some of us have been believers for several years and taken the elements many times—yet we have little more understanding than this girl showed: “Oh, it has something to do with the death of Christ…”

#### Others of us have become Christians more recently and have never heard an explanation of what this communion service is all about.

#### The Lord’s Supper is one activity that Christians do frequently which can lose its focus and be reduced to simply a “little snack.” Honestly, has it been meaningful experience for you each time? Don’t you want it to be? And don’t you want to make sure you are pleasing to the Lord as you take part? This is such a serious matter that some who have abused it have even gotten sick and died.

### Subject: So how can you honor God in the Lord’s Supper? In a way that pleases the Lord? How can you make sure that it has real meaning and isn’t just a “little snack”?

Honor God?

### Preview/Text: 1 Corinthians 11 addresses this question of how to make sure you celebrate this ordinance right. In fact, it encourages us to look in four different directions to gain the full meaning of the event. Since the background to the Lord’s Supper is actually the Jewish Passover, we’ll look at four parallels between these two celebrations as we look at these four directions.

• Passover

4 ways

### Transition: Notice with me in verses 17-22 of 1 Corinthians 11 the first way to make sure you’re participating in the Lord’s Supper in an honorable way. This is to…

# I. Look outward at your relationship with other believers (17-22).

MP

# [The Lord’s Supper reminds us to look around us at our relationships.]

17-19

## The Corinthians did a miserable job of seeing the corporate nature of this event (17-22).

20-22

### Did you know that the church potluck is biblical?

Agape

#### That’s exactly what we have here, also called the Agape Feast, or Love Feast.

#### Today we have the Lord’s Supper at the end of our *services*, but in the first century it was at the end of a common *meal*.

### But hoarding of food plagued the church at Corinth at this meal—and each opposing side tried to out-eat the other! By the time they got to the Lord’s Supper at the end, that last piece of bread or sip of the cup was on an empty stomach for some—and an empty heart too.

Black

### Paul alludes to this corporate idea also in 1 Corinthians 10:15-18 [read]. Verse 16 says the celebration is a “participation.” This was graphically illustrated in the fact that the early church all took from the same loaf and the same cup.

(As the Lord’s Supper causes us to “look outward,” so did its predecessor, Passover…)

## Passover was a celebration that involved the entire household.

### After all, the night that Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper He was participating in this communal meal with His disciples.

10:15-18

Seating

Modern

### By eating the meal together, Jews were recognizing that they were a body of believers in the God of Israel. Jews today still celebrate Passover as a communal meal.

## But what does this mean to us?

Black

### It means that this is always to be a communal celebration—not something we do by ourselves. It’s not for two people to take in a wedding, neglecting the rest of the congregation. It’s not to do alone at home, but when the church is assembled.

### But more importantly, this communal idea or “looking out” means we should not—we dare not—take part in the Lord’s Supper when our relationships with others in the church are not resolved.

### In other words, if there’s division or an unresolved matter between you and another believer, you make a mockery of this communal celebration which says in its symbolism that we are one, united body!

### It’s better to let the elements pass than to hypocritically say “all is well” with others.

Matt 5

### This is the thought of Matthew 5:23-24 [quote]. We don’t have an altar to approach at the temple, but the closest parallel for us is corporate worship at the Lord’s table.

• altar

### I personally have had many times when I’ve had to avoid participating because of disunity between me and another Christian. I remember one time years ago when a brother in Christ refused to speak with me—he was so angry about something I’d done. I tried unsuccessfully to resolve the matter but then the first Sunday of the month came when my church took communion. For me to take it would have made a mockery of being in the same body with him. I had to skip the Lord’s Supper actually a few times until I felt I had done everything I could to mend the relationship.

Black

MPs

(So to “look outward” is the first of the four directions the Lord’s Supper causes us to turn. Verses 23-25 tell us the second way to turn. Don’t just “look outward towards others” but…)

# II. Look back at Christ’s death for you (23-25).

MP

# (Be reminded of a historical point in time when you were delivered from sin.)

## The Lord’s table causes us to “look back” at Christ’s sacrifice for us (23-25).

23-25

### Both the bread and the cup tell us that forgiveness from sin comes by His death.

### You are delivered from the power and penalty of sin because Jesus bore both for you!

(The parallel to the Passover here is beautiful…)

## Passover also looked back—at Israel’s deliverance from Egypt.

Past

### Israel was enslaved for 400 years in Egypt, but the night that they left God told them that everyone who didn’t want their firstborn to die must slaughter a lamb and put its blood on the top and the sides of their doors. They did, God allowed all their firstborns to live, and that very night they were delivered from their slavery.

### In fact, the Passover meal structure revolves around four cups with many parallels to the Lord’s Supper. We won’t explain them all today, but one that is parallel is that Passover always included the eating of a bread called the afikomen, accompanied by the words, “This is the bread of affliction…”

Seder

Order 1

4 cups

#### Well, at the Passover with the disciples, Jesus picked up the afikomen (bread), and, leading the meal, the disciples had heard all their lives at every Passover this phrase, “This is the bread of affliction…”

#### But what did Jesus say? He changed it to, “This is my body, which is for you…” Why? Jesus was saying it not only symbolized *Israel’s* deliverance from slavery to Egypt but also *our* deliverance from the affliction of being slaves to sin!

My body

Order 2

### Passover also had another key phrase when the leader picked up the third cup of the meal. Called the cup of redemption, it looked back at Israel’s redemption from Egypt.

Circled

#### The leader would declare, “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm…”

Order 3

#### While the disciples expected this phrase, Jesus again changed it. He said, “This is my blood, which is for you…”, thus saying that redemption is in Him.

#### He did something else. He said that the cup was “the new covenant” in His blood. The disciples knew the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31—the promise that God would restore the nation from its exile. It included four promises:

New Cov

##### Verses 31-32 say that the northern and southern kingdoms (Israel and Judah) will be restored into a single kingdom under Messiah.

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##### Verse 33 says the indwelling of the Spirit would be God’s “law in their minds.”

##### Verse 34a: No need for evangelism will exist as “everyone will know the Lord.”

##### And forgiveness will be true of the nation in 34b. There’s no mention of blood here, but Jesus made this association with the disciples at the first Lord’s Supper.

(How does this relate to us?)

Black

## We too must “look back” at our own deliverance from sin when we take the elements.

### Think of *where* you would be— or *what* you’d be—if sin still had a grasp on you!

### Thank God that as you “look back” on His death, you also “look back” on a past life of sin which is now gone. Like the song says, “I’m not what I wanna be, I’m not what I gonna be, but thank God I’m not what I was.”

Song

### And if that past life still is *not* gone—if you’re living in sin now—you have no right to take part in the elements.

MPs

(So these commemorations—both Passover and the Lord’s Supper—cause us to look outward and look back. The third direction they beckon us is to “look forward”…)

# III. Look forward to Christ’s return (26).

MP

# (Jesus will return to earth to fully bring in the New Covenant.)

## Verse 26 tells us that we should take the Supper “until He comes” or returns.

26

### Doing so proclaims His death—it tells the world that because He died and rose and is alive today, He can and will return to take us to be with Him.

### So we “look forward” to a wonderful future! Let’s remind ourselves of that fact!

Next year

## Every Passover ends with a declaration: “This year we are here. Next year in Jerusalem!”

### It expressed the hope that perhaps the Messiah would come and rule over Israel and the world by the time the next Passover was celebrated.

Jerus

### This announces that Israel’s New Covenant will someday come true. The Church participates in some aspects of this covenant now, but aspects yet remain— “everyone will know the Lord” and Israel restored to the land in a glorious kingdom—forgiven.

MPs

(So we are to look outward, look back, and look forward. The final direction the Lord’s Supper beckons us is to “look inward”…)

# IV. Look inward to confess all sin (27-34).

MP

MP

# (Let the Supper be a time when you evaluate your life and confess sin.)

## Passover was eaten so quickly the night Israel left Egypt that the bread had no time to rise.

33-34

30-32

27-29

### They left their leaven in Egypt, symbolizing leaving their sinful life there too. This unleavened bread became known in the generations to follow as a symbol for sin.

### Almost every time you see leaven (yeast) in Scripture it denotes sin. At Passover & the Feast of Unleavened Bred that followed, Jews have no leaven even in the house, let alone the bread! The idea is to have their lives be as free from sin as possible.

Burn

Feast

Black

## Likewise, we must evaluate our lives to see if any unconfessed “leaven” or sin is there.

### If there’s no sin hindering your relationship with God, eat! But if there is something that you have yet to confess or deal with, it’s best to not participate until this is solved.

### Driving over the speed limit was a problem me while I was a teenager. It wasn’t that I was a hot-rodder, but I just hadn’t felt speed limits were that important. I’d generally drive 5-10 kilometers an hour over the posted signs…

### But every first week of the month, my church took the Lord’s Supper. And one week as I evaluated myself, the Lord brought to mind this issue of driving the speed limit. I remember saying to Him, “But Lord, have you seen how ridiculously slow some of these speed limits are? Even the police don’t expect me to drive *that* slow!” But since I hadn’t given this issue over and was still struggling with it, I let the plate pass.

### Four weeks passed and I had forgotten about the issue—until the next Lord’s Supper. Again my conscience pricked me. I felt like God was saying, “So *you* want to be the boss, huh? *You* want to determine which of my laws you will follow?” I still struggled with this, so I didn’t take the Lord’s Supper again.

### But another month quickly came—and another Lord’s Supper too! I began to realize that I had three options:

#### One was to reject God’s promptings and take the Supper irreverently.

#### Another was to deal with the issue—confess my sin so I could take it again.

#### A third option was never to take the Lord’s Supper ever again!

### I didn’t like any of the options, so I let the plate pass a third time.

### I was so disturbed about this issue I went to my pastor for counsel. I asked him, “If Jesus lived today and drove a car, do you think He would drive the speed limit?”

### He’d never been asked that question before in a counseling session! But he did say, “Well, it does sound like the Christian thing to do.”

### That settled it for me, so I finally committed this issue the Lord, promising Him that I would seek to drive like Christ the rest of my life, including the speed limit. This has been especially challenged on the highways of Arizona and New Mexico where the desert stretches for a hundred kilometers without a soul! But while I have failed for brief times, basically I’ve kept this promise to the Lord.

## What’s the point? It’s this: The Lord’s Supper is a time to pause and ask ourselves if we are living up to God’s standards in every area of life.

### Another important point: The text says for each man to *examine himself.*

### So I don’t want to see wives elbowing their husbands: “Hey, honey, time to fess up!”

Think!

# Conclusion

### Earlier I said we’d look at this question: How can we take part in the Lord’s Supper in a way that pleases God? Do you know the answer now? Look in four directions:

Review

#### As Passover was a communal celebration, so look outward regarding your relationship with other believers.

Chart

#### As Passover caused Jews to reflect back on redemption from Egypt, so look back at Christ’s death for you.

#### As Passover anticipates the return of Messiah, so look forward to Christ’s second coming.

#### As Passover prohibited any yeast in the house, so look inward to deal with any unconfessed sin.

### To properly look back on His death and look forward to His return, we need to look outward for others and look inward at our own lives (M.I.).

MI

### The Tuesday evening service at the University United Methodist Church in Fort Worth, Texas is very unique. The people spread out evenly throughout the building—no one sits next to anyone else! In fact, everyone is required to take a shower before each service and can’t shake hands with anyone else! Why is this church so seemingly antisocial? Each of the worshippers need to limit contact with the others because they all have severe allergies.

Black

### [Gospel with John 3:16 slide—Are you at arm’s length with God?]

### Maybe you already know Christ, but you need to look outward. Something keeps you at arms length from a person in this room. You won’t sit next to him or her if you have a choice. Maybe you *don’t* have a choice because that person is your spouse!

2 ways

Jn 3:16

#### What do you do? Don’t take the elements unless there is harmony in all your relationships with others in the body. It may not be appropriate for you to get up from your seat to go make things right at this moment, but withholding from the Supper may help you see just how important this celebration is. But be sure to go to that person when you can.

#### If that person is seated next to you, you can do what I’ve had to do with my wife at times. Lean over and whisper, “Honey, I’m sorry for saying that… doing that… or whatever… Would you forgive me?”

### Perhaps when you look outward at others, things are OK. But when you look inward and evaluate your life, an issue comes to mind. Maybe not your driving, but perhaps some other sin: your honesty, your availability to God, or something else. Please deal with it or withhold from the elements, OK? (silent meditation and prayer)

# Study Questions (Step 1)

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

# Questions

# Tentative Theme/Thrust Statements (Step 5)

Text

# Possible Illustrations (Step 6)

### Text

# Possible Applications (Step 6)

### Text

**Outlines (Steps 2-5)**

**Title**

***Passage***

**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# Exegetical Idea (CPT):

# I.

# II.

# III.

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)—Steps 5-6

# Subject:

# Introduction

### Interest:

### Need:

### Subject or CPS:

### Background:

### Text:

### Preview:

### Transition:

# I.

# II.

# III.

# Conclusion

### (MI/CPS).

### Main Points

### Exhortation/Application

# Discussion Questions:

Grace Baptist Church Dr. Rick Griffith

3 January 1999 Message #15

**No Ordinary Supper**

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

**Introduction**

1. Attention: ILL: Four-year old Sarah, “Aren’t you going to have your little snack now?”

2. Need: We chuckle at this—but then I wonder how many of us can provide our own understanding of what this celebration is about (old or new, don’t you want to do it right?).

3. Subject: So how can you participate in the Lord’s Supper in a way that pleases the Lord?

4. Preview/Text: 1 Corinthians 11 encourages us to look in four different directions = four parallels between Passover and the Lord’s Supper.

5. Transition: Notice with me in verses 17-22 of 1 Corinthians 11 the first way to make sure you’re participating in the Lord’s Supper in an honorable way. This is to…

**I. Look outward at your relationships with other believers (17-22).**

**(The Lord’s Supper reminds us to look around us at our relationships.)**

A. The Corinthians did a miserable job of seeing its corporate nature (17-22; 10:16-17).

B. Passover was a celebration which involved the entire household (explain).

C. But what does this mean to us?

1. It’s always to be a communal celebration (not wedding or home).

2. Abstain when unresolved with other believers (ILL: Matt. 5:23-24; me & Dean).

**II. Look back at Christ’s death for you (23-25).**

**(Be reminded of a historical point in time when you were delivered from sin.)**

A. Corinthians were to “look back” = symbolizes Christ’s sacrifice for us (23-25).

B. Passover also looked back—at Israel’s deliverance from Egypt (review Exod. 12).

1. Afikomen reminded them, “This is the bread of affliction…” = “This is my body…”

2. Cup of redemption announced, “I will redeem you…” = “This is my blood…”

3. A new covenant would come (cf. Jer. 31: restoration, Spirit, evangelism, forgiveness).

C. We too must “look back” at our deliverance from sin (ILL: “I’m not what I wanna be…”).

**III. Look forward to Christ’s return (26).**

**(Jesus will return to earth to fully bring in the New Covenant.)**

A. Verse 26 tells us that we should take the Supper “until He comes” or returns.

B. “This year we are here. Next year in Jerusalem!” = New Covenant fulfillment anticipated

**IV. Look inward to confess all sin (27-34).**

**(Let the Supper be a time when you evaluate your life and confess sin.)**

A. Passover was eaten so quickly the night Israel left Egypt that the bread had no time to rise.

B. We must evaluate our lives for any unconfessed “leaven” or sin (ILL: my struggle to drive speed limits; each man to *examine himself*—no elbows from the wife!).

**Conclusion**

1. To properly look back on His death and look forward to His return, we need to look outward for others and look inward at our own lives (M.I.).

2. The University United Methodist Church (spacing, showers, shake hands) Why? Allergies.

3. Look outward: Maybe you won’t sit next to him or her if you have a choice. Maybe you *don’t* have a choice because that person is your spouse! (Get up or whisper for forgiveness)

4. Look inward: Some other sin: your honesty, your availability to God, or something else. Please deal with it or withhold from the elements, OK? (silent meditation and prayer)

Mt. Carmel BP Church/Grace Baptist Church Dr. Rick Griffith

2 March 1997 & 3 January 1999 Message #13

NIV 25 Minutes

**No Ordinary Supper**

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

**Topic:** Lord’s Supper

**Subject:** How can you participate in the Lord’s Supper correctly?

**Complement:** Look outward, look back, look forward, and look inward.

**Purpose:** The listeners will mend any hindered relationships with God and others to prepare properly to take the Lord’s Supper following the message.

**Introduction**

1. Attention: Four-year old Sarah was just delighted one Sunday morning. Why? Because this was the Sunday she could attend “Big Church” with Mom and Dad. She was especially thrilled when the communion trays were being passed to her row…

At this point her parents realized that they had not yet explained to her why she couldn’t take the elements. Mom and Dad got some but little Sarah was very upset that she couldn’t get any. Her parents intended to talk to her about it later, but, as often happens, they forgot.

A few months later Sarah attended “Big Church” again with her parents, but this time it wasn’t Communion Sunday. As everyone rose for the benediction and Sarah realized church was nearly over, she scornfully asked, “Aren’t you going to have your little snack now?”

2. Need: We chuckle at this—but then I wonder how many of us can provide our own understanding of what this celebration is all about.

a. Some of us have been believers for several years and taken the elements many times—yet we have little more understanding than this girl showed: “Oh, it has something to do with the death of Christ…”

b. Others of us have become Christians more recently and have never heard an explanation of what this communion service is all about.

c. The Lord’s Supper is one activity that Christians do frequently which can lose its focus and be reduced to simply a “little snack.” Honestly, has it been meaningful experience for you each time? Don’t you want it to be? And don’t you want to make sure you are pleasing to the Lord as you take part? This is such a serious matter that some who have abused it have even gotten sick and died.

3. Subject: So how can you participate in the Lord’s Supper in a way that pleases the Lord? How can you make sure that it has real meaning and isn’t just a “little snack”?

4. Preview/Text: The passage read earlier in 1 Corinthians 11 addresses this question of how to make sure you celebrate this ordinance right. In fact, it encourages us to look in four different directions to gain the full meaning of the event. Since the background to the Lord’s Supper is actually the Jewish Passover, we’ll look at four parallels between these two celebrations as we look at these four directions.

5. Transition: Notice with me in verses 17-22 of 1 Corinthians 11 the first way to make sure you’re participating in the Lord’s Supper in an honorable way. This is to…

**I. Look outward regarding your relationship with other believers (17-22).**

**(The Lord’s Supper reminds us to look around us at our relationships.)**

A. The Corinthians did a miserable job of seeing the corporate nature of this event (17-22).

1. Did you know that the church pot-luck is biblical?

a. That’s exactly what we’ve got here, called elsewhere the Agape Feast, or Love Feast.

b. Today we have the Lord’s Supper at the end of our *services*, but in the first century it was at the end of a common *meal*.

2. But for the church at Corinth the meal was plagued by hoarding of food—each opposing side trying to out-eat the other! By the time they got to the Lord’s Supper at the end, that last piece of bread or sip of the cup was on an empty stomach for some—and an empty heart too.

3. Paul alludes to this corporate idea also in 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 [read]. Notice it says the celebration is a “participation.” This was graphically illustrated in the fact that the early church all took from the same loaf and the same cup.

(As the Lord’s Supper causes us to “look outward,” so did it’s predecessor, Passover…)

B. Passover was a celebration which involved the entire household.

1. After all, the night that Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper He was participating in this communal meal with His disciples.

2. By eating the meal together, Jews were recognizing that they were a body of believers in the God of Israel.

C. But what does this mean to us?

1. It means that this is always to be a communal celebration—not something we do by ourselves. It’s not for two people to take in a wedding, neglecting the rest of the congregation. It’s not to do at home, but when the church is assembled.

2. But more importantly, this communal idea or “looking out” means we should not—we dare not—take part in the Lord’s Supper when our relationships with others in the church are not resolved.

3. In other words, if there’s division or an unresolved matter between you and another believer, you make a mockery of this communal celebration which says in its symbolism that we are one, united body!

4. It’s better to let the elements pass than to hypocritically say “all is well” with others.

5. This is the thought of Matthew 5:23-24 [quote].

6. I personally have had many times when I’ve had to avoid participating because of disunity between me and another Christian. I remember one time two years ago that a brother in Christ refused to speak with me—he was so angry about something I’d done. I tried unsuccessfully to resolve the matter but then the first Sunday of the month came when my church takes communion. For me to take it would have made a mockery of being in the same body with him. I had to skip the Lord’s Supper actually for few times until I felt I had done everything I could to mend the relationship.

(So to “look outward” is the first of the four directions the Lord’s Supper causes us to turn. Verses 23-25 tell us the second way to turn. Don’t just “look outward towards others” but…)

**II. Look back at Christ’s death for you (23-25).**

**(Be reminded of a historical point in time when you were delivered from sin.)**

A. Corinthians were to “look back” in the sense this simple celebration symbolizes Christ’s sacrifice for us (23-25).

1. The focus of both the bread and the cup is that forgiveness from sin comes by His death.

2. You are delivered from the power and penalty of sin because Jesus bore both for you!

(The parallel to the Passover here is beautiful…)

B. Passover also looked back—at Israel’s deliverance from Egypt.

1. Israel was enslaved for 400 years in Egypt, but the night that they left God told them that everyone who didn’t want their firstborn to die must slaughter a lamb and put its blood on the top and the sides of their doors. They did, God allowed all their firstborns to live, and that very night they were delivered from their slavery.

2. In fact, the Passover meal always included the eating of a bread called the afikomen, accompanied by the words, “This is the bread of affliction…”

a. Well, at the Passover with the disciples, Jesus picked up the afikomen (bread), and, leading the meal, the disciples had heard all their lives at every Passover this phrase, “This is the bread of affliction…”

b. But what did Jesus say? He changed it to, “This is my body, which is for you…”

3. Passover also had another key phrase when the leader picked up the third cup of the meal. It was called the cup of redemption, looking back at the nation’s redemption from Egypt.

a. The leader would declare, “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm…”

b. While the disciples would have expected this phrase, Jesus again changed it. He said, “This is my blood, which is for you…”, thus saying that redemption is in Him.

c. He did something else. He said that the cup was “the new covenant” in His blood. The disciples were no doubt familiar with the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31—the promise that God would restore the nation from its exile. It included four promises:

1) Verses 31-32 say that the northern and southern kingdoms (Israel and Judah) will be restored into a single kingdom under Messiah.

2) Verse 33 says the indwelling of the Spirit would be God’s “law in their minds.”

3) Verse 34a: No need for evangelism will exist as “everyone will know the Lord.”

4) And forgiveness will be true of the nation in 34b. There’s no mention of blood here, but Jesus made this association with the disciples at the first Lord’s Supper.

(How does this relate to us?)

C. We too must “look back” at our own deliverance from sin when we take the elements.

1. Think of *where* you would be— or *what* you would be—if sin still had a grasp on you!

2. Thank God that as you “look back” on His death, you also “look back” on a past life of sin which is now gone. Like the song says, “I’m not what I wanna be, I’m not what I gonna be, but thank God I’m not what I was.”

3. And if that past life still is *not* gone—if you’re living in sin now—you have no right to take part in the elements.

(So these commemorations—both Passover and the Lord’s Supper—cause us to look outward and look back. The third direction they beckon us is to “look forward”…)

**III. Look forward to Christ’s second coming (26).**

**(Jesus will return to earth to fully bring in the New Covenant.)**

A. Verse 26 tells us that we should take the Supper “until He comes” or returns.

1. Doing so proclaims His death—it tells the world that because He died and rose and is alive today, He can and will return to take us to be with Him.

2. So we “look forward” to a wonderful future! Let’s remind ourselves of that fact!

B. Every Passover ended with the declaration, “This year we are here. Next year in Jerusalem!”

1. It expressed the hope that perhaps the Messiah would come and rule over Israel and the world by the time the next Passover was celebrated.

2. This Passover benediction announces that the New Covenant for Israel will someday be accomplished. True, we in the Church participate in some aspects of this covenant now, but two aspects yet remain—that “everyone will know the Lord” and Israel restored to the land in a glorious kingdom.

(So we are to look outward, look back, and look forward. The final direction the Lord’s Supper beckons us is to “look inward”…)

**IV. Look inward to deal with any unconfessed sin (27-34).**

**(Let the Supper be a time when you evaluate your life and confess sin.)**

A. Passover was eaten so quickly the night Israel left Egypt that the bread had no time to rise.

1. They left their leaven in Egypt, symbolizing leaving their sinful life there too. This unleavened bread became known in the generations to follow as a symbol for sin.

2. Almost every time you see leaven (yeast) in Scripture it denotes sin. At Passover Jews have no leaven even in the house, let alone the bread! The idea is to have their lives be as free from sin as possible.

B. In the same way we must evaluate our lives to see if any unconfessed “leaven” or sin is there.

1. If there’s no sin hindering our relationship with God, eat! But if there is something which we have yet to confess or deal with, it’s best to not participate until this is solved.

2. Driving over the speed limit was a problem me while I was a teenager. It wasn’t that I was a hot-rodder, but I just hadn’t felt speed limits were that important. I’d generally drive 5-10 kilometers an hour over the posted signs…

But every first week of the month, my church would take the Lord’s Supper. And one week as I evaluated myself, the Lord brought to mind this issue of driving the speed limit. I remember saying to Him, “But Lord, have you seen how ridiculously slow some of these speed limits are? Even the police don’t expect me to drive *that* slow!” But since I hadn’t given this issue over and was still struggling with it, I let the plate pass.

Four weeks passed and I had forgotten about the issue—until the next Lord’s Supper. Again my conscience pricked me. I felt like God was saying, “So *you* want to be the boss, huh? *You* want to determine which of my laws you will follow?” I still struggled with this, so I didn’t take the Lord’s Supper again.

But another month quickly came—and another Lord’s Supper too! I began to realize that I had three options:

a. One was to reject God’s promptings and take the Supper irreverently.

b. Another was to deal with the issue—confess my sin so I could take it again.

c. A third option was never to take the Lord’s Supper ever again!

d. I didn’t like any of the options, so I let the plate pass a third time.

In fact, I was so disturbed about this issue I went to my pastor for counsel. I asked him, “If Jesus lived today and drove a car, do you think He would drive the speed limit?”

He’d never been asked that question before in a counseling session! But he did say, “Well, it does sound like the Christian thing to do.”

That settled it for me, so I finally committed this issue the Lord, promising Him that I would seek to drive like Christ the rest of my life, including the speed limit. This has been especially challenged on the highways of Arizona and New Mexico where the desert stretches for a hundred kilometers without a soul! But while I have failed for brief times, basically I’ve kept this promise to the Lord.

4. What’s the point? It’s this: The Lord’s Supper is a time to pause and ask ourselves if we are living up to God’s standards in every area of life.

a. Another important point: The text says for each man to *examine himself.*

b. So when we reflect, I don’t want to see any wives elbowing their husbands: “Hey, honey, time to confess it!”

**Conclusion**

1. I told you earlier we’d be looking at this question: How can we take part in the Lord’s Supper in a way which pleases God? Do you know the answer now? Look in four directions:

a. Look outward regarding your relationship with other believers.

b. Look back at Christ’s death for you.

c. Look forward to Christ’s second coming.

d. Look inward to deal with any unconfessed sin.

2. To properly look back on His death and look forward to His return, we need to look outward for others and look inward at our own lives (M.I.).

3. The University United Methodist Church in Fort Worth, Texas is very unique. You notice it right when you walk in, for the people spread out evenly throughout the building—no one sits next to anyone else! In fact, everyone is required to take a shower before each service and can’t shake hands with anyone else! Why is this church so seemingly antisocial? Each of the worshippers need to limit contact with the others because they all have severe allergies.

4. Maybe you don’t have *this* problem, but another problem keeps you at arms length from someone else in this room. You won’t sit next to him or her if you have a choice. Maybe you *don’t* have a choice because that person is your spouse!

a. What do you do? Don’t take the elements unless there is harmony in all your relationships with others in the body. It may not be appropriate for you to get up from your seat to go make things right at this moment, but withholding from the Supper may help you see just how important this celebration is. But be sure to go to that person when you can.

b. Perhaps if that person *is* seated next to you, you can do what I’ve had to do with my wife at times. Lean over and whisper, “Honey, I’m sorry for saying that… doing that… or whatever… Would you forgive me?”

5. Perhaps when you look outward at others, things are OK. But when you look inward and evaluate your life, an issue comes to mind. Maybe not your driving, but perhaps some other sin: your honesty, your availability to God, or something else. Please deal with it or withhold from the elements, OK? (silent meditation and prayer)

**Preliminary Questions**

**Verses Questions**

Context What did the author record just prior to this passage?

Purpose Why is this passage in the Bible?

Background What historical context helps us understand this passage?

1

**Tentative Main Ideas**

Text

**Possible Illustrations**

NUH paid leave for marriage (importance of relationships)

Not taking part in the Supper when unresolved with Dean Kern

Not taking part in the Supper when driving over the speed limit

Fort Worth Church with allergies

1. Attention: When we participate often in celebrations, we can easily lose sight of their purpose (examples).

a. Chinese New Year brings in the new year, but visiting exhausts all but the foreigners.

b. Birthday parties are supposed to honor the birthday boy/girl’s entrance into the world, but we never even discuss this at these parties.

c. Sunday services originally commemorated the resurrection of Christ, but we easily forget that we can worship Him only because He’s alive! (ILL: Elvis church article in NTS Matt. notes)

**No Ordinary Supper**

***1 Corinthians 11:27-34***

**Exegetical Outline**

Exegetical Idea: The way to celebrate the Lord’s Supper in a worthy manner is to look outward, look back, look forward, and look inward oneself.

I. (17-22) The way to celebrate the Lord’s Supper in a worthy manner is to look outward for others in the body (horizontal aspect).

II. (23-25) The way to celebrate the Lord’s Supper in a worthy manner is to look back at Christ’s death for you (vertical aspect).

III. (26) The way to celebrate the Lord’s Supper in a worthy manner is to look forward by proclaiming Christ’s second coming to enact the New Covenant.

IV. (27-34) The way to celebrate the Lord’s Supper in a worthy manner is to look inward yourself in self-examination or suffer God’s judgment.

**Homiletical Exposition** (cyclical inductive form)

Attention: A small girl once thought that the Lord’s Supper was simply a “little snack” (LORD’S SUPPER misunderstood by children).

Christians often do not consider what the Lord’s Table is about.

Introduce Subject: How can you honor God in the Lord’s Supper?

I. Look outward at your relationships with other believers (17-22).

II. Look back at Christ’s death for you (23-25).

III. Look forward to Christ’s return (26).

IV. Look inward to confess all sin (27-34).

Main Idea: To properly look back on His death and look forward to His return, we need to look outward for others and look inward at our own lives.

**No Ordinary Supper**

*1 Cor. 11:17-34*

**Introduction**

1. Christians often do not consider what the Lord’s Table is about.

2. Subject: How can you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God in the Lord’s Supper?

I. Look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at your relationships with other believers (17-22).

II. Look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at Christ’s death for you (23-25).

III. Look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to Christ’s return (26).

IV. Look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to confess all sin (27-34).

**Conclusion**

1. Main Idea: To properly look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on His death and look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to His return, we need to look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for others and look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at our own lives.

2. What outward or inward issues do you need to address right now?

 **Rick Griffith**

17 February 2013

*Message 15 of 24 in “Becoming Who We Are” 1 Corinthians Series*

**No Ordinary Supper**

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

**Introduction**

1. Christians often do not consider what the Lord’s Table is about.

2. Subject: How can you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ God in the Lord’s Supper?

\* The four directions are adapted from David Watson, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*

**I. Look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at your relationships with other believers (17-22).**

**II. Look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at Christ’s death for you (23-25).**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Passover** | **Lord's Supper** |
| Light candles | Assumed (not recorded) |
| **1st Cup: Blessing/Sanctification**, saying, “I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians” (1st of 4 “I wills” of Exod. 6:6-7) | “Take this and divide it among yourselves… I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes” (Luke 22:17b-18) |
| Washing of one's *own hands* | Washed *disciples feet* during meal (John 13:2, 4) |
| Parsley dipped in salt water (bitterness), middle matzah (bread) made visible and broken and 1/2 called “afikomen” (Gr. “he who comes later”) wrapped with napkin and hidden | Son of God (second member of the Trinity) made visible, broken, body wrapped, and buried in a tomb (this tradition was added to the Passover by first century AD Jewish believers) |
| Passover story read (Exod. 12:1-13),  4 Questions, 4 sons, 10 Plagues | Assumed (not recorded) |
| **2nd Cup: Plagues/Judgment**, saying, “I will rid you of their bondage” (skip…) | Assumed (not recorded) |
| Eat afikomen—“This is the bread of affliction…” | “This is my body…” (Luke 22:19) |
| **3rd Cup: Redemption**, saying, “I will redeem you with an outstretched arm” | “This is my blood…” (Luke 22:20) then Jesus dips the sop with Judas and Judas leaves (?) |

***New Covenant Provisions (Jer. 31:31-34) Directions Cup***

* Israel & Judah reunited (31-32) Outward Blessing
* Spirit indwelling with new heart (33) Inward Plagues/Judgment
* No need for evangelism (34a) Forward Praise/Regathering
* Israel forgiven (34b) Back Redemption

**III. Look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to Christ’s return (26).**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Passover** | **Lord's Supper** |
| **4th Cup: Praise/Regathering**: “I will take you to me for a people” & read Pss. 113–118 | “For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes” |
| Declaration (“Next year in Jerusalem!”), hymn (Ps. 118), poem, or national anthem | Sang hymn & went to Mt. of Olives (Matt. 26:30) |

**IV. Look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to confess all sin (27-34).**

**Conclusion**

1. **Main Idea**: To properly look \_\_\_\_\_\_ on His death and look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to His return, we need to look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for others and look \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ at our own lives.

2. What outward or inward issues do you need to address right now?

**Thought Questions:**

1. Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 aloud. Explain the “four directions” in your own words:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Direction** | **Meaning** |
| Outward | It’s not about *me*––it’s about *us!* |
| Back | It’s easy to forget His sacrifice for my sin |
| Forward | I commit myself to the One who will return to set things right |
| Inward | I invite either God’s blessing or judgment upon me |

1. How does Jeremiah 31:31-34 relate to this passage?

Jeremiah shows the background to understanding the new covenant of 1 Cor. 11:25

The Jeremiah passage also parallels the outward, back, forward & inward directions

1. Share one of your experiences in relation to not taking the Lord’s Supper.

I withheld the Supper when my friend Dean would not speak with me—until I did what I could to repair the relationship.