

For Your Family

In our passage this week, Paul deals with a situation in the church at Corinth that was causing great harm. It seems the wealthier people were starting the communion meal before some of the poorer folks had even arrived. They also were eating inside, while the others had to eat on the patio. Some had a lot to eat and drink, while others had very little.

1 Corinthians 11:33—So then, my brothers and sisters, when you come together to eat, wait for one another—

This same principle applies to families. As children grow, they need to learn how to wait for everyone to get to the table before they start eating.

Ask your children why we should wait until everyone has sat at the table. Here are some suggestions:

We want to include everyone; we don't want to leave anyone out. Often, the one who has prepared and served the meal is the last to sit down; we should especially wait for them!

We want our family to be unified and peaceful. The table should not be a loud and wild place.

We want to take time to be thankful to God and to bless the meal. Waiting gives us time to remember how God has provided for us.

We need to learn patience, kindness, and gentleness.

Can you think of other reasons?

1 Corinthians 13:4—Love is patient and kind

Ephesians 4:1-3—I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.



Being Informed:

Spring Break – Wednesday Evening Classes will not meet

Easter Weekend—April 14-16:

Good Friday Service—7 PM

Saturday:

Egg Hunt—6:30 PM

Worship Service—7 PM

Sunday:

Burrito Breakfast—7:30 AM

Worship Services—8:00, 9:15, 10:45 AM; 5 PM

Please attend the Saturday or Sunday 8:00 service if you can.

Last Week: Paul began a new section in his letter, addressing three issues concerning their worship gatherings: 1) Head coverings in worship (11:2-16), 2) Divisions at the Lord's Table (11:17-34), and 3) Spiritual gifts at Worship (12-14). In the first section, Paul addressed whether it is appropriate for women (probably wives) to participate in the worship service with their heads uncovered. He argued from creation and from culture that doing so would bring shame to their husbands. Paul desired that the proper relationship between husbands and wives be reflected in the worship service.

A Look at the Lord's Supper

1 Corinthians 11:17-34

This Week: Paul has shown several times in his letter the problem of division within the Corinthian church. Now he shows how that it even affected their celebration of communion. Rather than being a uniting force, it was a place of separation and class distinction. People did not wait for each other; some were eating and drinking too much, while others went without, or settled for scraps. Paul corrects the problem, and repeats the actions and words of Jesus himself when he instituted the practice of communion.

Observing

Our passage has three sections: 1) 17-22, 2) 23-26, 3) 27-34.

The outer sections (1 & 3) address the problem at Corinth concerning their conduct at the Lord's Supper.

The middle section (2) tells us what the Lord said and did to establish communion as an important element of Christian life.

We'll look at the problem first, then the words of institution.

1. Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-22

What is Paul's overall assessment of the situation in Corinth regarding the Lord's Supper? (vss. 17, 20, 22c)

2. What is his view of the underlying problem?
(vss. 18-19, 21-22b)

3. Read 1 Corinthians 11:27-34

Given vss. 17-22, what does Paul mean by "in an unworthy manner" in verse 27?

4. Five times in vss. 27-29 Paul uses "bread/drink" or "body/blood" pairings. In verse 29, when he says "discerning the body" he uses "body" by itself, without adding "blood." That has led many Bible students to interpret the word body in that phrase as the body of Christ—the church—rather than the physical body of Jesus.

What would it mean, then, to "discern the body of Christ"?

Given the Corinthian situation, what would it mean for one to "examine himself"?

5. What is Paul's closing piece of advice in verse 33?

6. Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

From the sermon, what is the significance of the words "received" and "delivered" in verse 23?

7. What are we called to remember? Why?

8. How do we "proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" when we participate in the Lord's Supper?

Connecting the Dots

1. Read Acts 2:42-47

Compare what happened at Pentecost to what was happening in Corinth.

2. Read Titus 3:10-11

What does Paul think of people who stir up divisions?

Read also: 1 Corinthians 1:10; 3:1-3; 3:16-17; 10:17

Why is this particularly troublesome at the Lord's Supper?

3. Remembrance (vss. 24, 25), proclamation (vs. 26), and participation (10:16), are important aspects of the Lord's Supper. How would you explain each of these to a spiritual seeker?

Continuing the Journey

1. We don't experience gluttony or drunkenness at the Lord's Table today, but are there other ways we might make distinctions between different classes of Christians?

What can you do to bring more unity to the modern church?

2. Do you "proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" any time other than communion?

What could you do to make proclamation a bigger part of your life?

3. What can you do to increase your discernment of Christ's body?

Next Steps:

- I will make it a priority to gather around the Lord's Table.
- I will approach the Lord's Table in a worthy manner (not flippantly, half-heartedly, or selfishly).
- At the table, I will be mindful of the oneness of Christ's body (the church) and commit myself to unity.
- At the table, I will proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again.

Memory Verse

1 Corinthians 11:26—For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.