

## THE LORD'S SUPPER

Text: 1 Corinthians 11:20-29

INTRO: The memorial supper instituted by Jesus shortly before His crucifixion is a subject worthy of our study. By observing the supper, Christians have an opportunity to serve and please God, to show their faith and their recognition of the importance of Christ's death. Or by improper attitudes, they may eat & drink condemnation to themselves. Let us go to the Scriptures to learn some important facts about this memorial.

### I. THE MEMORIAL SUPPER HAS BEEN DIVINELY DESCRIBED OR DESIGNATED (NAMED).

A. The Lord's supper, 1 Cor. 11:20.

B. Communion, 1 Cor. 10:16.

But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new **with you** in My Father's kingdom. (MT 26:29)

1. As we observe the Lord's supper in His kingdom, Jesus observes it with us.
2. There is a particular day on which we experience this communion with Jesus.
3. While we take it the same way the disciples did long ago, Jesus takes it in a **new**, a spiritual sense

C. Breaking bread, Acts 2:42; 20:7.

Vine explains, "As to whether A 20:11 refers to the Lord's Supper or to an ordinary meal, the addition of the words "& eaten" is perhaps sufficient indication that the latter is referred to here, whereas ver. 7, where the single phrase 'to break bread' is used, refers to the L.S. A parallel instance is found in A 2:42, 46. In the former vs the phrase 'the breaking of bread,' unaccompanied by any word about taking food, clearly stands for the L.S.; whereas in vs. 46 the phrase 'breaking bread at home' is immediately explained by 'they did

take their food,' indicating their ordinary meals."

D. The love feast, Jude 12.

1. This term later came to be used of a meal in which, well-to-do Christians shared their food with their poor brethren but there is no evidence that such a practice existed before the 2nd century. There is no evidence that any inspired apostle or prophet sanctioned that practice, or indeed, ever heard of it.
2. Presbyterian scholar Albert Barnes makes several strong, I believe valid, arguments to prove that the "love feast" of Jude 12 was the L.S. It revealed the love of Christ to the world, & was a means of strengthening the mutual love of the disciples: a festival which love originated & where love reigned.

II. THE LORD'S SUPPER IS DIVINE IN ORIGIN, vs. 23-26.

A. Jesus instituted it the night before His crucifixion, and commanded His disciples to continue to observe it.

B. Its importance is manifested in the fact that He specifically revealed it to Paul, vs. 23.

1. The book of Matthew was probably circulating around Judea at that time.
2. The book of Mark was probably circulating around the area of Rome.
3. The book of Luke had not been written yet, and would not be written for another 5 years or so.

C. It became the established practice of N.T. congregations wherever they existed. Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20

1. There are 2 Divinely selected elements: unleavened bread, & the juice of the grape, Matt. 26:26-29.
2. There is an appointed "place,"

- a. At His table, in His kingdom, LK 22:30
- b. More specifically: in an assembly of a local church, 1 Cor. 10:21; Acts 2:42; 20:7
- c. Not at the deer camp, the fishing hole, the golf course, or at home apart from the other Christians in your community. The disciples did not stay apart to break bread, they came together to break bread.

3. There is an appointed time.

- a. Bible memorials always had a set time to be observed: Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles, Sabbath, etc.  
See Lev. 23
- b. The L.S. is no exception. There would be an appointed day, MT 26:29; MK 14:25
  - i. First mention after institution: Pentecost, Acts 2:42. Pentecost always came on the 1st day of the week, Lev. 23:16.
  - ii. Next mention: Acts 20:7.
  - iii Last mention: 1 Cor 11:20, 33; 16:1-2
  - iv. stedfastly, Acts 2:42
  - v. often, 1 Cor. 11:26
  - vi. There are numerous historical records indicating that the early church observed the L.S. each Sunday.

III. THE LORD'S SUPPER EXISTS FOR DIVINE PURPOSES.

- A. To frequently remind Christians of Christ's sacrifice, 1 Cor. 11:24-25.
- B. To proclaim to the world our confidence in the sacrificial nature of Jesus' death, vs. 26.
- C. To stir our anticipation of His return, vs. 26.

- D. To promote oneness & camaraderie among Christ's followers, 1 Cor. 10:16-17.
- E. To encourage us to practice self examination & purge out those things that do not belong in our lives, 11:28.

READ I COR. 5:7-8 NOTE: Not primarily a L.S. passage, but the supper was obviously in the mind of the apostle in the illustration he used.

#### IV. SOME DIVINE ADMONITIONS.

- A. Examine yourselves, and eat. 1 Cor. 11:28.
- B. Discern the Lord's body, vs. 29. Keep your mind on the significance of the supper.
- C. Be aware that to abuse the L.S., to treat it with irreverence, is to identify one's self with those who treated Christ's literal body with irreverence, nailing it to the cross.
- D. At the risk of causing someone to become angry, I suggest that we find some way to teach our young children to treat the elements of the Lord's supper in a reverent & respectable way.
- E. "Do this [often] in remembrance of Me," 1 Cor. 11:24-26.

Coventry Hills, Pottstown, PA, July 25, 1990  
Exton, PA, August 5, 1990  
Shiloh, Mexia, TX, April 26, 1992  
La Porte, TX, May 3, 1992 (meeting, Bible class)  
Shiloh, Mexia, TX, October 15, 1995  
Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, May 27, 2001