

Extend
Session 3

Love is a
Covenant

Updated: June, 2013

“LOVE IS A COVENANT”

In the Scriptures God always sealed His Commitments with a Covenant. Men have responded likewise in their commitments to each other.

A COVENANT IS A BINDING AGREEMENT- between two parties (or more) who will respond to each other on the basis of their covenant. There are three reasons for which men have covenanted together:

Protection – Individuals, communities and even nations are not so vulnerable when they have entered into treaties for their mutual security.

Partnership – These covenants often have economic foundations since it is advantageous to pool resources and engage in projects together.

Love and Devotion – David and Prince Jonathan’s covenant relationship was of this kind. The marriage covenant is an outstanding example. And, this is the kind of covenant God makes with us in His Son, Jesus.

BLOOD COVENANTS— Are the most binding of all covenants down through history

Anthropologists tell us that most ancient societies had some form by which they would make “covenants.” In fact, the blood sacrifices practiced by pagan religions, referred to in Bible times, were often the expressions of blood covenants

Just like the principle of Tithing was recognized and practiced before the actual Old Testament laws requiring tithing were written, so the earliest of societies seemed to have had an innate knowledge concerning Blood Covenants

Illustration: Stanley in Africa

Some two centuries ago the famous Explorer, H. M. Stanley, went charging into the heart of Africa to discover its secrets and at the same time to look for the missing missionary, David Livingston. The further he went the sicker he became. And, the natives were stealing him blind. In desperation Stanly was finally convinced to enter into a blood covenant with the most powerful African chief. The difference was incredible. From the moment Stanley entered into that covenant everything changed. No one would dare to steal from him now. He had help and protection all the rest of his journey.

“LOVE IS A COVENANT”

In His Son, Jesus, God has established with us a covenant of Love.

A COVENANT IS A BINDING AGREEMENT— Two parties bonded together.

Three reasons for men covenanting

— **Protection** _____

— **Partnership** _____

— **Love and Devotion** _____

BLOOD COVENANTS — Are the most binding of all covenants down through history

Illustration: Stanley in Africa

As soon as the covenant is “cut,” the parties are recognized and designated as blood brothers.

This is the one covenant which is absolutely:

_____ **sacred** _____

—and—

_____ **perpetual** _____

GOD ESTABLISHED THE OLD COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM

—The Hebrew expression for “making a covenant” literally means—

“ **To cut a covenant** ”

—Abraham and God “cut” a covenant

Then he brought all these to Him (the heifer, the goat and the ram) and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each opposite the other. And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those piece. On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram saying: “To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Eygpt to the great river Euphrates —Genesis 15:10 and 17-18.

Blood Covenants have always been held as **ENTIRELY SACRED**

* None ever took advantage of the one with whom they were in covenant nor broke the covenant's terms.

* If they did, the very ground which they walked on was considered cursed. Their relatives would turn them into the avenger to be killed.

Blood Covenants also were **PERPETUAL**

* They would last for 3 or 4 generations and could not be dissolved or annulled.

* Their children were bound to walk in the covenant which their ancestors made.

This understanding of Covenant, which has been so prevalent throughout the centuries, provides background for the awesome story of God entering into a covenant of love with His people.

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—Genesis 15:10 and 17-18.

“Making a Covenant” literally means - **“To Cut a Covenant”**

An incision was made and blood flowed when a covenant would be ratified.

Genesis 15 - God makes covenant with Abraham.

Numerous times God made promises to Abraham. Abraham believed God (made an unqualified committal of himself and all he ever would be to God) V.6 states that this was credited to him as righteousness. Then, Abram halved the animals which were provided and God passed between the pieces thus “cutting” the covenant He had promised with Abraham.

The symbolism was that if you break covenant with me may it be done unto you as was done unto these animals.

Genesis 17 – Circumcision would be the sign.

God said to Abraham, “Now, you have to shed blood too.” He told him to circumcise himself and all of his household. Circumcision was to be the sign that Abraham and all his descendants accepted the covenant which God offered. So, when that was done, then God and Abraham had entered into covenant. From now on every male was to be circumcised at 8 days.

This covenant, which they finalized together, signified that all Abraham had or ever would have was laid on the altar before God and that God must sustain and protect Abraham to the very limit.

Not a bad position to be in if you’re dealing with Almighty God!!!

(See the top of page 81 in the class notes)

Genesis 22 - God tested Abraham’s commitment to the Covenant.

He was told to make a sacrifice of his only heir. Abraham laid him on an altar, raised the knife (prior to God staying his hand) and believed that God was faithful enough to even raise him from the dead, if needed. And God said, “Now I know that I have found a man who will obey me and I can build my covenant on him.”

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THE COVENANT INCLUDED ABRAHAM'S FUTURE GENERATIONS

God remembered Abraham's descendants and the covenant which He had made (see Ex. 2: 23-24). In Ex. 24 the covenant was ratified under Moses' leadership and then it continued to be ratified at other times throughout the Old Testament.

If Abraham's descendants lived out the terms of the covenant, they would become both a people blest by God and a people committed to caring for one another.

BLESSED by God

E. W. Kenyon, in "The Blood Covenant" (p.28) lists some of the promised blessings:

- * God was under obligation to shield them from the armies of the nations that surrounded them
- * God was under obligation to see that their land brought forth large crops, that their hillsides were irrigated, and that their valleys teemed with wealth.
- * God was under obligation by the covenant to see that their herds and flocks multiplied.
- * They became the head of the nations and of wealth. Jerusalem became the richest city the world had ever known. There was no city like it, no nation like it.
- * Under the covenant one man would chase a thousand in war, and two would put ten thousand to flight.

COMMITTED to caring for one another

God wanted Abraham's offspring who were living together within this covenant to create a society in which people would respond toward each other in loving and caring ways.

- * Consider the Levitical principles for community life:
 - not to take advantage of one another
 - watch out for each other's welfare and well being
 - extract no interest
 - help if their neighbor's livestock was in trouble
 - cancel debt and set slaves free every seven years, etc
- * The rest of the Old Testament details the sad truth of how they did not keep the Covenant.

And so, instead of blessing them God had to discipline them most harshly for their disobedient ways. The heavens became as brass, the earth as iron, diseases decimated them, and enemies over ran them until their greatest city became a heap of ruins and the temple, the most costly ever reared up to that time, was completely destroyed.

—When God and Abraham “cut” covenant it meant that all Abraham had or ever would have was laid on the altar, and that God must sustain and protect Abraham to the very limit.

Then the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven and said “By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing and have not withheld your son, your only son—blessing I will bless you and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.”

—Genesis 22:15-18

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—Because of God’s Covenant with Abraham, the Israelite Nation came into being as a “Covenant People.”

The king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage and they cried out and their cry came up to God because of the bondage. God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.—Exodus 2:23-24.

Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said “All that the Lord has said we will do, and be obedient.” And Moses took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, “This is the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you according to all these words.”

—Exodus 24:7-8

—As participants in God’s covenant they were to be a people:

_____ **Blessed** _____ by God

—and—

_____ **Committed** _____ to caring for one another.

As long as Israel kept this covenant that was renewed in Moses, there were not enemies enough in the whole world to conquer one little village.

The word “**testament**” = “**covenant.**” So, the Old Testament refers to the Old Covenant and the New Testament details God’s New Covenant with His people. The old was only to be temporary. As we have just seen, it never was ultimately able to provide a permanent covering for man’s sinfulness nor create a right heart toward God.

In Jesus, God has established a New Covenant with His people

In the Lord’s Supper we “**REMEMBER** and celebrate” Jesus’ death which initiated us into the new covenant.

The Lord’s Supper is a **Memorial Meal.**

On Passover eve in that upper room on the night before He suffered, Jesus established the connection between Passover and the Cross.

(The First Passover) The Blood Covering –

“when I see the blood I will pass over you” The Israelites would be identified as God’s special people covered by the blood of the Passover lamb.

(The Final Passover) “Behold the Lamb of God” –

signaling that God is to establish through the sacrifice of His Son a new blood covenant which will accomplish for all who receive it what the old covenant could not do.

The First covenant was sealed by the blood of Abraham and animal sacrifices.

The New covenant is sealed by the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s own son.

Heb. 10: 4-12

On that very night in the upper room the old Passover was converted into the Kingdom meal. (Matt. 26:28 “*This is my blood, sealing the New Covenant*” and Luke 22:16 “*I won’t eat it again until what it represents has occurred in the Kingdom of God*”) So, He ate this meal with them as a bridge between the old and the new.

The Lord’s Supper is a **Celebration Meal** -

We celebrate this new covenant in Jesus’ blood and ratify our acceptance of it every time we participate in the Table of the Lord.

Just as God promised His blessing, His enriching and His caring to Abraham and his descendants under the terms of the Old Covenant, so now through Jesus, we celebrate these same blessings, and more, which are available to all those who live under the New Covenant.

That means Us!!!

GOD ESTABLISHED A “NEW” COVENANT IN JESUS

EVERY TIME WE PARTAKE OF THE “LORD’S COVENANT MEAL” WE:

1. Remember The New Covenant

Luke 22:14-16

When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. Then He said to them, “With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

—The Blood Covering

—The Final Passover

Matthew 26-28—*“This is My blood, sealing the New Covenant.”*

The first covenant was sealed by the blood of Abraham and animal sacrifices.
The new covenant is sealed by the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s own Son.

We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all. And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.—Hebrews 10:10-12

2. Re-Pledge The New Covenant

—The Passover celebrated not only a common heritage, but also a common bond.

—The “Lord’s Supper” is called “Communion.”

A common meal celebrated by those who are in the covenant with God, yes, but who are also in covenant with each other.

For Christ Himself is our way of peace. He has made peace between us Jews and you gentiles by making us all one family, breaking down the wall of contempt that used to separate us. By His death...He took the two groups that had been opposed to each other and made them parts of Himself, thus He fused us together to become one new person, and at least there was peace.

—Ephesians 2:14-15 (Living Bible)

Every time we partake of the Lord's Supper together we also **RE-PLEDGE** our commitment to all who have joined with us under the New Covenant.

As God's Old Testament people lived together under the covenant, two things would follow:

- (1) God would bless them, and
- (2) God would expect them to live in Covenant bonds with each other.

And so, at the Table we not only celebrate the blessing which Christ provides for us, but we also "RE-PLEDGE" ourselves to live together according to the terms of the new covenant into which we have been initiated.

We speak of the Lord's Supper as "**Communion**" – it is a common meal eaten by those who are not only in covenant with God, but who also are in covenant with each other

The Passover was celebrated by those who not only had a common heritage, but also by those who had made a common commitment.

- In Egypt it was to be a family occasion (those living together)
- In the Upper Room it was the Disciples who had walked together.

Eph. 2:14-15 (The Living Bible)

When Jesus died for our sins it was that He might bring us into a right relationship with God. But, He also intended to make us all into one family as well. The bottom line is that God has acted to fuse us, to inseparably bind us together. He has taken us from our different walks of life and He has formed us together into one new Man in Christ.

See the first paragraph on p. 83 followed by the Quote from E. W. Kenyon, ("The Blood Covenant.")

When I break the bread and drink the cup, I not only confess my loyalty to Him, but to every member of the Body of Christ who breaks that bread and drinks that cup with me. It is a confession of your love for one another. It is a confession that you have eaten and drunk with them, and now you are going to bear their burdens.

Each time we Re-pledge we say "Yes" to the blood of Jesus that unites us as one people to love, care for and watch over one another. That's why the Lord's Supper is so special. It's all about how much He loves us, how much we love Him, and how much He wants us to love each other!!

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INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING THIS COVENANT MEAL- I CORINTHIANS 11: 17-34

As we come to understand its true meaning, we shouldn't be surprised that there would be some careful instruction about partaking of the Lord's Supper.

Corinth is a classic example of a fellowship which is not walking in what Jesus intended. So, we can learn a lot from examining the situation there and how Paul dealt with it.

1. THE ABUSE v. 17-22

Corinth had a rich vs. poor problem which was brought to a head at Communion as the rich tried to "out do" each other's provision for the meal and drew apart into their own little clique.

What should have been an "agape" time of deep fellowship and bonding, deteriorated into a depiction of the Spirit of the Age in which everyone was looking out for themselves.

It divided rather than unified. It became an expression of selfishness and lustfulness instead of depicting the "new man" in Jesus Christ.

This symbol of the blood covenant was tearing them apart – how horrible!
And so it was doing more harm than good.

This is the context in which Paul is now going to instruct them.

2. THE PROPER UNDERSTANDING v. 23-26

He goes over the institution of the Supper with them once again: What beauty, what power in this description!

Don't you love it? Every time we take the bread and the cup we are "retelling the message." That is:

- we are proclaiming,
- we are giving an active confession,
- we are declaring and appropriating,
- we are establishing and setting in motion

all that Jesus has promised and made available to us through His cross.

We pledge sacred covenant with one another each time we partake of the Lord's Supper; for the nature of "Covenant" is the binding of lives together into one life and one will.

... When I break the bread and drink the cup, I not only confess my loyalty to Him, but to every member of the body of Christ who breaks that bread and drinks that cup with me.

It is a confession of our love one for another. It is a confession that you have eaten and drunk with them and now you are going to bear their burdens.

E.W. Kenyon, "The Blood Covenant" p.69

INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING OUR COVENANT MEAL—THE "LORD'S SUPPER."

Paul's dealing with what was "out of order" at Corinth in I Corinthians 11:17-34 provides keen insight into how the Lord's Supper should be experienced.

1. The Abuse v. 18-22.

When you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.

Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, for in eating each one takes his own supper ahead of others and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.

2. The proper understanding v. 23-26.

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after the supper saying "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, youu proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

Jesus is **actually imparting** His life to us!

There is more going on here than just remembering, or even than just retelling.
There is actually something for us to receive at this table.

Jesus Himself gives commentary on this in John 6: 53-57

v. 53-55 Do we literally eat His body and Drink His blood? No, of course not!
But, spiritually and symbolically, it is clear that He intends for us to eat of Him
so that He can impart His very life to us.

v. 56-57 When we eat His body and drink His blood He anticipates that there
will be an exchange of life which takes place. His very life comes within us and
increases within us. What a Prospect!!

Illustration: The miracle of assimilation

The fish curry which you ate last night has become a part of who you are today.

How did that happen? It is a “mystery. Even the scientists don’t completely understand how
assimilation takes place so that the curry has now literally become part of every cell in your
being.

In a similar way it is a spiritual mystery as to how we can experience a spiritual impartation
whereby His very life can actually be built up, strengthened and increased within us
as we eat these symbols of His body and His blood

By faith we receive the spiritual reality for the physical symbol which we are holding in our
hand.

The Bread *“This is My Body”*

Give thanks that you are actually taking the life of Jesus Christ within you:
His strength for your weakness, His health for your sickness, His wisdom for your lack
of knowledge, His ability for your inability, His joy for your discouragement, etc.

The Cup *“This is My Blood of the covenant”*

Believe that He is coming within you, flooding His new life down to the depths
of your being, purging out all of the old self, humanness and weakness as He
cleanses and makes you whole.

Now we can see why Paul was so upset with the Corinthians who were taking this beautiful
provision and making it something frivolous and disgusting.

Jesus is actually imparting His life to us.

His life coming within us so we can become what He is.

Jesus himself gives commentary on this in John Chapter 6

Then Jesus said to them...unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life.—John 6:53-55

“He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father so he who feeds on me will live because of Me”—John 6:56-57

As we feed on Him the very life of Jesus increases within us

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“The Bread” —*This is My Body.*

Give thanks that you are actually taking the life of Jesus Christ within you:— His strength for your weakness, His health for your sickness, His wisdom for your lack of knowledge, His ability for your inability, His joy for your discouragement, etc.

“The Cup” —*This is My blood of the covenant.*

Believe that as He comes within you, He enters the deep areas of life, cleansing and making you whole.

3. An unworthy Manner v. 27

Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

4. Self examination v. 28

But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

3. AN UNWORTHY MANNER v. 27

Paul’s warning is— “Don’t partake of this meal in an unworthy manner.”

I grew up using the King James version which translates this verse “whoever shall eat ... unworthily.” Therefore, for years I thought that I had to work hard at making sure I was worthy to come to the table. It was a losing cause. Who could ever be worthy? This KJV translation is misleading.

What is the table for? – It is for Cleansing! It is for Strengthening!
Who needs it? Those who are dirty! Those who are weak!

So, a “worthy manner” does not indicate that a person must examine their walk with Jesus so as to determine their worthiness to partake. Rather, it indicates those who recognize their need and who will come to partake by faith in His power to forgive, to restore, to strengthen and to heal.

The question is not am I worthy to partake, but rather it is - do I have a repentant spirit and a heart willing to receive? Do I want to be strengthened? Do I want to be changed? Do I expect Jesus is going to do something for me and in me? Am I willing to receive? If so, then I am coming to partake in a worthy manner.

In contrast to this, an unworthy manner would be partaking “lightly” (with a frivolous spirit) or “traditionally” (it’s a ritual we do on the first Sunday of the month), rather than coming with deep understanding and eager anticipation for Him to impart His life to us..

Those with an unworthy manner are “Guilty of sin against the body and blood of the Lord” – because they are taking these life-giving symbols, and the spiritual potential which they represent, and treating them crassly:

- * Without understanding
- * Without expectation (or)
- * Without proper reverence

So, that’s why v. 28 says--- “Examine yourself carefully”

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His life coming within us so we can become what He is.

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4. SELF EXAMINATION v. 28

Proper cautions need to be raised concerning casual participation. So, examine yourselves!

Sometimes it grieves me to see adults who give every outward appearance that they are:

- * Not intent about what is going on (laughing, talking, looking around)
- * Not in a spirit of communion with the Lord
- * Exhibit no attitude of expectation that He will meet them in any real way.

If adults need to be warned, it goes without saying that Teens and Children must not casually partake. Parents need to talk to their children. Determine when each one is ready. If they are not old enough to understand or mature enough to make this a special time with the Lord, then they are not ready and shouldn't be allowed.

We have no church law as to when children are old enough. All we say is that a person of any age who comes to the Table should:

- * Be born again
- * Be part of God's family here on earth and know it
- * Have a heart that is right with the Lord and with their fellow man
- * Have a meaningful anticipation in coming to the Lord's Table.

Just remember – casual participation can be dangerous. So examine yourself and all those for whom you are responsible before partaking.

But, as you do – Please, recognize that self examination needs to go deeper than just the matter of laughing, talking or lack of attention.

So, let's go on to v. 29.

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His life coming within us so we can become what He is.

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5. PROPER DISCERNMENT v. 29-30

“Thinking about the body of Christ and what it means”

NKJ puts it – “not discerning the body of the Lord”

NIV says - “without recognizing the body of the Christ”

Now we are getting to the heart of the matter:

THE KEY lies with a proper understanding about the Body of Christ.

There are two aspects to worthy participation at the Table of the Lord:

In the First instance:

We must come gratefully and eagerly with a repentant spirit and expectant faith.

Second instance:

We must also properly discern about what it means to be part of the Body of Christ – bound to one another in a Covenant of Love. (In both thought and action)

If we don’t properly discern this relationship then we will find ourselves actually eating and drinking God’s judgment

* Now read I Cor. 10: 16-17 as printed in the class notes

There are a couple of implications:

(1) The unbeliever has no place at the table because they could have no discernment at all concerning the Body of Christ.

(2) We all are part of the same body. So, if we have attitudes or are otherwise relating to one another in a way that is “giving the lie” to what we are proclaiming at the Table (that we are a company of blood brothers committed in love to each other) then we also are not recognizing the Body – “thinking about what it means” – and will be guilty of eating judgment upon our selves.

So, we need to examine to be sure we are:

* In the Kingdom

* Coming with proper expectations

* Walking in proper relationships (or at least desiring God to set our relationships straight) so that we are in reality one body in Christ.

This includes not holding grudges, as well as taking time and interest in our brothers even in the midst of the 100 other things we have to do. And, if we find there is anything between us we seek to be restored.

5. Proper _____ **Discernment** _____ v. 29-30

For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgement to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.
— v.29

When we drink the cup of blessing, aren't we taking into ourselves the blood, the very life of Christ? And isn't it the same with the loaf of bread we break and eat? Don't we take into ourselves the body, the very life, of Christ? Because there is one loaf, our many-ness becomes one-ness. Christ doesn't become fragmented in us. Rather, we become unified in Him. We don't reduce Christ to what we are; He raises us to what He is.

— I Corinthians 10: 16-17 (The Message)

For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.
— v.30

6. The concluding _____ **Admonition** _____ v. 31-34

But if you carefully examine yourselves before eating you will not need to be judged and punished. Yet, when you are judged and punished by the Lord, it is so that you will not be condemned with the rest of the world.

— v. 31-32

So dear brothers, when you gather for the Lord's supper—the Communion service—wait for each other; if anyone is really hungry he should eat at home so that he won't bring punishment upon himself when you meet together. I'll talk to you about the other matters after I arrive.

— v. 33-34

If in theory we say one thing, but in practice we do another then we need to examine ourselves – because Jesus says that our love towards one another is the fool-proof way in which the world will know that we are His followers.

So, our coming together at the Table for the Lord’s Supper is not just a something which we do in our church ritual, but it represents the very heart of all that Jesus came to accomplish here on earth.

And, this Table is where we express it, ratify it, agree to it, and let it happen!!

Jesus is no doubt saying to us – “you come to this Table and display anything but ‘One Body’ and I’ll tell you what – I DON’T LIKE IT – Don’t do it!”

So, that is why we must now come to -- v. 30

MANY ARE WEAK AND SICK----SOME HAVE DIED

Paul is speaking prophetically here. Evidently there has been a rash of illness. I’ll tell you why, he says. It’s because of the way you are treating the Lord’s Supper and what that reflects about your understanding of the Body of Christ and your relationships with one another!

As I look back over my years of ministry, I am aware that there are some people who are not here now on earth with us because they didn’t discern. They caused trouble in the Body, they helped fracture the Body, and then came to the Table when they had no business to do so with the attitudes and motives which they allowed unchecked in their hearts.

Moreover, in Paul’s view this is not just a personal matter of - you abuse, so you get sick or die. (This can happen, of course)

But, let’s remember that Paul is talking here about the Body of Christ.

So, he’s saying, “Some of you are abusing the table and therefore the whole community is being afflicted because of it.” That’s just the way it is. You are all united together in God’s eyes: one body, one family. So, what affects one affects all.

Paul sees the condition that he is referring to in v. 30 as an expression of judgment on the whole community.

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6. CONCLUDING ADMONITION v. 31-34

v. 31-32 - This is happening – but it doesn't have to!

* It's not that you will be eternally damned. (You may get sick? Yes.
Some may die? Yes)

* But, you will lose the blessing of God for your health and wholeness. Many of the purposes He has for you in this life and for the congregation of which you are a part will be frustrated.

The punishment they are experiencing is meant to be corrective and disciplinary.

* If you respond, change, get the message – then it doesn't have to continue this way.

So, what should they do?

v. 33-34 Paul always gets practical “Don't Pig Out!!” = Be Courteous!

Some translations = “receive each other”
Our translation = “wait for each other”

“Don't consider your status in life,” he implies. “Let the Lord bind you all together in unity as you celebrate your Covenant Meal. Those with loaded baskets and filled wine jars – spread it around – share. Let's have a common meal and enjoy each other in the love of the Lord. If you can't do that, eat at home!”

CONCLUSION

At this Table we have the most glorious and precious legacy which Jesus has left us.
(Communion, the Lord's Supper, Mass – whatever we call it)

- * It's a time when we Remember, Rejoice, and Proclaim
- * It's a time when we receive ever more of His life within us
- * It's a time when we express and ratify our commitment of
Covenant Love to each other

Dear Friends, I hope and pray that you will never come casually or lightly to this Table. I pray you will always come sincerely, expectantly and joyously to receive from the Lord and to use this occasion to re-commit your love to each other.

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FULL LIFE IN CHRIST - Group Leaders Suggestions
EXTEND - “Developing Our Witness” - Session #3

FIRST - Briefly

- Go over last weeks question sheet . (especially questions 3 & 4)
- The fruit from their “eating” I Corinthians 13:1-7.
- Answers to prayer from their prayer lists.

NOW

Let the group members share the most meaningful experience of communion (The Lord’s Supper) which they can remember, And, what made it so?

NEXT - Discuss John 6:53-57. What do you think Jesus is really saying here?

THEN - Since you now realize more fully that the Lord’s Supper is a “covenant meal,” how will it change or add to your experience in receiving communion?

FINALLY

- Share the Lord’s Supper together.

FOR NEXT WEEK

- “Eat” Hebrews 10:12-25
- Complete Question Sheet #3