

Why We Need...

The Lord's Supper (I Co 11:23-26)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning,
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of lessons on "Why We Need..."
 - a. Last week we examined "Why We Need The Church Of Christ."
 - i. **Mt 16:18** "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."¹
 - b. This week we will be looking into "Why We Need The Lord's Supper."
 - i. **I Co 11:23-26** "For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."
3. The "Lord's Supper" has many different names associated with it.
 - a. The Communion
 - i. **I Co 10:16**
 - b. The Breaking of Bread
 - i. **Ac 2:42; 20:7**
 - c. The Eucharist (This is derived from the Greek eucharisteo which means "giving thanks")
 - i. **Mt 26:26-27**
4. This communion is a very simple act done by Christian all over the world every first day of the week.
 - a. We partake together of the unleavened bread and drink of the fruit of the vine.
5. Yet though it is simple and though it is done every first day of the week it can become somewhat of a habit without thought for many.
 - a. How many times have you seen someone take the bread or the cup and then fidget with their purse, phone, notes...
 - b. How many of us have partaken only to be thinking about hundreds of other things other than what our minds ought to be focused on.
6. So this morning we are going to ask and answer the question "Why we need the Lord's Supper?"
 - a. With that in mind let us look at this morning's lesson.

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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I. The Partaking Of The Breaking Of Bread

A. The biblical evidence for the partaking of the Lord's Supper

1. We find in Scripture by way of example that we are authorized and expected to partake each and every first day of the week.
 - i. First we see Christians only partaking on the first day of the week.
 - a. **Ac 2:42** "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."
 - b. **Ac 20:7** "On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight."
 1. We know this "Breaking of Bread" is Communion because it is describe by Paul as such.
 - i. **I Co 10:16-17** "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The **bread that we break**, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? 17 Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."
(emphasis mine)
 2. We know the other breaking of breads are common meals because of the following additional information given with each.
 - i. In **Ac 2:46** we see this particular breaking of bread was being done daily which does not fit the examples found throughout the rest of the Bible. Also we find this bread breaking consisted of "food." This word in Greek "trophes" deals with that meal that nourished the body and is never associated with the Lord's Supper.
 - ii. In **Ac 20:11** we see this particular breaking of bread was "eaten" by Paul after he raised Eutychus. The Greek word "geus-a-menos" is used for the meal that is tasted and is never associated with the Lord's Supper.
 - ii. Second the only example we have of how regular we find the Lord's Supper being taken is in Corinth and they were partaking of it every single first day of the week.
 - a. To see this one must use logic and reason.
 1. **Is 1:18** "Come now, let us reason together..."
 2. **I Th 5:21** "Prove all things..." (ASV)

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- b. Let us look at the logic and thusly prove this point.
 1. The Corinthian church was meeting to worship God every first day of the week.
 - i. **I Co 16:2** “On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come.”
 2. The Corinthian church met to partake of the Lord’s Supper. They had turned the Lord’s Supper into a common meal but that doesn’t change the fact that they met to partake of the Lord’s Supper.
 - i. **I Co 11:20** “When you come together, it is not the Lord’s supper that you eat.”
 - a. “When” is in the present tense and thus establishes a continuity showing they did this every time they met.
 3. Thus we find the Corinthians meeting every first day of the week to partake of the Lord’s Supper.
- B. The historical evidence for the partaking of the Lord’s Supper
 1. The earliest of historical information outside the Bible confirms this obvious truth we have just discussed.
 - i. The Didache (ca. 95 AD) indicates Christians were to come on the first day of the week to break bread (Didache 14:1).
 - ii. Justin Martyr (ca. 150 AD) records how Christians assembled on Sunday and partook of the Supper (Apology I, 67).
 - iii. B. W. Johnson who wrote the People’s N.T. has this to say, “...the early church writers from Barnabas, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, to Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Cyprian, all with one consent, declare that the church observed the first day of the week. They are equally agreed that the Lord’s Supper was observed weekly, on the first day of the week” (People’s New Testament pg. 505).
 2. The religious scholarship confirms this truth and evidence as well.
 - i. Augustus Neander, a Lutheran, stated “As we have already remarked, the celebration of the Lord’s Supper was still held to constitute an essential part of divine worship every Sunday...” (History of Christian Religion & Church Vol. 1 pg. 332).
 - ii. Thomas Scott, a Presbyterian, noted, “This ordinance seems to have been administered every Lord’s day; and probably no professed Christian absented themselves...” (Commentary on Acts).
 - iii. A.C. Hervey, an Episcopalian, made clear, “This also is an important example of weekly communion as the practice of the first Christians” (Commentary on Acts).
 - iv. P. Doddridge, a Congregationalist, indicated, “It is well known that the primitive Christians administered the Eucharist every Lord’s day” (Notes on Acts).

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- C. Thus...
 - 1. If God saw fit to authorize the observance of the Communion every first day of the week and since the evidence clearly points to this truth God obviously thought this was important and thus we see our first reason as to “Why we need the Lord’s Supper.”

II. The Value Of Partaking In The Breaking Of Bread

- A. It is a memorial
 - 1. Paul points this out when he writes...
 - i. **I Co 11:23-25, 29** “For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” 25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me”...29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.”
 - 2. By memorializing the gospel each week...
 - i. We show to Christ how worthy we deem Him and His sacrifice.
- B. It is a proclamation
 - 1. Paul explains this when he writes...
 - i. **I Co 11:26** “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”
 - 2. By proclaiming the gospel...
 - i. We show our faith in Christ that He died for our sins.
 - ii. We show our faith in Christ that He will return again.
- C. It is a communion
 - 1. Paul states this when he writes...
 - i. **I Co 10:16** “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” (NKJV)
 - 2. Communing in the gospel means...
 - i. Sharing in the broken body of Christ.
 - ii. Sharing in the blood of Christ.
- D. It is a means of building fellowship
 - 1. Notice the disciples “came together” to break bread.
 - i. **Ac 20:7** “Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread...” (NKJV)
 - 2. This fellowship/unity of coming together as one reflects our oneness in Christ.
 - i. **I Co 10:17** “Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.”
- E. Thus...
 - 1. We need the Lord’s Supper because it unites the body of Christ in fellowship through its memorial, proclamation, and communion.

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CONCLUSION

1. Brethren is not our fellowship with Christ and each other a worthy reason to be faithful in our observance of the Lord's Supper?
 - a. Let us each make certain we are willing and wanting to be in fellowship with our God and our brethren this very day.
2. Question: Do you realize how very much you need to partake each week in the Lord's Supper?
 - a. If so continue therein and grow thereby.
 - b. If not why not?
3. Invitation
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Have Faith In Jesus **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**