

“ABOUT COMMUNION”

(1Corinthians 11:17-34)

February 5, 2017

The Bible often gives us bad news, followed by Good News:

The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?
Jeremiah 17:9

I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh.
Ezekiel 11:19

Paul identifies several severe problems with what the church in Corinth is doing:

1) Instead of being ONE family, they are dividing into groups or cliques.

2) The SHARING that is supposed to happen is not taking place.

3) Some of the people were having so much to drink they were getting drunk, certainly an inappropriate condition in which to honor and remember the SACRIFICE of Jesus.

Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.
Ephesians 5:18

It was in this atmosphere the church *tried* to celebrate the sacrifice God had made in sharing his Son for our sins - and it became a mockery.

It made no difference if the right words were spoken and the right actions were performed if the condition of the church's fellowship and the spirit of its members stood as a CONTRADICTION to the true meaning of the Lord's Supper.

To bring into the worship service divisions within the body of the church DIMINISHES the true meaning of worship.

Paul makes six statements about the true meaning of communion:

I. The Lord's Supper is rooted in HISTORY.

We are remembering real/historic event.

II. The Lord's Supper is God's GIFT.

Be careful not to focus on death, but the death that leads to life.

III. The Lord's Supper celebrates a NEW covenant.

A new relationship is made possible, not based in Law or perfection, but willingness of heart.

IV. The Lord's Supper is a PROCLAMATION.

A word of hope is shown to the world.

V. The Lord's Supper is not to be taken in an UNWORTHY manner.

Communion is a CONTINUAL reminder that there is forgiveness for the sinner and strength for the weak and weary.

VI. The Lord's Supper is a time for SELF EXAMINATION.

"To examine oneself" is to put oneself to the test as to the attitude of the HEART.

How do I know if my heart is right?

- 1. Look for an attitude of RELATIONAL equality.
Are you erecting barriers toward others? Why? How?**
- 2. Learn to appreciate COMPASSIONATE discipline.
Are you accepting of the Lord's correction?**
- 3. Look for an atmosphere of MUTUAL acceptance.
Are you "waiting for each other" in courtesy and compassion**
- 4. Lift up a GRATEFUL heart for the Lord's sacrifice.**

Most important of all, as we remember the Lord's sacrifice for us is to remember that he is COMING BACK!

And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come back and take you with me that you also will be where I am. John 14:3

As we look back, we look forward – with great longing and JOY.