

The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper # 6

1 Corinthians 11: 23-31

Last week we considered believer's baptism: one of two ordinances our Lord left for the church. Tonight I want to consider the second and final ordinance we are given to observe: Communion or the Lord's Supper. This ordinance was first observed with the Lord and His disciples in the Upper Room, just prior to His arrest and crucifixion. Having the privilege and opportunity to participate in the Lord's Supper ought to be dear to the heart of every believer.

These verses record the command to partake of the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Christ our Lord. Through them there is a remembrance of the sacrifice that was made to provide for our redemption and the hope we have for the future is renewed. I want us to look at the significance of the Lord's Supper, as well as, the sanctity of this observance in relation to how we should present ourselves each time we partake of it. Let's consider the [sacred elements](#) of Communion as we examine: [The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper](#).

I. The Significance of the Observance (23-26) – In these verses Paul deals with the great significance of this sacred time. It is not an occasion to be entered lightly. I fear that many fail to fully appreciate its significance. It should be an occasion that all believers are familiar with, but careful not to treat it as mundane or routine. We find that it is:

A. A Time For Consideration (24-25) – [And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.](#) As we observe the Lord's Supper, we should consider what Jesus did for us. This is a time of remembrance and consideration for the Christian.

1. Consider the Cross – We should ever be mindful of what Christ did for us on the cross of Calvary. We must realize that we were the ones who were guilty. The Innocent bore the condemnation of the guilty. He paid the debt that we owed.

- This wasn't an easy death, but a very cruel one. He endured the suffering of the cross for all. [Is. 53:3-7 – He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. \[4\] Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. \[5\] But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the](#)

chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. [6] All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. [7] He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

- I trust each time you observe the Lord's Supper you get a fresh glimpse of the cross and the price that was paid. It was there that we obtained forgiveness.

2. Consider the Resurrection – We have been reminded of the death that Jesus died, but that is not the end. Had He not rose again, our faith would be in vain. He would've been like every other man who had died before. As we participate in Communion, we do not grieve over a dead body, but celebrate a risen Savior. [Lu.5b-6a – Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen.](#) He rose victorious and is alive forever more. We have hope because of His resurrection.

B. A Time For Anticipation (26) – [For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.](#) We are not a people without hope this evening. We know that Jesus ascended back to heaven and is even now at the right hand of the Father. We are told to observe the Lord's Supper until He comes.

- There is a promise of the Lord's return. I thank God that I have put my trust in One who will return to take us home to glory. As we participate in this wonderful observance, let us do so in a spirit of anticipation as we joyfully await the return of our Lord and Savior. He has promised that He would come again and receive us unto himself, that where He is, there we may be also.
- [Heb.9:28 – So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.](#) The Christian has something to look forward to. We will one day be called out of this life of sin and sorrow, and spend all eternity with the Lord. [Titus 2:13 – Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.](#)
- He could return today. I trust we are anticipating His return. [1 Thes.4:16-17 – For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.](#)

I. The Significance of the Observance (23-26)

II. The Sanctity of the Observance (27-31) – In the closing verses of our passage, Paul addresses the need for personal purity and sanctity if one expects to participate in the Lord’s Supper. This is just an observance. Some teach that the sacraments actually become the body and blood of Jesus as they are received. We do not believe or teach that, but it is an occasion of seriousness and sanctity. I would encourage anyone to search their heart prior to partaking of this ordinance. Let’s look a bit closer at the sanctity of this observance.

A. A Time For Examination (27-30) – *Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. [28] But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. [29] For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. [30] For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.* I have always been amazed at how the Holy Spirit superintends these services. It seems that when we begin to observe the Lord’s Supper, there is a reverence that is hardly felt at any other time. I believe that Christ takes this very seriously.

- These verses deal with the condition of those who partake of the Lord’s Supper. The church at Corinth had many who were sick and some had died because of their attitude concerning the Lord’s Supper. This is a holy time as we remember the suffering and sacrifice of the Lord.
- I would remind you that God has not changed. He still expects us to deal with the sin in our lives. We seem to live in a day when many have turned a deaf ear to sin. It is so abundant that we tend to ignore it at times.
- As we examine our hearts prior to partaking of the Lord’s Supper, let us remember the holiness of Christ. We are remembering what He did for us because of who He is. It is very important that we examine our hearts before we partake of the Lord’s Supper.
- [1 Jn.1:9 – If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.](#) Let us search our hearts today. This time of examination calls for:

B. A Time For Rededication (31) – *For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.* We have the opportunity to deal with our sin and commit ourselves to God. It is always easier when we confess them, rather than ignoring them and causing God to chastise us.

- The church needs to experience a rededication to the Lord. I have thought much about the spiritual needs of our day. I have asked God to help me be a Christian that would honor Him. I don’t want to be a reproach to my Lord. We can enjoy fellowship with Christ when we are dedicated to Him. [Ps.51:10 – Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.](#)

- If the Lord has revealed something in your life, He desires that you deal with that and make it right! Only those who are dedicated, having their hearts free of unconfessed sin, should partake of this sacred ordinance.

The observance of the Lord's Supper is a special occasion for the believer. We have the privilege to worship our Lord in thanksgiving and remembrance of His great sacrifice for us. Apart from Christ we would yet be in our sin and without hope.

I pray that we never engage in this wonderful observance without being mindful of all Christ endured for us and the hope that we have in Him. I trust that you have been enlightened, and at the very least, challenged through this passage of Scripture. May we be willing to search our hearts each time we approach the Lord's table, seeking to ensure that we are right with Him!

If you are unsaved, you likely don't understand all that I have shared. Rest assured that Jesus died for your sin as well, and He wants you to be saved. If you have never trusted Christ in salvation, why not come to Him in repentance and faith?