

1 CORINTHIANS 11:17–34, TO THE CHURCH OF GOD

¹⁷In the following directives I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good. ¹⁸In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. ¹⁹No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval. ²⁰When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, ²¹for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk. ²²Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not!

²³For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

²⁷Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. ²⁹For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. ³¹But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. ³²When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.

³³So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. ³⁴If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment.

And when I come I will give further directions.

Discussion Questions (Choose a manageable number to discuss)

1. What (v. 17) caused the Corinthians' participation in the Lord's Supper to do more harm than good?
2. Why were the social distinctions practiced as the Corinthians conducted their "love feasts" a denial of the essence of the Lord's Supper? (See 1 Corinthians 10:17.)
3. Are there aspects of our own church's social interaction, fellowship, or worship that could cause those not part of an "inner circle" or of a differing age group to feel marginalized?
4. Who (v. 23) established the Communion ordinance?
5. In what sense (vv. 24–25) do you understand the bread and wine to be the body and blood of Jesus?
How can we individually appropriate the sacrifice of Jesus "which is for you"?
6. How did the Old Testament sacrifices (see Exodus 24:8) point forward to Christ's death?
How does the Church's observance of the Lord's Supper point back to the cross?
7. For how long (v. 26) is the Lord's Supper to be observed?
How does eating the bread and drinking the cup "proclaim" Jesus' once-for-all, finished sacrifice?
8. How can we guard against eating and drinking the Communion elements (v. 29) "without recognizing the body of the Lord"?