

LESSON 22

HOLY COMMUNION

CENTRAL TRUTH: Holy Communion is an important ordinance of the New Testament Church.

MEMORY VERSE: For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. _____ **1 Corinthians 11:26.**

LESSON TEXT

1 Corinthians 11:17-32.

17. In the following directives I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good.

18. In 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.

19. No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval.

20. So then, when you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat,

21. For when you are eating, some of you go ahead with your own private suppers. As a result, one person remains hungry and another gets drunk.

22. Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God by humiliating those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? Certainly not in this matter!

23. For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night 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, 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."

26. For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he

comes.

27. So then, 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.

28. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.

29. For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.

30. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.

31. But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment.

32. Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world.

INTRODUCTION

Holy Communion is an important act of worship, and a vital part of Christian experience. It is a time for personal reflection on the death of Christ, what it means to us, and a time to examine our relationship with Him. It is also a time to look forward to His second coming. As we examine the celebration of Holy Communion together we must allow the Holy Spirit to examine our lives.

LESSON

The Holy Communion, also referred to as the Lord's Supper was instituted by Jesus himself **(Luke 22:17-20)**. He emphasized its importance by instructing His disciple to participate in it regularly until he comes again. He instituted it during the celebration of the Passover feast.

The Passover feast was an annual commemoration of God's liberation of Israel from Egypt and institution covenant by God. It was marked by the blood of lambs. As believers, Jesus is our Passover lamb who was slain for our salvation. When Jesus celebrated the Passover feast with his disciples, he instituted a commemoration of a new covenant. Thus, the Holy Communion is

very important for what it symbolizes-Jesus' suffering and death in our place. The bread represents His broken body and the cup represents His shed blood for the remission of our sins. In **1 Corinthians 11**, Paul taught about the proper conduct of Holy Communion among other acts of worship. He pointed out the lack of unity among the Corinthian which became manifest even during the Holy Communion. The situation degenerated and caused more harm than good. This happens today in our churches as well. Many people who come to church to partake of the Holy Communion are not good in terms with others within the congregation.

Again Paul criticized the Corinthian believers for their selfish behaviours which he said was making a mockery of the Holy Communion and thereby destroying the sacredness of their worship and unity of the body. Concern for others' welfare must be a priority in the church today. As a body of believers united through Jesus Christ, we must minister to those in our Churches who are less fortunate than we are. Paul emphasized this with a warning against taking the Holy Communion unworthily. He said if we did, we will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

Because the Holy Communion is such a significant part of our worship, we are to approach it with an attitude of reverence. In view of this, Paul asked the Corinthians to examine themselves. Believers today also need to take a close look at their relationships with others before partaking of the Holy Communion. The relationship issues we need to resolve include, harbouring of bitter feelings against fellow Christians because of something they said or did.

LIFE APPLICATION

Holy Communion as an act of worship is very significant in the Christian life. It reminds us of what Christ did on the cross and also looks forward to His return. The frequency of it is not necessarily the important thing," as often as ye eat" (**1 Corinthians 11:26**) but it is the celebration of this ordinance that is important. And before receiving the Holy Communion we must allow the Holy Spirit to examine our lives. Each time we partake we should remind ourselves of what Christ did on our behalf and remember that He is coming again. This should motivate us to live holy lives.

DIALY BIBLE READING

Monday: Covenant of the Passover. (Exodus 12:13-17).

Tuesday: New Covenant Promised. (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Wednesday: New Covenant Instituted. (Mathew 26:26-29).

Thursday: New Covenant Explained. (Hebrews 8:6-13).

Friday: Price of the Covenant. (Hebrews 13:9-13).

Saturday: Communion with Christ. (Revelation 19:5-9).