

Subject: *Partaking of the Lord's Supper*

Scripture: *1 Corinthians 11:17-34*

God has given two ordinances to the church. These are object lessons that God gives believers to observe on a regular basis as we come together with the church body. These are baptism and the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a picture of Christ's death and baptism is a picture of the believer's faith in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. Baptism is something we do one time and the Lord's Supper is something repeated over and over. Both baptism and the Lord's Supper are to be obeyed as God's commands and both are to be understood as to their meaning and purpose.

1. The IDENTIFICATION of the Lord's Supper

Scripture identifies it in four ways: communion (1 Cor. 10:26-27; Gk. *koinonia*, fellowship; *sunerchomai*, come together, vs. 17, 18, 20, 33, 34); the Lord's table (1 Cor. 10:21; Gk. *kuriakon*, belonging to the Lord, same as Rev. 1:10, the Lord's day); the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:20); and the Eucharist (Gk. *eucharisteo*, giving thanks, 1 Cor. 11:24). All four of these are reminders of how sacred and special the Lord's Supper is, and we should treat it with the utmost reverence.

2. The INSTITUTION of the Lord's Supper

It was instituted by Christ Himself (vs. 23-25) at the time of Passover when He was eating the traditional Passover meal with His disciples in the upper room. This is often referred to as the Last Supper, and it was the last meal that Christ ate before His arrest and crucifixion. It was this last Passover meal when Christ instituted a new meal called the Lord's Supper. The Passover meal reminded the Jews of their salvation from the bondage of Egypt (Ex. 12). In the Lord's Supper we are reminded that Christ saves us through His shed blood (1 Cor. 5:7).

3. The INSTRUCTION for the Lord's Supper

A. Look back at Christ's death – "in remembrance of me"

The bread reminds us of His broken body. The juice represents His shed blood.

B. Look forward to Christ's return – "you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes"

The Lord's Supper is to be observed until Christ comes again.

C. Look inside at yourself – "let a man examine himself"

This is a time prepare and examine ourselves. It should be a time of soul-searching and repentance. To partake of the Supper "unworthily" means to partake in an unworthy manner. It means to partake with an unprepared heart. This was a problem in the Corinthian church (vs. 17-22, 29-34). Instead of unity, there was division and pride in the church. Instead of honoring the Lord, they were bringing shame and dishonor to the Lord and the church. They had forgotten it was the Lord's Supper and the Lord's table. Because they abused the Lord's Supper some in the church were sick and some had even died. This was a direct judgement from God. If we don't judge ourselves, then the Lord will judge us and discipline us.

How should you partake of the Lord's Supper?

- 1) Partake of the Supper *only if you are a believer in Christ.*
- 2) Partake of the Supper *prayerfully.*
- 3) Partake of the Supper *humbly.*
- 4) Partake of the Supper *thoughtfully.*
- 5) Partake of the Supper *faithfully.*
- 6) Partake of the Supper *thankfully.*
- 7) Partake of the Supper *joyfully.*