

Title: So Let Him Eat

Scripture: I Corinthians 11: 27-29

Date: 2-1-09

Place: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Princeton, New Jersey

I Corinthians 11: 27: 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.

As I have shown you many times the enemies of God, of his Christ and of his saints are always engaged in the common cause of turning the believer away from Christ to the works of our own hands. They will use whatever tool they can for leverage to pry you away from Christ to the law, even using the ordinance of the Lord's Table which was clearly given to the believer by the Lord as a time to do nothing else but remember him.

Many use this passage instructing believer's that they are to find some aspect of worthiness in themselves or else they are to stay away from the Lord's table. That is the opposite of what the text teaches.

Proposition: The only worthiness a sinner has in coming to this table is Christ Jesus the Lord. Is Christ your All? Have you cast all your care on Christ? Are you persuaded that Christ alone is able to save you and not you yourself? Then you are worthy and commanded by your Lord "to do this in remembrance of him." Let's see that.

BE SURE TO UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

The church at Corinth was full of those who were walking disorderly. Disorder causes a hindrance in beholding Christ Jesus our Lord in the church, especially during public worship. The brethren at Corinth were exalting themselves over one another, ignoring their own sin and self-righteousness, while holding to the opinion that everyone else needed correction.

Peace begins in the heart when we are brought to the feet of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, through the gospel of Christ and peace is continued in the heart the same way. Paul has been instructing them in a way that will not continue to gender division but will unite them at the throne of grace.

Now Paul comes to the subject of the Lord's Table.

I Corinthians 11: 20: When ye come together therefore into one place, *this* is not to eat the Lord's supper.

1. Paul declares the manner in which they were coming together was not a proper observance of the Lord's Supper.

I Corinthians 11: 21: For in eating every one taketh before *other* his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. 22: What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise *you* not.

Be sure you understand it is not the act of having a meal together that Paul is correcting. It is not even having a meal together in the same place where the church meets.

Note: We do not make an idol of a building or the place we worship by prohibiting having a meal together in such a place--it would be idolatrous. It was not eating a meal together that in the same place where we worship the Lord or observe the Lord's table that was being forbidden, it was this gaudy, show of carnality.

First, the problem was that they made their feast a part of the worship service, calling it an observance of the Lord's Supper, when in reality, they were only despising and shaming their brethren.

- It would be like each family walking in this morning, and instead of worshipping our Lord and observing the Lord's Table, we each spread out our own feast, uncorked a bottle of wine, ignored others that had nothing and went home later calling it an observance of the Lord's Table.
- One had nothing and went hungry
- Another got drunk

Paul called it, "Despising the church--the brethren--of God and shaming your brethren that have not." (v22.)

Secondly, most importantly, they were not remembering the Lord Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians 11: 23: For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the *same* night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24: 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. 25: 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. 26: For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

The purpose of observing the Lord's Supper is to remember the Person and finished work of our Lord and Savior.

1. Remember whose Supper this is.

THIS IS THE LORD'S SUPPER

- The Lord Jesus Christ Instituted this Ordinance (v23.)
- The Lord Jesus Christ is the Host--he bids his children come to his table. When you are invited to someone's table you are their guest and they are the host. So it is here.
- The Lord Jesus Christ is the Focus of this Supper. The remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ is the reason we come to this table. (v24-26)

THIS IS THE LORD'S TABLE.

2. Two elements are used.

- Bread
- Wine

When our Lord gave thanks, he did not change the bread and wine, nor did he change, nor will this bread and wine change when we pray over it today.

When the Lord said, "This is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me"--the bread was said to be a symbol his fleshly body which was broken under the wrath of God for those given him before the world began.

The wine represents his blood which was shed for his people, with which he bought the church, and in whose blood the everlasting covenant is written, the blood shed for many for the remission of sins.

When the Lord said "Take eat...and drink" the apostles did not to receive some special grace (these are not sacraments) but tokens of remembrance of our Lord's broken body and shed blood.

3. The Lord told us when to observe his supper--**V26: For as "often"**

4. This Supper **V26: shew the Lord's death till he come.**

Having stated that this supper is in remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ, that it shows the Lord's death, that it shows we believe he is risen and will return...so notice the word with which the next verse begins. **I Corinthians 11: 27: Wherefore...**

Important: We have seen two things that the Corinthians were having a problem with, two things. One, they were not loving their brethren. Two, they were not remembering the Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore...Paul is addressing the heart of the issue, which is the heart. A love for Christ and our brethren is the fruit of the Spirit of God.

I Corinthians 11: 27: 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.

HOW DO YOU EAT AND DRINK OF THIS TABLE UNWORTHILY?

Many have argued that it has to do with the elements used, the time of observance, how often is "often", and so on. These should be in order. An improper reverence, carrying on the way the Corinthian's were doing, is not an orderly way to approach this table. But Paul is going deeper than that here. Paul is pressing the point to the heart.

If the issue that makes a man unworthy was merely his sin's then Paul would have forbidden the church at Corinth to even observe the Lord's Table; and if sin is what makes us unworthy to come to this table then who could come? This issue is do you trust Christ. This guiltiness can never be charged to one for whom Christ died, one who trusts Christ alone.

1. Do you know what Christ's broken body and shed blood accomplished for all those who are bid to come to his table?

Hebrews 10: 14: For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. 15: *Whereof* the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16: *This is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17: And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18: Now where remission of these *is, there is* no more offering for sin. 19: Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

Ephesians 1: 6: To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. 7: In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Romans 8: 33: Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth. 34: *Who is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

John 10: 27: My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. 29: My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

Those born of the Holy Spirit--believers--no matter how full of sin their lives may be have had their sins purged by the blood and body of Christ. They can never be guilty of the blood and body of Christ.

2. So what does it mean to eat and drink unworthily?

I Corinthians 11: 29: For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

The Holy Spirit says plainly that those who eat and drink unworthily are those who do so "**not discerning the Lord's body.**" Those who eat and drink of this table unworthily are those who do so not discerning the person and work of Christ!

What must we have to be able to discern the Lord's body? Paul had dealt with this already in this very letter:

I Corinthians 2: 9: But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10: But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 11: For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 12: Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13: Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14: But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. 15: But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. 16: For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

The believer can never be guilty of the blood and body of Christ because our worthiness is Christ and his finished work. Those who do not know Christ do not have Christ the Worthiness which gives the sinner liberty to come to the Lord's Table. So Paul says...

I Corinthians 11: 28: But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.

Here is the first thing--let a man examine himself...

2 Corinthians 13: 5: Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

2 Peter 1:10: Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

- You can not remember someone you have never met
- You can not show forth his death if you have no idea who it was that died and why he died and what he accomplished by his death
- You can not discern the need for a Savior if you have not confessed your absolute inability in sin

- You can not discern the value of his broken body and the preciousness of his shed blood unless you are totally unable to save yourself
- You can not hope for his return if you do not believe that he is risen

So let a man examine himself...

Here is the second thing...**and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.**

This is spoken both to the man who examines himself as well as his brethren.

- Paul did not examine the Corinthian brethren
- Paul did not call on them to examine one another
- Paul said let a man examine himself, and so let him eat...

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? (I Cor. 2: 11.)

If he is indeed Christ's then he has one Master--Christ Jesus the Lord. **Romans 14:4: Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.**

If you determine you are his and he is yours then Paul says, "eat." The Lord gave us baptism and this table as his ordinances. He bids those who trust him to observe both. They are not optional.

Paul rebuked them for presuming that their vain show was truly the observance of the Lord's Supper, when in fact it was despising their brethren, now he admonishes them each to examine themselves whether or not they be in the faith, because they would be doing the same to the Lord Jesus Christ. Presuming to be Christ's when you are not will result in damnation. **Matthew 6:23: But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!**

I Corinthian 11: 30: For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

- For this cause--because Christ was not the focus of their worship
- For this cause--because they were yet carnal and divided rather than loving their brethren
- For this cause--because they spent more time examining others, justifying themselves, looking to the works of their own hands, rather than examining themselves--
- Rather than confessing their sin to the Lord and submitting to him from the heart

Many were weak and sickly among them and many did not truly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians 11: 31: For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

- Remember this is still a personal matter between the believer and his Lord
- Let a man examine himself--and let a man judge himself--take sides with God and confess his sin before God, then God will deal with us as sons.
- Paul is saying what John said in: **I John 1: 8: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10: If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.**

I Corinthians 11: 32: But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

Was this letter a rebuke to those at Corinth? Sure it was. But the work is in heart by God.

Hebrews 12: 5: And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: 6: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. 7: If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? 8: But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. 9: Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

But be sure you notice how Paul treated them. These very ones who were all engaging in this vain show were not forbidden to come to the Lord's Table but exhorted to search their own hearts. And how did Paul exhort them to treat each other?

I Corinthians 11: 33: Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

Do you hear Paul's tone?

- My brethren...
- When ye come TOGETHER to eat...let this be a time of uniting our hearts not dividing
- Tarry one for another...fellow believer's are the very ones for whom Christ body was broken and his blood shed

1 Corinthians 10:16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

I Corinthians 11: 34: And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

- Let's not add to or diminish from this privilege by our yoke or our inventions

Application:

- Examine yourselves
- Remember the Lord
- Love one another

