

**The Lord's Supper: we belong to Him  
AND to each other  
Philippians 2:1-11**

**INTRODUCTION**

Please open your Bibles to 1 **Corinthians 11:17-32**.

**The Lord's Supper** - what comes to mind when you hear those words? How should we understand the **Lord's Supper**?

- **A traditional misunderstanding:** a change of substance that results in salvation.
- **A biblical understanding:** a symbolic meal that reflects salvation.

The Lord's Supper reminds us of the death of Christ. The Lord's Supper sends a clear message to **all who will listen: *because of the dying of His body and the shedding of His blood, a Holy God has dealt with our sins.***

Why observe the Lord's Supper? **(1) To remember** the body and the blood of Jesus. **(2) To reflect** on our sin and on His promises. **(3) To renew** our commitment to Christ and our commitment to each other. **(4) To rejoice** for He has set us free and He is coming back! Through the Lord's Supper we declare that *we are a people who have found life in the death of Christ.*

**Baptism demonstrates our initial identification with Christ and His church. The Lord's Supper celebrates our continual identification with Christ and His church.**

Let's turn to God's word again and open your Bible to **Philippians 2:1-11**. As we prepare our hearts to partake of the Lord's Supper, let us take note of 3 realities that help us better understand the life that God has called us to live together in Christ.

*Please note...*

**I. A Common \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ (2:1)**

Before he offers his exhortation, Paul intends to draw the readers into the circle of their shared relationship to Jesus Christ. Verse one repeats the **"if"** clause four times. It is probably better translated as **"since"**. So, he's not expressing

a condition as much as he is making an assertion of what is common to all believers. *"...if there is any encouragement in Christ,"* that is, *'therefore assuming that there is encouragement in union with Christ,'* let that encouragement affect the way that you relate to the body.

*"...if there is any consolation of love,"* or *'assuming there is any consolation of love,'* refers to **alleviating** that measure of strain and toil in life brought on by the intensity of suffering. It does not mean that the suffering has vanished, but it implies that union with Christ and the constancy of His love serves as what's needed to keep the believers from sinking. **Love implies action not just affection.** So, the active love of Jesus brings comfort in the most difficult times.

*"...if there is any fellowship of the Spirit,"* that is, *assuming that as believers you now have fellowship with the Holy Spirit,* then you have both the power and strength to live in faithful relationship to one another.

**Finally,** in this common experience in Christ that belongs to the local church, Paul writes, *"any affection and sympathy (compassion)."* In other words, if you have felt the tender affections and compassion of Jesus Christ for you as a condemned sinner whom He rescued by His own bloody death, then know that the same will show up in your relationships in the body of Christ. **The call for selfless unity in the church may appear impossible but it is possible thanks to their common experience in Christ.**

Secondly, please note...

## II. A \_\_\_\_\_ Life in Christ (2:2-4)

**Read verses.** Because of all that is common to believers (2:1), then the consequent practice in the church should be selflessness in every relationship and situation.

*But what does that selfless practice in the church look like?*

### A. \_\_\_\_\_ (2:2)

This entails 3 things:

#### 1. A shared \_\_\_\_\_ –

The **ESV** speaks of “*being of the same mind*” or **NIV** speaks of “*being like-minded*”. literally, “*that you think the same thing.*” Obviously, Paul doesn’t mean that we all must see every matter exactly the same. Paul does not mean that they think precisely the same way about everything – **the Greek term isn’t so much an expression of intellectual agreement – but that they are one in intent and disposition.** Nor does he mean that we’re supposed to set aside essential truth for the sake of unity – see **1:27** (we must stand firm for the faith of the gospel). Rather, he means that we must have our minds geared toward Christian love so that we seek the highest good of one another; and, that we must be growing to experience what we possess-- the mind of Christ, revealed to us in His Word (**1 Cor. 2:16**).

#### 2. A shared \_\_\_\_\_ –

The **ESV/NIV** speak of “*having the same love.*” This touches how we feel about each other. The love of Christ, revealed in His incarnation and in His death, as Paul goes on to illustrate (**2:5-8**). It is a love that yields its rights for the sake of others. Christians must have that love in mind in every relationship.

#### 3. A shared \_\_\_\_\_ –

The **ESV** speaks of “*being in full accord and of one mind*” or **NIV** speaks of “*being one in spirit and of one mind.*” The first phrase (*being in full accord/being one in spirit*) literally means “*one in soul.*” True unity is not organizational or outward; **it is a matter of the heart.**

#### B. \_\_\_\_\_ (2:3)

What is humility anyway? Does it mean that we walk around with our heads down, refusing to look others in the eye? Instead, it means that we live in such a way that we esteem ourselves less than we esteem others. **Now please understand that to be humble does not mean that one must think less of oneself; to be humble means that one must think of oneself less.**

#### C. \_\_\_\_\_ (2:4)

Here is no call for being a busybody! Instead, it's a call to be concerned about the things that concern others. **It calls for an eye to serve instead of an eye to criticize or find fault.** It suggests investing time, resources, and energy in meeting the needs of those about us in the body of Christ and it does not give us room to wait until someone is doing such for us— instead we are to take the initiative in serving one another.

*How is all of this possible? Please note...*

### **III. A Firm Foundation: The \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ (2:5-11)**

**Verse five** connects the exhortation to the church with the humility, death, and exaltation of Jesus Christ. It brings the church into an intense consciousness of what Jesus Christ did selflessly on our behalf so that we seek to mirror His selflessness in our relationships.

### **CONCLUSION**

So where do we go from here? Good question. What I've tried to convey to you this morning is that we do belong to Christ AND we do belong to one another. The Lord's Supper is a reminder of both. A shared life is what the Bible presents, and the early church modeled to a watching world. The witness of Scripture concerning the early church is: *"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved."* **(Acts 2:42-47)**

Having informed our minds, our hearts are prepared to observe the Lord's Supper.