

Lords Supper #1

The need to think properly during the Lord's Supper is illustrated in 1 Corinthians 11: 17-34. Misuse of the Lord's Supper results in serious consequences for those who partake unworthily. In this case many members of the church were sick and some even dead because of abusing the Lord's supper. Note that the passage does not condemn those who are unworthy to partake for so we all are. If the requirement were worthiness then no one would qualify for "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:25).

What is condemned is partaking in an unworthy manner. Now that doesn't mean that only a specific form of ritual is acceptable but rather that the condition of the heart must be right. Matthew 5:23,24 gives us an example of engaging in service to God in a worthy way. We cannot enter into His presence with sins that are unrepented. Nor are we participating worthily if our thoughts are far from him (Matt. 15:7, 8).

But keeping our thoughts from straying is a difficult task. It is impossible if we only try to get rid of the worldly thoughts that fill our minds. For each time we chase one away several return to plague us (Lk. 11:25). What we must do if we are to participate with our minds as well as our bodies is to find some positive thoughts on which to concentrate. And there are many topics worthy of thought during the Lord's Supper.

The mental action of the participants of the Lord's Supper is to focus the mind on Jesus and especially his historical work in dying for our sins. The Bible says, "Do this in remembrance of me." As we do the physical act of eating and drinking, we are to do the mental act of remembering. That is, we are to consciously call to mind the person of Jesus as he once lived and the work of Jesus as he once died and rose again, and what his work means for the forgiveness for our sins.

The Lord's Supper is a stark reminder, time after time, that Christianity is not new-age spirituality. It is not getting in touch with your inner being. It is not mysticism. It is rooted in historical facts. Jesus lived. He had a body and a heart that pumped blood and skin that bled. He died publicly on a Roman cross in the place of sinners so that anyone who believes on him might be rescued from the wrath of God. That happened once and for all in history.

Therefore, the mental action of the Lord's Supper is foundationally remembering. Not imagining. Not dreaming. Not channeling. Not listening. Not going into neutral. It is a conscious directing of the mind back into history to Jesus and what we know about him from the Bible. The Lord's Supper roots us, time after time, in the nitty-gritty of history. Bread and Cup. Body and blood. Execution and death.

So let's remember the Sacred Seriousness of the Lord's Supper

Paul warns that if you come to the Lord's Supper in a cavalier, callous, careless way that does not discern the seriousness of what happened on the cross you drink judgement on your head. Therefore, Don't take the Lord's Supper lightly. It is one of the most precious gifts Christ has given to his church. So as the elements are being passed around, take time to examine yourself and truly remember what God has done for us in the person of Jesus.

With that in mind, let's have a few volunteers to help pass out the elements.

SONG

Let me simply read slowly passage (1 Corinthians 11) as we move joyfully and seriously to the Lord's table.

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner [that is, not trusting and treasuring the precious gift of Christ] will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. 28 Let a person examine himself, then, [not to see if you are good enough, but to see if you are willing to turn away from yourself trust Jesus for what you need]...

24 so when Jesus 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 He took the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance ...

With this in mind, let's eat and drink resting in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

1. Remember Jesus (Lk. 22:14-20, Matt. 26:26-28).
2. Recognize Jesus as the Source of Life and Nourishment (Jn. 6:47-58).
3. We Share Here With Others (1 Cor. 10:16, 17).
4. Examine Ourselves Individually (2 Cor. 11:27; 13:5).