

Worship and the Lord's Supper

The first day of the week is a special day for Christians. Within that day a special event occurs -- the Lord's Supper. This feast does not fit into "worship" that is geared toward spectators or television audiences. It is just ten minutes of "dead time" in this kind of "worship." To true worshipers, however, the Lord's Supper is a special time each Lord's Day.

In The Supper, We Remember

"Do this in remembrance of Me," Jesus said (1Corinthians 11:24-25). In partaking, we should not just give passing thought to the Lord's death. There is time for us to see Jesus in the garden in great anguish, praying, weeping, sweating; to see the kiss of Judas, the ill advised actions of Peter, the arrest; to see the Jewish trials, the false witnesses, the hypocrisy of Caiaphas and the Jewish council; to see them mock, slap, and spit upon Jesus; to see Jesus before Pilate and to hear the jeering crowd crying, "Crucify! Crucify!" to see the scourging, the purple robe, the crown of thorns; to see the soldiers bow before Jesus in mockery and strike Him with the reed; to see Him crucified, giving Himself for our sins; to hear Him say, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit," and to see Him die; to feel the earthquake and to hear otherwise callous centurion exclaim, "Surely this was the Son of God"; and to remember that all of this was because of our sins.

In The Supper, We Proclaim

We proclaim the Lord's death (1Corinthians 11:26). When our children ask, "What do you mean by this service?" we tell them of Christ's death. We tell them that the bread and fruit of the vine represent His body and His blood. When friends visit with us and observe us for the first time partaking in a solemn and thoughtful manner, we proclaim to them the meaning of this feast. We proclaim our faith in Jesus' suffering and death on our behalf. A memorial stands as strong evidence of the event being memorialized. When we partake we are proclaiming to the world that we believe that Jesus is "the way, the truth, the life" (John 14:6) and that He is the only way to the Father.

In The Supper, We Have Fellowship

We are familiar with the word "communion" in relation to the Lord's Supper. The words communion and fellowship are synonymous. When we partake of the bread, we are in communion (fellowship) with the body of Christ. When we drink of the cup we are in communion (fellowship) with the blood of Christ (1Corinthians 10:16). In the Lord's Supper we also are in fellowship with all in the body of Christ who legitimately eat of the "one bread" (1Corinthians 10:17). Every faithful local church has a fellowship hall, but it is not a place for fleshly nourishment, it is a meeting place where we sing together, pray together, and worship our Lord together. In its fellowship hall every faithful local church has a fellowship meal. That meal is the Lord's Supper. What a marvellous fellowship we have in our worship together! What a marvellous fellowship we have in Jesus Christ.

In The Supper, We Anticipate

In the Supper we proclaim Christ's death till He come (1Corinthians 11:26). We look toward the day when the Lord Himself will descend, when He will appear a second time (1Thessalonians 4:16; Hebrews 9:28), when the dead will be raised in incorruptible, immortal, spiritual bodies, and when the living will be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1Corinthians 15:51-58). At that time we, with all the faithful, will worship forever around God's throne. We raise the question: if we do not have that hope, do we really have a place at the table of the Lord?

In The Supper, We Reflect And Renew

How can we possibly consider what our Lord has done for us without reflecting on the covenant we made with Him when we became Christians and renewing our determination to be faithful to Him? Because of the Corinthians' failure to partake worthily, many among them were weak and sick, and others dead (1Corinthians 11:30). We will experience the same results if we fail to consider our Lord's suffering and the commitment we have made to Him.

When we consider all that is involved in eating at the Lord's Table, surely we can appreciate the privilege, the honor that is ours. Let us approach this moment each week with reverence and respect, making it a time of spiritual refreshing. Let us eat with happy anticipation of eternally communing with our Lord.

- by Bill Hall

'What Have You Done For Me Lately?'

First, let us acknowledge that we have important, essential duties to one another as fellow Christians. We are to help, encourage, edify, strengthen, support, and care for one another. This includes both physical necessities and spiritual imperatives. No one denies these realities.

However, it seems that some Christians are looking to be on the receiving end of these services – but apparently feel little need to give back to their brothers and sisters in Christ. They are quick to criticize if they think they have been neglected, but they do little to reach out to others. It appears that some even have a sort of 'chip on their shoulder' which can be easily knocked off if some constant 'stroking and petting' is not directed their way. And, the fact that they have been helped numerous times in the past is not enough. If recent attention has not been paid to them, then they will let their displeasure be known.

To these folks, we would say:

- 1) We can always do better, and we'll keep trying to grow in the important area of brotherly love (1 Thess. 4:10-11). We feel a true burden to help you and we want to fulfill it faithfully.
- 2) But, please be grateful for the help and love your brethren have shown you in the past. Gratitude is a command (Col. 3:15) and ingratitude is a sin (2 Tim. 3:2).
- 3) And, look for YOUR opportunities to serve others. Every Christian, regardless of their specific circumstances, can and must serve their brethren (John 13:12-17). No one can remain exclusively on the receiving end of this relationship. Jesus Himself said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

We cherish our special bond within the family of God. Let us all do our part to make it as good as it can be.

- by Greg Gwin