

A Disciple's Life Is Worship

June 7, 2020

1 Corinthians 11:17-34

I have missed sharing in the Lord's Supper with all of you. The absence of this act of worship also made me realize the importance of why the Lord said we should continue this ordinance until His return. This period of isolation placed on my heart and mind the magnitude of the importance to keep the Lord's Supper from being just another "thing" or ritual the church does on a regular basis and the need to work at keeping the Lord's Supper an act of worship that reflects our love of Christ. Canyon Bible has a pattern of celebrating the Lord's Supper once a month, but this does not mean it should become routine and it does not have to be limited to once a month. So, this morning we are taking a break from the Gospel According to Luke and reflecting on the Lord's Supper and when we have reflected on Christ's purpose for instituting it and commanding us to celebrate it until His return; we will finish by partaking in the Lord's Supper, expressing our worship of the Lord Jesus.

Pray

Please stand as brother **Garth** reads the Word of God and let it penetrate our minds and souls. 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

Worship Encompasses Everything

Paul wrote to the church in Corinth within 20 years of Jesus calling him to be an apostle, as recorded in Acts chapter 9 on the road to Damascus. He wrote the church because there were problems developing within this young and new church of Christ. Many of Paul's letters were written to correct problems as they appeared in the churches and the lives of the saints. I want to praise God that there were

conflicts and problems in the early churches. Praise God for these problems because in response to these problems the gospel accounts and epistles of the New Testament were written dealing with these problems and they give us the guidelines inspired by God instructing us in handling both the internal and external problems experienced in living out the Gospel of Christ as a church community. The corrupt heart of mankind and the brokenness that leads people to sin causes most people to remain in the lost world. The corruption of man that causes sin is the same as it was after the fall of Adam to this very day. Because of man's broken and sinful heart it did not take long for men to work at corrupting Christ's Church. If one is a true disciple of Christ and a child of God their lives are to be living worship; everything one does is meant to bring glory to God and be His light to the world. The Lord's Supper is one of the two ordinances Jesus gave to his followers to continue until His return. The Lord's Supper is never called worship in the Bible, but I want us to clearly understand the Lord's Supper is not just another ritual of the church, but a sacred form of worship. The Lord's Supper was central to the early church and should also be in our church life. As with any relationship; when it is new there is a heighten level of excitement and expectation because everything is new. As a relationship matures it develops a richer and deeper meaning but it also can become routine if we do not take care. So, we are returning to the beginning of church history and its calling and purpose given by Christ as found in God's Word to remind us of why and how the church gathered, as the historian Luke writes, the church, meaning the people of Christ "[devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.](#)"⁴³ [And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.](#)⁴⁴ [And all who believed were together and had all things in common."](#) (Acts 2:42-44) The apostles' teachings where oral for the first 20 to 30 years. Then Gospel Accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and the

history of Jesus in Acts were written. John's account came 10 to 20 years after the first three gospels and after Paul's epistles which were written within a 10 to 15-year period. So, some of Paul's epistles were written slightly before or at the same time as the gospel accounts. The Epistle of James was written first before all other books and letters or within about 15 years from the ascension of Jesus. What happened was as soon as Jesus left for heaven corrupt men entered into the church for their own ambitions. So, God the Holy Spirit inspired the writings of the New Testament gospel accounts and the epistles to be written to various churches and circulated by the apostles to put the truths of God in writing. This was done, so that, the church could live as directed by God and not men. The church was young and everything was being examined and the core purposes listed in Acts chapter 2 for worship within the church community was the Word of God or the Scripture or as it says, the apostles' teachings, along with fellowship in community, the Lord's Supper or the breaking of bread and prayer. There is a good indication that the early church gathered more often than just Sundays. Because the early church saints sought fellowship with Christ and each other with their heart and soul, resulting with an awe of God and awe of Christ, the Son of the Living God, this awe came upon every soul who believed.

The point of stressing this is to break us of the habit of equating worship mainly with only what happens here on Sunday morning. The Sunday gathering of believers is worship and is often referred to as congregational or corporate worship. But Sunday is not to be our only worship. The New Testament message and gospel given by God for the followers of Christ is for believers to understand God indwells them with His Spirit and the Holy Spirit was given to change believer's hearts of stone into hearts of flesh. God says, *"I will give them one heart meaning a community of Christ that is of one heart, one purpose; living for the*

glory of God, and a new spirit I will put within them community is possible because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,²⁰ that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.” (Ezekiel 11:19-20) From our new spiritual hearts of flesh we become the people of God and worship is to flow out of us as a fountain of living water into all of life, not just on Sunday.

The Apostle John records that Jesus attended the **Sukkot** (Suc·coth / sōō'kōt) which commemorates the years that the Jews spent in the desert on their way to the Promised Land and celebrates the way in which God protected them under difficult desert conditions for 40 years. Sukkot is also known as the Feast of Tabernacles. Jesus stood on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles and said to all who were attending, **“If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Jesus was speaking of the forthcoming Lord’s Supper and also that we are to drink in all that He taught for this will fill us with spiritual life to overflowing.”**³⁸ **Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”** *When one is filled with Jesus to overflowing then out of their hearts will flow the gospel, the rivers of living water of Jesus the Christ into the world.* The Apostle John continues in verse 39, **“Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”** (John 7:37-39) Observing a festival does not reconcile people back to God nor does coming to church. Jesus is the Living Water that gives believers the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit and when we have received the Holy Spirit **“Out of our hearts will flow rivers of living water.”** This should be the natural and supernatural outcome of becoming a child of God and as believers in Jesus – our lives are to be flowing rivers of living water. Our lives are

transformed to live spiritually as sojourners passing through this fallen world on our way to the eternity of heaven. The living water that flows from our lives is to show the world that everyone can drink into their souls who Jesus is and when that is done, they will receive eternal life.

The Essence of Worship

The essence of worship is the inner experience of treasuring the true beauty and worth of God and Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. The outward forms of worship are the acts that show how much we treasure the beauty and worth of God. Therefore, God created all of life as worship because He has told us, through Paul, “whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31) Do “all” in your living of your life is to be an expression of how you treasure and love God. This is not only for the good of your spiritual life, but also for the benefit of your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ and for exposing Christ to the lost.

Now, in the gathered or corporate life of the church, one of the external acts of treasuring Christ that we are to carry out is the Lord’s Supper. However, there had developed a problem within the church at Corinth, you can see this in 1 Corinthians 11:18 & 20 as **Garth** read, “For, in the first place, when you come together as a church ...²⁰ When you come together, it is not the Lord’s supper that you eat.” Paul goes on to criticize the way some of these Corinthian Christians, who are gathering as Christ’s church, are making a mockery of the Lord’s Supper by gorging themselves and even getting drunk on their own food and wine at the church gathering. While they gorge themselves others within the community have nothing to eat. So, he tells them in verse 22 when one eats for physical nourishment, eat at home. However, at times of fellowship – the church worship

time is for spiritual life. Now this does not mean we cannot have our fellowships meals for to be community that fellowships together and breaks bread together is also important as Acts 2:42 says, but it does mean we are not to confuse the spiritual and physical. As we are taught in Acts chapter two, one primary purpose of the early church and church today is fellowship, for through fellowship we are stronger than as individuals and we protect each other and we serve each other and we pray for each other.

From Paul's writing we understand the implication is that **“when you come together as a church”** the spirit and demeanor of the gathering should be one of focus on the Lord and worshipping God and sensitivity to the needs of others; not careless eating and drinking. This is one of the reasons that the way we do the Lord's Supper is lean – by lean, I mean, it is not a meal to satisfy one's physical hunger but meant to satisfy one's spiritual hunger. Paul distinguished the Lord's Supper from the eating and drinking we do for our ordinary physical needs. This is why he adds in verse 22, **“What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in?”** So, Paul is teaching that the Lord's Supper is part of community life and by the way, I get this name Lord's Supper from verse 20, **“When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat”** and other scripture passages in the Gospels concerning the Last Supper. So, the Lord's Supper is to be observed as a gathered church – it is to be part of congregational life and it is to be a spiritual experience of worship. Further, the Lord's Supper is different from other meals to satisfy one's physical hunger – the Lord's Supper is a spiritual meal; the problem is some confuse the two.

At Canyon Bible we often speak about everything in our lives is to be worship of God. This brings forth these questions, “If the Lord's Supper is worship, how does it express the spiritual treasure of Christ's beauty and worth?”

How does it express that one is to live with Jesus as their Lord and Savior?” With these questions in your mind, I would like to now put forth three principles found in this scripture text that are key in making the Lord’s Supper more than ritual; for it to be an act of worship; these three are remembering, proclaiming and nourishing.

The Lord’s Supper Is Worship

Remembering

First, the Lord’s Supper expresses the value of Christ by reminding us of who He is. Notice the word “**remembrance**” twice. Once in relation to the bread in verse 24 and once in relation to the cup in verse 25. I begin reading in verse 23 where Paul gives the words inspired by the Lord, “**For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread,** ²⁴ **and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and Jesus said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”** ²⁵ **In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”** In other words, Christ gave us this simple “Lord’s Supper” to help us keep Him in our memory, especially the memory that His blood and body was given up in death and He is the complete and final sacrifice to atone for our sins. Jesus paid the ultimate price for the forgiveness of our sins that we might be reconciled back to God. This is worship - if in partaking of the Lord’s Supper it is an authentic heart experience which says, “We must remember Christ because He is the most valuable Person in the universe. We must remember Jesus’ death because it is the most important death in history for it changed everything until the end of time.” Setting out this tangible reminder of Christ’s sacrifice time-after-time in the life of the church is to

be worship, not ritual. The Lord's Supper is worship if our hearts feel the preciousness of remembering Christ and tremble at the prospect of forgetting him.

Proclaiming

Second, the Lord's Supper expresses the value of Christ by proclaiming his death. Verse 26 says, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you **proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**" If "remembering" means calling to our minds what Christ did by his death, then "proclaiming" means calling out to each other and calling out to the world what Christ did by his death. This remembering and proclaiming is the normal movement of worship; the preciousness of Christ presses itself on our memory and then that inner remembering breaks out in proclaiming the worth of what we remember as "**rivers of living water**". If you really value something that is relevant for others as well as yourself - if it moves you and delights you - you cannot help but speak of it. From deep within you – you cannot help but declare it. So, the Lord's Supper is worship if in partaking of it there is an authentic heart experience which says, this death and all it achieved is so valuable that it must not only be remembered, but from deep within my soul it must also be proclaimed!

These two meanings of the Lord's Supper support each other. Remembering enables us to proclaim, since you cannot proclaim what you do not remember then proclaiming helps us remember. Coming together as community helps because not everyone remembers at the same time and with the same intensity, and we need His death to be proclaimed with Word and bread and cup lest we forget the preciousness of Christ's death.

Nourishing

Finally, the Lord's Supper expresses the value of Christ by nourishing our life in Christ. If we come to Christ over and over and say, "By this act, my Lord Jesus, I feed on you. By this act, O Jesus my Lord, I nourish my spiritual life in You. My dear Lord, by this act I celebrate all the grace You bought for me with your own blood and body". If we approach the Lord's Supper in this manner then Jesus is being remembered, proclaimed and He nourishes our very souls. Paul asked the church, "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a **participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?** ¹⁷ Because there is one bread (*Jesus Christ*), we who are many are one body (*Christ's Church*), for we all partake of the one bread (*Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior*)." (1 Corinthians 10:16-17) Jesus is the center of every Christian life and gives common purpose and unity to every Christian regardless of nationality, language. If we also come to Christ over and over, not as ritual or routine, but with this longing and this conviction in our hearts that here, at the Lord's Supper, Christ nourishes us by faith, then the Lord's Supper will be a deep and wonderful act of worship. Nothing shows the worth and preciousness of Christ so much as when we come to Him to feed our hungry souls from the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

One might ask, pastor, where do we see this in the text? I see it in the fact that the Lord's Supper is a supper. We are eating and drinking. Why are we eating and drinking? Eating and drinking is for nourishing and sustaining life and here in the Lord's Supper - Jesus tells us that the bread we are eating represents His body, and the cup we are drinking is the new covenant in His blood. So, the eating and drinking is no ordinary eating and drinking; the nourishment that is in the Lord's Supper comes not from bread and wine. Paul already said in verse 22 that we

should take care of our bodily needs by eating at home before we come to church. This Supper is not about physical nourishment, it is about spiritual nourishment. Jesus told the people that God sent manna from heaven to nourish the wandering Jews for a day, but now it was different, Jesus said, **“I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.”** (John 6:35) Jesus is the permanent manna, He is the permanent solution to our sin and believing in Him gives one eternal life.

How does the Lord’s Supper spiritually nourish?

Canyon Bible’s view, also called the Reformed view of the Lord’s Supper comes from our understanding of the Scriptures that the bread and wine are symbols of the real, literal body of Christ that was crucified in history and today Christ is in heaven at the Father’s right hand. We believe that there is a real feeding on Christ spiritually by faith – but not on his physical body as some practice, which is heretical. Our souls are fed by Christ’s real and spiritual presence in our lives as believers. Also, even though a believer can nourish himself anytime and anywhere on the presence of Christ in His written Word, for Christ is the Living Word and in prayer - there is a special spiritual nourishing offered in eating the Lord’s Supper and hearing the preaching of God’s Word that takes place in the communal life of Christ’s Church. As Paul wrote to the church in Rome, **“For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”** Then Paul continues by asking, ¹⁴**“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?”** (Romans 10:13-14) There is spiritual power found in the Word of God, time spent in prayer with God and hearing the preaching of God’s Word, and there is spiritual power found in partaking of the

Lord's Supper by remembering, proclaiming and the spiritual nourishing of our souls as we worship our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The Reformed view, the view shared by Canyon Bible was one of conflicts that caused the Protestant Reformation. Jesus spoke of the spiritual not literal eating of himself; he made this statement, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

⁵⁴ Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.

⁵⁶ Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him." If one stopped here there is room for confusion. (John 6:53-56) But Jesus followed this statement with one that explains He was speaking spiritually not of his actual body and blood, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life." (John 6:63) One more point to drive home that the Lord's Supper is the spiritual eating of Christ and not the physical; in 1 Corinthians 11:25, Paul records on the last night that Jesus "took the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.'" I am not aware of anyone who says that the cup is literally the new covenant. Nor is the wine in the cup the new covenant. The new covenant is God's commitment to save to the uttermost those who trust in Jesus. The cup and the juice represent this covenant because the blood of Christ bought the new covenant for us. But the cup and juice does not become the covenant.

The Lord's Supper

So, I conclude that, in a few minutes, when we eat the bread and drink the cup, we may nourish our souls by faith on the spiritual presence of Christ. When

we remember and proclaim His death, He manifests himself to us as infinitely precious. Jesus shows us all that He, as the Living God promises to be for us in His life, death and resurrection. This is the food for our souls. With this we are spiritually nourished and find strength to live as Christians traveling through this fallen world. As the Apostle Peter instructed, “Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation meaning Jesus’ second coming.” (1 Peter 2:11-12)

The Lord’s Supper is worship because it expresses the infinite worth of Christ. Jesus commanded that those who believe in him as the Christ are to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” (Mark 12:30) The Lord’s Supper brings this command to our minds and hearts as we worship Christ. No one is more worthy to be remembered. No one is more worthy to be proclaimed and no one can spiritually nourish our souls with eternal life but Christ. So, let us come and remember, and proclaim and eat of Christ, and be nourished by the Spirit of Christ and experience how He will change us forever. Amen!

My beloved, while I prepare the Lord’s Supper, please take the time to reflect on Jesus as your Lord, Savior and Master. Confess your sins and repent – prepare to come before the Lord with clean hearts.

Pause. Pass out elements. Call people to prayer.

My beloved, as we come now to the celebration and observance of the Lord’s Supper. May the Lord’s Supper be an act of worship because of your love for Jesus Christ. We remember the Apostle Paul brought the believers together in

Corinth, a city known for its sin and a city openly against Christians. Paul says in his letter, ²³ “For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you...” Paul was not at the Lord’s Last Supper, but he knew the details of the Last Supper from the other apostles and indicates he received knowledge concerning the celebration of the Lord’s Supper from Jesus Christ directly. The Lord’s Supper is done as an act of worship – we believe in Jesus as our Lord, Savior and Master. Jesus wants us to remember, proclaim and be nourished by partaking in this spiritual lifegiving experience of the Lord’s Supper.

Without Jesus’ death and resurrection there would be no hope. There would be no salvation. There would be no future second coming. It is at the Lord’s Supper we are called to remember all this, that by Jesus all this was made possible, all made true. So, we remember His sacrifice for our salvation with gratitude. We remember with a memory that goes back before our lives, back to the beginning of Jesus’ church - but not a memory before God had written our names in the Book of Life. Remember with a memory that will carry you forward for eternity.

Jesus’ commands all believers to remember, saying, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” *My beloved, eat the bread, a symbol of Christ’s body broken for the sins of all believers and remember. May we never forget!* ²⁵ “In the same way also Jesus took the cup, after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.’” *Now we drink the symbol of Jesus’ blood shed that we might have eternal life – drink and remember – remember with a heart that desires our Lord’s return.* Paul says the Lord’s Supper is to be worship ²⁶ “For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.” Lord, Jesus, we, Your believers say, “Come, come Lord Jesus - we await Your return!”

Let us pray. Our Almighty God who hears each voice and cares for every soul, we pray to you, we ask, we open our hearts to a deep faith, remembering with thanksgiving and living for the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ whom You sent that we might have life, life eternal. Thank You Father, thank you – Amen and amen!