

## **The Supper: Spirit-Empowered Unity, Proclamation, and Repentance**

**Dr. John Carmichael**

**[1Co 11:17-32 NASB95] 17 But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worse. 18 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that divisions exist among you; and in part I believe it. 19 For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you. 20 Therefore when you meet together, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper, 21 for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk. 22 What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you. 23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He 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 of Me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. 27 Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. 28 But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. 30 For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. 31 But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.**

- **Thursday starts on Wednesday as sunset. Maundy Thursday is day of the Passion Week that Jesus instituted Communion.**
- **Communion is one ordinance that is part of every Christian denomination in some way. There are nuanced differences, but there is a unifying aspect of communion.**

### **What happens at the Lord's Supper?**

**Here are four vital truths at the Lord's Supper.**

#### **I. The Supper is a Place of Unity, Not Division**

- a. 1 Corinthians 11:17–22
- b. Paul rebukes the Corinthians for allowing divisions and selfishness to taint the Lord's Supper. The meal meant to unify was being used to highlight disparity.
- c. The early church's agape meals had become scenes of gluttony and exclusion. The rich feasted while the poor were humiliated.
- d. Communion must reflect the unity of the body of Christ. Any act that divides or excludes betrays the very meaning of the table.
- e. [Gal 3:28 NASB95] 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.
- f. The Spirit makes us one body—race, class, and status are dismantled at the foot of the Cross.

#### **II. The Supper Proclaims the Lord's Death Until He Comes**

- a. 1 Corinthians 11:23–26
- b. Paul recounts the tradition given by Jesus Himself. This is not a mere ritual—it is a prophetic act proclaiming Christ's death and His return.
- c. The verbs "took," "gave thanks," "broke," and "said" reflect intentionality. The communion meal is a reenactment of the New Covenant.

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- d. Every time we partake, we declare the saving power of the Cross and anticipate the return of the King.
- e. A likely reference to the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9) [Luk 22:15-20 NASB95] 15 And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; 16 for I say to you, I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." 17 And when He had taken a cup [and] given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; 18 for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes." 19 And when He had taken [some] bread [and] given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 20 And in the same way [He took] the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood."
- f. We are proclaiming a living gospel. The same Spirit who raised Jesus empowers us today through this sacred act.

### **III. The Supper Demands Self-Examination and Discernment**

- a. 1 Corinthians 11:27–32
- b. Paul warns that unworthy participation brings judgment. The Lord's Table requires reverence and introspection.
- c. "Unworthy manner" doesn't mean being unworthy as a person, but partaking in a way that dishonors the meaning of the meal—without repentance, love, or discernment.
- d. Communion is a mirror for the soul. It calls for examination, repentance, and a renewed surrender to Christ.
- e. [2Co 13:5 NASB95] 5 Test yourselves [to see] if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you unless indeed you fail the test?
- f. The Holy Spirit convicts and reveals—use this moment to realign with God's will and presence.

### **IV. The Supper is a Spirit-Empowered Supper**

- a. Seek the filling of the Spirit during communion. The Lord's Supper isn't just symbolic—it is an encounter with the living Christ.
  - b. Live a life of repentance. Turning from sin and to God.
  - c. Healing—both spiritual and physical—is available at the Lord's Table (v. 30 connects illness and death to spiritual carelessness).
- **At the Supper the Holy Spirit is calling us to living in unity and not division as we proclaim the Lord's death until He returns while continuing examine ourselves.**