

The Purpose of the Lord's Supper

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References: **1 Corinthians 11**, 1 Corinthians 11:23; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; 1 Corinthians 11:17-20

Direct Revelation from the Lord

All right. So I want you to turn in your Bibles, please, to 1 Corinthians chapter 11. 1 Corinthians chapter 11.

1 Corinthians 11, and we're going to read one verse together. It's verse 23. 1 Corinthians 11:23. Many of you know this verse very, very well. I'm sure some of you could quote it without looking it up, but we're going to read it anyway. 1 Corinthians 11:23 says:

[1 Corinthians 11:23 NKJV] - For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;

I found that verse interesting for many reasons, not the least of which is the introductory line. The introductory line says, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." There was something very special about this particular truth from Paul's point of view. He didn't just get it by reading the Old Testament. He didn't just get it by listening to the messages that he heard from the Lord Jesus Christ indirectly through the saints. He didn't get it listening to the apostles of his day. He got it by special revelation from the Lord. "For I have received from the Lord that which also I declared unto you or delivered unto you."

So in a very special, unique way, he got this information from the Lord. And therefore, in a very deliberate way, he delivered the information to the saints. He said, "If the Lord precisely, directly asked me, told me about this, I'd better pass it on."

You'll remember that there is a parallel verse later on in the book of 1 Corinthians. Turn to chapter 15. 1 Corinthians chapter 15 and verse 3 says:

[1 Corinthians 15:3 NKJV] - For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

So on at least two occasions, the Lord Jesus Christ spoke directly to the Apostle Paul, giving him information which was not at all contrary to any other information that had been given, but it was rather affirmative, confirming what he had heard in the other sources. And special attention, therefore, having been given to these particular passages: the first one deals with the Lord's Supper; the second one deals with the Holy Spirit—deals with the resurrection from the dead. And as time permits, we'll probably consider the second one later on this morning in the next meeting.

Proclaiming the Lord's Death

But let's go back to chapter 11 and see what we can learn about the Lord's Supper that Paul brings before us here. Things he will say you've heard before; other things might be just slightly different. But we're going to try to clarify some items for you.

So let's read 1 Corinthians 11, verses 23 down to 26. Paul says:

[1 Corinthians 11:23-26 NKJV] - ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

So the question that I have put before us—there's two or three issues. But the first one is: what is the purpose of this particular meeting? And the answer is very simple. At the end of the passage we read, we read the verse: "as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." That's the first aspect. And second, we show the Lord's death till He come.

Why are we doing it? So that we would remember Him. We talk often about the importance of that remembrance. But there's another reason, and it is to show the Lord's death till He come. It is possible that we could forget the Lord's death. What is the most amazing, the

most wonderful thing that ever happened in the history of the universe? The answer: Christ Jesus died for our sins. Hallelujah, He died! And we are to show the Lord's death till He come.

How do we show it? Well, we talk about it often, but we show it by taking the bread and the wine in remembrance of Him. What is the purpose of this meeting? The purpose is that we will remember Him, and we will show both to God and to ourselves and to the evil one and his hosts and to anyone and everyone else—we show the Lord's death.

We must not forget the Lord's death. Most people in the world today live as though they have completely forgotten. Many of them don't even know. Our responsibility is to show it. How do we show it? Well, we show it in many ways, but especially we show it by this particular meeting.

Coming Together for Better or Worse

Now, I guess the next question is: is this always the case? Do people always show the Lord's death in the breaking of bread, as we have done this morning? Do they always do it the right way?

So let's keep reading, and we'll go now to verse number 17—back to 17:

[1 Corinthians 11:17 NKJV] - ¹⁷ Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse.

Would it be possible for us to take the breaking of bread in a way that is not better, but worse? Answer: yes.

[1 Corinthians 11:18-20 NKJV] - ¹⁸ For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. ¹⁹ For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. ²⁰ Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.