

THE ORIGINAL MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

1 Corinthians 11:23-34

Introduction: Jesus left only two visible things for His followers to continue to do. One is baptism, that is to be submerged in water symbolizing burial and the other was what is called the Lord's Supper. Through the years people have changed both ordinances, (the two visible things Jesus left for His followers to continue to do) in various ways and changed the meaning of both as well. Some teach that sprinkling water is the same as being baptized (submerged), that it is alright to sprinkle babies and get them "saved" before they get very far along in life, and others teach that in order to be really saved, one must be baptized. Then concerning the Lord's Supper, some require it to be done every Lord's Day and some teach that the bread actually turns into the flesh of Jesus upon eating it and the wine actually turns into the blood of Jesus upon drinking it. There are many other "changes" people have made to the two ordinances. Let's look at the original meaning of the Lord's Supper.

I. THE REAL MEANING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. The original meaning of the bread.
 - "...**take, eat, this is my body...**" The bread ONLY represents the body of Christ.
 - "...**which is broken for you...**" Representing the suffering, the injury, the death which the body of Jesus went through as He was the substitute in suffering for the sins of mankind.
 - "...**this do in remembrance of me...**" Taking the bread is to REMEMBER all that Christ did for mankind and continues to do.
 - The bread is not magical, it does not turn into the actual flesh and body of Jesus, it is to ONLY remind us of what Jesus went through physically for us.
2. The original meaning of the cup.
 - "...**this cup is the new testament in my blood...**" The old testament covenant was set aside for the new covenant which Jesus brought based on Christ's blood, not the blood of animals as was the old testament covenant.
 - "...**this do ye, as oft as ye drink it...**" We are to do what Jesus did and for the same reason. We are to set aside a special time, take the cup, bless it, and drink it.
 - There is no required time, no frequency given, just set aside a time for the cup.
 - "...**in remembrance of me...**" There is but ONE purpose for the Lord's Supper - ONLY ONE and that is to focus attention upon what the Lord Jesus has done for us and the rest of mankind.
3. The original, the real meaning of the Lord's supper is to show, proclaim, to preach, to declare, to announce the Lord's death, the Lord's coming return, what He has done, what He shall do for us and all believers. IT IS A TIME OF REMEMBRANCE!!!!

II. A SEVERE WARNING IS GIVEN WITH DIRE CONSEQUENCES (v27)

1. "**Unworthy...**" What does "unworthy" mean?
 - It is having unconfessed sin within one's heart and life.
 - With unconfessed sin, how can one be "worthy?"

- "Worthy" is when one is walking:
 - in constant confession
 - in constant repentance
 - in constant praise
 - actively thinking upon the Lord Jesus

2. Consequences of taking the Lord's Supper unworthily:

- One becomes guilty of the Lord's death. He/she is held accountable for he/she has insulted Jesus, offended Jesus, has rendered Jesus' death useless and he/she dishonors Jesus Christ.
- One condemns him/herself by failing to judge him/herself which causes Jesus to have to do so.
 - Jesus then declares that person guilty, unworthy whenever he/she fails to think about his/her guilt.
- That guilty one is disciplined and chastened by the Lord Jesus.
 - The Lord' Supper is very important!
 - God disciplines us because He loves us.
 - God disciplines us to prevent us from hurting and destroying ourselves and others.
 - God knows exactly what discipline is needed.
 - God knows when we won't change or repent and will sometimes remove us!

III. HOW TO RIGHTLY APPROACH THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. We must examine and judge our own selves and confess (get rid of) every sin yet unconfessed.
2. We must accept God chastening, then confess, repent, turn from our known sin for continuing in known sin runs the risk of unbelievers seeing us and judging us as well as God judging us.
3. We must serve one another and stop cliques, divisions, selfishness, factions, indulgencies and we must share, and demonstrate love by putting others first.
4. We must not bring God's nor the world's condemnation upon ourselves.
 - We must change whatever needs to be changed.

CONCLUSION:

1. The Lord's Supper was left us by the Lord Jesus, not by His disciples, not by the early Church nor by anybody else. It was first done by the Lord Jesus and for the sole purpose of REMEMBERING.
2. There is no magic in the bread nor the cup. The bread REPRESENTS the body of Jesus and the cup REPRESENTS the blood of Jesus.
3. There is no required frequency of observing the Lord's Supper.
4. Before partaking of the Lord's Supper, one must make sure all things are right between him/herself and the Lord, confessing all known sins.
5. If a person does partake of the Lord's Supper and is not "right" with the Lord, consequences may follow.

