

THE ULTIMATE SUPPER

1 Cor. 11:17-34

Introduction: Story of a boy walking into a drugstore for change for a dollar. Putting a coin into a pay telephone, the boy dialed a number and then asked, "Mr. James, do you have a boy to do your lawn? You do, does he do a good job, are you satisfied with him? You are? Well thank you Mr. James." The druggist overheard the conversation and put his arm around the boy and said, "I'm sorry you didn't get the job." To which the boy answered, "Oh, I've got the job already, I was just calling to check up."

Tonight we want to check up on ourselves as we participate in the most significant memorial service in which we could ever involve ourselves - The Lord's Supper.

- The Lord's Supper took place on the eve of his crucifixion. It was a bitter sweet time of fellowship before he was betrayed and arrested.
- The Apostle Paul gives us an account of how a church was making a mockery of this sacred event.
 - Instead of using what we use today, they had a pot luck dinner that did more harm than good. They refused to share what they brought with others who had little to bring and they even got drunk. Division arose over the conduct and behavior of many at the supper.

It is not likely that any of us will get drunk but there is the threat of the Lord's Supper losing its meaning. What can we do to ensure that our time tonight is one that is of love, mercy and sacrifice?

1. Remember the Cross

- Our Lord's Supper gives us time to reflect upon the intense suffering of Jesus and his ultimate death so our sins could be forgiven.
- **The broken body of Christ** - *"This is my body given for you"* (Lk. 22:19) *"Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you."* (1 Cor. 11:24)
- The children's story about the "Prince Brat and the Whipping Boy" where a substitute child is punished instead when a spoiled misbehaving prince requires discipline reminds us of what Jesus did for us: *"He, himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed."* (1 Pet. 2:24)
- **The shed blood of Christ** - Following the bread, Jesus took the cup and said, *"This cup is the new covenant in my blood."* (Lk. 22:19)
 - No longer would the blood of animals provide forgiveness for the sins of the people. Required under the new covenant was the shed blood of the Lamb of God - Jesus Christ. *"The blood of Jesus, his son, purifies us from all sin."* (1 Jn. 1:7)
- The story of a little girl critically injured in a car accident. needing blood the doctors discovered that her younger brother had the same type. Explaining that unless he gave his sister blood, the angels would come for her. His face turned pale, his eyes widened with fright and then he whispered to the doctor, "I'll give my sister my blood." The doctor bragged on him and told him he knew he wasn't afraid. The boy watched as the tube carried his blood into the body of his sister and the doctor said, "don't be nervous, it will all be over in a few minutes." Big tears welled up in the boys' eyes, "Will I die pretty soon then?" He thought he was giving up his life so his sister might live. Of course the little boy didn't die, but Jesus did. Jesus gave his blood so that we might have eternal life. The Lord's Supper allows us an opportunity to remember the price paid for us.

2. Examine Yourself

- *"A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup" (1 Cor. 11:28)*
- **An Unforgiving Spirit.** A woman stopped attending S.S. due to hard feelings she had toward someone in her class. She was allowing her bitterness to rob her of what she needed most.
 - Jesus said *"For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." (Mt. 6:14)* *"Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." wrote Paul (Col. 3:13)*
- **Spiritual complacency.** Have you grown unresponsive to Christ and unconcerned for others? An "apathy club" was being formed at a college but nobody showed up. Nobody cared. *"We must pay more careful attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away." (Heb. 2:1)*
- **Worldliness.** What excites you more than the work and Word of God? *"The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever." (1 Jn. 2:17)*
- **Failure to give of your resources.** Jesus said, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35)* Are you giving your tithe to God?
- **Lack of faith.** Remember when Peter climbed over the side of the boat in the storm and began walking on the water to Jesus and then began to sink when he took his eyes off Jesus and began to look at the storm? Jesus said, *"You of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Mt. 14:31)* Have you been skeptical of God's ability and purposes? We never really get going until we act on what we accept and affirm.
- **Unconfessed sin.** *"If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened." Ps. 66:18.* Unconfessed sin grieves the Holy Spirit and prevents Him from doing God's work in our lives. It damages our relationship with the Heavenly Father. *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1Jn. 1:9)* Recovery begins immediately after we are honest with God about our sins and failures.

3. Anticipate the Second Coming

- Paul balances his call for examination with these words of expectancy: *"For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." (1 Cor. 11:26)*
- Let us indeed anticipate this climactic event in the near future, the wedding feast of the Lamb, when Jesus will be physically present with us and we will all be together in heaven. Jesus told his disciples that night before his crucifixion *"I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's kingdom." (Mt. 26:29)*

CONCLUSION

1. I am looking forward to that time and I know for certain that I will be there. What about you?
 - Not everybody will be there although many have been invited, but few have been chosen.
2. A preacher was attacked and robbed one night and the preacher said to the robber, "If the day should come that you desire to leave this way of life and live for God, remember that *'the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin.'* Years later this preacher was approached after a worship service by a man who said, 'you don't remember me, but I am the one who robbed you one night. You told me that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. I have trusted Christ and he has changed my life.