

## Introduction

One of the things that we have done in all our church plants is to have fellowship lunches. Generally, we have held them once a month, but in the early stages of some of the church plants, we had them more often. We found that fellowship lunches were wonderful ways to get to know one another, and build relationally. They were great for getting to know any visitors, and most visitors stayed around for the lunches. I looked for any new comers and I purposely sat at their table so that I could get to know them. The fellowship lunches were great opportunities for the body to come together and fellowship. These fellowship lunches were enjoyed by everyone, and brought great unity.

At our first church plant, the children initially went through the line first at our fellowship lunches. By the time that the adults went through the line, all the desserts were gone. The children were skipping the main courses, and were loading up on the desserts. We ended up making the children go through the line with their parents, and this solved that problem.

In one of the churches that we planted, we had a deacon named James. He was a true servant, and whatever needed to be done, you could count on James to get it handled. He was a big help in planting that church. At our fellowship lunches, James and I would always go last in the serving line. The reason that we went last was that if we ran out of food, we wanted to be the ones that did not get any food. We wanted to make sure that visitors and other members were served food. That "if we ran out of food," could have been "when we ran out of food," as we ran out quite frequently. We had a lady in charge of our fellowship lunches, and she came up with a theme each month, and had sign-up sheets for people to commit to bringing certain dishes. This kept us from having all desserts and no entrees or side dishes. Most people signed up, and brought food to the potluck lunches, but there were some people who always came, but never brought any food. Karen always made enough for two families to make up for some of the ones that never brought food. There were many Sundays that the food ran out, and James and I ended up eating when we got home. These monthly lunches were great for fellowship, but they were not without problems. Whether it was the children taking all the desserts, or some people not bringing food, we addressed the issues and tried to resolve the issues.

In the early church, they had weekly fellowship meals, known as love feasts. In Acts 2:42-47, we find that the church in Jerusalem continually devoted themselves to four things: the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. The breaking of bread was another way of saying that they celebrated the Lord's Supper. When they broke bread, they also shared communion. It is also called the Eucharist in some churches, which comes from the Greek word, eucharisteo (Strong's G2168), which means to give thanks. In verse forty-six, we find that they broke bread from house to house, and were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart. Communion and meals were done together; the sharing of the Lord's Supper was usually done at the end of the meal. It was not done as it is practiced today, as a sacrament by itself without a meal accompanying it.

(Jude 12) "These are the men who are hidden reefs in your **love feasts** when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves..."

(Acts 2:42-46) "They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.... {46} Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,"

In Acts 20:7-11, Paul was in Troas, and on Sunday, the first day of the week, they were gathered together to break bread. The celebration of the Lord's Supper was one of the reasons that churches gathered together; it was a key component of their gatherings. Today, some churches never celebrate it. Some partake quarterly; some partake monthly; and others partake every week, which is what the early church did. The biggest difference was that they broke bread as part of their meals. Sundays, at that time, were work days. Saturday was the day that everyone had off. I grew up in Iran, and at that time, our week-end was Thursday and Friday. We had church on Sunday evening, after people got off of work. That was the way it was at Troas, and the church met on Sunday evening, and they were going to share a meal and break bread together. Having the Apostle Paul there was pretty special, and he apparently got long-winded, as his message went to midnight. A young man named Eutychus was sitting on the window sill, and fell asleep, and fell out the third-floor window and died. Paul went down and fell upon him, and raised him from the dead. They went back upstairs, broke bread and ate their meal. That is pretty late to eat, but these fellowship meals were an important aspect of their gatherings.

(Acts 20:7–11) “On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight. {8} There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together. {9} And there was a young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. {10} But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, “Do not be troubled, for his life is in him.” {11} When he had gone back up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak, and then left.”

When the Lord instituted the Lord's Supper, it was done during a meal. All four gospels include the Last Supper. At that last supper, Jesus washed their feet, spoke to them about His crucifixion, which was about to take place, their falling away, the betrayal by Judas, and the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Jesus gave His disciples the meaning and purpose of celebrating the Lord's Supper. The practice of the early church reflects the instructions that the Lord had given to the apostles at that Last Supper.

The church was not the only place that had these fellowship meals. The pagan temples celebrated feasts at their gatherings. The temples had dining rooms in them, and their feasts were pretty lively. They had an abundance of food, wine, and other activities, and some of these were immoral. Most of the Corinthian church had come out of this pagan lifestyle, and the fellowship meals were not a new thing for them. In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul told them that they could not partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. They were not to continue going to these lunches that were part of the pagan worship. They were to flee from idolatry.

(1 Cor 10:20–21) “No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. {21} You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.”

Like our church plants, the lunches were not without problems. In our passage today, Paul gave correction to the Corinthians about the way that they were celebrating their meals and the Lord's Supper. He first addresses the problem. Second, he shares the instructions that he had received from the Lord about communion. Third, he tells them about the judgment for not taking the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner. Finally, he gives them two corrective actions.

### **Paul's Correction Regarding the Lord's Supper**

1. The problem (1 Cor 11:17-22)
2. The instructions (1 Cor 11:23-26)
3. The judgment (1 Cor 11:27-32)
4. Corrective Actions (1 Cor 11:33-34)

(1 Cor 11:17–34) “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. {33} So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. {34} If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you will not come together for judgment. The remaining matters I will arrange when I come.”

#### **1. The problem (1 Cor 11:17-22)**

Paul begins this word of instruction and correction by telling them that he was not praising them. He said they were coming together for worse, not for the better. He had praised them a few verses earlier for remembering and holding on to the traditions or ordinances that he had given them. But now he is not praising them because their gathering together was for the worse, not the better. Paul is now going to address the problem in their gatherings and fellowship meals.

(1 Cor 11:17) “But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worse.”

(1 Cor 11:2) “Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you.”

When the Corinthians came together as a church, there were divisions existing in it. In 1 Corinthians 1, Paul had exhorted them to all agree and have no divisions. He had been informed by Chloe's people that there were divisions and quarrels. The divisions that he addressed in the first few chapters were over leadership. People were holding on to Paul, Peter, Apollos, or the Lord, and had formed factions over the leadership. The division that Paul is speaking about in chapter eleven is between the rich and the poor, and selfish behavior.

(1 Cor 11:18) "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."

(1 Cor 1:10-11) "Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. {11} For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you."

Paul said that the factions were necessary to show those who are approved among them. In difficult times, true leaders become evident. My father used to say that the cream comes to the top, and in these difficult times, those that promoted unity and peace would certainly become evident. I was once told that sea captains are not made in calm waters. Difficult circumstances are golden opportunities for leaders to step up and lead.

(1 Cor 11:19) "For there must also be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you."

When the Corinthians came together, it was not to eat the Lord's Supper. They had made this love feast anything but a love feast. The rich would bring their ample supply of food and wine and would eat and drink. Some of them were drinking so much that they got drunk. Meanwhile, the poor people in the church were being ignored and were going hungry. This love feast was dividing, rather than uniting them as a body.

(1 Cor 11:20-21) "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."

Paul said that they had not met together to eat the Lord's Supper. This was one of seven reasons that Christians are to assemble together. There are many people today that think that they can watch a service online, or listen to the podcast, and they do not need to assemble with the rest of the body. We go to church for many reasons, and hearing a sermon is only one reason. Here are the seven reasons why the early church assembled together

1. **Because we are commanded to assemble together.** (Heb 10:24-25)
2. **To encourage one another.** (Heb 10:24-25, 3:13)
3. **To be built into a spiritual house.** (1 Pet 2:4-5, 2:9, Heb 3:15)
4. **To pray together.** (Acts 2:42, Is 56:7, Col 4:2)
5. **To be equipped for the work of ministry.** (Eph 4:11-13, Acts 2:42)
6. **To break bread together.** (1 Cor 11:20, 11:33, Acts 2:42-46, Acts 20:7)
7. **To fellowship with one another.** (Acts 2:42-45)

In Acts 2:42, we saw that the church was devoted to fellowship and the breaking of bread. The purpose of these fellowship meals was fellowship. The Greek word for fellowship is koinonia (Strong's G2842), which comes from koinos (Strong's G2839), which means to have things in common. They were sharing with one another and had all things in common. In the world there were divisions between Jews and Gentiles, slaves and masters, rich and poor, and men and women. In the church, Christ broke down the dividing walls (Ephesians 2:14). In the church, there was one body, and the Lord's Supper is a picture of the one loaf of bread, Jesus, being broken for all. His blood was shed on behalf of everyone, rich, poor, Jew and Gentile.

(Acts 2:42-45) "They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship (koinonia), to the breaking of bread and to prayer....{44} And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common (koinos); {45} and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need."

In Galatians 2:11-14, Paul rebuked Peter for segregating himself in the Lord's Supper. Prior to certain Jews coming, he would eat with the Gentiles, but when they came, he withdrew and only ate with the Jews out of fear of the party of the circumcision. Paul was not going to stand for the hypocrisy, and he was going to defend the gospel message, so he rebuked Peter.

(Gal 2:11-14) "But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. {12} For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, fearing the party of the circumcision. {13} The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy, with the result that even Barnabas was carried away by their hypocrisy. {14} But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, "If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

In Galatians 3:28, Paul wrote, "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." When the Corinthians were coming together, they were doing exactly the opposite of what Jesus did on the cross. Instead of bringing the body together as one, they were dividing the body between those who were wealthy and those who were poor. They were not sharing with one another. Paul could not praise them for this; they were coming together for the worse, not the better.

(Gal 3:28) "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."

Paul asked some questions that showed how upset he was over what they were doing. "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." These fellowship meals were about sharing with one another and celebrating our unity in Christ. Even though there was a meal that was to be shared, the meal was not the main thing. The purpose of the meals was to facilitate fellowship. If the rich people were really hungry, they could have eaten before they came to this so that when they came, they could have shared with those that did not have anything. Their selfish actions were bringing division and shame to the church, and to the Lord. Paul was not going to praise them for this.

(1 Cor 11:22) "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."

## 2. The **instructions** (1 Cor 11:23-26)

After identifying the problem, Paul gave the Corinthians some instructions. Paul did not get these instructions from the other apostles; he received these from the Lord. Paul had received revelation about the mystery of Christ from the Lord, and now he shares that the Lord gave him instructions about the Lord's Supper.

(1 Cor 11:23) "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;"

(Eph 3:3) "that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief."

One would think that Paul would have received this information from the other apostles and the four gospel accounts, but that is not what happened. The Gospel of John was written somewhere between 85 AD and 95 AD. The Gospel of Mark was written around 70 AD. The gospel of Luke was written around 60 AD. The Gospel of Matthew was written between 55 AD and 65 AD. Scholars have set varying dates for all of these books, particularly the Gospel of Matthew. Paul's letter to the Corinthians was written between 53 AD and 54 AD, before any of the gospel accounts were written. His revelation of the Lord's Supper was given directly to him by the Lord. While it was not written with collaboration, it certainly lines up with the other accounts.

The Lord's Supper was started on the night that Jesus was betrayed. Jesus and His disciples were gathered in the upper room to observe the Passover Meal. Jesus is the Passover Lamb, so the offering of the Passover Lamb of God had to be done at that exact time. Even though it was done on the Passover, Jesus is inaugurating a new covenant. During that meal Jesus took bread and after giving thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." Jesus told the apostles at that supper to do this in remembrance of Him, so the Lord's Supper is about remembering what Jesus did for us. Jesus' body was broken for all of us, not for a few of us. We are all to take from the one loaf because we are one body. What the Corinthians were doing was tearing down what Jesus had done on the cross.

(1 Cor 11:23–24) "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."

(1 Cor 5:7) "Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed."

Then, 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. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." When we take the Lord's Supper, we are remembering and proclaiming Jesus' death. He died and gave His life so that we could be released from our sins and be reconciled to God. Corinthians were using the occasion to feast and ignore the poor in the church. They were destroying what Jesus did on the cross.

(1 Cor 11:25–26) "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."

### 3. **The judgment** (1 Cor 11:27-32)

Paul stated the problem, and then taught about the elements of the Lord's Supper. Now, he gets to the judgment and consequences that they have suffered because of what they have been doing. He said, "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.” The Corinthians had been eating and drinking the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, and were guilty. They were guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. He had given His body and blood to reconcile us to God and to one another. Their actions were making a mockery of what He had done. I don't believe the Corinthians realized the gravity of their actions.

(1 Cor 11:27) “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.”

Paul told the Corinthians to examine themselves first, and then to eat the bread and drink the cup. Most of us have used this to look at our overall standing with God, and to confess any sins that we are aware of. There is nothing wrong with examining ourselves, and confessing our sins. We should be continually confessing our sins as we become aware of them. We should not wait until taking the Lord's Supper to examine ourselves and to confess our sins. But, Paul's correction to the Corinthians was about the fellowship meal, which included the partaking of the elements. Some people in the church were poor, and were coming to the fellowship meal without much. There were others that were wealthy, and were bringing a feast with lots of wine. But they were not sharing it with those who had none, so some were going hungry, and some were eating a lot and even getting drunk. The purpose of the meal was to come together and have fellowship (things in common), and they were not doing this. When they took the actual elements of communion, it was being done in an unworthy manner. The Corinthians needed to examine the way that they were celebrating the Lord's Supper, not just the communion elements, which were a part of that meal.

(1 Cor 11:28) “But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup.”

The consequences for eating and drinking in an unworthy manner was that they were eating and drinking judgment to themselves. Paul said if they would judge the body rightly, they would not be eating and drinking judgment on themselves.

(1 Cor 11:29) “For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly.”

What were the consequences of that judgment? He said, “For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.” There were people in their body that were sick or had died because of God's judgment and discipline.

(1 Cor 11:30–32) “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.”

A number of years ago another pastor had a disagreement with me. He said that God never judges believers. He said that God heals, and would never cause a believer to be sick. He said that God never disciplines Christians. I told him that in Hebrews 12, we find that God disciplines those whom He loves. The word teaches us that if we are without discipline, we are illegitimate. God disciplines us as sons, and He does it so that we may share His holiness. It may not be joyful at the time, but it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. God disciplines us, and it is for our good that He does it. He disciplines us because He loves us. I told this pastor that in 1

Corinthians 11, God disciplined the believers in Corinth, and some were sick, and some had died because of the discipline of the Lord.

(Heb 12:5–11) “and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, “MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; {6} FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.” {7} It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? {8} But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. {9} Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? {10} For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. {11} All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”

Paul exhorted the Corinthians to examine themselves and to judge themselves rightly so that they would not be judged. God would much rather have us do what is right so that He does not have to discipline us. In Psalm 32, God tells us not to be like a horse or mule, whose trappings include bit or bridle, and otherwise would not come near. God does not want to have to use consequences in our lives to do what is right. He wants us to go to Him on our own accord. He wants us to go to Him about our sins, and to be cleansed. He wants us to go to Him about our ways, and thereby, avoid making mistakes. He wants us to go to Him for counsel, and He promises to counsel us with His eye upon us. Paul has encouraged the Corinthians to examine themselves and to judge rightly so that they would not be judged and disciplined by the Lord.

(Ps 32:8–9) “I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you. {9} Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding, whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check, otherwise they will not come near to you.”

#### 4. **Corrective Actions** (1 Cor 11:33-34)

Paul has already told the Corinthians to examine themselves before taking the Lord's Supper. His next corrective action is for them to wait for one another when we come together to eat. This does not mean that they are to wait until everyone has been passed out the communion elements; Paul is addressing the fellowship meal that they were taking. He wanted to make sure that everyone got served, and for them to eat together. The Lord's Supper is about fellowship and being unified as a body.

(1 Cor 11:33) “So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.”

(1 Cor 11:28) “But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup.”

Karen and I have our meals together. When I sit down at the table I do not start eating right away. I wait for Karen to get done and be seated. Then, we pray over our food. Once we have prayed over the food, we begin to eat. It would be rude to start eating without her. The Corinthians divided up into groups and started eating. There were groups that did not have any food, and were going hungry. Meanwhile, in some of the other groups with wealthy people, they

had food and were eating. Paul is telling them to look around, and make sure everyone has food, and then start their meal. Scholars say that the way that their feasts began was to break an unleavened piece of bread. Once the bread was broken, people could start eating. I believe that they would have also prayed a blessing over the food when they broke the bread. The Corinthians were not waiting for one another, so Paul tells them to wait for one another.

For many of us, there would be an additional action from this statement. The body of Christ needs to come together to eat meals together. In medium-sized and larger churches, they need to have a small group ministry so that the members can share meals together. In smaller churches and home churches, fellowship meals are a little easier to do. There must be a commitment by churches to come together to eat. People are busy, and this is just one more thing to add to their busy calendars. The early church was devoted to fellowship and the breaking of bread. They were devoted to breaking bread from house to house and taking their meals together. If we are devoted to something, we will make it a priority. We may have to cut some other things out of our schedule in order to devote ourselves to sharing meals together.

(Acts 2:42–46) “They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.... {46} Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,”

Paul's next corrective action was focused on those who were really hungry. If they were really hungry, they should eat at home, so that when they came, it would be about the fellowship and sharing. They needed to be more concerned about sharing what they had with others than stuffing themselves. They needed to be patient, and wait until everyone got served before diving into their meals. If these were issues, it would be better for them to eat at home than to go to these meals for judgment.

(1 Cor 11:34) “If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you will not come together for judgment. The remaining matters I will arrange when I come.”

Paul ends by telling them that he will arrange the remaining matters when he comes. The word arrange is *diatasso*. You may remember that the word for submission is *hupotasso*, which means to be under proper order and arrangement. *Tasso* means proper order and arrangement. *Dia* is a prefix that means through. The diameter of something is the measurement through an object from one side to the other. *Diatasso* means a thorough order. Paul was going to work with them on getting completely in order when he comes.

This was not the only time that Paul said he was planning to visit them. In chapter four, he said that he would come to them soon, if the Lord wills. He asked them if he should come with a rod, or with a spirit of gentleness. Then, in the closing chapter, Paul told them that he planned to come to them after going through Macedonia, and might stay the winter with them. His coming to them would be to help bring them to order, and to be more complete in Christ. The job of every pastor is to help present each person complete in Christ.

(1 Cor 4:19-21) “But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant but their power.... {21} What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a spirit of gentleness?”

(1 Cor 16:5–6) “But I will come to you after I go through Macedonia, for I am going through Macedonia; {6} and perhaps I will stay with you, or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way wherever I may go.”

(Col 1:28–29) “We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. {29} For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.”

## **Conclusion and Applications**

We all profit from the correction that Paul gave to the Corinthians. We model our celebration after the elements that he taught them. When we partake of the bread and of the cup, we publicly acknowledge and remember what Christ did. We learn to examine ourselves and not to take the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner. We learn that when we take the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, we could be judged and disciplined by the Lord.

What we have not learned and taken to heart is the big picture, the context that the Lord's Supper was administered. We have taken the communion elements from the love feast, and have made that into a sacrament that we practice. We have forgotten that the communion sacrament was part of a love feast or meal. Paul's correction was more about the way that the meal was being conducted than the elements themselves. Some were feasting and getting drunk, while others had no food at all. They were not sharing with one another, and were rendering the gospel message null and void.

The application for us, and the body of Christ today, is to be devoted to fellowship and the breaking of bread. The Covid 19 pandemic provided an opportunity for many people to stop going to church services. Many still do not attend services. You cannot fellowship by watching a sermon on TV. You cannot break bread with others while sitting alone at home. Our walk with God is not just individual; it is a corporate walk. We, collectively, are the temple that He is building. We must get back to the things that the early church was devoted to: the apostles' teaching, prayer, fellowship, and breaking of bread.

## **Closing Prayer**

Father God, help us to truly understand and receive Your word today. We are to live in community and fellowship with one another. We are to share with one another. We are to wait for one another. We are to encourage one another. We are to share our lives with one another. Help us to be devoted to breaking bread together from house to house. Help us to celebrate the Lord's Supper properly. Help us to examine ourselves and make sure that we are taking it in a worthy manner. Help us to live lives that line up with the message of the Lord's Supper. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

**Introduction** (Jude 12, Acts 2:42–46, 20:7-11, 1 Cor 10:20–21, 11:17-24)

1. **The problem** (1 Cor 11:17-22, 1 Cor 11:2, 1 Cor 1:10–11, Acts 2:42-45, Gal 2:11-14, 3:28)
2. **The instructions** (1 Cor 11:23-26, Eph 3:3, 1 Cor 5:7)
3. **The judgment** (1 Cor 11:27-32, Heb 12:5–11, Ps 32:8–9)
4. **Corrective Actions** (1 Cor 11:28, 33-34, Acts 2:42–46, 1 Cor 4:19-21, 16:5-6, Col 1:28-29)

**Conclusion and Applications**