

We are Baptist

Lord's Supper

1 Corinthians 11:17-34 *Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.*

Introduction

In the beginning of the chapter in verse 2, Paul mentions the fact of keeping the ordinances. There are different ordinances, or traditions, that have been delivered to the church. The main two spoken of as given to the church to symbolize and remember Christ's death, burial, and resurrection are the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. In the above few verses Paul addresses the importance of order in the church and reminds them of the tradition and subsequent command of the role of women in the church leadership. We too often look at ordinances or traditions as man-made and thus not necessary or good. The reality is that some traditions are just teachings that are habitual because Jesus commanded them to be so. So many churches today are abandoning God's truth and trying to say it was just a tradition of man and not a bible truth! That is not correct! Just because our society has gone mad and decides that it does not want to obey God's Word and traditions does not mean the church is right is following suit.

The prohibition of women leading in the church is not an archaic teaching that needs updating, it is a command of God. Not just a tradition, but a tradition God instituted! The command to baptize people by immersion is not something new. It was happening since the time of Christ. Now Paul addresses another ordinance of the church in that he talks about the Lord's Supper and how to perform it properly. It was a new ordinance for the church and already people were doing it wrong and so Paul set them straight!

It is interesting how the church has moved away from the Bible teaching on order and then ordinances in the church. The very word ordinances has a reference to order. It is how God wants the church to operate. We have no right to change what God has set in place. We are not smarter than God. We are not better than God!

There is a spirit in the church today that is questioning and changing everything that is a tradition or old. If it has been done for years the philosophy is to change it! Now I am telling you this spirit is not of Christ. The Bible says to try or prove the spirits! Just because something has been done for a long time doesn't make it wrong or outdated! If it is not unbiblical, don't change it! Churches are taking hymns out of the services. Churches are letting anyone baptize. Churches are having women serve as pastors. Churches are inviting anyone to take the Lord's Supper! These changes are not biblical!

I. The Passover

Leviticus 23:5-6 *In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.*

- A. The Passover is also known as the first day of **unleavened** Bread
- B. This was an annual **feast** to celebrate the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and from the death angel.

Called the "festival [of] the matzos" (Hebrew: חג המצות hag hamatzot) in the Hebrew Bible, the commandment to keep Passover is recorded in the Book of Leviticus:

In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month between the two evenings is the LORD's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD; seven days ye shall eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have a holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work. And ye shall bring an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days; in the seventh day is a holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work. (Leviticus 23:5)

The biblical regulations for the observance of the festival require that all leavening be disposed of before the beginning of the 15th of Nisan. An unblemished lamb or goat, known as the Korban Pesach or "Paschal Lamb", is to be set apart on Nisan 10, and slaughtered at dusk as Nisan 14 ends in preparation for the 15th of Nisan when it will be eaten after being roasted. The literal meaning of the Hebrew is "between the two evenings". It is then to be eaten "that night", Nisan 15, roasted, without the removal of its internal organs with unleavened bread, known as matzo, and bitter herbs known as maror. Nothing of the sacrifice on which the sun rises by the morning of the 15th of Nisan may be eaten, but must be burned. The sacrifices may only be performed in a specific place prescribed by God (for Judaism, Jerusalem, and for Samaritans, Mount Gerizim).

The biblical regulations pertaining to the original Passover, at the time of the Exodus only, also include how the meal was to be eaten: "with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD's passover" Exodus 12:11.

- C. The biblical commandments concerning the Passover (and the Feast of Unleavened Bread) stress **the importance of remembering**
- D. The obvious symbolism of Jesus being the Passover Lamb and being crucified during the Passover time is by no mistake! It is a great symbol that He is our Passover Lamb!

II. The New Institution of Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper

- A. The Lord's Supper is not to commemorate the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, but rather the **deliverance** of the world from sin to salvation.
- B. It can be taken wrong. Paul strongly rebukes the church for not taking it **properly**.
 1. They came eating and drinking a meal irreverently and disrespecting the poor. This was not the spirit they were to partake the Lord's Supper

1 Corinthians 11:27-30 *Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.*

2. There was division among them

1 Corinthians 11:18 *For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.*

3. Some were coming unworthy. They were coming in sin and had not confessed their sins.

I Corinthians 11: 29-30 *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.*

C. Why should it be taken?

1. To **Remember!**

- As a time to remember the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- We reject the doctrine of transubstantiation. This doctrine falsely interprets Jesus words in the book of John 6:53-54 and says that when you take communion the bread miraculously becomes the flesh of Jesus and the wine becomes His blood. That passage was written in symbolism and was not intended to be literal. The same goes for when Jesus says you should hate your mother and father. He was talking symbolically and comparatively, not literally. We can determine this by looking at Scripture as a whole and understanding His teachings on obeying your parents and loving them. Jesus did use symbolism and the Lord's supper is wrapped in symbolism.
- Just as the Passover was taken each year to remember, so the Lord's Supper is taken each year to remember as well.

2. To **Examine** oneself

Corinthians 11:28 *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

- Of their salvation
- Of their sins confessed before the Lord

D. Who should partake of the Lords supper?

1. **Saved** People
 2. **Baptized** People
 3. Three beliefs on who should take communion
 - a. **Open** – anyone who claims to be a Christian
 - b. **Close** – all saved and baptized believers of life-faith
 - c. **Closed** – saved and baptized believers in your church
- We hold to the closed position because of our belief in the local church. We do not believe in a universal church until we are all in heaven. Until then, the Scriptures teach a local body of believers. Each local body has a pastor, deacons, and teachers. Each local body gives to the local church to sustain the church and promote missions. Each body of believers is commissioned to baptize new believers into their church. Since there are only two ordinances given to the church – baptism and the communion; then if baptism is for the local church, so must communion be for the local church.
 - In 1 Corinthians the local church was taking the Lord's supper. They were to examine themselves, not the universal church because that would be impossible. It would also be impossible for everyone to partake at the same time. The only consistent way to interpret the Scriptures is that the local body takes it together.

E. How often should we **partake**?

1 Corinthians 11:26 *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.*

1. This is left up to each church to decide
2. Some take it every week – although not wrong, it loses its importance by many as it becomes a ritual with little meaning
3. We take it several times annually as a time to remember!

F. Who has the **authority** to dispense the Lord's supper?

1. Local Churches
2. If the local church has the authority baptize, then it also retains the authority of this ordinance as well.
3. One cannot give communion to others of their own authority. It is for the church, not the individual.

III. Conclusion

A. The Lord's Supper is one of two ordinances given to the local church by Jesus Christ.

B. Because the local church is autonomous, the Lord's Supper should be taken in your local church, not any church.

C. The Lord's Supper is for saved, baptized members of the local church.

D. Every denomination practiced closed communion for centuries. We have not changed the doctrine or practice of the Lord's supper, yet other denominations have. If God's Word has not changed, then why have all the other churches changed their doctrine?

E. The Lord's Supper is a time to remember what Jesus Christ did for us in regard to our salvation. It should never be forgotten.