

Lead Me To Calvary

by Bubba Garner

“And if you have any questions about what we do, please do not hesitate to ask.” That statement, or some variation, is usually made at the beginning of our worship service to help the visitors feel more at ease. Some of them even take you up on your offer. I’ve noticed that two questions are more frequent than any other. Why don’t you have musical instruments and why do you observe the Lord’s Supper every Sunday?

Since we’ve made the claim that we’re trying to follow the Bible and do what it says, our answers to those questions should not fall back on personal preference or taste or convenience. Every part of our worship involves just doing what we’ve been told to do. The same Bible that commands us to sing and make melody with our hearts to the Lord (Eph. 5:19) says that the disciples were gathered together to break bread on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). God deserves to be worshiped in His way on His day.

That’s why it’s called the Lord’s Supper. It is not my supper, it is not even ours. It belongs to the Lord. And doesn’t that give Him the right to regulate it and decide the manner in which it is observed? It doesn’t matter if I think it is more special to do it only once a month or twice a year. I’m not in the position to make that call. Besides, if the Son of God dying on the cross is something that you have to think about less so it will mean more, then there’s a bigger problem to address here.

Why did the Lord institute a supper for His people? What value is there in eating the bread and drinking the cup every first day of the week?

He wants us to remember. Paul reminds us what Jesus said on the night He was betrayed: “Do this in remembrance of Me” (1 Cor. 11:24-25). God knows something about us that we, at times, seem to forget. We have short-term memories. Even when we try to address this problem as a country and celebrate Memorial Day or Veteran’s Day, it’s still just for one day. We may get out the flags and play the patriotic music, but those things are right back in the closet come morning. And so are the people and causes we were so intent on remembering.

We shouldn’t have any trouble replaying the scenes of Calvary in our minds. We shouldn’t even have to be told to remember the Lamb of God who was slain for our sins. It is good for us to reflect on those who have fought and died for our country, who have secured our rights and liberties. But it does not compare to the freedom that Jesus won by His death on the cross. As often as we eat the bread and drink the cup, we show our remembrance and honor of Him.

He wants us to commune. Communion. Union. Common. Communication. This supper is a sharing. “Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ?”

Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ” (1 Cor. 10:16)? Our observance of the Lord’s Supper is a reminder of the covenant we share with God and our commitment we have made to Christ. By eating His flesh and drinking His blood, we become one with Him and make Him a part of us.

We commune with Christ. We commune with one another. “For we all partake of the one bread” (1 Cor. 10:17). This unites us together. We are many, from many walks of life, at many levels of spirituality, with many problems. But we’re all sitting down at the same table. We all have one thing in common and that is that Jesus died to take away our sins. We all have one objective, and that is to remember His death until He comes again. It is an individual act, but we all have a share in it.

He wants us to examine. “Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup” (1 Cor. 11:27-28). I have known some to use this verse to excuse themselves from partaking because they didn’t feel worthy that day. If that were the point of the passage, none of us could ever observe the Lord’s Supper, for we are most unworthy. But it seems Paul is warning us not to partake flippantly, in a manner that does not show reverence for Him or His memorial feast.

What preparations would you make if you had plans to dine with the king? You wouldn’t just show up. You would carefully consider how to speak, dress, and act appropriately in his presence. Does the Lord not deserve such special treatment? Does Jesus’ death not compel us to examine our mind, our heart, our motive, our all?

God gave us the best of heaven. What better way to remember what He has done for us than to give Him our best when we commune with Him and with one another.