

# 1 Corinthians 11:17-34: A study on the Lord's Supper

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In understanding 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, the question is: Is the Apostle Paul condemning the way they were conducting this (common) meal that was taking place before the Lord's Supper when they gathered as the church, or was he condemning them in that they transformed the Lord's Supper into a common meal in which they were also demonstrating division?

From the scripture as well as historic writings, the evidence is that Paul was condemning the church in Corinth in that they transformed the Lord's Supper into a common meal, through which they were demonstrating not only an adulteration of the Lord's Supper, but also serious division among their brothers and sister.

First, I will examine the context of 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 and then will also examine and discuss other passages in the Bible that support this premise.

## *1 Corinthians 11:17-22*

*In the following directives I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good. In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval. So then, when you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, for when you are eating, some of you go ahead with your own private suppers. As a result, one person remains hungry and another gets drunk. Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God by humiliating those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? Certainly not in this matter!*

When the church in Corinth met for worship, they were doing more harm than good, they had exchanged what was first given to them through Paul when the church there was established and had mutated the Lord's Supper into this common meal at which the wealthy came early and gorged themselves with the emblems they brought for the Lord's Supper, leaving the poorer Christians hungry, humiliated, and without the physical emblems to partake of the Lord's Supper when they arrived. These Christians in Corinth were calling these private suppers, this common meal, the Lord's Supper. These Christians had the place and day right, but had the wrong timing, manner, and maybe worst of all, their attitude about their poor brothers and sisters. The Lord's Supper is a time of sober self-reflection about our sins and Christ's sacrifice, as well as a time to unite the body of Christ, the church, not divide it by taking the Lord's Supper whenever one feels like it.

Albert Barnes (1797-1870) Commentary on 1 Corinthians 11:20-21:

When ye come together therefore ... - When you are assembled as a church, compare Hebrews 10:25, and see the note on Acts 2:1. Christians were constantly in the habit of assembling for public worship. It is probable that at this early period all the Christians in Corinth were accustomed to meet in the same place. The apostle here particularly refers to their "assembling" to observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. At that early period, it is probable that this was done on every Lord's Day.

This is not ... - Margin, "Ye cannot eat." The meaning of this expression seems to be this. "Though you come together professedly to worship God, and to partake of the Lord's Supper, yet this cannot be the real design which you have in view. It cannot be that such practices as are allowed among you can be a part of the celebration of that supper, or consistent with it. Your greediness 1 Corinthians 11:21; your intemperance 1 Corinthians 11:21; your partaking of the food separately and not in common, cannot be a celebration of the Lord's Supper. Whatever, therefore, you may profess to be engaged in, yet really and truly you are not celebrating the Lord's Supper."

The Lord's supper - That which the Lord Jesus instituted to commemorate his death. It is called "the Lord's," because it is his appointment, and is in honor of him; it is called "supper" (δεῖπνον deipnon), because the word denotes the evening repast; it was instituted in the evening; and it is evidently most proper that it should be observed in the after part of the day. With most churches the time is improperly changed to the morning - a custom which has no sanction in the New Testament; and which is a departure from the very idea of a supper.

For in eating - When you eat, having professedly come together to observe this ordinance. In order to understand this, it seems necessary to suppose that they had in some way made the Lord's supper either connected with a common feast, or that they regarded it as a mere common festival to be observed in a way similar to the festivals among the Greeks. Many have supposed that this was done by making the observance of the supper follow a festival, or what were afterward called "love feasts" ἀγάπαι agapai - "Agapae"). Many have supposed that that custom was derived from the fact that the Savior instituted the supper after a festival, a feast in which he had been engaged with his disciples, and that thence the early Christians derived the custom of observing such a festival, or common meal, before they celebrated the Lord's Supper. But it may be observed that the Passover was not a mere preliminary festival, or feast.

It had no resemblance to the so-called love feasts. It was itself a religious ordinance; a direct appointment of God; and was never regarded as designed to be preliminary to the observance of the Lord's Supper but was always understood as designed to be superseded by that. Besides, I know not that there is the slightest evidence, as has been often supposed, that the observance of the Lord's Supper was preceded, in the times of the apostles, by such a festival as a love feast. There is no evidence in the passage before us; nor is any adduced from any other part of the New Testament. To my mind it seems altogether improbable that the disorders in Corinth would assume this form - that they would first observe a common feast, and then the Lord's Supper in the regular manner. The statement before us leads to the belief that all was irregular and improper; that they had entirely mistaken the nature of the ordinance, and had converted it into an occasion of ordinary festivity, and even intemperance; that they had come to regard it as a feast in honor of the Savior on some such principles as they observed feasts in honor of idols, and that they observed it in some such manner; and that all that was supposed to make it unlike those festivals was, that it was in honor of Jesus rather than an idol, and was to be observed with some reference to his authority and name.

Everyone taketh before other his own supper - That is, each one is regardless of the needs of the others; instead of making even a meal in common, and when all could partake together, each one ate by himself, and ate that which he had himself brought. They had not only erred, therefore, by misunderstanding altogether the nature of the Lord's supper, and by supposing that it was a common festival like those which they had been accustomed to celebrate; but they had also entirely departed from the idea that it was a festival to be partaken of in common, and at a common table. It had become a scene where every man ate by himself; and where the very idea that there was anything like a "common" celebration, or a celebration "together," was abandoned.

There is allusion here, doubtless, to what was a custom among the Greeks, that when a festival was celebrated, or a feast made, it was common for each person to provide, and carry a part of the things necessary for the entertainment. These were usually placed in common and were partaken of alike by all the company. Thus, Xenophon (Mem. lib. 3:cap. xiv.) says of Socrates, that he was much offended with the Athenians for their conduct at their common suppers, where some prepared for themselves in a delicate and sumptuous manner, while others were poorly provided for. Socrates endeavored, he adds, to shame them out of this indecent custom by offering his provisions to all the company. And one is hungry - Is deprived of food. It is all monopolized by others.

And another is drunken - The word used here (μεθύω methuō) means properly to become inebriated or intoxicated; and there is no reason for understanding it here in any other sense. There can be no doubt that the apostle meant to say, that they ate and drank to excess; and that their professed celebration of the Lord's Supper became a mere revel. It may seem remarkable that such scenes should ever have occurred in a Christian church, or that there could have been such an entire perversion of the nature and design of the Lord's Supper.

Not that I concur with every statement of Albert Barnes, but I do agree with what he wrote concerning the lack of evidence of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century church having a "Love Feast" in conjunction with the Lord's Supper when he writes,

"I know not that there is the slightest evidence, as has been often supposed, that the observance of the Lord's Supper was preceded, in the times of the apostles, by such a festival as a love feast. There is no evidence in the passage before us; nor is any adduced from any other part of the New Testament. To my mind it seems altogether improbable that the disorders in Corinth would assume this form - that they would first observe a common feast, and then the Lord's Supper in the regular manner."

Throughout the Graeco-Roman Culture and particularly in large cities like Corinth, it was customary practice to incorporate such grand feasts as part of the worship service to idols. The Christians in Corinth had changed the Lord's Supper into this strange/hybrid common meal somewhere between the Lord's Supper and a Pagan Idol worship feast. They had changed the Lord's Supper, which was first delivered to them when Paul helped to establish a congregation there and perverted it to the point that it was not even recognizable. They had the right day (Sunday) and the right place (when they gathered together), and most likely the correct emblems (unleavened bread and fruit of the vine) but had every other aspect of the Lord's Supper wrong.

Their perverted meal was demonstrating and causing greater division. Their perverted meal was about serving themselves and displaying their wealth; the Lord's Supper is to be about the Lord and serving one another. Their perverted meal was an outward act of gluttony and overindulgence; the Lord's Supper is to be a special meal about reflection and introspection.

The evidence that presented outside the Bible is weak and inconclusive concerning early Christians having this "Agape Feast" together. Even if evidence is to be uncovered in the future, one should not seek out the writings of man to understand the writings of God.

Many reference the early writings of Ignatius (c. 110 AD), specifically his letter to the Smyrnaeans, Chapter 8:

See that ye all follow the bishop, even as Jesus Christ does the Father, and the presbytery as ye would the apostles; and reverence the deacons, as being the institution of God. Let no man do anything connected with the Church without the bishop. Let that be deemed a proper Eucharist, which is [administered] either by the bishop, or by one to whom he has entrusted it. Wherever the bishop shall appear, there let the multitude [of the people] also be; even as, wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church. It is not lawful without the bishop either to baptize or to celebrate a love-feast; but whatsoever he shall approve of, that is also pleasing to God, so that everything that is done may be secure and valid. See that ye all follow the bishop, even as Christ Jesus does the Father, and the presbytery as ye would the apostles. Do ye also reverence the deacons, as those that carry out [through their office] the appointment of God. Let no man do anything connected with the Church without the bishop. Let that be deemed a proper Eucharist, which is [administered] either by the bishop, or by one to whom he has entrusted it. Wherever the bishop shall appear, there let the multitude [of the people] also be; even as where Christ is, there does all the heavenly host stand by, waiting upon Him as the Chief Captain of the Lord's might, and the Governor of every intelligent nature. It is not lawful without the bishop either to baptize, or to offer, or to present sacrifice, or to celebrate a love-feast. But that which seems good to him, is also well-pleasing to God, that everything ye do may be secure and valid.

Even in this extra-Biblical writing, these “Love Feast” could just as easily be referring to the Lord’s Supper as it could to a meal that the church took before the Lord’s Supper.

Many also refer to Tertullian (c. 200 AD)

Yet about the modest supper-room of the Christians alone a great ado is made. Our feast explains itself by its name. The Greeks call it *agape*, i.e., affection. Whatever it costs, our outlay in the name of piety is gain, since with the good things of the feast we benefit the needy; not as it is with you, do parasites aspire to the glory of satisfying their licentious propensities, selling themselves for a belly-feast to all disgraceful treatment,-but as it is with God himself, a peculiar respect is shown to the lowly. If the object of our feast be good, in the light of that consider its further regulations. As it is an act of religious service, it permits no vileness or immodesty. The participants, before reclining, taste first of prayer to God. As much is eaten as satisfies the cravings of hunger; as much is drunk as befits the chaste.

In the argument made by many referring to Tertullian, again, not only is this mention of an *Agape/Affection Feast* vague, but even so, this is not found in the scriptures. The church in Corinth that was established by an Apostle of Jesus was already practicing error in approximately seven to ten years. Can there be any doubt that many churches were already practicing false doctrine by 200 AD?

Alexander Campbell was in error when he wrote,

"There can be no doubt that the Eucharist at this period (shortly after Pentecost) was preceded uniformly by a common repast, as when the ordinance was instituted. Most scholars hold that this was the prevailing usage in the first centuries after Christ; and we have traces of this practice in 1 Corinthians 11:20.

There is no Biblical evidence for such a strong claim nor is there any strong extra-biblical evidence to support this.

1 Corinthians 11:17-22 demonstrates that the Christians there in Corinth claimed that they were taking the Lord’s Supper, but the reality was that they were far from it. They were guilty in at least three ways. The first being their selfishness and greed, second their intemperance, and third their discord in partaking of the emblems separately.

In understanding this, the closing remarks of Paul are in harmony with all of 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

*1 Corinthians 11:33-34*

*So then, my brothers and sisters, when you gather to eat, you should all eat together. Anyone who is hungry should eat something at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment. And when I come I will give further directions.*

What was the judgment that Paul was referring to?

*1 Corinthians 11:27-29*

*So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.*

If, however, 1 Corinthians 11:17-22 and the verses at the end of the chapter, (v. 33-34) are referring to the act of a common meal prior to the Lord's Supper, then when a group assembles as the church, they ought to ensure that this practice continues. To be consistent with this understanding, Christians at a minimum ought to encourage the practice of eating a common meal together ("potluck") when we assemble as the church. Does verse 33 make reference to eating the Lord's Supper together or eating a common meal when they came together? The strongest Biblical evidence points to Paul correcting their adulterous change of the Lord's Supper. There is no Biblical evidence that Paul is referring to the church partaking of the Agape Feast wrong, nor is there any strong extra-biblical evidence to support this position.

Paul ends this topic with a warning against the attitude and way they had already shown guilt and judgment, he charged the Christians there to avoid all such indecencies at the Lord's table. They were to eat for hunger and pleasure only at home, and not to change the Lord's Supper into a common meal; and much less eat up the provisions before those who could not afford the bread and wine were able to meet with them.

Other scriptures in the New Testament also support this understanding of the passage.

*1 Corinthians 10:16-17*

*Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.*

*Acts 20:7*

*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.*

At a minimum, the Bible tells us that the Lord's Supper represents:

Acknowledgment – We acknowledge that Jesus has proven victorious over death and has become the first fruits of all those who die in Him.

Anticipation/Expectation – We acknowledge Jesus' eventual return and eagerly await that day.

Commitment – We are persuaded of the truth and all the promises that God has given to us and strive to grow in our commitment and trust to our Lord.

Fellowship/Unity – We partake with each other and with Jesus. It is not just one person, partaking of the Lord's supper with the Lord. We all are partaking when we gather together with both each other and with the Lord.

Memorial – We remember the Lord's sacrifice and the New Covenant He established.

Proclamation – We proclaim and honor the Lord's death until His return.

Thanksgiving – In this act we praise God and thank Him for His indescribable gift!

On the first day of the week, they came together to partake in the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is an act of worship that is to be done when the church assembles on Sunday. There is not an example or tradition of Christians partaking of the Lord's Supper outside the assembling of the church. Paul warns us to examine ourselves before partaking, for in taking the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, one can eat and drink judgement against oneself. In this regard, the Lord's Supper is an individual act, but that does not negate the fact that the Lord's Supper is also something that was always done, "When the disciples came together." If one cannot assemble, then he or she cannot partake.

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## **Examination of the book, “Must We Eat Together” by Philip E. Chumbley**

As a Christian, I am appalled by the title. When I read God’s Word, I do not ask, MUST I do (fill in the blank), but rather: What direct statement of truths and commands have been given to us? What did the faithful do, what is the example of those who were acting with God’s authority?

To begin, the questions should be, *“Is there an example of Christians in the New Testament meeting together and eating the Lord’s Supper?”* And the simple answer is YES! Do we have any example of a small group or individual outside the assembly on the first day of the week, taking the Lord’s Supper? NO! Do we have an example where a Christian “waiting/tarried” in an area so that he/she could partake of the Lord’s Supper where Christians assembled? YES!

The entire argument presented by Philip Chumbley is wrong. He claims that those who believe that the Lord’s Supper is a congregational action, condemn the tradition of a congregation providing another opportunity for Christians to partake of the Lord’s Supper. I also agree with him, in that those who hold this understanding would be wrong in their conclusion that the Lord’s Supper can only be administered once each Sunday.

Philip Chumbley writes, *“Since a number of Christians present are not eating the Lord’s Supper, then it is not being eaten together.”* *“The Eat Together advocate would again object stating that not everyone is eating therefore the Lord’s Supper is not being eaten together.”* For those that believe that the Lord’s Supper is something to be done together when the church is assembled to then impose that no one can take of the Lord’s Supper in the evening since they missed the assembly are not being intellectually consistent. To be consistent with this understanding, Christians who attend a worship service ought to partake of the Lord’s Supper when the church is assembled. To be consistent with my understanding of the scriptures concerning the Lord’s Supper, I choose to partake every worship service on the first day of the week.

If one side was arguing that grass is naturally orange and the other side was arguing that their grass is naturally purple, both sides would be wrong. If those that are arguing that the Lord’s Supper should only be taken when Christians assemble, also condemn those who partake during another worship service when Christians are assembled. Then they are wrong in their conclusion but not in their statement. If those that are arguing that the Lord’s Supper can be taken when Christians assemble but can also be taken individually. Then their statement is false even if their conclusion might be correct. To be as straightforward as possible, the Bible teaches that the Lord’s Supper is an act of worship that is to be done when the church assembles on Sunday. Therefore, we see no example of partaking of the Lord’s Supper outside the assembling of the church.

Very similarly to those who would twist Mark 16:16 to somehow mean that baptism is not required to be saved, Philip Chumbley twist the scriptures to mean the opposite of what they say. In Acts 20:7, it says, *On the first day of the week we came together to break bread.* He claims, *“Upon closer look, we see that nowhere in scripture do we find the words “together” modifying the word “eat,” that is, nowhere do we find a reference to “eat together.” ... In fact, we do not find anywhere in the scripture that togetherness is a condition for eating the Lord’s Supper.”*

This my brothers and sisters, is the twisting of the scriptures that Peter warns us about in, 2 Peter 3. Just like how men can twist Mark 16:16, Philip Chumbley is twisting passages like Acts 20:7 and 1 Corinthians to mean something it does not.

If I were to say, “Let’s meet together at 1PM on Saturday to eat,” what would I mean? Would I need to say, “Let’s meet together at 1PM on Saturday to eat together”?

Philip Chumbley also claims that the Bible must offer a “WHY” regarding eating the Lord’s Supper when we assemble together. First, I dare not ask my God, why. And secondly, even if I had the audacity, I would still comply even if God did not give me the why. On this topic, however, the scriptures do give us a WHY.

1 Corinthians 10:14-17;21

*Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry. I speak to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.*

*You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord’s table and the table of demons.*

1 Corinthians 11:32-33

*Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world. So then, my brothers and sisters, when you gather to eat, you should all eat together.*

The scripture demonstrates a unity/fellowship/joint participation with not only Jesus, but with all Christians who partake. We see the contrast made in 1 Corinthians 10, where Christians thought they would both continue idol worship and worship to Jesus.

It has been argued that 1 Corinthians 10:14-17 is talking specifically about the Christians the world over, and I agree. Yet this does not take away from the WHY given to us by God as to why we assemble to take the Lord’s Supper.

Philip Chumbley mentions that the Greek word for together is ὁμοῦ (hom-oo') meaning: together: of persons assembled together. This word is found in John 4:36; 20:4; 21:2 and Acts 2:1; 20:18. As contrasted by the Greek word, συνάγω (soon-ag'-o) meaning:

- I. to gather together, to gather
  - a. to draw together, collect
    - i. of fishes
    - ii. of a net in which they are caught
- II. to bring together, assemble, collect
  - a. to join together, join in one (those previously separated)
  - b. to gather together by convoking
  - c. to be gathered i.e. come together, gather, meet



III. to lead with one's self

- a. into one's home, i.e. to receive hospitably, to entertain

This word is found in 62 passages to include: Acts 20:7,8; 1 Corinthians 5:4; Revelation 16:16; 19:19; 20:8

And the Greek word, συνέρχομαι (soon-er'-khom-ahee) meaning:

- I. to come together
  - a. to assemble
  - b. of conjugal cohabitation
- II. to go (depart) or come with one, to accompany one

This word is found in 32 passages to include: Acts 1:6; 2:6; 10:27; 1 Corinthians 11:17,18,20,33,34; 14:23;26

The argument that Philip Chumbley is making is absurd. Yes, the Greek word ὁμοῦ does mean “persons assembled together” and in Acts 20:7, the word συνάγω means, “to gather together, to bring together, assemble.” And in 1 Corinthians 11, the word συνέρχομαι means, “to come together, to go (depart) or come with one, to accompany one.”

The emphasis in Acts 2:1 is about the individuals who are gathered. In Acts 20:7, the emphasis is on the gathering itself, as well as 1 Corinthians 11, where the emphasis is on the act of coming together. And how fitting are these two Greek words when discussing the manner in which the Lord's Supper is to be observed. The emphasis of our gathering is not individualistic, but rather collective.

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## Christian Commentaries:

Assembly is necessary to the proper observance of the Lord's Supper. "When you come together it is not for the better but for the worse." Anything that hinders our assembly on the Lord's Day hinders the observance of the Lord's Supper. *Terry Partain*

We cannot properly take the Lord's Supper (1) if we fail to come together, (2) if we fail to commune, share, or share as a family, (3) if we fail to follow the pattern given by the Lord, (4) if we fail to remember the cross of Christ and proclaim his death until He comes again, (5) if we take it in an unworthy manner, not discerning the body and blood of Jesus. *Terry Partain*

We acknowledge this scriptural truth when we refer to the Lord's Supper as "communion," for we commune not merely with God but with one another. Perhaps more than any other element of our corporate worship, it is the Lord's Supper that is supposed to bind us together into a community of faith. We must be able to say, "This is my body" of our local congregations as Christ said, "This is My body" of the unleavened bread. These are my people. This is where I belong. *Matthew Bassford*

When we partake of the Supper, we are engaging in fellowship. That's the reason that the Supper is sometimes referred to as "Communion," a word that emphasizes sharing or mutual participation, the idea behind fellowship. Paul made this point to the Corinthians by asking rhetorical questions about the implication of Supper observance. The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). We commune with Christ in the Supper (Luke 22:18) but notice the conclusion of the apostle: We although many, are united in the body of Christ because we all partake of the one (same) bread. Brethren in congregations all around the world partake of unleavened bread in the Supper with the understanding that it represents the same thing. Paul also rebuked the Corinthians for not eating together (1 Corinthians 11:20-21, 33). The Supper is a unity meal, and we are reminded of our connection to our brethren, local and elsewhere, when we partake together. *Allen Dvorak*

Just as our sharing the Lord's Supper declares our fellowship with Christ, it also declares our fellowship with one another. We proclaim that each of us is one with Christ and that all of us are one in Christ. When brothers and sisters eat the Lord's Supper together, it is a reminder that, "we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another" (Romans 12:5; cf. 1 Corinthians 10:17). Picture those first century Christians of diverse backgrounds – Jews and Gentiles, slaves and free, rich and poor, citizens and commoners – reaffirming every week in the Supper that they were one in Jesus. Likewise, when we gather together around the Lord's table, we are declaring that no factor which might threaten to divide us – race, education, wealth, status, politics, or anything else – is as strong as the spiritual fellowship with Christ that unites us. *Jeff Himmel*

The Lord did not teach His followers to isolate themselves from each other and observe the Lord's Supper in private devotion but to assemble as the local church to observe it. Paul waited a week in Troas to participate with the saints in their worship assembly including the Lord's Supper. "And upon the first day of the week, ready to depart on the morrow" (Acts 20:7). When Paul addressed the abuse of the Lord's Supper at Corinth, he explained how it was not properly observed in their worship assembly or "when ye come together in the church" (1 Corinthians 11:17-34, see vv. 16-17, 20, 33).

***Ron Halbrook***

In his comments on 1 Corinthians 10:16,17, Willis notes that communion is "sharing with someone in something.... When Christians participate in the Lord's Supper, they announce to the world their belief in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.... The drinking of the cup is a joint participation with other Christians in the benefits of the death of Christ.... We Christians, who backgrounds are so varied, become one body when we gather around the table of the Lord. All of our unique differences are set aside in order that we might all become one with each other and with Christ."

Knowing that we are communing with brothers and sisters in Christ all over the world is a consoling thought. While Paul was at Ephesus (1 Corinthians 16:8, 19), he said to the brethren at Corinth (approximately 275 miles away and separated by the Aegean Sea), "the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ? Seeing that we who are many, are one body: for we all partake of one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:16,17). If you are united with Christ and I am united with Christ, then we are united with each other through Christ too. The communion typifies the fact that we are one body in Christ, one with each other, When authorized people do the authorized thing in the authorized place on the authorized day for the authorized purpose, they are doing exactly what the Lord demands of them. ***Richard (Dick) Blackford***

The Lord's Supper is an expression of our union with Christ and with one another (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). The word communion comes from the Greek word *koinonia*, which means partnership, joint participation, a sharing together, or fellowship. Observing the Lord's Supper is an outward expression of our unity as Christians. Furthermore, in partaking of this feast, one shares in the benefits of the Lord's sacrifice (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). In the context of 1 Corinthians 10:14-22, Paul warns the Corinthians against becoming involved in idolatrous rites. Eating meat in the idol's temple unites the eater with evils of idolatry. By participating in pagan festivals, the saints at Corinth were having fellowship with evil. So likewise, when Christians eat of the bread and drink of the cup of the Lord, they were united with Christ and share in the blessings that his sacrifice affords. We share in these blessings, not only by partaking of the Lord's Supper, but also by keeping his ordinances and commandments. In order to maintain fellowship with our Savior, we must walk in the light. Breaking bread is no substitute for godly living (1 John 1:6-7). ***Mark Mayberry***

We share here with others (1 Cor. 10:16, 17). Paul condemned the Corinthians for not communing together (1 Cor. 11:20, 21). Christians are set apart by their participation in this breaking of bread. The Supper is a communion and we share with Christ in it (1 Cor. 10:16) as we share with Him in our lives (Phil. 3:8, 10). And thus we are not liked by the world (Jn. 15:18; Lk. 6:26) because, by our observance of His memorial feast, we show His death till He comes again (1 Cor. 11:26). It is a proclamation to the world. By partaking we say to the world: "I believe: that He lived and died as the Son of God, that He rose from the grave by the power of God, and that He's coming again (Acts 1:10,11) to claim His own Qn. 14:1-3; Matt. 26:29) and to judge the world (Acts 10:42). And thus there is a glorious hope on which to fix our minds during the Lord's Supper. It is wonderful to think on and draws us closer to Him. The feast then is anticipatory as well as commemorative (Matt. 26:29). We should also remind ourselves that as Christians, partaking of the Supper together, we are one body (Eph. 4:4) of which Christ is the Head (Col. 1: 18). There is peace among us (Eph. 2:14-17). And unity is our sign of godliness (Jn. 17:20, 21). If we are to love each other as Jesus loved us (1 Jn. 4:9-11), how can we sit week after week and year after year without getting to know those who share this precious moment with us and without learning to care for them? It is said that families who share together stay together. And what greater thing to share together than this participation in the communion with Christ death? And what greater family 'unity could there be than that among the family of God? *M. Thaxter Dickey*

When Christians partake of the Lord's Supper, they engage in a period of "sharing" or "communion" (1 Corinthians 10:16-21). The breaking of the bread is a sharing in the body of Christ; the drinking of the cup is a sharing in the blood of Christ. Christians are in fellowship with one another and with the Lord. This is what the Lord promised (cf. Matthew 26:29).

*Shawn Jeffries*

We should be aware of our fellowship. Partaking of the Lord's Supper is a time of communion for God's people. As we partake of the unleavened bread and fruit of the vine we commune with one another and also the Lord. *Shawn Jeffries*