

The Life Challenge

"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10

Sermon Series: Body Building
Title: Communion
Speaker: Matt Ewert
Text: 1 Corinthians 11:17-34
Date: May 6, 2018



WARM-UP

- Imagine the church is having a picnic. What might be the advantages and disadvantages of:
 - a) having everybody bring their own picnic lunch or
 - b) doing a "potluck" approach?
- If you knew ahead of time that there was going to be Communion at the service, would you feel more committed to attend than if there was not Communion?

DISCUSSION

REVIEW:

The substance of what this meal means:

- **Salvation:** Our rescue from sin and death
- **Covenant:** We are bound to Christ and to each other; "who we are" and "whose we are"
- **Anticipation:** We live in the present but are looking forward to the Lord's return

The tone of the Communion meal:

- Is it only a somber event? Traditionally it has a strong focus on the suffering and death of Christ.
- Is it only celebratory? Acts 2:46 speaks of a "glad and generous heart."

"Me and Jesus" or "Us and Jesus": Read the text – 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

- **"Me and Jesus" Communion:**
 - ⇒ Me and Jesus are doing well, but I'm not too concerned about my relationship with a brother or sister – 1 Corinthians 11:21
 - ⇒ We may have negative attitudes to someone while partaking. We can be disingenuous, dishonest and hypocritical and still take "Communion."

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DISCUSSION

- **"Us and Jesus" Communion:** ("discerning" or "recognizing" the body)
 - ⇒ The Lord's Supper represents the oneness in Christ and the church.
 - ⇒ Vv. 27-31 – Examining yourself to see if your relationships with others are sound – right attitudes and actions toward each other.
 - ⇒ Participating "unworthily" can have serious consequences.
 - ⇒ Attend to the voice of the Spirit – judge ourselves and make corrections where necessary.
 - ⇒ Living in unity and love for each other allows us to celebrate the body of Christ in oneness.

Application and Ponderings:

- Many of us may have participated in Communion numerous times. Where are the dangers in taking Communion when it occurs pretty much every month?
- Pastor Matt quotes N.T. Wright: The communion table is "*the moment at which past event comes **forward to live again in the present**, and the future moment of the Lord's return comes **backwards in time to challenge us in the present.***"
 - ⇒ The "forward moment": The past event can live again, but how can we do that? What are the elements that will us allow to *live again in the present*?
 - ⇒ The "future moment": If we anticipate the Lord's return, how are we being challenged to live in the present? What are we being challenged with? What is our calling in light of Christ's return?
- Is the idea of participating in Communion as a celebration a new concept for you? Has "somber" been the traditional mode for you to take Communion?
- How do we celebrate at Communion then? (It may be worth noting that many traditions use the word "Eucharist" whereas we use terms like Communion, the Lord's Supper etc. The meaning of Eucharist emphasizes thanksgiving.)