

“This Do in Remembrance of Me”

1 Corinthians 11:23-34

Matthew 26:26-30, Mark 14:22-26, and Luke 22:17-20 record the Gospel account of the Last Supper – the reason this text in First Corinthians is here.

Matthew 26:26–30

²⁶ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, **Take, eat; this is my body.**

²⁷ And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, **Drink ye all of it;**

²⁸ **For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.**

²⁹ **But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.**

³⁰ And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

Mark 14:22–26

²² And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, **Take, eat: this is my body.**

²³ And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.

²⁴ And he said unto them, **This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.**

²⁵ **Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.**

²⁶ And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

Luke 22:17–20

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, **Take this, and divide it among yourselves:**

18 **For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.**

19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, **This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.**

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, **This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.**

These words are often found on the communion table at the front of many churches, and in just four words it sums up what the Bible teaches, and what this church believes, as it relates to "The Lord's Supper."

The first two words of the title of this message, from verse 24 of our text, are why this is called an "ordinance." This is considered one of two "ordinances" of most fundamental, doctrinally sound churches – the other is believer's baptism. The term "ordinance" is used rather than sacrament because of the difference of meaning and application. Although the terms are used synonymously by many theologians of the past, and by some denominational churches and scholars today, they are very distinctly, and importantly, different, historically.

The following three paragraphs are from the website <https://www.gotquestions.org/ordinances-sacraments.html>:

A sacrament is often thought of as being a means of God's grace—as a worshiper performs a certain religious rite, he or she receives divine blessing, either for salvation or for sanctification. An ordinance is usually not considered a conduit of grace but simply a practice commanded to be

performed by the Lord. In other words, a sacrament, at some level, involves a supernatural work of God. An ordinance is simply an act of man in obedience to God.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches there are seven sacraments: baptism, confirmation, holy communion, confession, marriage, holy orders, and the anointing of the sick. According to the Catholic Church, these sacraments "are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament" (The Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd edition, p. 293). Also, "The Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are necessary for salvation" (Ibid., p. 292). This teaching reveals a works-based system of salvation and a sacerdotal approach to worship.

Protestants and evangelicals reject the notion that sacraments can offer salvation. Rather, most see them as signs and signifiers (and sometimes seals) of grace already received. To help avoid communicating the idea that their religious activities are channels of grace, most evangelicals prefer to call them "ordinances." They see the ordinances as symbolic reenactments of the gospel message. Rather than being requirements for salvation, ordinances are visual aids to help us better understand and appreciate what Jesus Christ accomplished for us in His redemptive work, and they are testimonies that we indeed believe in Christ. Ordinances are determined by three factors: they were instituted by Christ, they were taught by the apostles, and they were practiced by the early church. Baptism and communion (or the

Lord's table) are the two rites that most evangelicals consider ordinances, and neither of them is a requirement for salvation. Scriptural support for baptism is found in Matthew 28:18–20, and support for communion in Luke 22:19.

The text before us in this letter to the Corinthian believers, the Apostle establishes the church's responsibility in following in obedience the "ordinance" established by Christ that is to be followed. As seen in the previous portion of this letter, the church had grown to abuse the rite of the Supper and in so doing minimized the importance of it, and, more importantly, diminished the affect of the gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

Before we look at the text itself, a brief history of this ordinance (or sacrament, as Catholics, and others, call it) is necessary. There are three primary views, or beliefs, when it comes to the Lord's Supper that are practiced today in Christianity: transubstantiation, consubstantiation, and memorialization. Almost all churches practice one of these forms – Catholics, all mainline Protestants, Baptists, Evangelicals, and non-denominational churches following one of these.

1. Transubstantiation: "The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring: 'Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This

change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation.”

In other words, the Roman Catholic Church teaches that once an ordained priest blesses the bread of the Lord’s Supper, it is transformed into the actual flesh of Christ (though it retains the appearance, odor, and taste of bread); and when he blesses the wine, it is transformed into the actual blood of Christ (though it retains the appearance, odor, and taste of wine). – taken from <https://www.gotquestions.org/transubstantiation.html>.

Although I, and many biblical scholars that consider themselves doctrinally sound, believe the Bible literally unless the context (both the biblical context and historical context) indicates otherwise, there are some clear teachings that are metaphorical or allegorical, and the teachings by Jesus of the Lord’s Supper are some of those. Catholics, in their teaching of transubstantiation, take the literal words of Christ and came up with a mystical way of applying them literally. It is a poor use of the literal teaching of Scripture, but one that has been used in a very real sense to keep Catholics coming back to church generation after generation – if you don’t take communion in a Catholic church offered by a Catholic priest then the work of Christ is no longer valid for your salvation – that’s what they teach (in a very simplistic explanation).

“The doctrine of transubstantiation leads to a serious delusion in the worship of the Church. In the change produced in the elements by the words of the priest, Roman Catholicism

teaches that Christ is crucified afresh on the cross. Hence, the mass, the offering of the elements of the eucharist on the altar, is a means by which influence is brought to bear on God. Thus the mass becomes the central part of worship in the Catholic Church. Since the service of sacraments is monopolized by the priests, the eucharist becomes the most potent means by which the priests control their entire penitential system. With the erroneous idea of Christ's death influencing God, and the false teaching of the mass as a repetition of the sacrifice of Christ, the priesthood may easily arrogate to itself indomitable authority over the laity. The Reformers rejected this doctrine of the mass and gave to the preaching of the Word the most important place among the means of grace." (Gamertsfelder, Systematic Theology, pg. 571)

"It is called 'the Eucharist' in a number of churches, from the word meaning prayer of consecration or thanksgiving. Early in the history of the church, even before A.D. 300, the unscriptural teaching began that this prayer, prayed by the bishop, changed the elements of the Lord's Supper into the actual body of Christ. Then applying Christ's words in John 6:51-57 [READ THIS] to mean that the way of salvation is in eating His body and drinking His blood, they made the Eucharist to be a sacrament. This means that this act has saving merit. Therefore, in the Roman mass, they believe that by partaking of the elements which have been made the actual body of Christ by the Eucharist or consecration prayer by the priest, one can cause the sins of both living and dead to be

forgiven. In the Roman church both baptism and the Eucharist are called sacraments and are believed to have saving power." (New Life for Adults, Darwin E. Merrill)

Following are some comments on that text in John 6 (vs. 48-59, which makes up the context of the verses just read) that are important:

- a. In verse 48-50 Jesus states definitively that He was, and is, "that bread of life" just spoken of – and He prepares the stage for what He is about to say with that statement – the emphasis being on "the bread" and that He IS that bread.
- b. In verse 51 He introduces the concept of what we call "the Lord's Supper," or "communion" – He introduces Himself, being "that bread of life" as being the substance that, if partaken of, can give eternal life – 1 Cor. 11:23-34.
- c. These verses, as all at that time were well aware, are not to be taken literally. The principle for true Biblicists to follow is that all Scripture is literal unless the context indicates otherwise. Here, the context indicates otherwise.
- d. He is simply pointing out that in order to receive eternal life one must believe in His substitutionary death as the atonement for their sins – this He is stating here as a means to teach that His body would be sacrificed and His blood shed for the sins of mankind – "for the life of the world" (vs. 51)
- e. These statements were very difficult for the Jews (vs. 52) since they were taught in the Levitical Law not to ever partake of blood. Since Jesus would not, could not, contradict the Law, then this must be an allegory, a

figurative lesson, for them to learn.

- f. Verses 53-58 further explain what Jesus meant by eating His flesh and drinking His blood – further explains the absolute imperative to believe on Him and, by faith, accept His payment of His shed blood and sacrificed body as payment for sin
2. Consubstantiation: This is very similar to transubstantiation and was the Reformer's answer to what the Catholic church believed and practiced.

Again, from the website "Got Questions" - <https://www.gotquestions.org/consubstantiation.html>:

Consubstantiation is the view that the bread and wine of Communion / the Lord's Supper are spiritually the flesh and blood of Jesus, yet the bread and wine are still actually only bread and wine. In this way, it is different from transubstantiation, in which the bread and the wine are believed to actually become the body and blood of Jesus. Transubstantiation is a Roman Catholic dogma that stretches back to the earliest years of that church, while consubstantiation is relatively new, arising out of the Protestant Reformation. Consubstantiation essentially teaches that Jesus is "with, in, and under" the bread and wine, but is not literally the bread and wine.

The change from trans- to con- is the key to seeing the bread and wine as the body and blood of Jesus. The prefix trans- means "change" and says that a change takes place; the bread actually becomes the body of Jesus, and the wine actually becomes the

blood of Jesus. The prefix con- means “with” and says that the bread does not become the body of Jesus but co-exists with the body of Christ so that the bread is both a bread and the body of Jesus. The same thing is true of the wine. It does not become the blood of Jesus, but co-exists with the blood of Jesus so that the wine is both wine and the blood of Jesus.

In this way, the make-up of the Host central to the worship service approaches reality since the physical property of the bread and wine do not change; the bread tastes like unleavened bread, not flesh, and the wine tastes like wine, not blood. However, these two essential elements, the flesh and the blood, remain as co-existing elements with the bread and wine so that the teaching of Jesus, in Matthew 26:26-28 and Mark 14:22-24, can be properly observed. Consubstantiation is held by some Eastern Orthodox churches, and some other liturgical Christian denominations (Episcopal and Lutheran, as examples). Even among these groups, consubstantiation is not universally accepted.

3. Memorialization, or simply memorial: This is the view held by our church, and by churches of like belief. This is the simplest to explain and the simplest, most logical view of all the texts in the New Testament that speak to the Lord’s Supper, including the words of our Lord Himself.

Communion is a memorial to remind us of the broken body and shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross – nothing more, nothing less. It is a memorial of our own salvation in

reminding us, as believers, that His body was sacrificed for us, and His blood was shed for our redemption.

“The Lord’s Supper is a representation of the redemption wrought out for us by the suffering and death of Jesus Christ on the cross. They who partake of it in faith partake of the benefits of the broken body and shed blood of the author of our redemption.

“It symbolizes the death of Christ for our sins by means of a perpetual feast. It symbolizes the method of appropriating the benefits of Christ’s death. The bread is a communion, or participation, of the body of Christ. The cup is a communion of the blood of Christ. The worthy participant by means of these emblems thinks of the death of Christ and by faith partakes of the benefits of redeeming grace. The Lord’s Supper symbolizes further the constant dependence of the believer on the sustain grace of Christ. To show this constant dependence this [ordinance], unlike baptism, is repeated often.

This brief text answers some important questions about this ordinance.

NOTE: Following is a message from Matthew 26:14-16 entitled “What Will You Give Me” on the betrayal of Jesus.

“What Will Ye Give Me?”

**Matthew 26:14-16; Mark 14:10-11; Luke
22:1-6**

Have We Sold Him Out Too?

The text for this message comes from Matthew 26:15.

Matthew 26:14–16

14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

Mark 14:10–11

10 And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.

11 And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

Luke 22:1–6

1 Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

2 And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.

3 Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

⁶ And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

This message is about betrayal. It's a very familiar story to many that have been in church. As we consider the payment Jesus paid for us, the suffering He endured for us, consider one of the first things that happened to Him on His journey to the cross in His last days – He was betrayed by a close, personal friend. Perhaps the betrayal by Judas was even worse for Him than the denial by Peter for Jesus knew Peter would repent and become great; at the same time, He knew Judas would not. All that time with them and one of them Jesus knew would be a traitor.

The overall lesson, or application, for us today is bound up in the question at the beginning of this message – “Have we sold Him out too?” Many of us, by our lives, by our actions, have surely done that. Oswald Chambers said, “A man may betray Jesus Christ by speaking too many words, and he may betray him through keeping his mouth shut.” Either way the outcome is the same – many will die and spend eternity in hell because we betrayed our Savior. God help us if we don't care about that!!!

I. THE PERSON OF BETRAYAL – MATT. 26:15; MARK 14:10; LUKE 22:1-3

[Matthew 26:15](#)

¹⁵ And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

[Mark 14:10](#)

¹⁰ And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.

Luke 22:1-3

¹ Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

² And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.

³ Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

A. It would seem, based upon the previous discourse with the Apostles, and how Judas was upset with the alabaster ointment that was used on Jesus that the Devil used that as the occasion to spark Judas to betray Jesus.

B. The person of the betrayal of Jesus to be crucified was a friend – not just any friend, but one of the twelve, one of His closest friends.

Psalm 41:9

⁹ Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

C. Consider Judas Iscariot as one of the Apostles – he sat at Jesus' feet and heard Him teach, he was given power to heal and cast out devils, he was a preacher of the Gospel, etc.

“He was not an open enemy, nor one of Christ's common hearers, nor one of the seventy disciples, but one of his twelve apostles, whom he made his intimates and associates; whom he selected from all others, and called, qualified, and sent forth to preach his Gospel, and perform miracles: it was one of these that meditated the delivery of him

into the hands of his enemies, and never left pursuing his scheme till he had effected it, even Judas Iscariot by name; so called, to distinguish him from another disciple, whose name was also Judas." (John Gill)

D. There are many today that say they are a friend of Jesus – that seem to have amazing abilities, and even seem to perform miracles – but many times they are "of their father the devil" – they are empowered by him.

Ephesians 6:12

¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

John 8:44

⁴⁴ Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

E. Many times, it is our friend that will betray us – it is the one that we may be closest to that will be used of the Devil to bring us down.

II. THE PRICE FOR BETRAYAL – MATT. 26:15; MARK 14:11A; LUKE 22:4-5

Matthew 26:15

¹⁵ And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

Mark 14:11

¹¹ And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money...

Luke 22:4-5

⁴ And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

⁵ And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

A. When there is a betrayal of our Savior, there will always be a price that we are willing to pay – what is your price?

B. The Devil knew what it was for Judas – it was money. Maybe for us it's fame, or prestige, or friendship with the world, or family – anything the Devil knows that he can use to get us to waiver in our devotion to the Lord and His will for our lives.

1 Timothy 6:9-10

⁹ But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

¹⁰ For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Matthew 16:26

²⁶ For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Zechariah 11:12-13

¹² And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they

weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.

¹³ And the LORD said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the LORD.

C. The price we pay will have grave consequences. Most of the time when betrayal happens we are so blinded to it that we don't stop to consider the consequences – until it is too late.

Acts 1:16–18

¹⁶ Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

¹⁷ For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

¹⁸ Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.

III. THE POTENTIAL TO BETRAY – MATT. 26:16; MARK 14:11B; LUKE 22:6

Matthew 26:16

¹⁶ And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

Mark 14: 11

¹¹ ... And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

Luke 22: 6

⁶ And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

A. Because of our own sinful nature, and the fleshly desires, there is always the potential there to betray – that's why it is so important we maintain our testimony and our fellowship with the Father.

Romans 6:1–10

¹ What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

² God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

³ Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

⁴ Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

⁵ For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

⁶ Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

⁷ For he that is dead is freed from sin.

⁸ Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

⁹ Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

¹⁰ For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

Romans 7:15–25

¹⁵ For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.

16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.

22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

B. Sin will separate us from that fellowship, and it isn't far for us to reach the point of betrayal after that.

C. The Devil is watching our every move, listening to our every conversation just waiting to catch us in something he can use against us when the time is right – and the betrayal is done.

1 Peter 5:8

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Job 1:8

⁸ And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

D. With Judas, it was his comment on the alabaster ointment that was the thing Satan used – what is for us?

Conclusion: Where do you stand in your relationship with the Lord? Could it be said of you that you are a friend to Him? If so, what kind of friend are you? There are many in churches just like ours, maybe even in ours, that are a "Judas Iscariot," willing to sell their Savior out for "thirty pieces of silver." God help you if you're one of them!!!

I. WHY WE HAVE THIS ORDINANCE – VS. 23A-B, 26B

1 Corinthians 11:23

²³ 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...:

²⁶ ... ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

A. *In the first part of verse 23, the Apostle Paul tells the church that this message on the Lord's Supper came by what would be considered in theological definition, "special revelation." He was not just repeating what someone told him, or what he read in the words of Christ somewhere but he was giving, in basic verbatim words, what the Lord had giving him directly on the matter – and he only gave what he was given, without embellishing it with his own views at all. He was not there at the "Last Supper" with the other apostles to have received this from the Lord at that time – this was given at some other point (most likely in the desert teaching, spoken of in the book of Galatians).*

1. "For I have received of the Lord" – "The information of which he treats was what he himself had received from the immediate and personal communication of the Lord himself, and according to the express injunction therein contained was appointed for their observance. It was not therefore of his own devising, not that of any man, but divinely instituted, and consequently imperatively binding on all

Christians.” (Lipscomb)

2. “That which I delivered unto you” – the Apostle Paul received this truth by direct revelation and simply passed it on to the church at Corinth as he received it. This is, in part, why I (and many other preachers and teachers) say so often that we, as teachers, are not to give our opinion of what the Bible says as much as we are to simply teach the truth of what is already said. We are to “deliver to you” what God said – not what man says about what God said.

B. In the second part of verse 23 is the basis for the Lord’s Supper – communion, as many call it – the principle that was established by Christ Himself.

1. “That the Lord Jesus” – again, established by Him – this is why it is called and “ordinance.” The fact of Jesus’ baptism, and His example and command for the believer to follow that example, is why baptism is called an “ordinance,” as well.
2. “The same night in which he was betrayed” – it is of note that the Apostle (by inspiration of the Holy Spirit) would use this qualifying point in time to show when the Lord’s Supper was instituted by the Lord Himself. It shows the importance and impact that the betrayal of Christ by Judas Iscariot had on both the Lord and those at the Supper (and now, the Apostle Paul himself).

C. In the clause at the end of verse 26 – “ye do shew the Lord’s death” - gives us the reason why this is so important for us and why we need to continually observe it – it is a constant reminder of the price that was paid for our sins. Unlike the Roman Catholic mass where in their observance they, in their view of the Lord’s Supper, crucify Christ anew each time, we observe it as a means of remembering the price already paid – once for all.

Hebrews 10:10-14

¹⁰ By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

¹¹ And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

¹² But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

¹³ From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

¹⁴ For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

D. “Till he come” – the church is to continue the observance of the Lord’s Supper until He returns to take His bride home, and then we will sit with Him at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb and continue, at least until the end of time as we know it, the observance with Him in praise and glory for what He did for us in redeeming us to Himself.

Matthew 26:29

²⁹ But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

II. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THIS ORDINANCE— VS. 23c-25

1 Corinthians 11:23-25

²³ ...the Lord Jesus...took bread:

²⁴ 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.**

²⁵ 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.**

There are two elements involved, as given here and in the Gospel accounts:

A. "Bread" – specifically, unleavened bread

1. During the Passover, all leaven was required to be removed from the Jewish house.

Exodus 12:15

¹⁵ Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses: for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel.

2. This was done because leaven was often a symbol of sin in the Bible, and would have taken the reader of this letter, and the believers in the church at Corinth that heard it read, back to the previous point in chapter five and they would have clearly

“connected the dots,” so to speak, with that admonition. To be an accurate picture of Christ’s sinlessness, the bread must be without leaven.

1 Corinthians 5:6–8

⁶ Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

⁷ Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

⁸ Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Following are notes on my message from that text in chapter five that I preached in February of 2019. Some of these points will be relative to the later part of chapter eleven in the issue of being “unworthy” to partake of these elements of the Lord’s Supper.

3. The separation – 1 Cor. 5:6-8

Let me say at the outset here that although we are to separate the one in the church that is in sin and unrepentant, we are neither to separate the sinner that doesn’t know better from the church, nor are we to prevent them from seeking the Lord through the church.

- a) Vs. 6 – They were to separate themselves from the immoral person, not glory in him – not praise him (this is why some think this to be, at the very least, a prominent person in the church, if not an elder).

(1) "A little leaven" – This same wording is

used in Gal. 5:9 to caution against the danger of a little bit of false teaching. In the context here, it is dealing with sin – in particular, a sin that was so depraved that it had corrupted the whole of the church already. It only takes a "little."

(2) *"Leaveneth the whole lump"*

Are you not aware that a little leaven imparts a character to the whole lump? That this is the meaning, and not, 'that a little leaven will, if not purged out, leaven the whole lump,' is manifest from the point in hand... One of them was a fornicator of a fearfully depraved kind, tolerated and harboured: by this fact, the character of the whole was tainted. (Alford)

(3) *This is not just true of the church as a whole, but can be applied to our individual lives, as well.*

b) Vs. 7 – Make sure there is no part of the sin remaining that could cause others to stumble – that is why Jesus paid our sin debt, became sin for us, as the Passover lamb was to the Israelite in Egypt.

(1) *"Purge out" – to be thoroughly cleansed from*

(a) From two words: *ek*, or out of; and *kathairo*, purge, which is the normal word used.

(b) With the prefix "out of," it is speaking to the issue of complete separation from a thing, a complete and thorough purging.

- (2) *"Therefore" – because of the damage that had been done to the church and to the people, and more importantly to the cause of Christ, they were to remove the "leaven" – the man who was unrepentant in his sin – completely purge the whole of the "lump" of sin.*
- (3) *"That ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened" – it is only after sin is dealt with that the Holy Spirit can create that new heart in us, as believers, and in the church. If we expect God to do something with us, we cannot allow sin to be left "fermenting" in our lives, nor in our church.*

Let me say this at this point (again) – this is not dealing with lost people. If a lost person comes to church, no matter what they're life is like, they are to be loved and given the truth in that love – nothing more, nothing less. We are not accepting their sin, but we are allowing the Holy Spirit to do His work in changing them.

Dr. Wuest interprets it this way: Cleanse out completely, at once and once for all, the old yeast which is part of a world which has passed away for you and out from which you were saved, in order that you may be a fresh aggregation of individuals, even as you are without yeast.

- (4) *"For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us"*

(a) *"Passover" – the Passover Lamb*

(b) *The issue of the Passover is*

mentioned here because of the analogy of the leaven. No leaven was allowed in the house during the feast of unleavened bread at Passover.

Matthew Henry said this: This is the great doctrine of the gospel. The Jews, after they had killed the passover, kept the feast of unleavened bread. So must we; not for seven days only, but all our days. We should die with our Saviour to sin, be planted into the likeness of his death by mortifying sin, and into the likeness of his resurrection by rising again to newness of life, and that internal and external. We must have new hearts and new lives. Note, The whole life of a Christian must be a feast of unleavened bread. His common conversation and his religious performances must be holy. He must purge out the old leaven, and keep the feast of unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. He must be without guilt in his conduct towards God and man. And the more there is of sincerity in our own profession, the less shall we censure that of others. Note, On the whole, The sacrifice of our Redeemer is the strongest argument with a gracious heart for purity and sincerity. How sincere a regard did he show to our welfare, in dying for us! and how terrible a proof was his death of the detestable nature of sin, and God's displeasure against it! Heinous evil, that could not be expiated but with

the blood of the Son of God! And shall a Christian love the murderer of his Lord? God forbid.

- c) Vs. 8 – They weren't to replace one sin (of immorality) with equally egregious sins of "malice and wickedness," but they were to replace that kind of hatefulness with "sincerity" (purity – being sincere and pure in judging) and "truth" (out in the open, uncovered).

(1) *"Therefore let us keep the feast" – referring to the feast of Passover in the previous verse.*

Sacrifices were in old times accompanied by feasts in which the reconciled God and His worshippers ate together. In the feast of Passover the lamb which had been used as a sacrifice was consumed as food to strengthen the Israelites for their exodus. This idea Paul here adapts to his present purpose. "Christ, our passover is sacrificed for us," he says, "let us therefore keep the feast." The whole life of the Christian is a festal celebration; his strength is maintained by that which has given him peace with God. By Christ's death God reconciles us to Himself; out of Christ we continually receive what fits us to serve God as His free people. Every Christian should aim at making his life a celebration of the true deliverance Christ has accomplished for us. We should see that our life is a true exodus, and being so it will bear marks of triumph and of freedom. To feed upon Christ, joyfully to assimilate all that is in Him to our own character, it is this which makes

life festal, which turns faintness into abounding strength, and brings zest and appetite into monotonous labour. (Expositor's Bible)

(2) *"Not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness"*

(a) The "old leaven" was their old life – we aren't to continue living in the sin of the past, we are "born again" – born anew. The old life is passed away and we are no longer to allow the "leaven" of that past to "ferment," or corrupt, the new.

(b) *"Leaven of malice and wickedness"*

(i) *The corrupting force of the old life will lead to this in our lives, as well as the self-righteousness that can come from those that think they are better than others, and that ends up causing the believer to judge others with the same thing they had been redeemed from – malice and wickedness*

(ii) *"Malice" (Bishops and Geneva Bible has it as "maliciousness") – from a word that simply means "bad" – in this context, "wickedness as an evil habit of the mind" (Zodhiates)*

(iii) *"Wickedness" – badness – the action that is an outcome of the "malice" – the evil habit of the mind. "As if [wickedness], the endeavor to do evil to others, emanates from being inherently*

evil [malice] (Zodhiates).

(3) *"But with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth"*

(a) As opposed to "malice and wickedness," which are considered to be part of the leaven of sin that corrupts the greater whole.

(b) "Sincerity" – pureness – if the church is going to be effective in the world then it needs to understand it, as an institution, must be pure, sincere in its actions.

(i) *The English word for "sincere" is from the Latin derivative similar to it – "sincerus" – meaning, clean, unadulterated, pure of composition.*

(ii) *The Greek is from two words that, put together, literally mean "judged by the sun" – rightly judged because seen in full light.*

(c) "Truth" – the only way to keep the corruption that is caused by allowing sin to go unchecked is to deal with everything in the light of the truth of the Word of God

B. "The cup" – according to the Gospel accounts, this would have been filled with "the fruit of the vine."

1. The series of Greek words here (του γεννηματος της αμπελου) are broad and are literally translated in English as "the

fruit of the vine." Most automatically think this as wine, but the Holy Spirit could have very easily used the Greek word for "wine" (οἶνος) instead of this phrase (the only time in the Bible this is used is in these accounts).

2. The phrase used is somewhat of a definition of the word used for "wine" in the Bible. It can be anything that is produced by the grape on the vine – not just wine.

Dr. Frederic R. Lees, of England, the author of several learned articles in Kitto's Cyclopaedia, in which he shows an intimate acquaintance with the ancient languages, says: "In Hebrew, Chaldee, Greek, Syriac, Arabic, Latin, and English, the words for wine in all these languages are originally, and always, and inclusively, applied to the blood of the grape in its primitive and natural condition, as well, subsequently, as to that juice both boiled and fermented."

A Methodist dentist, Dr. Thomas Welch, objected to his church's use of fermented wine in the communion service. Experimenting at night in his kitchen he came up with a nonalcoholic grape beverage, which he named "Dr. Welch's Unfermented Wine".

He approached church officials to persuade them to substitute his beverage for the traditional wine. The elders regarded his suggestion as being an unacceptable innovation.

A son, Charles, who was also a dentist, changed the name to Welch's Grape Juice. He set up a production facility in a barn behind the family home. Response was so overwhelming that he gave up dentistry and devoted full time to making and distributing grape juice.

III. WHEN WE ARE TO OBSERVE THIS ORDINANCE – vs. 26A

1 Corinthians 11:26

²⁶ For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup...

A. There is no frequency given as a mandate of Scripture, which leads us to believe that no mandate is to be made as frequency of observance – it is left up to the individual church to decide for themselves.

B. It would seem that the churches in New Testament times may have observed the Lord's Supper, in some cases, on a daily basis when assembled for worship, and a weekly basis on the Lord's Day.

IV. WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THIS ORDINANCE – vs. 27-34

A. The key point to be seen here is in verses 27 and 29 and the issue of those abusing the Lord's Supper and partaking of it "unworthily."

1. Although there is the measure here of partaking of the Lord's Supper with unrepentant and unprepared heart, and

that is something that needs to be understood when observed, that isn't actually the primary focus of this word. As will be seen, if we approach the Lord's Supper with an obvious disregard for sin, and a flippant attitude toward repentance then we clearly don't understand what this ordinance is and we need to get that settled before anything else – lest we do, in fact, observe it "unworthily." (That's why we take the time at the beginning of Communion for introspection and confession – to make sure our attitude and understanding is settled.)

2. Although it should be obvious, a lost person, one without having received the grace of God provided through the work of Christ in man's redemption, should not partake of the Lord's Supper. To do so would be done "unworthily," because it shows the person clearly not understanding its purpose. That said, however, that is not the intent of this text. This was written to believers, and is clearly speaking of believers.
3. The primary focus of the word is found in how the Corinthian church approached the Supper. The Corinthians "ate it not in reference to Jesus Christ's sacrificial death; but rather in such a way as the Israelites did the passover, which they celebrated in remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Likewise, these mongrel Christians at Corinth used it as a kind of historical commemoration of the death of Christ;

and did not, in the whole institution, discern the Lord's body and blood as a sacrificial offering for sin: and besides, in their celebration of it they acted in a way utterly unbecoming the gravity of a sacred ordinance. Those who acknowledge it as a sacrificial offering, and receive it in remembrance of God's love to them in sending his Son into the world, can neither bring damnation upon themselves by so doing, nor eat nor drink unworthily." (Clarke)

4. The word for "unworthily" (ἀναξίως) is an adverb not an adjective.
 - a) As an adverb, it is modifying "eateth and drinketh," describing the way one is partaking, rather than, as an adjective ("unworthy"), describing the person doing the "eating and drinking."
 - b) The only time in the New Testament this Greek word is used is in this text – verses 27 and 29. It is defined as irreverently, in an unbecoming manner (Zodhiates), in an unworthy manner (Thayer) – which is how the ESV and other versions translate it.
 - c) The antonym (opposite) of this Greek word is the word εὐσεβῶς (piously, reverently), translated "godly" in 2 Tim. 3:12 and Titus 2:12. Understanding the opposite of a word is helpful, at times, in understanding more obscure words in the Bible. This understanding shows the importance of our right standing with God as we observe the Lord's Supper.

2 Timothy 3:12

¹² Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ

Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Titus 2:12

¹² Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

- d) To partake of the elements of the Supper “unworthily” (or in an unworthy manner) minimizes the work of Christ in our redemption – His suffering and agony, His blood being shed for our sins.

Albert Barnes notes the following:

Perhaps there is no expression in the Bible that has given more trouble to weak and feeble Christians than this. It is certain that there is no one that has operated to deter so many from the communion; or that is so often made use of as an excuse for not making a profession of religion. The excuse is, “I am unworthy to partake of this holy ordinance. I shall only expose myself to condemnation. I must therefore wait until I become more worthy, and better prepared to celebrate it.” It is important, therefore, that there should be a correct understanding of this passage. Most persons interpret it as if it were “unworthy,” and not “unworthily,” and seem to suppose that it refers to their personal qualifications, to their “unfitness” to partake of it, rather than to the manner in which it is done. It is to be remembered, therefore, that the word used here is an “adverb,” and not an “adjective,” and has reference to the manner of observing the ordinance, and not to their personal qualifications or

fitness. It is true that in ourselves we are all "unworthy" of an approach to the table of the Lord; "unworthy" to be regarded as his followers; "unworthy" of a title to everlasting life: but it does not follow that we may not partake of this ordinance in a worthy, that is, a proper manner, with a deep sense of our sinfulness, our need of a Saviour, and with some just views of the Lord Jesus as our Redeemer. Whatever may be our consciousness of personal unworthiness and unfitness - and that consciousness cannot be too deep - yet we may have such love to Christ, and such a desire to be saved by him, and such a sense of his worthiness, as to make it proper for us to approach and partake of this ordinance. The term "unworthily" (ἀναξίως *anaxiōs*) means properly "in an unworthy or improper" manner "in a manner unsuitable to the purposes for which it was designed or instituted..."

David Lipscomb says:

To eat or drink in an unworthy manner is in general to come to the Lord's table in a careless, irreverent spirit, without the intention or desire to commemorate the death of Christ as the sacrifice for sins, and without the purpose of complying with the obligations thereby assumed. The way in which the Corinthians ate unworthily was that they treated the Lord's table as though it were their own; making no distinction between it and an ordinary meal; coming together to satisfy their hunger, and not to feed on the blessings of the body and blood of Christ.

B. When one partakes of the bread and cup,

according to verses 27 and 29 does so to their own hurt, so to speak.

1. That person "shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord."
 - a) The word for "guilty" - ένοχος - "in a forensic sense, [denotes] the connection of a person either with his crime, or with the penalty or trial, or with that against whom or which he has offended" (Thayer).
 - b) The guilt is that he makes the cross of no effect - and he becomes guilty of the very crime against the Lord because of his disregard for its worthiness.

Inasmuch as the eating and drinking were intended to proclaim and keep in memory the death of Jesus Christ, whoever should eat of this memorial in a light and frivolous manner, in forgetfulness of the spirit of sacrifice that led to the death of Christ, is guilty of profaning the body and blood of Christ. He incurs the guilt of treating lightly the slain body of the Lord Jesus. (Lipscomb)

2. And, that person "eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."
 - a) Not damnation in hell, as some consider this, but condemnation or judgment for the action of partaking "unworthily." This word is to be understood as being guilty (as in verse 27). The word "κρίμα denotes the sentence pronounced, a verdict, a condemnation, the decision resulting from an investigation" (Vine).

"The word 'damnation' we now apply, in common language, exclusively to the future and final punishment of the wicked in hell. But the word used here does not of necessity refer to that; and according to our use of the word now, there is a harshness and severity in our translation which the Greek does not require, and which probably was not conveyed by the word 'damnation' when the translation was made." (Barnes)

- b) "Not discerning the Lord's body" – the Corinthian believers were acting in such a way as to demonstrate that they either could not distinguish, or chose not to distinguish, between the true purpose of the Lord's Supper and the feasts they were apparently used to.

"This is an instance of their eating and drinking unworthily, and a reason why they eat and drink condemnation to themselves, or contract guilt, or expose themselves either to chastisement or punishment; because they distinguish not the Lord's supper from an ordinary and common meal, but confound them together, as did many of the Corinthians, who also did not distinguish the body of Christ in it from the body of the paschal lamb; or discern not the body of Christ, and distinguish it from the bread, the sign or symbol of it; or discern not the dignity, excellency, and usefulness of Christ's body, as broken and offered for us, in which he bore our sins on the tree, and made satisfaction for them; a commemoration of which is made in this ordinance." (Gill)

C. Regarding verses 27 and 29 and the issue of partaking "unworthily," verse 28

gives direction for how to make sure we are doing so "worthily," reverently. It specifically deals with the time of the observance of the Lord's Supper and the steps we can take to make sure we are where we ought to be.

1. As pointed out, part of the "examining" of oneself is to circumspectly view ourselves and our actions, our lives as lived as a believer in Christ, and see if we're where we ought to be. If not, steps to correct that shortcoming should be part of our "examining." That said, that is not the primary purpose of the text as it is connected to the term "unworthily."
2. The word for "examine" – δοκιμάζω – is one that means tested and approved. "Test himself as he would a piece of metal to see if genuine" (Robertson).
3. We are to put ourselves to the test of God's Word, and His Spirit, to see if we are genuinely observing the spirit of the Lord's Supper, understanding its implications. Too often and too many observe it without really giving any thought to the implications and purpose as given Scripture.

On this David Lipscomb makes a great comment:

[Let him ascertain by earnest consideration whether he is in a proper state of mind for commemorating and proclaiming the Lord's death; whether he feels a suitable gratitude for the sacrifice

it commemorates, and is firmly resolved to observe the injunction of its founders.] On this verse Macknight says: "First, whether he comes to this service to keep up the memory of Christ; secondly, whether he is moved to do so by a grateful sense of Christ's love in dying for man; thirdly, whether he comes with a firm purpose of doing honor to Christ, by living in all respects conformably to his precepts and example." To this I add, whether he comes in a submissive and worthy manner, drinking into the same spirit of self-sacrifice for others that Christ manifested. [Such examination of one's motive would have made impossible the shameful scenes here described.]

D. Verse 30 goes with 27 and 29 and speaks to the very real and often severe consequences to their abuse of the Lord's Supper.

1. "For this cause" – because they approached "unworthily," without regard for the sacrifice the Lord made for their sins, and they didn't bother to correct any of those actions once they were confronted with them. They remained unrepentant.
2. "Many are weak and sickly among you" – literally in bad physical condition (not mental weakness, as some consider).
3. "And many sleep"
 - a) "Many" – an unusual Greek word to use for many (ἱκανοί) – "The word for *many*

means, primarily, *adequate, sufficient...*[N]ot a few hardly expresses the *ominous* shading of the word: *quite enough* have died" (Vincent).

- b) "Sleep" – κοιμῶνται – this is another reason we view this text as dealing with believers because it is spoken often of believers that have died in Christ as being "asleep in Christ." Being asleep means that there is a time when they will wake up. That happens at the Rapture, as we know from 1 Thess. 4:13-18.

E. Verses 31 and 32 go to verse 29 and give further understanding to the whole of the context, and the consequences of verse 30. Simply put, if we, as believers, would take the time to consider the Lord's Supper, in all its importance, and approach it in the right demeanor, we would avoid the dire consequences spoken of in verse 30, and we would be much more capable of walking worthy for the Lord in our lives.

1. The word for "judge" in verse 31 corresponds to "discerning" in verse 29. The word for "judged" corresponds to the word "damnation" in verse 29.
 - a) "Judge" – to discern, to distinguish – "For if we would judge ourselves" – if we take the time to look at our lives and make a determination that we are approaching the Lord's Table in a proper way then we are where we need to be.
 - b) If we do this, "we should not be judged" – we will not come under judgment or

condemnation.

2. Young's Literal Translation of the Bible reads: "for if ourselves we were discerning, we would not be being judged" – which shows the verb tense in a literal sense. It shows that we need to do this on a continual basis – in every instance of the Lord's Supper we need to be diligent in our self-examination so as to be proper in our observance.

The meaning is that "if we" (St. Paul here identifies himself with the Corinthians) "were in the habit of self discernment—and in this self discrimination is involved a discrimination between spiritual and common things—we should not be undergoing this sign of God's displeasure; but the fact that his judgments are abroad among us is intended to further our moral education, and to save us from being finally condemned with the world." (Pulpit Commentary)

3. Verse 32 continues with the benefit of self-judgment and shows that there are very real benefits to following the mandates of Scripture, in every aspect.
 - a) The word for "judged" (κρίνω) here is one that means "to separate, distinguish, discriminate between good and evil, select, choose out the good. In the NT, it means to judge, to form or give an opinion after separating and considering the particulars of a case" (Zodhiates). It is connect to the other words for "judge" in the previous

verses, but deals specifically with the person doing the judging more than the outcome of the judgment.

- b) Once so judged, “we are chastened of the Lord” – even though chastening may seem harsh, it has worthwhile benefits to our lives going forward – “that we should not be condemned with the world.” Being chastened of the Lord, considering ourselves in judging discernment, will show that we are not going to fall under the same condemnation as the lost of this world.

This goes back, in part, to verse 19 where the Apostle addresses the “heresies” that were taking place in the church when it came to the Lord’s Supper, and how that those true saints of God were being “manifest” among the church. They were finding out, by the consequences (or lack thereof) of the actions taken by the believers in the church as to who was truly a servant, a saint, and who was not. If a person partakes of the Lord’s Supper in an unworthy manner and there are no consequences to those actions over time then there is the very real probability they are not truly born again. If not, then verse 32 comes into the equation, and those people will be “condemned with the world,” rather than being chastened here on earth for their actions.

Hebrews 12:5–11

⁵ And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

⁶ For whom the Lord loveth he

chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

⁷ If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

⁸ But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

⁹ Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?

¹⁰ For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

¹¹ Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

F. Verses 33 and 34 go back to verses 17-22 and the context of "coming together."

1. In these concluding remarks, the Apostle is enjoining the believers in the church to consider one another, to "tarry one for another," as they come together for the purpose of the Lord's Supper. As seen in verses 21 and 22, there were some that were financially better off than others and they were eating their food before the poor of the church arrived, and they were shaming the poor because they were poor. This clarifies the point – wait until all got there before you begin.

Involved in this word for “tarry” (ἐκδέχομαι) is the idea of more than waiting for them, but waiting to make them equals – rather than shaming them, they were to share with them what they had, making the poor feel no different than the rich.

“The eating referred to is, of course, the Lord’s Supper, and he enjoins perfect order, respect, and sobriety. The table is common for the rich and poor, and the rich have no claim of priority over the poor.

“By their indecent haste, each eating his own meal without waiting for the rest, they had turned the Supper from the memorial purpose into an ordinary and insignificant meal, a mere eating and drinking. He therefore exhorts them to wait for one another, and make their coming together a joint service in commemoration of the Lord’s suffering and death.” (David Lipscomb)

2. Verse 34 goes back to the verse 29 and the point of “damnation to himself.” The “condemnation” spoken of in verse 34 is the same Greek word translated “damnation” in the previous verse. It isn’t speaking of eternal damnation but that the participants are doing so in a worthy manner and by not abusing the Lord’s Supper they won’t fall under the severe consequences as those mentioned in verse 30.

G. One final issue needs to be dealt with here that is not actually in the context but which has made its way into the church over time and has been one of divisiveness and distraction – should anyone be allowed to participate in Communion or just active members of the church? “Open communion” and “closed communion” are the terms used for this topic.

1. This would not have been an issue in the church of the New Testament because there was no need to set any standard. All were part of the “Church in Corinth,” or whatever city that had a church. There were no divisions of denominations and no divisions of doctrine in the churches at the time. So, to justify the view of “closed communion,” proponents read into the text something that’s simply not there.
2. Some argue that all churches dating from before the Protestant Reformation practiced closed communion, which is true, but is not an argument that can be made today. The very real, clear reason for this is that the Roman Catholic church was the dominant force in religion at the time and the only way to make a determinate separation from them was to take this stand.
3. One argument made for “closed” is that this text is given to a local church and that no prohibition needs to be made because it was given to the church and there would have only been members there (and they

justify that by the next chapter). Considering the fact that there were "members" partaking of the Lord's Supper unworthily, and abusing the sanctity of the service, this argument is not valid.

4. To be clear – the issue should not be closed or open but rather "worthily" or "unworthily." And that point is to be determined between the individual believer and the Lord – not the church and the believer.
5. Many churches make biblical baptism (by immersion) the "litmus" test of participation, and that is the background for many Baptist churches practicing closed communion. Again, going back to the issue of "worthily" or "unworthily," this rule is a moot point for to approach the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner would necessitate one walking worthy with the Lord, and to do so believer's baptism would be requisite.
6. This text before us is the primary text for the Lord's Supper and it is clear that the church did not take action against those that were participating "unworthily," nor were they told to do so. The Lord dealt with them. No matter what churches do, no matter who teaches otherwise, no matter what churches did historically – if it can't be justified by the clear, direct teaching of the Bible, it needs to be reconsidered. The argument used that Judas Iscariot had left the upper room before the Last Supper is not very valid for

this purpose. If it was to be used, Paul would have used it.

7. Our church would be considered one that practices "open communion," but I don't agree with the term. We practice biblical communion – not liturgical (church-ordered) communion, nor historical communion. Church membership is almost always the criteria to communion, but there are a great many "members in good standing" (by that is meant they have been baptized and support the church by attendance and giving) that are not born again (and their life outside of church bears this out), and by that very truth are disqualified – but we are not the judge in that matter, the Lord is. As far as I'm concerned, church membership, as we know it today, is not exactly biblical. We are "members one of another" in the local church because we fellowship together in one place, but we all belong to the body of Christ in general. To say that a person has to be a member of this local church to participate in a worthy manner is simply not supported in Scripture.

"The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" – the Lord is the one that added those being saved to the church (the body of Christ in general, as a whole), not a vote within the church. So, if it's the Lord's church, and He does the adding, then there is no real support that a local church has the authority to disqualify someone. That's the Lord's responsibility.

8. I'm known for saying that if I'm unsure of a thing I will "give God the benefit of the doubt," and not do that thing. This is not one of those occasions. I have no doubt about this issue for it is clear, as found in this letter to the Corinthians.
9. Some accuse pastors and churches that observe "open communion" of either being weak doctrinally or being afraid of offending someone. Neither of those is an argument for "closed" nor a valid argument against "open," even if that were true. I, and this church (or whatever church I may lead) will follow the Scriptures, no matter what others say or do.

Conclusion: Much has been covered in this series of messages on the Lord's Supper and much information has been given, but it all comes down to its purpose – to remember, on a regular basis, the work Christ did for us in giving His life a ransom for our sins. The "who, what, where, when, and how" of it are really secondary to its primary purpose. If, we, as believers and as a church, keep in mind that purpose, then the other issues will all become either clearer or moot, for that matter, because the purpose supports the rest.

"This do in remembrance of me."