

1st Corinthians: Be A Believer

## Judge Ourselves

1st Corinthians 11:17-34

Reminder of two types of judgment...discernment and condemnation

### Refresher

- Written by Paul to the church in Corinth
  - Paul, called to be an apostle...as we just saw in Acts. A murderer knocked off his horse and changed to give his life for the Lord.
- A major port city, similar to Ephesus
- 750,000 people (68% of Montana) or 21x size of Helena
- Famous...
  - New York - city that never sleeps, money, Broadway, fashion
  - Philadelphia - cheese steaks, American history, cream cheese
  - Hollywood - movies, famous people, rich people, Beverly Hills
  - Las Vegas - sin city - what happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas
  - Amsterdam - bicycles, pot, red light district
- There was a saying **“To live like a Corinthian”** - wild partying, sexual immorality
- I'd imagine this is what some of the East thinks of the West today
- **The letters to the Corinthians are very corrective letters. The church was not in a good place. They lacked adherence to Biblical authority. They even thought what they were doing was enlightened.**

### Where do we get the authority in our lives?

- Education
- Popular thought
- The newest fad
- The news
- Our pastor or religious tradition

**The Bible is The Word of God. It is THE AUTHORITY** of everything. What does God say about something? Well, the word says it plainly.

*Reading about divorce in Mark this morning...*

**When the Bible says something, do we believe it? Or do we give the authority to something or someone else to define what the Word says?**

*Book of Mormon*

*Pastors - saw a video of a pastor apologizing to the community that God says is “abominable”*

*“Remember Sodom and Gomorrah” “if the works done in you would have been done in them they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes”*

The western world today has given up all of God's authority. Without it we now believe insane, abominable, obviously false things, and persecute anyone who doesn't go along with it. No longer is it democrat vs. republican, arguments on what to spend money on or how to do foreign policy. It is literally arguments on definition of what is a life, what is a woman, who's kids are they and more...

I'd say Corinth was similar, but they didn't have hundreds of years of Christian foundation.

The church in Corinth was swept up by the society around them. They were confused on what love "is"

And somehow they were still the church. I think because they had done it in ignorance and not had the Bible. The Bible was written TO them.

Today's church has no such excuse.

**As we study Corinthians, I think we're through most of the hard rebuke. Go back and read. But it clearly outlines things that for some reason, there's still confusion on in the Church.**

*Just coming to Jesus, reading Corinthians, loving it*

**[Pray]**

**11:17-22**

**Right off the bat...ouch**

"You have come together not for the better, but for the worse."

The church, the gathering of God's people, is supposed to be such a good thing. But what Paul is saying is basically "it'd be better if you guys never got together"

**Divisions**

There's good division and bad division

"blessed subtraction"

**[1 Corinthians 1:10-15 NKJV] Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and [that] there be no divisions among you, but [that] you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same**

**judgment. For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's [household], that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name.**

**God sees the 7 churches/church ages/types of churches we see in Revelation  
But denominations...some of it is necessary...some of it is fleshly.**

**V19 For there must be factions among you**

[Matthew 25:31-34 NKJV] "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides [his] sheep from the goats. "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Wheat from chaff

**A division is good when one group is attempting to stay under the authority of God's word and the other isn't**

*Certain denominations today...some parts going into the ways of the the world, others aren't*

*But some of it is fleshly...we have taken this one little thing in scripture and blown it up in a religious practice (you must wear a bonnet!)*

*Or we like our pastor the best, he's the authority we need! Maybe they don't say that, but that's the fruit of it...*

*I remember many people not showing up when the senior pastor wasn't teaching. Sure, he was great and all, and maybe the others not as good of speakers...*

*but who are you there to hear? The pastor? Or the voice of God through the authority of those gifted to teach within your body?*

**There is a difference between genuine faith, real believers, and not**

Sometimes the division comes now. Sometimes it's later...so that the good wheat is not torn up with the false wheat

**Eating the Lord's supper**

Communion mainly, but it seems the Corinthian church at least, perhaps more of the early church, had feasts. We've had potlucks, some churches regularly have meals, BBQs, etc. All very good.

However, there have been few that have had communion at them. And I think that's a shame. Communion together, especially during a feast, is such a picture of heaven and of the Lord and our lives with him.

### **V21 one goes hungry and another drunk**

So people haven't eaten before going or don't have food as they're poor...and they only got a small plate or nothing and went hungry

While others gorged themselves...even gotten drunk on the wine and communion...

**They think they're having great parties!**

**Paul says, I DO NOT PRAISE YOU**

**It is shameful**

**I mean, some of this seems so very basic...and simple. But how often it isn't practiced!  
The simple things go overlooked in search of something more "spiritually profound"**

**[Luke 14:8-14 NKJV] "When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him; "and he who invited you and him come and say to you, 'Give place to this man,' and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place. "But when you are invited, go and sit down in the lowest place, so that when he who invited you comes he may say to you, 'Friend, go up higher.' Then you will have glory in the presence of those who sit at the table with you. "For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." Then He also said to him who invited Him, "When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. "But when you give a feast, invite [the] poor, [the] maimed, [the] lame, [the] blind. "And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just."**

**When the Corinthians met together for a church meal with COMMUNION**

**Some showed up and helped themselves to the detriment of others**

Meal at Capstone, orderly, everyone seemed to have enough, and there was plenty leftover to hand out at the end. Nobody rushed the food table. People waited until dinner was served. The leadership served desserts. It was very nice.

But in Corinth, it was a free for all. Pizza ranch.

The idea that there was this belly to feed. This greed of self-indulgence at the expense of others. Poor coming to get a free meal and couldn't get it because others in the church were so greedy - they could have even eaten before they came - but they thought hey, a free meal...

*Friend working at Ponderosa buffet decades ago*

When we come together as believers, it should be a time that is praise worthy. Praise worthy of Jesus. Praise worthy to each other. And certainly, praise worthy to anyone looking on and in.

## **:23-26**

### **The beginning of Communion**

It's about remembering Jesus.

The cracker and the juice don't turn into his flesh on the way down as some religions teach.

It's about **remembering all that he did for us**  
**Not taking it for granted**  
**Realizing that it was a complete sacrifice for us**  
**Taking our place**  
**Every last drop was shed**  
**Every part of him brutalized**

**THAT WE WERE SEPARATED FROM GOD BY SIN**  
**And He brought us back together through his separation**

**And that his life is now our life**  
**We get our real sustenance in this life not through the food we eat physically**  
**But through feasting on Him spiritually**

**And that in so doing, we proclaim his death until his return**  
**We show and remind the world of the suffering and death of Jesus**

**For us...and for them.**

**Communion is a command...DO THIS in remembrance of me.**

But for them Communion had become a time to just eat and gorge like the world around them. Let their fleshly bellies be full...and they had forgotten the meaning of it all.

## **:27-34**

**This is a hard truth  
Taking communion unworthily makes us guilty.  
We haven't received that forgiveness.**

**Now, who is worthy? No one.  
That's the point of the cross and communion to remember that HE alone is worthy.**

**But, to take it unworthily is not about our past actions  
Not about our need for forgiveness or not**

**It's about our heart, our attitude towards it.**  
Do we really repent? Do we really want forgiveness?  
Does it really mean something to us that Jesus died on the cross for us and the things we did,  
even maybe an hour ago?

**[1 Samuel 16:7b NKJV] ... For [the LORD does] not [see] as man sees; for man looks at  
the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."**

**Let a man examine himself**  
That's what communion should start with  
Self-examination

**IF we look honestly, we quickly find things that need to be forgiven, corrected, changed**

**I think that's why we don't like to look**

**And the more we look, the more we see**

*Buying a used car, or a house...looks great from 10 feet, or on your rushed walkthrough  
But when you start examining...you notice the rust, or the lack of craftsmanship, or worse*

**But that's the first part of communion. Seeing how we still need Him. Daily. Moment by  
moment.**

**Because when we don't...we're showing that we don't really believe. We don't really love  
God.**

**And we in vain, take this thing that should be a sign of our forgiveness but now is a sign  
of our condemnation.**

**[John 3:16-18 NKJV] "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.**

**The act in some way, brings more sin on us...but it also reveals that the condemnation was already on us through our unbelief in the sacrifice of God.**

**Paul says something even more hard... v30**

**Many are weak**

**Unhealthy**

**And even died**

*All these deaths just happening in young healthy people...we know what it's from but will the media or government or vaccine makers ever admit it...I don't know.*

**But in Corinth, and in all history, I'm sure there's been the same thing**

*Ever been sick with conviction?*

*Ananias and Saphira*

**If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged**

**Forgiveness in a sense, starts with us realizing that we need it**

**That we're wrong, and we need God to make us right**

**Discipline, judgment of God in our lives, serves the ultimate goal of us not going to hell**

**The conviction or rebuke before we came to Christ or after**

**Is good**

**It's healthy**

**It makes us better**

**[Proverbs 3:11-12 NKJV] My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor detest His correction; For whom the LORD loves He corrects, Just as a father the son [in whom] he delights.**

**God doesn't want us to continue down the wrong path and our little things grow into big things and into bigger things. Things that the consequences can't be reverted. Things that can't be undone. Things that will affect us for life if we continue doing the things that lead up to them.**

**[Ecclesiastes 7:2-5 NKJV] Better to go to the house of mourning Than to go to the house of feasting, For that [is] the end of all men; And the living will take [it] to heart. Sorrow [is] better than laughter, For by a sad countenance the heart is made better. The heart of the wise [is] in the house of mourning, But the heart of fools [is] in the house of mirth. [It is] better to hear the rebuke of the wise Than for a man to hear the song of fools.**

**The end of it...love each other.**

**Wait.**

**Put each other first.**

**Serve each other.**

**Simply, if you're hungry, eat a snack before you go to church.**

**I will set the rest in order when I come...**

He says in verse 18 "Firstly..."

So there was plenty more than needed to be addressed in Corinth.

But Paul, and the Spirit, decides it's better to deal with those things in person.

I think they were very direct. Very problematic. Some practicality out of order. Some worse.

**As Corinthians continues Spiritual Gifts and Love our outlined.**

**A church that had no idea what love was becomes the vector for one of the most popular chapters in the Bible, one that even the world might know.**

**And yet, it's sandwiched between two chapters about spiritual gifts to which the church seemingly has no clue that they're there...**

**But God is gracious! Let us so examine ourselves in the light of that.**