

“Members of One Another”

Drive-in Communion Service

May 31, 2020

We just sang a few moments ago, “From life’s first cry to final breath, Jesus command’s my destiny.” We believe that. Not only is God orchestrating and working through the events of our lives, but He also secures the eternal destiny of all who trust in Him. And because of that we can have hope. In a world filled with chaos, disappointment, uncertainty, and evil, many things can be taken from us, but the one thing that cannot be taken from believers is the assurance that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ which secures our heavenly reward.

Paul presses this point home at the end of Romans 8 by asking the question, “*Who [or what] will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*” [or Covid-19 or rioting in the streets]? “*...For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*” (Rom 8:35, 38-39).

Notice here that Paul is not just talking about individual believers, but the church—“us.” One of the implications of our security in Christ, is that...

1. *There is an essential spiritual union between believers that cannot be severed by mere circumstances—like social distancing or conflict* (Rom 12:5; Eph 4:25; 1Cor 12:12, 14, 20).

Paul goes on in Rom 12:5 and Eph 4:25 to say that believers are “individually members of one another.” In 1Cor 12, Paul reminds us that the body of Christ has many members, yet we are one body. We belong to one another as believers, and we need each other. This is why worshiping in front of a screen is not sufficient for very long. And its why so many of you feel the way you do—a deep sense of longing and loss at not having gathered with your church family for so many weeks. It’s right to feel the way you do because believers have a union, in Christ that is meant to nurture and encourage us in our walk with the Lord. So...

2. *Christian fellowship is both the fruit of our union with Christ and the means by which our unity is nourished* (Heb 3:13-14).

Heb 3:13-14: “Encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers with Christ if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end.”

This verse gives us great insight into what true fellowship looks like. It’s more than chit-chatting. *It’s encouraging each other in such a way that we walk less in sin and more like Christ.* This only happens between genuine believers, and when it does, it strengthens our unity. That is what we are eager to restore in coming back together for worship. But I also need to remind you that...

3. *Our unity will be tested, demonstrating our true character and presenting opportunities for us to grow in Christlikeness and to display the reality of the gospel* (1 Cor 11:19).

There is a very interesting verse in I Cor 11. Vs. 19 says, “*There must be factions among you, so that those who are approved may become evident among you.*” Only genuine believers handle conflict in a Christlike way—with humility and patience, speaking the truth in love. The purpose of conflicts within the church is to reveal our true character and to give us opportunities to imitate Christ and display the reality of the gospel.

The context of 1Cor 11 is Paul’s rebuke of the Corinthians for failing to give preference to one another in how they were coming to the Lord’s table and it was creating conflict. In that day, the Lord’s Supper was more like a meal than the way we observe it today. But some would take so much they would get drunk on the wine while others didn’t get any at all. So the Lord’s Supper, which was meant to be a portrayal of Christ’s selfless sacrifice for others, had become characterized by selfishness and pride rather than servanthood and humility. It was so distorted that Paul rebuked the Corinthians saying, what you are doing is not the Lord’s Supper at all (20).

But Paul did not just rebuke them. He was calling them back to follow the true character of Christ and display the reality of the gospel through their humble, sacrificial, servant-hearted love for one another—to give preference to one another. The gospel calls us to put the interest of others

ahead of our own just as Christ put our needs ahead of His own interests in sacrificially going to the cross for us.

Beloved, we are walking into a season of opportunities. Either opportunities to not prefer one another in the many ways we can have differing perspectives of how the church should adjust to change as we regather for worship, or opportunities to grow in humility, having a servant-hearted attitude toward one another, even when we disagree. Opportunities to “*be devoted to one another in brotherly love, giving preference to one another in honor*” (Rom 12:10).

So as we come to the Lord’s supper today, it’s a time for us to pray for God’s grace in dying to ourselves and humbly putting on the selfless, servant-heart of Christ; to let differences of perspective refine us, and refuse to let them divide us; to display the reality of the gospel by our love for one another.

In 1Cor 11, Paul brought the church back to the heart of the gospel in their relationships with one another by reminding them of what the Lord’s upper truly represents.

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

And in the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes. Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

But a man must examine himself...for he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly” (1Cor 11:23-29).

[Time for Prayer]

- Taking the Lord’s Supper while clinging to any known sin makes a mockery of Christ’s death.
- Taking the Lord’s Supper while maintaining attitudes of pride toward others or refusing to humble ourselves in the pursuit of reconciliation makes a mockery of Christ’s death.

I invite you to take your communion cups from your packet and pull back the top clear seal to get your wafer. As we eat this bread, we celebrate the sinless life of Christ which was selflessly broken to reconcile us to God. We were in the wrong, He was in the right, yet He took the first step of sacrificial love so that we might be forgiven. Let’s eat in honor of Christ.

We take the cup now which represents a new covenant through Christ’s blood which makes us one with Him and members of one another. This is possible only because by His blood we are set free from our sin to love God supremely and to love one another sacrificially. Let’s drink in honor of Christ.

[Prayer]

Closing Song → Elders move to driveway to pray over you as you leave...