

I Corinthians Lesson # 23
Separation at Communion
Pentwater Bible Church
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I Corinthians 10:16-17 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

Paul's point in these verses about the Lord's Supper was like that made earlier (5:6-8). The collective worship of Christians at the Lord's Supper expressed the unity among the members and their participation (koinōnia, "fellowship") in the blood of Christ and in the body of Christ. The one loaf of bread, of which all partake, pictured their unity as members of the one body of Christ. This denotes oneness, and that is most significant, as we will see.

First of all, the elements a church uses fosters commonality in that the participant *eats* and *drinks* something. When the Devil He was tempting Jesus He had not eaten for forty days. Satan then tempted him to turn stones into bread. Jesus replied, "*Man does not live on bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*" (Matt 4:4)

What did Jesus mean by this?

In a metaphorical sense he was comparing food to God's Word. It is God's Word that connects us together. A **metaphor** is a something regarded as representative or symbolic of something else, for example: **his muscles are as solid as a rock**. We are one in the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Spirit who entered us at the point of Salvation. In fact God place the utmost importance on His Word. And The Lord Jesus is the Living Word (John 1:14).

Psalm 138:2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

This is a Psalm of David expressing a fact: God places His Word above even His name. It is extremely important to Him.

The comparison of *believing* the Word of God with *eating* is a biblical metaphor. When you take the written Word of God into your mind to the end that you act upon it is similar to taking into your body food and drink. This is called a figurative analogy. We see it in many Scriptures.

Psalm 34:8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

Jeremiah 2: 13 For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

John 4: 34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

For when we take some food or drink into our bodies it goes deep within us and our bodies act upon it producing a satisfaction. In the same way when we take the Word of God deeply within us and He initially regenerates us and we are transformed.

Romans 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

There is nothing more satisfying than becoming a believer then obeying God and seeing Him keep His promises to us.

I Corinthians 10:18 Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

Within the Mosaic Covenant Jewish worshippers of Jehovah God would offer a sacrifice to Him and then eat part of it.

Deuteronomy 12:17-18 Thou mayest not eat within thy gates the tithe of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil, or the firstlings of thy herds or of thy flock, nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy freewill offerings, or heave offering of thine hand: But thou must eat them before the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD thy God shall choose, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates: and thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God in all that thou puttest thine hands unto.

Deuteronomy 14:22-27 Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year. And thou shalt eat before the LORD thy God, in the place which he shall choose to place his name there, the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; that thou mayest learn to fear the LORD thy God always. And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it; or if the place be too far from thee, which the LORD thy God shall choose to set his

name there, when the LORD thy God hath blessed thee: Then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the LORD thy God shall choose: And thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth: and thou shalt eat there before the LORD thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou, and thine household, And the Levite that is within thy gates; thou shalt not forsake him; for he hath no part nor inheritance with thee

When they offered these sacrifices and then ate a part of it they were uniting and fellowshiping with God to whom they brought the Gifts. You see our communion is born out of the Old Testament Mosaic Law. However, with Christ's once-for-all sacrifice for us we partake of the elements that represent His blood and body.

I Corinthians 10: 19-21 What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

In much the same way with pagan worship the worshipper was unifying him/herself with the idol. It was true that an idol was nothing (8:4; cf. Psalm 115:4-7), but the true driver behind pagan religion was demonic. Pagan sacrifices were offered to demons, not to God. Through his minions Satan has blinded unbelievers and kept them from the truth (II Corinthians 4:4). There could be no union for good between Christ and Belial (II Corinthians 6:15).

So those who were the temple of God (I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19) should shun the temple of idols (II Corinthians 6:14-18). No magical contamination was conveyed, but the corrupt character of the participants would be harmful for believers (I Corinthians 15:33). Being participants with demons was unthinkable for those who are participants with Christ (10:21; cf. v. 16). We need to be aware of the enemies constant attempts to drive us away from God and get us to do things contrary to God's Will.

I Corinthians 10: 22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

We must not provoke the Lord to anger with our behavior especially the way we treat His Word. We do not have His strength. Paul is asking a rhetorical question here.

Jeremiah 7: 19 Do they provoke me to anger? saith Jehovah; do they not provoke themselves, to the confusion of their own faces?

Where does the provocation begin? It begins when we compromise the Word of God. Do you understand what that means? As soon as we begin to compromise the Word of God, our love for the truth in the Scripture begins to grow cold. God does not send the

judgment of confusion until there is first this falling away from the love of the truth. If you are not regularly studying your Bible this will happen. No matter what age we are we can fall away. It happens gradually.

II Timothy 2: 15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

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