

We welcome those joining us by livestream or over the phone. You cannot eat and drink, because in God's providence, you cannot be here today. The Lord's Supper symbolizes us being together. Until you can be here with us, we are thankful that the message of the gospel of grace can travel to where you are through God's gift of this technology. You get the SAME CHRIST in the gospel preached as we get in the bread and the cup.

For those gathered here in person – I remind you that The Lord's Supper is not about the quality of the elements, but about the meaning of the elements. Our biggest question is not whether we will enjoy the wafer and cup, but whether we are reconciled with God! We get THE SAME CHRIST, even with a diminished bread and cup.

Message: 1 Corinthians 11:28, *“Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.”*

In our verse 28, we are commanded to examine ourselves. The word examine is to test. The root is to test metals to find out whether they are pure metal, or some mixture of that metal with other things.

To test yourself is to see whether you are purely here because of Christ and Him crucified, or some mixture of that with other things.

The Lord's Supper is not like a church fellowship lunch. No, the Lord's Supper is a holy sacrament instituted by Jesus Himself, who gave this special mini-meal a very significant meaning. To eat of this bread and to drink of this cup is a very serious matter.

So serious, that it requires us to pause and examine ourselves before eating and before drinking. Do we understand that the body of Christ was given so that we can eat this bread, and the blood of Christ was given so that we can drink this cup? Do we discern?

Paul was upset with what the church in Corinth was doing in the Lord's Supper, and one of the correctives was to pause to examine themselves. Their celebration of the bread and cup got worse and worse, and had become similar to the city's pagan temples. They turned it into a whole meal a community fellowship lunch and within that, there was a ranking of people. Some had plenty of food. Others had none. Some had plenty of wine and felt its effects and became unruly. Others had no drinking from the cup at all.

Paul scolded them and determined that more harm was being done than good. It was not considered by Paul to be The Lord's Supper at all. It was a fake. Why? Because they did not focus on Christ.

How could they fix it? The answer from Paul was to return back to the basics. Paul went back to what the Lord Jesus had taught initially.

Jesus had carefully used language such as “This is my body.” And “This cup is the new covenant in my blood...” Jesus spoke about the bread as if it were His body. Jesus spoke about the cup as if it were the new covenant in His blood.

This use of language was only possible because the same Savior who gave Himself for us on the cross, here gives Himself to us in the bread and the cup.

By faith, we take ordinary things, such as this bread (or wafer) and this simple cup, and we set them apart by prayer, and we speak about them as Jesus spoke about them – as body and blood. And we examine ourselves to see that we are focused. And then we partake. In good conscience and with proper seriousness, we eat of the bread and we drink of the cup.

And we are blessed in doing so with grace from our Savior to cover our sins. We are so thankful.

*To parents of young children, we say please wait until the children have reached the age to understand these things, in consultation with the elders.*

To visitors, we say **If you are a Bible-believing Christian and you are walking with God and with your church, we lovingly invite you to partake in this blessing with us.**

OPEN THE BREAD.

*[Please now peel back the top layer of your cup, so that the bread wafer is ready.]*

The bread we break together is the communion of the body of Christ.

*Pray, thanking God for the body of Christ, represented by this bread.*

Take, eat, remember, and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for a full pardon of all our sins.

*[Please now peel back the next layer of your cup, so that the juice is ready.]*

The cup of blessing which we drink is the communion of the blood of Christ.

*Prayer of thanks for Jesus' blood, represented, sealed, & applied by this cup.*

Take, drink, remember, and believe that the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for a complete cleansing of all our sins.

Let us pray, “Merciful Father, we thank You for this holy sacrament, which shows forth His death. Enable us to live always for Him who gave Himself for us, even Jesus Christ, through whom we ask, Amen.

Blessing from Psalm 144:15, “*Blessed are the people to whom such blessings fall! Blessed are the people whose God is the Lord!*” Amen.