

Self-disqualification – I Corinthians 11:23-34 (Luke 24:13-35)

I. Introduction:

- A. We will not always have a message about the Lord's Supper before we observe the Lord's Supper.
 1. Sometimes it will be a sermon about something entirely different.
 2. And then once in a while we may not have a message at all – we'll just say a few words and begin.
 3. But this week the Holy Spirit showed me a parallel between *I Cor. 11* and *Lk. 24* which I couldn't ignore.
 4. Beside the general tenor of that chapter in the *Gospel of Luke*, which I hope to show you in the next few minutes, there are a couple of statements which drew me to the Lord's Supper.
- B. Please turn to the last chapter of *Luke*.
 1. Notice how **verse 35** concludes – *"He was known of them in breaking of bread."*
 2. I'll come back this, but in the taking of communion there should be a clear reminder of our Saviour.
 3. And then there are the words of **verse 30** – *"He took bread, and blessed it, and brake and gave to them."*
 4. Doesn't that take you back to the Last Supper – *"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?"*
 5. Besides these two things there are Paul's comments about properly prepared hearts – *"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."*
- C. This afternoon I'd like to take you through that very well-known story about two disciples returning to Emmaus.
 1. There are other parallels between that bit of Christian history and our observance of the Lord's Supper.

II. Luke 24:13 –

- A. *"And behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about three-score furlongs."*
 1. These were **disciples**, & for the sake of our lesson, let's say they were **members** of the Jerusalem church.
 2. But they were **not in fellowship** with the rest of the brethren at that time; they had **chosen** to **walk away**.
 - a. This was the **same day** as the discovery of the empty tomb. It was **Sunday** – the Lord's day – church.
 - b. Not only were the eleven gathered together, there were others there as well – **verse 33** – the church.
 3. But these two were going home.
 - a. They weren't on a missionary journey; they didn't have evangelistic responsibilities.
 - b. We aren't told that there was a dying loved one whom they needed to attend.
 - c. Without any information to the contrary, I am going to assume that they had simply chosen to walk away
 - d. The exact reason is not important, but that they had absented themselves from the brethren **was**.
 4. It was only 7 or 8 miles to Emmaus.
 - a. That isn't a great distance. However they were not as close to the brethren as they should been.
 - b. They weren't apparently angry with anyone, and no one was angry with them.
 - c. They hadn't been excommunicated. They were simply not in proper fellowship.
 5. If the Lord's supper had been celebrated that Sunday afternoon, they were not ready to receive it.
 6. They were missing out on anything and everything taking place in the church.
- B. *"And they talked together of all these things which had happened."*
 1. You could say that they were **discussing spiritual things** – at least – important religious **events**.
 2. They were **sharing their opinions**. But, opinions are not enough when it comes to the things of God.
 3. They weren't discussing what the Word of God had to say about the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.
 4. They needed more direction, they needed some spiritual light.
 5. But they weren't going to get it where they were going.
 6. They weren't going to hear any gospel preaching or Bible exposition.
 7. They weren't going to be in a position to pray with their fellow believers.
 8. And they were not where they could observe the Lord's supper, because that is a church ordinance.
 9. They had **disqualified themselves** from communion.

C. *“And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that should not know him.”*

1. *“Communed”* is the same Greek word as *“talked”* in the previous verse.
2. They were *“talking”* and *“reasoning”* – they were thinking about, and trying to understand, the crucifixion.
3. But then from behind them – from Jerusalem – came the Lord Jesus, although they didn’t recognize Him.
 - a. They were looking with down-cast eyes rather than walking with heads up and eyes toward heaven.
 - b. And did they lower their voices when they heard the stranger behind them?
 - c. They didn’t know that the Lord was there.
4. How often has the Lord... how often has the Holy Spirit... visited us, and our eyes were holden to the point we didn’t know it was the Lord?
5. These two weren’t prepared for communion with Christ. They weren’t ready for the Lord’s supper.
6. For whatever reason, they had disqualified themselves, by leaving the brethren in Jerusalem.

III. Verse 17 –

A. *“And he (Jesus) said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?”*

1. Brethren, the Lord wants to probe our thinking.
 - a. He knows full well what it is we are thinking, but the question is: do we?
2. And He is well-aware of our state of mind – cast down, up-beat, joyful, gloomy.
 - a. These Christians were sad. And as such they were not spiritually fit for communion with the Lord.
 - b. The worship of the Lord should involve humble joy.
3. But **why** were they down? Wasn’t it in part, because they didn’t get their way – at least, their expectations?
4. Wasn’t it because they found out that their theology wasn’t as precise as God meant it to be?
5. They were looking for a Messianic King. They didn’t realize there must first be a crucified Saviour.
6. In their misconceptions and preferences, they were not fit for the Lord’s table.
7. The Lord wants us to examine **why** we are sad, why we are away from proper fellowship, why we aren’t prepared for communion with Him.

B. *“And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?”*

1. Do I detect a bit of pride in Cleopas?
2. Was there a bit of annoyance and even arrogance in his voice as he looked down his nose at this stranger?
 - a. *“What’s wrong with you? Have you been living under a rock? Is your head in the sand?”*
3. If that was the case, then, no, Cleopas wasn’t ready for the Lord’s supper.
4. Those things which separate us from our brethren are things which also separate us from our fellowship with the Saviour.

C. *“And (Jesus) said unto them, What things?”*

1. *And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people;*
 - a. *And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.*
 - b. *But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel.”*
2. The Lord often tests us, pushing us to look for scriptural reasons for the things which we profess.
3. These two had some of the facts of the case, but certainly not them all – nor the proper application.
4. *“We were sure that Jesus was a prophet of God, but He disappointed us. He died.”*
5. Their thoughts were on the loss of their future kingdom, but not on the necessity of the cross.
6. They were thinking along **religious**, but **fleshly religious** lines.
7. Their minds were not in submission to the Lord.
8. They were not fit for the Lord’s supper.

D. *“And beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done.*

1. *Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;*
 - a. *And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels which said that he was alive.*
 - b. *And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even as the women had said; but him they saw not.”*
2. Why weren't these two with the women when they went to the tomb? Perhaps we can give them a pass.
 - a. But their language seems to suggest that they were with the others when the ladies gave their report.
 - b. And what the women said **astounded** them; they were **astonished**; they questioned their sanity.
3. The ladies returned from the sepulchre and told all these things to the eleven **and** to all the rest.
 - a. So why didn't these two join Peter and John in running to the tomb to investigate further?
 - b. Was it fear that kept them in hiding? Was it disbelief? Were they simply too lazy?
 - c. When they said that the women had *“seen a VISION of angels,”* it sounds as if they doubted the testimony. Was it that they **refused** to believe the ladies?
4. No, they were not fit for the Lord's supper if it had been celebrated that night.

IV. Verse 25 –

A. *“Then Jesus said unto them, O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?”*

1. This is verbiage which I'll leave to the Lord Jesus, but the Christian **IS** being *“foolish”* when he refuses to believe what the scriptures tell us.
2. As I say, I'll let the Lord talk this way, because aren't we all this kind of fool from time to time?
3. If God said it, that settles it and we should believe it.
4. And this means Bible Christianity should not be confined to thoughts of future kingdoms and heavenly glory.
5. **Bible** Christianity is built on the sufferings of Christ – the broken body and the shed blood of the Saviour.
6. *“Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, before entering into his glory?”*
7. The Lord's Supper takes us back to the cross, going from there we can step into the future.
8. *“As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he COME” – I Corinthians 11:26.*

B. *“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”*

1. Despite their religious-sounding rhetoric, these two were not really focusing on the Lord Jesus.
2. They were yearning for a kingdom without Rome and without the Greek culture.
3. They were looking for the Millennium, and how those blessings would affect them.
4. They were wanting the wealth and peace which comes when sitting under their own olive and fig trees.
5. They sound almost like Muslims or Mormons.
6. They were not ready for the Lord's Supper, and they would not be ready until they were focused on *“the things concerning Christ.”*

C. *“And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went; and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, abide with us for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.”*

1. This leads some commentators to think that Cleopas and the other were a married couple.
 - a. It could be, or maybe they were a pair of young brothers.
2. At this point, were they simply being polite, or did they really want more of this stranger?
 - a. I think it was the latter – they did want more, even if they weren't sure at this point what it was.
3. Isn't it true that a little taste of the Saviour makes us yearn for more of the Saviour?
4. But if we are **not** interested in **more**, the Lord isn't going to force us to take more.
5. Christ would have kept going if these saints hadn't encouraged him to stay.

D. *"It came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them."*

1. Jesus, the visitor, took charge of the evening meal, just as He had done on the night before the Passover.
2. I am not going to tell you that these two were present in the upper room when the Lord first instituted His supper. They were not.
3. But I am going to suggest that you and I were there – in the sense that we have read those gospel accounts and Paul's retelling of that event.
 - a. We have heard the Lord's words.
 - b. And as I suggested earlier, what was said about the supper in Emmaus was almost word for word what the Lord said about the communion meal in the upper room.
4. Christ took charge of the meal, even though it might be argued that He was the guest.
5. Again, the Lord's supper is about the Lord. We should **want** His control. We **need** His control.

E. *"And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight."*

1. *And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?"*
2. It wasn't the meal; it wasn't the breaking of the bread which gave them their vision of Christ.
3. It was the grace of God to hearts which, by this time, had become willing to see Him.
4. At that point they looked by faith, not simply with their physical eyes.
5. Their hearts had been burning, in Holy Spirit preparation, for the revelation which He gave to them.
6. The Lord was preparing them for a fresh vision of Himself – for revival.
7. And once they saw what the Lord intended for them, He was gone, leaving them to live by faith.
8. This should be a part of our purpose in sitting at the Lord's table.
9. We need a **fresh VISION** of the Saviour; we need a **fresh VISITATION** from the Lord.

V. Verse 33 –

A. *"And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon."*

1. *And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread."*
2. **Now**, these two were ready for the Lord's Supper.
3. **Now** they were now focused on the Lord, and they were once again in fellowship with the brethren.
4. They were willing to cast aside their wants, wishes and plans. *"Thy will; thy will be done Lord."*
5. They then hurried back down that seven mile road to Jerusalem, and they were restored to their former fellowship with the others, even though it was the middle of night.
6. Those who had seen the Lord were too excited to sleep or even to leave one another.
7. As these two ran into the room, before they could speak, they were told that Lord had risen.
8. They shouted, *"Yes, we know."* And they went on to explain how the Lord had met with them.
9. And in their conclusion, they said, *"We knew him through the breaking of the bread."*

B. Why are we observing the Lord's Supper this afternoon?

1. While in respect to our fellowship we have with one another as a church, that is not the reason.
2. We are observing this ordinance to remind ourselves of the salvation we have through the broken body and shed blood of the Saviour.
3. We are observing the Lord's Supper celebrating our communion with Christ Jesus, who is alive.
4. *"The Lord is risen indeed."*
5. And we will be in this kind of fellowship with Him until the day the fulfills His purpose for saving us.