

## The Communion of The Unleavened

I Corinthians 11:23-32; 5:1-13

Today we celebrate communion as those thankful we are forgiven.

When Jesus instituted the Communion we now celebrate, it was as He held the pictures of His soon to be sacrificed body and blood, and gave thanks.

Forever we shall do the same in Heaven, around His Throne giving thanks to the One who Himself died for our sins.

The Gospels record Communion the Scriptures saying that Jesus took the Bread and "gave thanks" (Matthew 26:27). The word for "thanks" is **eucharisteo** and marks Communion as a time we His purchased children gather to give our thanks to Him.

That means that we as Christ's Church are celebrating:

### A Communion of The Thankfully Forgiven

Communion is a Thanksgiving offering to God that flows from us who know we have been justified. Justification means: 'the record of our sins, and the punishment for them, have both been forever taken care of by Jesus'.

We who have been justified freely by His grace through the redemption Jesus accomplished on the Cross are forever grateful. So first of all, communion is a Giving of Thanks.

Those who are justified, and thus thankful, are called to also be watchful. Paul tells us that we are to always be "judging" ourselves which is self-examination for any unrepented of sin. This means keeping close watch on any sin in our lives. Though forgiven already in a judicial sense, our sin has to be dealt with on a practical level. Paul explains that the communion of the thankful is also the communion of the watchful in I Corinthians 11. Please open there with me.

*1 Corinthians 11:23-32 (NKJV) For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and **when He had given thanks**, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25 In*

*the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. 27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 **But let a man examine himself**, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.*

Communion is not only when we gather and pour out our thanks to God for His mercy and grace upon us guilty sinners, it is also when we remember that we are to be watchful.

As we look at this passage, Paul reminds us that our job is to identify and turn from all known sin in our lives. That self-examination in the Presence of Jesus Christ, as He walks among us at the gatherings of His Church is very sobering. That means that we are to always be:

## **A Communion of The Watchfully Repentant**

Right now Jesus is looking for any sin that has been allowed to find lodging in our midst.

Either we confess and forsake that sin, or He begins the process of chastening us. Look again closely at v. 28-32.

Especially clear is v. 30: for any believer who does not agree with God about their sin (confession) and repent (forsaking sin) God begins the chastening process of weakness, sickness, and even death.

Beware of lightly partaking of communion this evening, without self-examination, confessing and forsaking sin, and receiving His cleansing.

One final passage is needed today, please open to I Corinthians 5, and follow along as I read these words.

1 Corinthians 5:1-13 (NKJV) It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife!  
2 And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. 4 **In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together**, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may

be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. 6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 9 I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. 10 Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. 11 But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—not even to eat with such a person. 12 For what have I to do with judging those also who are outside? Do you not judge those who are inside? 13 But those who are outside God judges. Therefore “put away from yourselves the evil person.”

Paul asks each of us to be sure that we:

## **Purge out The Leaven of Sin**

In New Testament times, as Paul wrote these words, leaven had great spiritual significance. In the terms of Jewish life, leaven nearly always stands for an evil influence. As in modern sour dough recipes, a little dough from the past batch was kept and allowed to sour and spoil to make a starter for the next batch.

As one New Testament historian puts Jewish history into perspective:

"The Passover bread was unleavened. More than that, on the day before the Passover Feast the law laid it down that the Jew must light a candle and search his house ceremonially for leaven, and that every bit must be cast out.

Paul takes that picture. He says our sacrifice has been sacrificed even Christ; it is His sacrifice which has delivered us from sin, as God delivered the Israelites from Egypt. Therefore, he goes on, the last remnant of evil must be cleared out of your lives. If you let an evil influence into the church, it can corrupt the whole society, as the leaven permeates the whole lump of dough."<sup>1</sup>

The celebration of the Lord's Table is to be a time when we as Christians search and get rid of any leaven we find in our lives.

We are to take up the piecing light of the candle of God's Word. Looking into every crack of our hearts, we search for any traces of un-cleansed sin. One commentator has said, "The Christian's [Passover] Feast does not last a week, but all his life."<sup>2</sup> That means that each time we gather we must be:

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<sup>1</sup> William Barclay, *The Letters to the Corinthians*, The Daily Study Bible Series (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1975), p.45.

<sup>2</sup> F.L. Godet, *Commentary on First Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1977), p.266

## A Communion of The Obediently Purged

One further note from I Corinthians 5 also relates to us today.

Paul told the church at Corinth to put out a member who was unwilling to confess and forsake their sin. That person was placed outside the protective care that Christ's affords believers who are in communion with the other saints. Outside of the protection afforded by regularly gathering at the Communion Table of the Redeemed is the destructive power of Satan, Paul tells us.

This past Sunday one of our own members was put out from Calvary Bible Church in the manner that Church Discipline is commanded in God's Word.

An elder led that LifeGroup in an explanation of the steps and process, and then they shared communion.

The process we have followed is the clear instructions that Jesus gave to us in His Church in Matthew 18:15-19.

Today as we gather at Communion, as the church of Jesus Christ called Calvary Bible, we put out of our midst our fellow member: Jake Straube, for his persistent unrepentance of the sins that he has been Biblically confronted with and remains unwilling to forsake.

Today, we as the gathered church at Calvary give him over to the chastening Hand of God by whatever means the Lord chooses to use, until Jake Straube repents, confesses and forsakes his sin, and returns to Christ's embrace.

In this time of obediently carrying out Christ's words to us, we now turn to our celebration of communion: Jesus Christ is here.

Jesus is walking up and down these aisles.

He is looking at each of our hearts.

Jesus Christ is asking us to take up the piecing light of the candle of God's Word.

He wants us looking into every crack of our hearts for any traces of un-cleansed sin.

Today as we celebrate Communion:

- We are to celebrate as the **thankfully forgiven**;
- We are to celebrate as the **watchfully repentant**;
- We are to celebrate as the **obediently purged** saints of Calvary Bible Church.

Bow with me, as the men prepare to serve us the Bread; and using these quiet

moments take some time to confess and forsake any known sin.