



## **“UNTIL HE COMES: UNDERSTANDING THE LORD’S SUPPER,” PART 2**

**July 13, 2025**

### **Review:**

- Last week we looked at the top priorities of the early church.
- In no specific order, these things were: dealing with sin, worship, teaching the Scriptures, sharing their resources with one another, promoting fellowship, remembering the saving work of Christ on the cross, and emphasizing their unique ‘oneness’ in Christ.
- These things are summarized in **Acts 2:42-47**, and it’s in this passage where we find one more priority emphasized twice: The Lord’s Supper.
- In our last lesson, we saw how The Lord’s Supper, when **properly** and **regularly** conducted within a community of true believers – compels that community to address all these priorities at the same time.
- We learned from **1 Cor. Chapters 10 and 11** that The Lord’s Supper, when responsibly incorporated into our fellowship...
  - Reminds us of Christ’s work of salvation on the cross.
  - Prompts us to share and participate in Christ’s presence.
  - Promotes intentional fellowship as ONE body of believers.
  - Challenges us to confront any mixed loyalties we may have.
  - Redirects the focus of our worship and devotion to God alone.
  - Provides an opportunity for self-examination and purification.

**NOTE:** A point that was underscored several times in our last lesson is this: the modern church has largely moved away from a sound Biblical posture concerning The Lord's Supper.

There are multiple reasons for this, but doctrinal drift, woke agendas, poor teaching of God's Word, tolerance of sin, and wrong goals for the church have all played a role.

We concluded last week by briefly glancing at the warning that comes with improper self-examination concerning The Lord's Supper. This warning is outlined in **1 Cor. 11:27-29**.

But to properly understand this warning, we must understand the context. That requires that we look at two other purposes of The Lord's Supper which are stated in **vs. 26** as follows:

*"For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."*

**A. HERE WE SEE THAT THE LORD'S SUPPER, WHEN IT IS PROPERLY CARRIED OUT, IS SUPPOSED TO BE A (a.) PROCLAMATION AND (b.) ANTICIPATION:**

1. The Lord's Supper is a sacrament that considers a broad timeline:
  - It is an occasion that looks back in time to the institution of The New Covenant. It **looks back** to Jesus Christ's work of salvation on the cross for you and me.
  - It is also an occasion that **looks ahead** to His glorious reappearing when you and I will be *"taken to where He is now,"* as **John 14:3** says.
  - Jesus doesn't want us to forget what He's done for us. That's the **memorial** part.
  - He also doesn't want us to forget what He's STILL going to do for us, and that's the **blessed hope** part according to **Titus 2:13**.
  - There are two bookends here: one past, and one future. It's why the title of this two-part series includes the three words: "Until He Comes."
  - We have a **responsibility** here. We need to see the FULL person and work of Jesus Christ - - and not just PART of that.
  - The full person and work of Jesus Christ keeps both **His past provision** and **His future promise** in view. The Lord's Supper, properly carried out, recognizes both.

**NOTE:** I have been in and around the church for almost all my life.

- It's tough to remember a time when The Lord's Supper was conducted with the fuller perspective of His death **and** His return both acknowledged. It's nearly always just the former.
- The first part is about the judgement Jesus Christ bore for us. He came to die and to pay the penalty for our sins.

- The second part is about the judgement WE escape if Jesus Christ is our Savior and Lord. He will judge this fallen world, but we will not be included in that.
- One commentator says that The Lord's Supper is *"the link between His two comings, the monument of the one, and the pledge of the other."*
- Let's look at both these issues in **vs. 26**.

## **B. FIRST, THERE IS THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF PROCLAIMING THE LORD'S DEATH.**

**NOTE:** The Greek term underneath our English word 'proclaim' is a present tense construct - - and that implies this needs to be done 'continually.' We need to continually proclaim the Lord's death and what that was about...

**NOTE:** Here are a few points about the organization and proclamation of The Lord's Supper to consider:

1. First, nowhere in Scripture does it tell us "how often" The Lord's Supper is to be conducted. We are only instructed that it should be a regular element.
  - I think churches that conduct The Lord's Supper EVERY time they meet run the danger of falling into a mindless ritual. I've seen that to be the case.
  - I think churches that conduct The Lord's Supper very RARELY also run a similar risk of not appreciating this somber and essential occasion. I've seen that too.
  - But the Bible does not specify a set schedule. It is up to each community of believers to know how best to incorporate it and preserve its significance for them...
2. Second, the Scriptures give us no instruction that a Pastor or an Elder (or any similar capacity) be the party to officiate (if it IS there, I have not found it)
  - The Lord's Supper is simply a memorial service for all saints. There seems to be little prescription provided for its choreography and process.
  - A bigger point to keep in mind is true Christians come together, as one "holy priesthood" (**Cf. 1 Peter 2:5**) to proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.
  - I've read stories of underground churches that are forced to do all sorts of creative things in the absence of traditional pastors and leadership.
  - The Lord's Supper is an occasion where the integrity of hearts and intentions are FAR more important than 'who does what.'
3. Third, and concerning the action of PROCLAIM specifically, The Lord's Supper was intended to be public – not hidden.
  - This idea is inherent in the term 'proclaim' in the first place. You cannot proclaim anything if you are quarantined alone – separate from all others - in your private closet with your own 'private faith.' It doesn't work that way.
  - Notice – again – in **Acts 2:42-47** that the believers met in *'the temple courts.'* They also met *'in their homes.'*

- They met in both places, but the fact that *‘the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved’* suggests that the public proclamation of the breaking of bread was witnessed by those outside the church.
- The Lord’s Supper is a service of worship - - but it is also a means of evangelism. It graphically demonstrates to all that Jesus Christ died for us. It’s a sort of Biblical ‘show and tell.’
- The point is this: people who are not members of the body of Christ should understand the clear message behind this important ceremony.
- I am not saying The Lord’s Supper is FOR unbelievers; I have been very clear that Scripture teaches this memorial is FOR believers.
- However, properly done, it carries a vital message to those who may observe it and are not saved. That’s my point.
- We noted earlier that the Greek term underneath our English word ‘proclaim’ suggests something that is to be done ‘continually.’
- But that same Greek term also means *“to declare plainly, publicly, insistently, openly, and authoritatively.”*
- This is how we are supposed to “proclaim the Lord’s death.” This is how we are to declare the message of the cross. It needs to be very up-front and transparent.

**C. NOW SECOND, LET’S BRIEFLY CONSIDER THE OTHER ELEMENT OF vs. 26, AND THAT IS THE PART ‘UNTIL HE COMES.’**

1. When we properly and reverently consider what God has done for us in the past, it enables us to joyfully anticipate His future provisions too.
  - The Lord’s Supper is intended to be an occasion in which we look both directions as we proceed into it.
2. As believers, this should be our discipline when we gather to celebrate the Lord’s Supper.
  - We remember and we contemplate - with assurance – the significance of Jesus’ death on the cross for us.
  - We can also look forward and contemplate - with confidence - the glory of His return to receive us TO Him!
3. NOTE: I want to touch on two points which are remarkable about The Lord’s Supper insofar as Christ’s return is concerned:
  - **The first point is found in Matt. 26:28-29 (this is the FIRST Lord’s Supper, and Jesus says)–** *“This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it anew with you in My Father’s kingdom.”*
    - A time is nearly upon us (I believe) when all our talk of ‘until He comes’ is going to give way to our joyous shouts of: ‘He HAS come.’

- What we have looked forward to all this time will have finally arrived.
- This future Lord's Supper that Jesus anticipated sharing with his disciples is the great banquet that Christ will spread before all His saints at the end of the age when he consummates the start of His physical kingdom.
- And Jesus says in this passage that it will be at THIS future point, upon THIS commencement of His Millennial Kingdom (and that is a post-Tribulation occasion) – that He will then - once again! - drink the cup of this celebration, with us!

**NOTE:** This has a certain theme in common with the Lord's Prayer within which Jesus instructs us to pray for His kingdom to come.

- Too many people pray 'thy Kingdom come' and don't realize what that is really saying.
  - ✓ It's not some ambiguous spiritual kingdom here on this earth or in our hearts right now.
  - ✓ That's the view many people have and hold. They think it's some sort of spiritual perspective we need to embrace.
  - ✓ It also has nothing to do with the church making things better on earth so it can roll out the red carpet for Jesus Christ's arrival.
  - ✓ That is something more and more churches are teaching and more and more people are believing, but that's not even Biblical.
  - ✓ Things are not getting better; they're getting worse. Our faith is not picking up steam and getting hot. Here and there that may be true, but in the bigger picture, faith is sputtering and becoming lukewarm.
  - ✓ This will be the trend that precedes Christ's return, and the Bible is very clear.
  - ✓ Instead, "thy Kingdom come" is about a real physical kingdom with Jesus Christ on His throne in Jerusalem.
  - ✓ We are to pray for that the same way we are to pray for 'the peace of Jerusalem.' Both of these acknowledge Christ's 1000-year physical reign on earth.
- This will be an exciting time for you and me! True believers are assured of their future participation in the Millennial Kingdom.
- The Scriptures hold the promise of fellowship, celebration, and responsibility with Christ in His kingdom, and one element of that will be participating in The Lord's Supper WITH HIM!
- Jesus said it will be the first time He will have done this since the night before His death on the cross.

- The second point concerning The Lord's Supper and His 'return' is found in the last part of *John 6:54* where Jesus says of those who properly partake of The Lord's Supper, "*(they have) eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.*"
  - The context here is about one who believes – about one who has placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ (*John 6:40 and 47*, a few verses earlier, make that thrust quite clear).
  - But here, the promise of resurrection, and the promise of eternal life are underscored within The Lord's Supper as every believer's great hope.
  - This will happen when 'He comes,' or when 'He returns.' One aspect of The Lord's Supper in this *John Ch. 6* account is the reminder that Jesus Christ has overcome death.
  - He is "*the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep*" (*Cf. 1 Cor. 15:20, just a few chapters later*).
  - Because Jesus Christ died AND ROSE AGAIN, so those who are IN Christ will also be resurrected into eternal life.
  - Therefore, the Lord's Supper in *1 Cor. 11:26* is a prompt – it is a reminder - of great hope and assurance to true believers.
  - It is when 'He Comes' that our ultimate hope is realized, our deliverance from this fallen world is complete, and those church saints who have already died 'in Christ' will be raised to life.

**NOTE:** And so, it's here – with these things in view - that I now return once more to that warning that we closed last week's lesson with. The full warning is outlined in *1 Cor. 11:27-32*.

After all the joyful and promising things we've just considered from *vs. 26*, after all the wonderful things we are reminded of that are coming our way, there are also sobering – and even frightening issues to contemplate here.

The larger point is, one better not come to The Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, because nobody wants to fall under God's judgment.

We barely scratched the surface of this issue last week. Now I want to unpack it more fully - this matter of coming to The Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner and risking God's judgment.

1. First, this issue is plain. There's no running around what's being said here. There's no leapfrogging it, or rationalizing it away. The text is clear; it's blunt.
2. Most translations begin *vs. 27* with 'Therefore,' and whenever we see a passage starting with that word, we want to understand what 'therefore' is there for.
3. In this passage, Paul draws a conclusion in *vs. 27* from what he has said just before in *vs. 26*.

4. Since the Lord's Supper is intended to PROCLAIM Christ's death, and since we are to do this 'until He comes,' then willfully partaking of The Lord's Supper in an "unworthy manner" is unconscionable and disgraceful.

NOW, LET'S GET INTO SOME STUFF THAT IS REALLY IMPORTANT!

- This passage is **not** about our inherent worth or our worthiness in Jesus Christ.
- We are cleansed by the blood of Christ, and so we can approach God in all the worthiness of His own beloved Son. The Bible is very clear about this.
- Paul is not questioning our worthiness or our right as spiritual sons and daughters to partake of The Lord's Supper. If this were the case, it would exclude all Christians because we are all sinners.
- What he IS saying is we can find ourselves in a situation where our thoughts, our words, our motives, and our deeds and choices (AKA: our "sins") are such that we are judged unworthy of partaking.
- Paul is speaking here of the disgraceful conduct which CAN mark us as we participate in The Lord's Supper. This is a caution to not be guilty of careless, irreverent, sinful, and frivolous behavior.
- This is not about the **condition** of one partaking of The Lord's Supper, but rather about the **way** one partakes of it.

**NOTE:** As Dr. John MacArthur puts it, *"One can come to His table unworthily in many ways. It is common for people to participate in it ritualistically, without participating with their minds and hearts. They can go through the motions without going through any emotions, and treat it lightly rather than seriously. They can believe it imparts grace or merit, that the ceremony itself, rather than the sacrifice it represents, can save or keep one saved. Many come with a spirit of bitterness or hatred toward another believer, or come with a sin of which they will not repent. If a believer comes with anything less than the loftiest thoughts of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and anything less than total love for his brothers and sisters in Christ, **he comes unworthily.**"*

THAT SORT OF SUMS IT UP, BUT LET'S GRASP SOME IMPORTANT BULLET POINTS HERE:

1. It is impossible for us to live a perfect life on this fallen earth. Nobody can do that. This is not about living right now in flawless fashion.
2. We all have times of failure, weakness, frustration, setbacks, confusion and yes! - - sometimes even deliberate and repeated sin.
3. This warning passage is about coming to The Lord's Supper "unworthily," and that means coming to it with a wrong state of mind and heart. This boils down to a choice.
4. It is wrong to come to The Lord's Supper thinking about everything BUT Jesus Christ and what He's done for us.

5. We are deemed to be unworthy if we are simply going through a passive ritual that holds no conscious reality or reverence for us.
6. Let me suggest that when we come to The Lord's Supper, there is a need to prepare for that occasion in advance.
7. We need to search our own hearts for secret sins. We need to engage in confession and repentance before the Lord. It's time for a checkup.
8. The bottom line is The Lord's Supper is a serious occasion and all our thoughts, our intentions, our affections, and our attention should be focused on the person and work of Jesus Christ.
9. We must remember that Jesus died for our forgiveness of sins, and so we must observe The Lord's Supper in full faith and with great care - - otherwise, we are guilty of sinning against **"the body and blood of the Lord."**
10. When we engage in The Lord's Supper properly, it leads us into prayerful self-examination, confession, and recommitment. We gain a renewed sense of gratitude for what Christ has done for us, and we restore our fellowship one with another.
11. The principles of this passage are quite clear: if we don't judge ourselves properly, then - - well, it's God turn. He will have to judge for us. And this leads into what **vs. 30** is saying.
12. Paul says the saints at Corinth were being judged by God for irreverently, casually, and frivolously partaking of The Lord's Supper. This discipline by God was physical, and it was progressive! It affected many, and some had died as a result.
13. (What does this mean for us?) The takeaway here is participating in The Lord's Supper is serious business. It may have serious consequences for those who take part in it unworthily.
14. Now, let me be very clear - not all sickness and death is the result of partaking of The Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, but the Bible is clear that this may be one of the reasons.
15. If we are sick, God might be waving His red flag of warning to us. God may use - and He HAS used - The Lord's Supper to say, "Slow down; examine yourself properly, think through your choices, and get right with God."
16. It all comes down to **vs. 32**. This is about divine discipline - and that is not a bad thing. Divine discipline demonstrates we are truly children of God.

**Heb. 12:6** says, "*For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.*"

17. This divine discipline, and all the corrective elements that are part of an honest examination of our faith, are a means to ensure - and a means to remind us - that we are not subject to eternal punishment.
18. Eternal punishment (see the end of **vs. 32**) is what results from being condemned as an unbeliever. **That is not the fate of the true believer.**
19. In other words, divine discipline serves IN PART to distinguish a saved person from an unsaved person.



20. When God's divine discipline comes into our life, for one reason or another, we need to understand that it comes to us from a loving Heavenly Father, and it is always intended for our greater and eternal benefit.
21. God is far more concerned about our holiness than we are. The Bible says He will discipline every child who truly belongs to Him.
22. According to God's Word, if you are not divinely disciplined this way, then you are not truly saved. I realize that is shocking for some of you to hear, but it IS the truth.

***Heb. 12:8 – just a couple of verses later – says, “If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all.”***

23. The bottom line is an absence of divine discipline means we are not God's children. This verse is very clear, and that's something many people have not considered.
24. If a person who professes to be a Christian goes on and on living in sin, holding deep grudges or anger against others, acting on burning lusts, living a lifestyle of depravity, not worrying about the wrong choices they are making (and so on and so on) - - and nothing in the way of discipline ever happens to them, then it is likely that person is not a Christian at all.
25. The point of **vs. 32** is God will not allow His own followers to be condemned with the world. That is why He brings divine discipline. That's why He interrupts our lives with His chastening. He's thinking about our long-term standing, not our short-term welfare.
26. The Lord's Supper, therefore, is an occasion in which we have an opportunity to deeply and honestly examine ourselves, to engage in confession and repentance, and seek to return to full and unfettered fellowship with Jesus Christ and each other...

**Some thoughts for Solid Bread Community from all this we've learned (high level):**

- (a.) I think we need to incorporate The Lord's Supper in our fellowship. This is a strong and growing community of believers who want the deep truths of God's Word. And so, concerning this matter, I think that is a good start.
- (b.) Details of 'how we do this' I've not fully processed at this point – but I'm thinking and praying about it all and I would ask that each of you do the same.
- (c.) I DO know that I want to approach The Lord's Supper with the intent to conform to the things we have learned about it.
- (d.) I think this means it will be different – it will feel and look different from the way most bodies of believers do it.
- (e.) I don't want to put a spotlight on all the compromises of other fellowships, but rather, I am emphasizing how I want to INTENTIONALLY pursue what the Bible instructs us to do.
- (f.) I want this occasion to be bathed in conviction and reverence. We need to consider all the aspects of what The Lord's Supper means – and how we best attend to those.

- (g.) I want to do what we can to conform to the Scriptures: this needs to be a time of genuine self-examination, confession, and repentance. I want us to draw closer to God and to each other in this process.
- (h.) Right now, I am thinking we will prepare our own elements: the bread and the wine. How we dispense these elements will involve participation from each of you.
- (i.) I think we need to be more active and less passive with how we engage with The Lord's Supper. This compels us to think about what we are doing and why we are doing it.
- (j.) I ask that you all soberly consider the things I am saying. I ask that you – as I've already said – pray about this and seek the Lord's leading.
- (k.) Right now, I am thinking of doing this once a month. I want the lessons that are part of those occasions to direct us into the right frame of heart and mind.
- (l.) The issue of The Lord's Supper is a broad one. It has many inroads from the various lessons and applications that we will learn together.

**NOTE:** There are many other truths to unpack concerning The Lord's Supper. There are multiple other passages which speak to this subject. Over time, we will explore those.

**NEXT WEEK:** We begin our new series in Jonah. It will be an exciting and personally convicting series to learn from together. Jonah's life and example confronts all of us where we each struggle – whether we admit it or not. Please consider inviting others.



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Solid Bread Community began with a passion to teach the truth of God's Word – every part, as it was divinely inspired to be understood.

The rules are simple. First, teach what IS there. Don't pretend the Bible is not saying what it is saying.

Second, don't teach what is NOT there. Don't force a passage to mean something it really doesn't.

And – number three, if the Bible states it plainly, we should too.