

THE LORD'S DAY

December 31, 2023

10 O'clock A.M.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

REFLECTION

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalms 100

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth!

Serve the LORD with gladness!

Know that the LORD, He is God!

Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise!

Give thanks to Him, bless His name!

For the LORD is good; His steadfast love endures forever.

*HYMN OF ADORATION

#98

Now Thank We All Our God

*PRAYER OF ADORATION

God has truly called us to trust in Christ. How are we assured that we are truly his chosen one? Practice the godly qualities that Peter has been discussing in this entire passage. So, believers grow in assurance of their salvation by consistently living the Christian life. They cannot perfectly do this of course. John helps us understand this in his first letter. There he tells us how to “know that we know him.” That is really know that we know Jesus in a saving relationship. He speaks of knowing the true Christ, fully human and fully divine. He tells us to obey God’s law, and love the brothers. There is no one that can do these things perfectly. Yes, indeed that is true. That is why John tells us the first thing we do when we sin is to confess our sins. So, we grow in assurance of our salvation by acknowledging and confessing our sins to God through Christ.

So, when you prepare to come to the Lord’s Table, or any time you prepare to worship the Lord on the Lord’s Day, ask yourself why you are doing so? Am I going through some religious activities that I feel compelled to do because I have always done so? Or do I come to the Lord’s Table and come to Lord’s Day worship because I earnestly desire to worship my Risen Lord and Savior Jesus because he has died for my sins. I come to worship the Lord, and sit at His table and be spiritually fed because by His grace I trust in Christ and my sins are forgiven and I am in a right relationship with God.

Introduction

The primary Scriptural text for preparing for the Lord's Supper is 1 Cor. 11:27-34. This passage is a part of a larger passage on the Lord's Supper beginning in verse 17. When we consider the passage as a whole, we recognize that Paul is addressing a very serious problem in the church at Corinth. The church has been abusing the Lord's Supper by the way they were practicing it: some were even getting drunk at the Lord's Table! Their sins were so egregious that God had disciplined some with sickness and others with death.

So, the matter of preparing for the Lord's Supper is no mere academic matter. It is very serious because it has to do with the corporate worship of the Lord, but let's go ahead and note an important general principle at this point. Every aspect of corporate worship of the Holy, holy, holy Triune God is important! So, we should not think that we only prepare for the Lord's Supper, but we should always prepare for corporate worship whether we celebrate the Supper or not.

Examine Yourself

Self-examination is at the heart of Paul's teaching in this passage. The problem in Corinth is that some who were coming to the Lord's table in an "unworthy manner." The answer to this problem was first for Paul to set forth the basic meaning of the institution of the Lord's Supper. Second to tell them "to examine themselves." How are they to examine themselves?

The implication of verse 29 is very clear. We must rightly discern the Lord's body. Some think that this refers to the church as the body of Christ. However, I believe the reference is to the body and blood of Christ. In other words, before we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we must rightly understand the meaning of the death of Christ for us his people. It is not enough that someone knows that Jesus died on the cross. He must understand that Christ died as a sin-substitute and did so for the one that desires to come to the table.

This is likely why the WLC A. 171 first highlights that we examine ourselves of our "being in Christ." In other words, the first issue is this. Am I truly in Christ? Am I a genuine Christian? This is certainly a good question to ask ourselves before we come to the Lord's Table. The Apostles teach that it is a good question to ask ourselves at other times as well.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Christian, in whom do you believe and trust? SC 5,6,21

I believe in the one true and living God revealed in Holy Scripture. He is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

Who is your Redeemer? SC 21

I believe our only Redeemer is the Lord Jesus Christ, who being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continues to be, God and man in two distinct nature, and one person, forever.

CONFESSION OF SIN

based on Ephesians 4,5

Heavenly Father, have mercy on us, for our sins are many, and we are in danger of grieving your Holy Spirit. No corrupting talk should come from our mouths, yet we discourage other believers with our words. We are prone to bitterness, wrath, and clamor. We even slander those we claim to love in Christ. By your grace enable us to forgive each other as you have forgiven us in Christ. Enable us to walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Ephesians 1:3,47,8

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing.

The Father chose us in Christ, before the foundation of the world.

That we should be holy and blameless before Him.

In Christ we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses.

According to the riches of His grace.

*HYMN OF DEVOTION #305

Arise, My Soul, Arise

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE Doxology

*READING OF GOD'S WORD Acts 2:42-47
Pew Bible Pg. 1082

PASTORAL PRAYER

PREACHING OF THE WORD **Progress in 2024?**

*HYMN OF RESPONSE #598

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

*BENEDICTION

*GLORIA PATRI #735

**Stand if you are able*

*We wish you and your family a
Happy New Year!*

THE LORD'S SUPPER PREPARATION JANUARY 7, 2024

Westminster Larger Catechism 171

*LCQ. 171. How are we to prepare to receive the Lord's Supper?

We prepare by examining ourselves of our being in Christ, of our sins and wants; of the truth and measure of our knowledge, faith, repentance, love to God and the brothers, love to all men, forgiving those that have done us wrong; of our desires after Christ, and of our new obedience; and by renewing the exercise of these graces, by serious meditation, and fervently prayer.

**This is a slightly revised version of the question and answer. I have put them both in modern syntax for readability, and put in the first-person plural to make the question more personal.*

I Corinthians 11:27-32 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgement on himself. That is why many of are weak and I'll, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

Am I a Genuine Christian?

Notice what Peter says in 2 Peter 1:10. "Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities, you will never fall." How do we confirm, or assure ourselves that