

3 • Communion

We see unleavened bread and fruit of the vine used in a special observance every first day of the week. *Why? What exactly is “the Lord’s Supper?”*

It’s not uncommon to hear the word “_____” used to describe the Lord’s Supper. *Communion* means

to _____ in common or to participate in the _____ thing, and that’s exactly what the apostle Paul had in mind as he gave instructions to the church in Corinth:

But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you _____ together it is not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a _____, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. When you come _____, it is not the Lord’s supper that you eat.

For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not. (11:17-22)



There were serious problems in the church at Corinth that needed to be corrected if they were going to observe this memorial as the Lord intended.

So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for _____ –if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home–so that when you come together it will not be for judgment. (11:33-34)

In the next chapter, Paul gives one of the classic examples of the unity that ought to exist among God’s people.

For just as the body is _____ and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were _____ baptized into one body–Jews or Greeks, slaves or free–and all were made to drink of one Spirit. (12:12-13)

Examples of this truth can be found all over the New Testament. Consider just one: Philemon and Onesimus. Philemon was a master, Onesimus was a slave who had apparently run away. He had been taught the gospel, now Paul was sending him back and encouraging Philemon to welcome him “as a beloved brother” (Philemon 15-16). Can you imagine the first time they shared “communion” together? Powerful! **Let’s talk about it...**



For Class & Family Discussion:

- “Communion” means to share in common or to participate in the same thing. We’ll talk about the Lord’s Supper in just a moment. What other everyday examples of “communion” can you think of? What makes “communion” a powerful experience?
- In **1 Corinthians 11:17-22**, we heard Paul talk a lot about when those brothers and sisters would “come together as a church.” What made these gatherings different from other sorts of gatherings?
- Can you find other examples in **1 Corinthians** of “factions” among the saints in Corinth? What’s a faction? Why are they dangerous? What makes them completely inappropriate in view of something like the Lord’s Supper?
- Why do you think Paul would say what he did in **1 Corinthians 11:20**? In your own words, what was the real problem in Corinth at this point?
- Throughout **1 Corinthians 12:12-27**, Paul uses the example of a single body with many members. How does this relate to the Lord’s Supper?
- In a wide variety of places, the New Testament authors emphasize unity in Jesus, despite the fact that some were Jews and others Greeks, some were slaves and others free, some were male and others female (**1 Cor 12:13; Gal 3:26-28**). Our video also briefly mentioned the example of Philemon and Onesimus. Lots of differences, and yet, they all shared in the same Lord’s Supper. What can we learn from that?
- Thousands of years later, our situations are a little different, but the powerful principle of the Lord’s Supper as “communion” is still the same. What do we need to remember about each other, every first day of the week?