

1 CORINTHIANS: LESSON 27

Chapter 10: The Lord's Table Chapter 11: The Lord's Supper

22 December 2017

Most Christians assume that the Lord's table, mentioned in 1 Corinthians chapter 10 is the same as the Lord's Supper, described in chapter 11. Though there are some similarities, we ought to learn what the distinctions are so that we can determine the importance of each.

THE LORD'S TABLE 10:15-21

This passage illustrates God's desire to have fellowship ("communion") with man. It is such a strong desire that God was willing to sacrifice His Son, Jesus Christ, to restore the fellowship that was lost through sin (John 3:16). God didn't create man to help and serve Him. He created man so He could fellowship with him. Our service for God doesn't prove we're in fellowship with Him. But if we're in fellowship with Him, we'll want to serve Him.

A table suggests that people will sit together and interact with one another. Christians are not at the table alone with the Lord; they are partaking in fellowship and communion with each other and with the Lord.

THE LORD'S SUPPER 11:23-32

It's interesting that the Lord's Supper is often called "Communion" when the word does not occur in this chapter. The Lord's Supper involves an individual examining himself—and taking some time to remember what the Lord did to make it possible for him to have communion at the "Table" of chapter 10.

8 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE LORD'S TABLE AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. THE FORM OF LANGUAGE DIFFERS.

- a. Chapter 10: it's a **figurative** table that represents our fellowship with the Lord and His saints.
 - i. The same figurative language is used in Psalm 23:5.
 - b. Chapter 11: it's **literal** bread and a literal cup that we observe to remind us of the Lord's sacrifice and what it accomplished for us.
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2. THE ACTION DIFFERS.

- a. Chapter 10: I am a "**partaker**" of fellowship with God (10:17).
 - b. Chapter 11: I am one who "**remembers**" what the Lord did for me (11:24) so that I could have fellowship with Him along with all the other believers.
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3. THE ORDER OF THE ELEMENTS DIFFERS.

- a. Chapter 10: communion OF the blood of Christ, communion OF the body of Christ (10:16).
 - i. Notice we are not communing WITH the blood and the body of Christ. We are able to have fellowship on the basis of that common bond; the fact that we were all redeemed by the **same** shed blood and broken body of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - ii. The blood is mentioned first in this passage because this is the order of **human experience**. You can't get in the body of Christ without first getting cleansed by the blood of Christ.
 - b. Chapter 11: the elements are listed from **God's point of view** (11:24-25).
 - i. The Lord's body was given (it wasn't take against His will) before His blood was shed.
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4. THE FIGURE OF THE BREAD DIFFERS.

- a. Chapter 10: **“we being many are one bread”** (10:17). This pictures the mystical body of Christ that includes every believer. We each have our own physical body, but together we form one spiritual body; the Body of Christ. The loaf of bread represents one inseparable body (**“the whole lump”** of 1 Cor. 5:6-7).
 - b. Chapter 11: **“This is my body, which is broken for you”** (11:24). Here the bread represents the literal body of Jesus Christ. During the Lord’s Supper, we must discern the Lord’s body (vs 29) because that’s the only thing that makes us “worthy” (vs 27).
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5. THE FUNCTION DIFFERS.

- a. Chapter 10: the believer praises the value of the blood by a life of **communion**; enjoying the provisions of the Lord’s table. We show the world that we prefer the company of other believers (Romans 12:10).
 - b. Chapter 11: the believer proclaims the meaning of the death of Christ. Ye do shew the Lord’s death (11:26). When we partake of the Lord’s Supper, we show unsaved men and women that we have a part in the Lord’s death—and they don’t (but they can).
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6. THE DANGER DIFFERS.

- a. Chapter 10: there is the danger of trying to maintain fellowship with the world and with God at the same time. Those are two different tables that do not go together. The believer will never enjoy the world like he used to and he’ll never fully enjoy fellowship at the Lord’s table until he forsakes the world’s table.
 - b. Chapter 11: there is the danger of evil within. Each individual must “examine himself” (vs 28). I must evaluate my personal relationship to God.
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7. THE EMPHASIS DIFFERS.

- a. Chapter 10: emphasizes a continuous experience of fellowship.
 - b. Chapter 11: emphasizes an oft remembrance. It’s not continuous and we’re not told how often to observe it.
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8. THERE ARE TWO DIFFERENT IMPOSSIBILITIES.

- a. Chapter 10: **“Ye CANNOT drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils...”** Don’t let the devil lure you to his table with his tempting treats. If you commune with those things, it will interfere with your relationship with Jesus Christ and with the brethren.
 - b. Chapter 11: we CANNOT rightly understand the Lord’s Body until we rightly understand ourselves (vss 28-29). Until we see ourselves for what we truly are (a sinner who needed to be saved), we can never see our relationship with God the way we should.
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