

Discussion of the importance of The Lords Supper for the Christian !

I believe, the best thing that we can do, to better understand Gods purpose, for instituting The Lords Supper, is to have a better understanding, of God Himself. One of the best verses in the Bible to do that, is found in 1John 4:8. We read, He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love. so now we know for sure, that love had its beginning, with God. Now, with this kind of knowledge about God, it will give us the true meaning of everything that God purposed to do, and it was all based upon His love. If we can grasp this verse, it is probably, the greatest single verse in the entire Bible about God.

Now lets just spend a little of our time thinking about God, whos nature is filled with love and then we will better understand why He created this world and everything therein. Now lets think about this. Would we expect for this One whos nature is love, to create things that would bring about loneliness? No, we would not expect that. Now the question is, what would He create? After we have thought about this for awhile, we would probably say, that He would create something, that He could lavish His love upon, because love needs someone to love, and love also needs someone who will return that love. So lets watch what God does. He first purposes a plan, which will accomplish His needs. He then starts immediately to fulfill His plan.

His plan included something that He could love and that something would have the capability, of returning that love. Now lets continue to watch Gods love at work in His plan. So for love to manifest itself in its truest form, it must create an environment that is conducive for appreciating, and love from its inhabitants. So God created a world that would do exactly what He intended for it to do. Now next in His order of creation was mankind. He created man, in His own image, and in His own likeness, and gave him dominion over all His creation. And then we can read in Gen 2:8 where God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had created. This was the most beautiful place in all the world.

Here again we can see Gods love being manifested to man. Now we can read in Gen. 2:21 where God continues to show His love for man. It reads, and the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept. And while he was asleep, God took one of the mans ribs and closed up the flesh. Verse 22, And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman and brought her to man. Verse 23, And the man said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh and she shall be called woman, because, she was taken out of man. Verse 24, Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh. We must not forget what we have learned about the God of this universe. And that is, He is love. In these verses that we have just read we can easily see, Gods love being poured out to man. God sees the needs of this man that He has created, that he too needs someone to love, and to return that love to him. Gods love for Adam and Eve is not completed yet. He again manifests his love

for Adam and Eve by saying, I want you to have a family, so you both can enjoy your own creation through loving one another, and then giving birth to your own children.

So, it is true, that God is love. We have just read where God has instituted the home. The home is the most beautiful, and loving institution that God could have ever created. It is therefore no wonder, that we call a new born baby, a bundle of love. Because it was conceived in the greatest act of love making that God could devise.

There is something else that must be said about the far reaching effects of Gods love. His love for His children goes right on after their death. We can read about it in John 14:1-4. These verses tell us that all those who are in the family of God will be in the presence of God in Heaven after this life is over. Some of us now are probably wondering, what has all of this got to do with the importance of The Lords Supper. It has all to do, with The Lords Supper, because if it was not for Gods love for his children, there would be no Lords Supper. Now lets continue our study on the importance of The Lords Supper. We see Gods love being manifested for man in John 3:16-17, where Jesus says, For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. Lets read another verse about the love of God. It is found in 2 Peter 3: 9, The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is long suffering toward us, not willing that anyone should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

The greatness of the love of God is so far reaching, that sometimes we can read verses like this, and really miss the importance of why these verses were written. If we fail to see, that the motivating factor in these two verses is the love, which God has for each of us, then it will be very difficult for us to partake of The Lords Supper in a worthy manner.

Question - what does it mean, In a worthy manner ? It means that The Lords Supper is a Memorial of something that has already taken place.

Question - What was it that had already taken place? There is a verse in Heb. 10:1 that says, That the law of Moses was a shadow of good things to come and not the very image of the things. So we can go to Exodus 12:14, and read what the shadow was for, The Lords Supper. Lets read verse 14, and this day shall be unto you a Memorial, and you shall keep it, as a feast to the Lord through out your generations. Now lets read in Exodus 12: 26-27, and we will find out what this Feast day was called. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, what mean ye by this service? You shall say unto them, it is the sacrifice of The Lords Passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians and delivered our houses, and the people bowed their heads and worshipped. Now lets read Exodus 13: 3. We must pay close attention, to what this verse is saying. And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage, for by strength of the Lords hand, He brought you out from that place. There shall no leavened bread, be eaten. In this verse we find some very important information about the whys of The

Passover Feast. The very First thing that God says about The Passover is, that it is a day, set aside, for all the people of God, to look back on, and to remember the love of God, that was poured out upon them.

The Second thing He said unto them, was what they are to remember. God said, you remember the house of bondage that you have been delivered from, and it was Me who delivered you. We must not forget the purpose of this Memorial celebration.

Question - What was it? To answer this question, we must go back to the beginning of this lesson and remember what the scriptures had to say about the character of God. We learned that God is love. So this will lead to the creating of something, to lavish His love upon and in return, they too will lavish their love upon their Creator God. So in Gods Wisdom and Power, He created Heaven and Earth, and everything therein and then He created the one that He could lavish His love upon, and he was called man, and God named him Adam. And then God said, it is not good that man should be alone, so He took a rib from the man and made woman to be his helpmate.

Gods Final Plan, (Him being the God of love), was to keep man loving Him until the end of time, and then He would end that which we call time, by destroying this Earth and all evil that is therein. And then, everyone who has returned their love to God, by becoming obedient believers, then Gods purpose will be fulfilled because, He then will have all those who have returned their love to Him in Heaven forever. So God, in His Wisdom, does everything for mankind that He can do, to help them to keep of loving Him without taking away their free will choice. We must never forget the love of God in all that He asks, and commands us to do. Now lets read about the bondage that they were delivered from. Lets start reading in Exodus 3:6. God said to Moses, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Verse 7, and the Lord said, (Now lets pay close attention to the next few words). God says, (1) I have seen the way that the Egyptians are afflicting my people. This word Affliction in the Hebrew means, depression, misery, and trouble. (2) I have heard their cries, (3) their cries are because of the cruel task masters that are ruling over them. Please notice in verse 8, through Gods love, He is not only going to deliver them from this hard bondage that they are in, He is also going to bring them to a land, a large land, and it flows with milk and honey. Which means, there will be no lack in that which they need.

Now lets notice the importance and the needs of this Memorial Feast. It is not just for the Israelites that were then living, it was also for the children who were to be born for generations to come. We read in Exodus 12: 25-27, And it shall come to pass, when you come to the land which the Lord will give you, that you shall keep this Feast. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, what is the meaning of this Feast? Lets read the meaning that is given in Exodus 13: 14. By the strength of the hand of the Lord, who brought us out of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, and the Lord, slew all the first born males that were Egyptians. Lets not forget what we read in Heb. 10:1, That the Law of Moses, was a shadow of the good things that was to come. How about what the Israelites were to eat in The Passover Feast.

We can read it in Exodus 12: 5-8. Every household was to take a male lamb, without blemish, and roast it in fire, and eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. We all know what unleavened bread is. It is bread dough that is cooked without any yeast. Now what is bitter herbs? The name bitter describes unto us, that it is a plant, that tastes so bad that no one eats it of their own free will.

Question - Why didnt God have them to eat leaven bread which tastes much better, and there were lots of herbs that was very good to the taste. The answer to that question is very simple if we will think about the purpose that God had in mind when He planned these ingredients that were to be eaten with the roasted lamb. What was the Memorial that this meal was to produce in the hearts of the people? It was to bring to their minds, the love that God had for them in delivering from the bitter bondage that they were in by being slaves in Egypt. It was to bring to their minds the beatings, and the misery, and all the other things that a slave had to deal with. They were now enjoying freedom for the first time in their lives. All because of the love that God had manifested to them.

Question - Was there a penalty for not keeping The Passover Feast? Lets read Num. 9: 13, But the man that is clean, and is not on a journey, and forbeareth to keep The Passover, even the same soul shall be cut off from among his people, that man shall bear his sin. We have not exhausted the study on The Passover at all, but we only wanted to point out its purpose. We read in Heb. 10:1, That the things of the law of Moses was a shadow of the good things to come.

Question - What was the good thing, that The Passover was a shadow of? I believe that it is The Lords Supper. Now lets notice some similarities.

1. The Passover required a male lamb or a goat for a sacrifice. - Exodus 12:5

2. Jesus was a male, and the Lamb of God. - John 1: 29

1.The Passover required a male lamb or goat without blemish. - Exodus 12:5

2. Jesus our sacrifice, was without sin. - 2 Cor. 5:21

1. The Passover sacrifice required, no broken bones. - Exodus 12:46

2. Jesus our sacrifice, not a bone was broken in His body. - John 19:36

1. The Passover Feast was a Memorial day. - Exodus 12:14

2. Jesus said when you break this bread and drink of the fruit of the vine, do this in

Remembrance of Me. - Luke 22:19

1. The Passover Feast was a time to remember the love of God.

2. Partaking of The Lords Supper is also a time to remember the love of God.

1. The Passover feast was also a time for remembering that they were freed from Egyptian

Bondage. - Exodus 13:3

2. When we partake of The Lords Supper we also are to remember that the death of Jesus

Set us free from the bondage of sin. - Matt. 26:28

1. The Passover feast required that Gods people partake of it once every year on a certain

Day. - Exodus 12:17-18

2. The Lords Supper requires that the Christian meet upon the first day of every week to

Partake of The Lords Supper. - Acts 20:7

1. The Passover Feast was to help them, keep their minds of the love that God had manifested unto them.

2. The Lords Supper is to help the Christian to keep their minds on the love that God Has manifested unto them.

I believe that these are enough similarities to prove that The Lords Supper, was the true thing, which was to follow The Passover which was the shadow of something good to come.

Christians, must realize, the importance of The Lords Supper, or we will never be able to partake of it in a worthy manner. Please, lets listen carefully. We can never do enough good to make ourselves worthy to partake of The Lords Supper. But we can prepare ourselves to partake in a worthy manner. We read in Luke 22:19, how we can partake of The Lords Supper in a worthy manner. Jesus said, as often as we eat this bread and drink of this fruit of the vine, do it in Remembrance of Me.

Question - What did Jesus do for man, that man could not do for himself? I do not want to make this lesson so lengthy that people will lose interest before getting this lesson read. So I will try to answer this question by a few simple verses. From the beginning of time, man finds himself in bondage to a law that is called, The Law of Sin and Death. This law was set in motion by God in Gen. 2:17, when God said to Adam, of every tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in the day, that you eat thereof, you shall surely die. Please notice here in this verse that God is talking about, spiritual death and not physical death. Isaiah 59:2 says, that our sins will separate us from

God. We also read in Rom. 3:23 where the Apostle Paul writes, for all, have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Question - After reading these few verses, what is the condition of the souls of mankind? They are all separated from God because of their own sins.

Question - Before Christ came, did God make a way for man to get his sins eternally forgiven by his own law keeping? No, He did not. So we must then come to the truthful conclusion, that all men have sinned and are separated from God without any hope of salvation, because under The Law of Sin and Death, if we sinned one time, we could not keep enough laws, to get that sin forgiven. So what condition was the soul of man in from Gen. 2:17 until Jesus came? Lets read it from the Apostle Paul himself in Rom. 7:24-25 and Rom. 8:1-2. Paul writes, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. We continue of reading in Rom. 8:1, there is therefore now, no condemnation, to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, (please listen carefully to the rest of this verse) hath made me free, from The Law of Sin and Death. Praise God for such a deliverance. If we can just remember what Paul has shared with us in these verses, we will have no problem in partaking of The Lords Supper in Remembrance of what it cost Jesus to set us free from, The Law of Sin and Death, and also what it cost God the Father, for setting us free.

It cost God His only begotten Son. He had to see, all the rejections of His Son while upon this Earth, and all of His sufferings and shame that He went through, before His crucifixion and death. We must think about how hard it must have been for God, to see His Son on that cross, and comforting Him, by His Spiritual Presence. And then having to remove His Presence and let His Son die alone on that cruel cross of Calvary. When God placed the sins of all the world upon Him, then we hear Jesus cry out, My God, My God why have You forsaken Me? So Jesus became the Sacrificial Lamb of God and died on that cross, and paid a debt for you and for me that we could not pay ourselves.

Question - How can some of us partake of The Lords Supper with our minds on other things? Just like we had done enough to save ourselves. When we do this, it is an abomination to God. We should be ashamed of ourselves when we have forgotten the love of God that was mightily expressed in the gift of His Son, to pay for our sins, that we could not pay for ourselves.

There are some men in the church, who are in charge of saying some remarks before we partake of The Lords supper, to help us get in the proper frame of mind, to partake in a worthy manner. And they will some times say funny things trying to get everyone to laugh, and then believe they have done their job well. To me, telling a joke before partaking of The Lords Supper is an abomination unto God. And there are some churches today, who do not believe in using unleavened bread and fruit of the vine, as Jesus left us the example for us to follow. They have changed from unleavened bread, to a bread that is not unleavened, because it tastes better, and they have changed the fruit of the vine, some to just plain water, some to wine, and on and on we could go with all of these

changes. Do we know what our problem is? We have created our own God. A God who allows us, to do what ever pleases us. If the love, that God has poured out to us, does not move us to partake in a worthy manner, I am afraid we will be lost, when this life is over.

Now lets go to 1 Cor. 11:23-29 and discuss these seven verses. Now lets read verse 23. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread. Verse 24, And when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take eat: this is my body, which is broken for you, this do in Remembrance of Me.

Question - What kind of bread was used when Jesus instituted The Lords Supper? We read in Matt. 26:17. It was unleavened bread. Unleavened bread, was a flat piece of bread which made the breaking of it very easy. The reason the bread was in flat cakes, there was no leavening power in it to cause it to rise. That would make it a loaf.

There are many divisions today on what kind of bread is to be used when we partake of The Lords Supper. Whos example are we to follow, Jesus or mans? We should all know which example we should follow, but we all do not practice the example that Jesus left us to follow.

We have some man made churches, who use bread with leavening power in it. When this is done, we do not have a flat piece of bread which breaks easily. We have a loaf, which does not break easily. It is usually cut with a knife or just tear a piece from it. It is impossible, to just break it. If we do not believe this, just try for ourselves and see if a loaf of bread will break. Now, we know for sure, the bread that Jesus used, in the institution of The Lords Supper was unleavened bread.

Question - Why is it then that some people claim to be followers of Christ, and yet they refuse to follow him? They think, that their way is better than His. If, any of us, do not follow Jesus in all His examples that He has left for us to do, we must be aware, that will bring the wrath of God upon us. Lets go to 1 Samuel 15:3 for an example. God told King Saul, you go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; and slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox, and sheep, camel, and ass. Now lets read verse 9 and see if he obeyed what God told him to do. But Saul and the people spared Agag, the king of the Amalekites,, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good , and would not utterly destroy them.

Verses 12-13 , And Samuel the prophet arose early the next morning and he came to Gilgal where Saul had set up camp. And king Saul said unto Samuel, Blessed be thou of the Lord. I have performed the commandment of the Lord. Verse 14, And Samuel said unto Saul, what meaneth then, this bleating of the sheep in my ears and the lowing of the oxen which I hear? We must notice Sauls reply, in verse 15. He said, the people, have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep, and the best of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God, and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

Question - Is this what God told him to do? No, it is not. The reason, that king Saul gave for his actions, does it sound like, it was a good thing, that the king and the people chose to do? Yes, it sounds good to me. But what really counts is, did it sound good to God? We must get this into our hearts, because if we don't, we cannot please God. Our thoughts, will never be pleasing unto God. The only thing that pleases God, is to obey what He says. What Saul and the people chose to do here, for most of us probably sounds okay, but is sure was not okay with God. Let's read what God thought about it in verse 22. And Samuel said Hath the Lord, as great a delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord. Behold, to obey is better than a sacrifice, and to obey is better than a burnt offering of the fat of rams. Now if we fail to comprehend the importance that God places on obedience to His will, we have missed the most important lesson in the Bible. But let's notice what else God has to say to king Saul for his disobedience. verse 23. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Now listen carefully. This is the mind of God speaking. It is not the mind of Herb Trout. I hope that we can all see very clearly, that disobedience to God's word, has major consequences now and eternally. Let's read 1 Sam. 15: 26. And Samuel then said to Saul, the Lord will not return unto you, because you have rejected my word, and I am rejecting you, from being king over Israel.

Question - Are we listening and learning from these verses? There is a verse in Proverbs 14:12 that sure goes along with these verses that we have been reading. Let's read it. There is a way, which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof, are the ways of death.

Question - Do we believe, that those who choose to use the loaf, (for unleavened bread) when we are partaking of The Lord's Supper, is that disobedient? I can just hear those who are guilty saying, yeah, but these verses are all in the Old Testament, and does not pertain unto us today. Those who believe that, should read Rom. 15: 4 where the Apostle Paul says, For whatsoever things that were written a foretime, were written for our learning. This means, that if God poured out His wrath on the disobedient under the Old Testament, He will still pour out His wrath on the disobedient in the New Testament days.

Let's continue our discussion in verse 25, It reads after the same manner also, He took the cup, and when He had supped saying, this is the New Testament in my blood, this do you, as oft as you drink it, in Remembrance of Me. The first thing of importance in this verse is, what was in the cup? We may be saying to ourselves, every one knows, that it was grape juice. I have had it said to me, how do we know, that the fruit of the vine is grape juice? There are all kinds of vines. It may have been a tomato vine, or a cucumber vine, and there are many different kinds of vines in our gardens. If we believe, that this is an easy subject to prove, then we need to do our own study. Then we will know for sure it was grape juice. There are some religious groups that use water for fruit of the vine and a loaf for unleavened bread. And the largest religious group in America believe that when they say a prayer of faith over the bread that it literally becomes the body of Jesus, and when they say a prayer of faith over the fruit of the vine, it becomes the literal blood of Jesus.

Question - How did all these different doctrines get started, when the Bible is so plain on this subject? We have already given the answer to that question in John 8:43. I do not want to spend a lot of time on what type of vine produced the juice that was in the cup. Lets turn our Bibles to Gen. 9:20-21 and read. And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard. And he drank of the wine, and became drunk. So we must go the Hebrew word studies to find the answer. First I would like to make this comment from just a common sense approach. Did we ever hear of some one getting drunk, from tomato juice? What about cucumber juice? And on and on we could go.

In the Hebrew word study, the word vineyard means vines, a garden, or a vintage. Now wouldnt it be wonderful, if we could find a verse, that would tell us beyond any shadow of a doubt that the word vintage is talking about grapes. Lets read Isaiah 24:13. When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. Now what have we learned? We have learned that Noah planted a vineyard and he drank of the fruit of this vineyard and became drunk.

We then studied from the Hebrew word study and found out that the word vineyard was a garden of vines, and was also called a vintage, and then we read a verse in the Bible where it said that grapes were used in the vintage. So this is all the proof that I need, to prove that the contents in the cup was grape juice. This is all that should be said to an open minded person on this subject for them to know, what was in the cup. Please listen carefully. Those who enjoy bringing up things, that can cast a shadow over the truth and cause doubt in the unlearned persons heart, can very easily fall into the same doubts that they have passed on to others. Here is something else that should be noteworthy. In Matt. 26:27-28, Jesus took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, this is my blood of the New Testament.

Question - What fruit juice comes immediately to our minds when we think of fruit juice, whos color resembles the color of blood? Would it be tomato juice? Would it be cucumber juice, or would it be grape juice? I think we would all say, it would be grape juice.

Was the grape juice that Jesus used, fermented or unfermented? The Bible does not say. When Jesus instituted The Lords Supper, He always referred to the cup, as the fruit of the vine. I believe that if it had been wine, Jesus would have said so. The Proverb writer also helps me to believe that it was unfermented wine. In Proverbs 20:1, we read, wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. Proverbs 23:20 says, be not among winebibbers. Now lets read verses 30-33. They which tarry long at the wine, and they who go to seek mixed wine, look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright, and at the last, it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Your eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

Question - Someone please tell me why would Jesus use such a strong drink as wine, which we have just read from the word of God that clouds the mind of people who drank

it? Then we hear the Apostle Paul say in 1 Cor. 11:29-30, that if we eat and drink of The Lords Supper, not discerning the Lords body, we are eating and drinking damnation to our own souls. And for this cause, many Christians are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. Can any open minded person say, that using wine in the cup sound like the God of all wisdom, that I serve? I dont think so. Yet we have hundreds of thousands of people who use wine in the cup, when they partake of The Lords Supper. What the Proverb writer is saying, you can become addicted to fermented grape juice, which will cause you to do all kinds of evil things. I would like to give another example why I do not believe that the cup that Jesus blest had fermented grape juice in it. There was a man who was setting with me and Mary one Sunday morning in the worship service. He had obeyed the Gospel, the week before. He was a recovering alcoholic. The song that we had just sang had these words in it. We break the bread, we drink the wine. Just as soon as the worship service was over, we said to him, we noticed that you partook of the bread, but you did not partake of the fruit of the vine. His answer was I am a recovering alcoholic and I cannot drink any wine or I will have to have more and more until I am drunk.

God in his wisdom knew all of these things before He ever instituted The Lords Supper, and it was no accident that only grape juice was used in the cup the communion song that we sing before we have our communion, that has these words in it that says we drink the wine, is unscriptural because wine is not in the cup. So this song does not teach the truth. Verse 26, For as often as we eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Lords death till He come. The first point of discussion is found in these words, For as often. Some religious groups partake of The Lords Supper any time that their leaders choose. The church that Jesus built partook of The Lords Supper every first day of the week, and some religious groups, do not ever partake of The Lords Supper. Some of them have a complete meal together and call it a love feast.

Question - So how can we know, how often, are we to partake of The Lords Supper? To answer this question, we must be truth seekers. If we are, we will not mind at all, in spending whatever time it takes, in studying and in prayer, wanting to find the answer for ourselves, in how often we are to partake and in what manner we are to partake. We have to start somewhere in the Bible, so lets turn to Acts 20:7 and read. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them. We learn one thing for sure, from this verse, and that is those disciples had come together, on the first day of the week to break bread. The argument, that comes from these words is, it does not say, every first day of the week. We definitely have a problem in trying to find the answer, that we can live with. There is no verse of scripture that says every, first day. So what are we going to do? The only way that I know of , is to read all other scriptures relating to this subject and then use our common sense. For example, we read in Exodus 20:8 where God told the Israelites, remember The Sabbath day and keep it holy. Here we must notice that God did not say every Sabbath. So the Jews understood this kind of wording to mean every Sabbath. This was exactly what God meant.

Question - How did the Jews know this? They used the common sense approach. Now lets read 1 Cor. 16:2. Upon the First day of the week, let everyone of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. Now lets use

the common sense approach on this verse. It seems, what Paul is saying here to the church at Corinth is, while you are gathered together on the first day of every week, it would be a good time for you to give to the church as God has prospered you. Lets notice the wording in Acts 20:7 and 1 Cor. 16:2. Both verses use the exact same words. They say upon the first day of the week. One verse talking about, how regular God wants us to partake of The Lords Supper, the other verse telling us how regular God wants us to give. Some religious groups, when they read Acts 20:7 say, the words first day of the week, does not say, the first day of every week. So this means that we are at liberty to set our own time. But then the same religious group reads 1 Cor. 16:2 which say the exact same words, upon the first day of the week, and they have no problem in understanding that upon the first day of every week, they are to give as God hath prospered them. We must remember we cannot fool God, and we will have to answer to Him for all of our deceptions.

There is another verse that I believe is noteworthy to read in our discussion on this subject, and that is Col. 2:16-17. We read, let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come. Lets not forget, what we have already studied about the things used in the Old testament that was a shadow of some good things to come. So what is the shadow? The verse that we just read said that the shadow was the Sabbath day. So the question is, how regularly did the Israelites keep the Sabbath day holy? We all know that they kept every Sabbath day holy.

Question - Using the common sense approach, in Acts 20:7, where it says on the first day of the week the disciples met together to break bread. How regular did they come together? Every first day? every 3 months?, every 6 months?, Or once a year? If we are truth seekers our answer will be, every first day of the week.

When we want to do things our way, we can come up with all kinds of ways to do that. For example, if we do not want to partake of The Lords Supper every first day of the week, then we can say, to break bread in Acts 20:7 means a common meal together. If we are willing to believe this and never try to check it out with other scriptures, then I could see why this conclusion could be reached. Lets turn our Bibles to 1 Cor. 10:16 and read, the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ, the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? Here is another example of the exact same wording, and in one verse, some religious groups believe that the breaking of bread in Acts 20:7 means, a common meal together, and in 1 Cor. 10:16 the exact same words are used the bread which we break, and in this verse the same religious groups believe that this verse is talking about The Lords Supper.

Lets discuss this for just a moment. Do we remember what we studied, on breaking bread just a few pages back? That it is impossible to break leavened bread. It always requires cutting or tearing, but unleavened bread is almost impossible to cut or tear. If we do not believe this, then just give it a try, and all we will have is, unleavened bread crumbs. Something else that we must consider is, unleavened bread was never required from God in the common meal, so where do we get any proof that Acts 20:7 is talking about a

common meal? if anyone of us has any doubts, that 1 Cor. 10:16 is not talking about The Lords Supper, then lets read verse 21, you cannot drank the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: you cannot be partakers of the Lords table, and also the table of devils. Now lets read 1 Cor 11: 27-32. They all deal with the same subject. In verse 27, Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. Verse 28, But let a man, examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. Verse 29, For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lords body. Verse 30, For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. Verse 31, For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. Verse 32, But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

Now, lets discuss these six verses. The first thing, that I want to say is, there is no way that I can do these verses of scriptures justice in their importance, and in their seriousness. It is very difficult for me to even know where to start. But we must start somewhere, so here we go. Lets begin by studying the word Unworthily, because everything that these six verses say is in some way pertaining to this word Unworthily. To find the true meaning of this word, we must go to a Greek word study. Here is the only meaning that the Strongs Exhaustive Word Study gives on this word Unworthily, and that is irreverence. This word in the New World Dictionary means - a lack of reverence, disrespect, an act manifesting our disrespect.

Question - How can we do this ? Verse 29, tells us. It is when we partake of The Lords Supper, not discerning the Lords body. As serious as this subject, is we must know the meaning of this word Discerning. In Strongs Greek Exhaustive Study, this word means, to separate thoroughly, or to withdraw from. This makes it very clear how we can partake of The Lords Supper in an unworthy manner. It would be when we separate or withdraw our minds from the act that we are involved in, which is The Lords Supper. It is very important that we discuss ways, that we can be guilty of doing this.

We will give, a lot more of our attention on this discussion, if we will first read what the consequences are, if we are guilty of this sin. In verse 29, it says, that if we are guilty of this sin, then we are eating and drinking damnation to ourselves. In verse 30, it says, that God had already started expressing His divine displeasures and judgment for their improper manner in partaking of The Lords Supper. We read in verse 30, many are weak, and sickly among you, and many sleep. These things are physical things, and not spiritual as some people think. Notice in verse 30, it says that those who are weak and sickly are among you. This word Weak in the Greek means, feeble, diseased, impotent folks. The word Sickly means, infirmed sick folks. This is the only place in the New Testament that this word Sickly is used. Now how about the word Sleep? There are only three times that this Greek word is used in the New Testament. Here in this verse 30, and in 1 Cor 15:51 and in 1 Thess. 4:14. In verse 30, it means to repose. In the dictionary, this word Repose can mean, to rest from work, rest from traveling, rest from exercise. Also it can mean-

rest as in death, or rest in the grave. So lets go to the other two verses where this Greek word is used. In 1 Cor. 15:51 we read, Behold I show unto you a mystery, we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. so we can see very plainly here that this word Sleep means, rest at death. In 1 Thess. 4;14 we read, for if we believe, that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also, which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with Him. So we can again see that this same Greek word means, rest at death.

We must learn, it was not uncommon in these times, for God in an extraordinary manner, to bring weakness, sickness, and also death, upon His own children for partaking of The Lords Supper in an improper manner.

Question - Why does God bring this severe punishment upon us for our sin, in partaking of The Lords Supper in an unworthy manner? Please listen carefully. God has a purpose, in everything that He does. His purpose is not to just whip us into doing His will. His purpose is love. God does not want anyone of us to perish, but to the contrary, he wants all of us who are partaking of The Lords Supper in an unworthy manner to repent of this sin, so when this life is over, He can take us to be with Him in Heaven forever. Lets notice, what He did not do. He did not leave us in our own sinful state, without even trying to rescue us. He could have you know. For He had already given His Son to rescue us from The Law of Sin and Death. Now he finds some of His children back into sin again. He could have just left us alone , and His action would have been justified. Notice, He did not choose to do nothing. His love for His children would not let Him do that. So what does He do? There is only one thing that He can do to get our attention, and that is, to bring upon us a form of His discipline, that will be very plain to us that this is from God. So if suddenly becoming weak, does not get our attention and cause us to see, that this weak feeling that we have, is surely from God, and Gods plan is, for that to move us to examine our lives with the Word of God and find our sin, and that will lead us to repentance. We then are back in a right relationship with God. This was made possible by Gods wonderful love for His children. Praise God for His loving discipline.

God explains His actions in Heb. 12:6-7 better than I can. Lets read it. Verse 6, For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. Verse 7, If we endure chastening, God dealeth with us as with sons; for what son is he, whom the father chasteneth not. Please read verse 10, and we can easily see the love of God at work. In this verse, God wants us to know that He finds no pleasure in disciplining us, and then He says, the discipline is for our profit, that we might be partakers of His Holiness. Isnt this good to know why God disciplines us? This will sure be a big help in our understanding of Gods discipline.

I see Gods love, in the First discipline, that God brings upon those who are partaking of The Lords Supper in an unworthy manner. I can also see Gods love at work in the Second discipline, when the First discipline failed to bring the repentance that God so much desired. But then, when the Second discipline failed to bring the repentance that God so much hoped for, it seems that God then does exactly what He said He would do to those in the church at Thessalonica, who after a certain period of time would not receive the love of the truth in their hearts. God says in 2 Thess. 2:11-12, And for this cause God

shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth.

My prayer for all of us is, that we will give our fullest attention to the seriousness that God places upon the thoughts, that are in our mind, when we are partaking of the Lords Supper. There is still so much that needs to be said on this subject. Lets read verse 31, for if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. What does this verse mean to you? What does this verse mean to me? I would like to share with you what it means to me. If we will judge ourselves means to me, that while we are examining our own minds, in preparing to partake The Lords Supper, and we find that we are not giving our full attention to the importance of what we are doing, we then will repent to God for our wrong mindset, and then partake in a worthy manner.

God will not need to bring His discipline upon us. But when we fail to examine our own selves and correct our own unworthy manner in which we are partaking, then the final chastening of the Lord, will be condemnation with the world. We all know what that is.

It is being separated from the presence of the Lord eternally.

Now lets discuss some things that can cause our minds to be distracted from partaking of The Lords Supper in an unworthy manner. I believe the first thing of importance is found in 1 Cor. 11:28. If we fail to spend the preparation time that it takes to examine ourselves, then we are missing the most important part of our partaking, according to these words of the Apostle Paul, that we have been studying. Verse 23 is where we started our study, and Paul tell us that everything that he was going to say, came straight from the mouth of the Lord. In verse 30 we have already read where the Lord told Paul, that while we are partaking of this Memorial, that we must have our minds, fixed upon His sacrificial body.

Question - Why did God do this? Because in Gen. 2:17, God put a law in force that is called The Law of sin and Death. This was a very simple law. Sin one time, and we at that moment, are separated from God. That is what Isaiah 59:2 says. God made no exception to this law, not even with His own Son Jesus. So when He placed all the sins of the world upon Jesus, he had no choice, but to separate His Presence from His Son and let Him die alone. Before Jesus died on the cross, everyone of us was under this Law of Sin and Death, and without hope, until Jesus shed His blood on the cross. Lets read it in Eph. 2:12, That at that time, we were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in this world. Now our minds should be ready to discuss this problem that some were having in preparing their minds to partake of The Lords Supper in a worthy manner.

There is no doubt about it, that we as Gods children could not be discussing, a more serious subject than this one. It should cause us to give our fullest attention to this discussion on, how is the best way to help us to prepare our minds to partake of The Lords Supper. Lets start this discussion by giving some examples that are being used in

the church today. The elders choose the amount of men that it will take to serve the communion to the members of the church, in the shortest amount of time as possible.

1. Some churches will sing one song to help us to prepare our mind and then a prayer is .

Said by one of the men for the bread.

2. Some churches have the man who is in charge of the communion service, to make a

Short talk, on what ever he chooses, with the purpose of helping each one, to prepare

Their minds for partaking of The Lords Supper in a worthy manner. Some of these

Talks are rather lengthy and has nothing to do with preparing our minds to partake in a

Worthy manner. It can cause boredom and lead to a complete loss of interest in what

He is saying.

Question - How does this approach, help us to prepare our minds for the most serious part of our worship service?

3. Some churches sing a song before communion to help prepare our minds, and then sing

Another song while we are partaking of The Lords Supper. This can be a distraction to

Some people. For example, if we are sitting in our pews, and we have our minds

Focused upon Jesus as He is hanging on the cross in our stead, and all of a sudden the

Whole church starts singing, could that possibly cause us to break our train of thought?

Here is something for us to think about, If we have prepared our minds, that means we

Are partaking of The Lords Supper in a worthy manner.How can we improve upon

That, by singing another song?

Question - How can we have our minds upon the music of a song, without affecting the seriousness of the manner in which we are to partake. Something else to think about is, what if some of us, could have our minds on two thoughts at the same time. That does not mean that all people can do that. What about those, whose minds goes to the sound of their voices instead, of the body and blood of Jesus? According to the words that Jesus taught Paul on this subject, that we have already read, we have caused them to sin and if they do not repent they could be lost.

Question - Do we really think that we put as much importance on the manner in which we partake of The Lords Supper, as Jesus told us to? If we dont, we must begin today. Our eternal destination just may depend upon it.

I would like to share with us, the best procedure that helps me, in preparing my mind to partake in a worthy manner. An elder stood before the congregation , and read to us some scriptures from the Bible pertaining to The Lords Supper. Then he said, we are now going to have a few moments of silence, for meditation, and for the preparing of our minds, to partake of The Lords Supper in a worthy manner. You could have heard a pin drop during this time of preparation. This produced an excellent atmosphere of individual prayer, and meditation without any distractions. And at the time of the elders choosing, he begin giving thanks for the bread. The reverence and the respect that was manifested during the entire communion service was something to behold. This approach in preparing our minds puts all the responsibility on each individual, and that is exactly what God said in 1 Cor. 11:28. That each one, is to examine themselves. We must all remember, when we are placed in any kind of a leadership role, what works for us may not work for someone else. Our love for one anothers souls will keep us doing that, which is best for one another, eternally.

Here are my final thoughts. We have just read that if we partake of The Lords Supper unworthily, we are guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. What does that mean? To me it means, that it would be like a Christian, setting at the foot of the cross, while Jesus is hanging above us, with His blood dropping all around us, dieing in our stead, and our minds are on worldly things. I believe when we do this we are just as guilty as those who crucified Him. There is so much more that could be said, and I want each one to know who reads this lesson, that I am well aware, that I will have to give an account unto God for every word that I have said in this lesson.

In Christian Love;

Herb Trout