

# September 27th, 2009 Part 3 of 3

## The Last Will and Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ: The Real Disciples

1 Corinthians 11: 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 27 Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. 28 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.

Over the past two weeks we have looked at the repetitions of the Last Will and Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ when He commanded His disciples "Take and eat, this is my body. Take and drink, this is my blood." Because of His Words we are guaranteed, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that we are receiving the forgiveness of sins by eating and drinking His body and blood in, with and under, the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. Today we focus in on the Ascended Lord's Words given through Paul to the believers in a local congregation in the city of Corinth. These words to the Corinthian congregation served as a warning and as a guideline for them as they do for us sinner-saints today. So that we might not fall under judgment and a curse, we look closely at the warning given to God's people concerning eating and drinking the Lord's body and blood in an "unworthy manner". We look at these words given to God's people also as a guideline so that we might receive the gracious blessing of assurance that our sins are forgiven and give honor and respect to our Lord and Savior, every time we proclaim the His death for us in this Holy Supper.

The Corinthian church was no where near a poster child for the perfect group of disciples. Their sins were numerous. Their sins were public. Their sins were against each other. Their sins were against the people they were called to serve. They sinned in worship with disorder. They sinned in their private lives with sexual perversion. They sinned by showing preference to the rich. And they were sinning when it came to celebrating the Lord's Supper, the very body and blood of Jesus Christ. Some of the Corinthian believers were coming to the Lord's Supper drunk and treating the Lord's Supper as an ordinary supper. The apostle Paul warned them of the consequences of taking the

Lord's Supper without proper preparation, judgment, even now on earth. He says that because of their sins at the Lord's Supper, some of them were dying.

26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 27 Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. What is the "therefore" there for? Because Jesus' powerful Word is there it makes the Lord's Supper, the very body and blood of the Son of God who was slain for the sins of the world. When you come to the table of the Lord in an unworthy manner, you are disrespecting not bread and wine, pastor, congregation or fellow members – you are insulting the Son of God Himself! This is no ordinary meal. This bread and this cup are the very body and blood of Jesus Christ. How dare we hypocrites approach him as if it is an ordinary common meal. Not only is it insulting the Son of God but there is also attached to the Lord's Supper God's judgment for punishment of death in this life. Paul tells them that they are falling asleep because of their unworthy eating and drinking of the Lord's body and blood.

How can anyone not be afraid to come to the Lord's Supper? Why would any sinner come to the Lord's Supper often?

26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

From these verses we also see the proper way to be prepared and worthy to be in the presence of the Lord Jesus. He gave the Lord's Supper to his disciples. Disciples, who were not perfect, instead

they were men who had weaknesses and temptations. These were sinful men who were in no way worthy to stand before the Son of God, let alone be worthy to eat and drink His body and blood. Yet they were believers – His followers. Temptation, weakness, confusion abounded among those disciples, yet they trusted the word of Christ. They had faith in His word, in Him as their Savior.

On the night Jesus told His disciples that one of them would betray him. Every single one of them asked Jesus, hoping to be eliminated from the possibility, but knowing that they could be the one because of their sinful weak heart, “Surely not I, Lord?” The disciples examined themselves and found each of their hearts to be lacking proper trust and dedication to their Lord and Savior. They examined themselves and found themselves in lacking. They were not worthy of Jesus according to their own work and merit. We too ought to examine our own hearts and lives. Are we worthy to receive the great blessing of forgiveness? Are we able to stand in the presence of God who reads our minds every thought, who sees our hearts deepest wants, and who knows our dreams before they are begun in our sleep? We are not worthy to be called His disciples. We need help.

If we are not worthy to stand before God, how can we ever receive His true body and blood and escape judgment and punishment? Paul reminds the Corinthians and us today to recognize or discern the Lord’s body and blood in with and under the bread and wine of the Lord’s Supper. If we are able to do this to judge correctly, recognize the true body and blood in the Lord’s Supper –then we will be worthy recipients of Jesus body and blood. How can we recognize the true body and blood of Jesus in the Lord’s Supper? Can we use our human senses? Do our eyes separate the difference between ordinary supper and this Lord’s Supper? Does our nose separate the difference between this ordinary supper and this Lord’s Supper? Do our tongues separate the difference between Jesus body and blood in the Lord’s Supper from the bread and wine in an ordinary supper? Our five senses let us down. They do not recognize or separate the difference out for us. We need something else to come to the Lord’s Supper in a worthy manner. We need to come with the eyes of faith that relies on the Lord’s Word, “This is my body. This is my blood” so that we might spiritually see, taste touch and feel the difference.

Faith in Jesus Christ’s words as the Son of God makes us worthy and prepared to receive the very body and blood given and shed for each of us for the forgiveness of our sins.

“I don’t feel worthy to come to the Lord’s Table. I’m ashamed. I’m afraid.” Who is it that comes to the Lord’s Table? Is it only the good people? Is the Lord’s Supper given and shed for only the people that deserve it by their great life of sacrifice? Is the Lord’s Supper a parade to display all the winners? Is it not given and shed for weak, struggling, disciples in need of help? The Lord’s Supper is strong medicine. We must diagnose our illness and trust the cure from our Lord. Examine yourself. Are you sorry for your sins? Do you believe Jesus Christ died on the cross for the forgiveness of sins? Do you believe that Jesus Christ offers and gives you His real body and blood for the forgiveness of yours in the Lord’s Supper? Do you intend to change from your life of sin and follow the Word of Jesus? If you answer yes to these questions then come with confidence and joy and proclaim the Lord’s Death until He comes with my family and me as disciples in Jesus Christ. “Glaubs du, hast du; glaubs du nicht, hast du nicht” When you believe, you have. When you don’t believe, you don’t have. Because we have faith in Jesus Christ we are his forgiven brothers and sisters and come to receive His body and blood in full assurance of safety, receiving zero punishment and judgment.

True disciples of Jesus are living in repentance. They examine themselves, recognizing their own sinfulness and trusting in Jesus Words for truth in this life and the next. Sadly today, not everyone who claims to be a disciple of Jesus is in fact trusting in Jesus Words of truth for this life and the next. Since the very body and blood in the Lord’s Supper, has been connected to a very real curse and judgment, we have a responsibility to give the Lord’s Supper to those who publicly confess with their mouth and show with their lives they are Jesus true disciples. Turning away from sin and turning to Jesus Word for help and guidance are marks of a disciple.

I have heard people say, “Oh pastor, just let them take the Lord’s Supper. It’s between them and God anyway.” Is it? God says the he holds the watchmen responsible if they fail to sound the alarm when the enemy attacks. Ezekiel 3:18 When I say to a wicked man, 'You will surely die,' and you do

not warn him or speak out to dissuade him from his evil ways in order to save his life, that wicked man will die for his sin, and I will hold you accountable for his blood. God also commands us to watch out and keep away from those who hold to false teachings, who veer off from Jesus Words. In no way could this mean, stand shoulder to shoulder with them and take the Lord's body and blood. Romans 16:17 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. We have a responsibility to the Lord and to each other to call a spade a spade. Who among us would see a neighbor's house burning down in the middle of the night and simply let him and his family sleep. The Lord's Supper is for the true disciples of Jesus Christ, who live in repentance everyday – sorry for their sins and trusting in Jesus Word's for forgiveness and strength to overcome.

Luther's Small Catechism: "Who then is properly prepared to receive this sacrament? Fasting and other outward preparations may serve a good purpose, but he is properly prepared who believes these words, 'Given and poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.' But whoever does not believe these words or doubts them is not prepared because the words 'for you' require nothing but hearts that believe.