

I CORINTHIANS 11

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to I Corinthians chapter 11 as we continue our study through the Word of God and this letter to the church in Corinth.

Over the last few weeks we have been looking at the Christian liberty that we have in Christ, which covered I Corinthians chapters 8 through 10. In other words, how are we to conduct ourselves out in the world! A very important point, especially in the days we are living in when the church looks no different than the world, and it should be!

And, as we saw last time as we concluded I Corinthians chapter 10, I believe that the first verse in I Corinthians chapter 11 belongs in that chapter.

Keep in mind that the chapter divisions and the verses were not added until much later.

As we saw, Paul used his life as an example for the Corinthian believers to follow, one that was other's-centered instead of self-centered.

The reason Paul could tell them to imitate him is because his life was centered upon Christ.

Today we hear people say, or we may have even said it at times, "Do as I say, not as I do!"

That is a cop-out! Paul lived what he believed and thus he could boldly say, "**Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.**" I Corinthians 11:1.

We too need to be examples of Jesus because the only Bible some people will read is your life, how the Lord has impacted you, how you walk!

Also, Paul is responding to a letter that was sent to him from Corinth with specific questions for him to answer, problems that had developed in the Corinthian church, as well as verbal communication about what was going on there in Corinth.

Now, beginning in I Corinthians chapter 11 and continuing through I Corinthians chapter 14 Paul will be addressing proper conduct in the local church service!

And here in I Corinthians chapter 11 Paul deals with church conduct, specifically the role or order of women in the church and we see that in verses 2-16. Make no mistake about it, this is a highly controversial subject, and it really should not be. You see, this is what the Holy Spirit gave to Paul and thus, to go against what Paul is saying is, in reality, going against what God is saying!

Then Paul deals with communion and the wrong way they were partaking of it in verses 17-34.

With that said, let's begin reading in I Corinthians chapter 11, starting in verse 2, since we have looked at I Corinthians 11:1 last week and have touched on it already tonight, and let's see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through His Word.

I CORINTHIANS 11

VERSES 2-3

When Paul says, "**Now I praise, you, brethren . . .**" is Paul speaking sarcastically to the Corinthians or is he really commending them for following what he had taught them?

To me, it would seem to me that Paul is a little sarcastic here because the Corinthian believers were not following what he has taught them but were living a self-centered life and justifying their sin.

But, even if he was sincere in what he was saying to the church in Corinth, even if you believe they were doing good and this is a commendation, Paul is still going to correct them in their error.

Now some freak out when they hear Paul say that the church in Corinth were keeping **“the traditions as I delivered them to you.”** And they reason they freak out is because we have seen the traditions that have crept into the church and many of them are not of God. So we try to avoid all these traditions.

Please understand that when Paul speaks of **“traditions”** he is speaking of those teachings that the apostles gave to them, and they in turn received from Jesus – he is talking about doctrine, so don’t let that word scare you.

Also, not all traditions are bad or evil, only if they go contrary to the Word of God or cause us to do something that will not honor God.

And then we must deal with verse 3, which is very controversial, as are other passages in this chapter.

But what we see here is that Paul is laying out God’s divine plan of authority and submission.

Now I know that scares some people, but please understand that this is not speaking of inferiority! Paul is speaking of submission to those in authority over you, this is God’s structure, not mans! We might call it God’s ***“chain of command”*** for the church and for the home!

Listen again to what Paul says here in I Corinthians 11:3, “**But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.**”

First of all, this word “**head**” speaks of headship and authority. Thus, it is speaking of the person having the responsibility to lead as well as being accountable as they lead.

And here we see Paul describe three headship relationships. They go as follows:

JESUS IS THE HEAD OF EVERY MAN

MAN IS THE HEAD OF WOMAN

GOD (THE FATHER) IS HEAD OF CHRIST

And, with the women’s liberation movement, this is a problem for many women, being under the authority of a man. We even have this crazy idea of “toxic masculinity!” Are you kidding me? We need men to be men and not women!

But let me show you how this all plays out and, after I share this with you, if you still think it is wrong, take it up with God!

Listen carefully to what I am saying here. In His redemptive ministry, the Son was subject to the Father even though He is equal to the Father (John 10:30; 14:28).

But wait a minute. Jesus said in John 14:28, “**My Father is greater than I.**” So does that mean God the Father and Jesus are not equal? Not at all. Here in John He was speaking in terms of authority and not being greater in essence and being. They are equal, both being part of the God-head!

Let me show you how this is played out and I think you will see what I mean, that God the Father and God the Son are equal.

In Philippians 2:5-8 we are told, **“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”**

In case you didn't catch how powerful that is, listen to how The Amplified Bible puts these verses, **“Let this same attitude and purpose and [humble] mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus: [Let Him be your example in humility:] Who, although being essentially one with God and in the form of God [possessing the fullness of the attributes which make God God], did not think this equality with God was a thing to be eagerly grasped or retained, But stripped Himself [of all privileges and rightful dignity], so as to assume the guise of a servant (slave), in that He became like men and was born a human being. And after He had appeared in human form, He abased and humbled Himself [still further] and carried His obedience to the extreme of death, even the death of the cross!”**

Let me ask you this, is Jesus inferior to the Father?

Of course not, but He willingly submitted His life to the authority of the Father so that man could be redeemed.

Now let's make the application here. If Jesus submitted His authority to the Father, why can't women submit to the authority of man?

The reason is simple, sin and their refusal to obey God. It is rebellion!

In Genesis 3:16, we see the result of sin in the curse as the Lord spoke to Eve, the woman, **“Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you.”**

That same word for “**desire**” is used in Genesis 4:17 as the Lord is speaking to Cain and tells Cain, “**If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its *desire* is for you, but you should rule over it.**”

In other words, the battle of the sexes began in Genesis chapter 3 for the word “**desire**” carries with it the idea of lording over a person.

You see, the woman was now going to lord over the man, usurp his position and the man was going to lord over the woman, not at all as God intended it. No longer would they live in harmony, but they would be out of tune, you might say!

You see, submission is done out of love not constraint and if you are struggling with this, ask God to help you.

Yes, in a positional sense we are one in Christ. Man is not superior to the woman or is woman superior to the man. Paul tells us in Galatians 3:28, “**There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**”

What we see is that God has laid down the structure in the family and in the church, and men are to be the spiritual leaders in the church and in their families! Not that they are smarter, better or even more spiritual. That is the order that God has set, and God means what He says and says what He means.

In fact, in Isaiah 3:12 God spoke of judgment upon His people who were out of order. He said, “**As for My people, children are their oppressors, And women rule over them. O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err, And destroy the way of your paths.**”

Judgment came because the structure of the family was turned upside down!

And when you look at the church, what you see many times are women who are doing the leading because the men are not doing anything!

When you look at the family, what you see many times are the women who are leading the family because the man does not take the role that God has called him to and that is sad and what a mess the family is in because of it.

Let me finish this up by saying this. Men, you are to love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave His life for it.

This is not a dictatorship or lording over your wife but love her unconditionally and treat her as a queen, she is God's daughter!

And when a husband is submitted to Christ and the wife to her husband in love, we see a beautiful picture of God's design for a family, for society!

If you still refuse to do as God said, if you are still in rebellion, keep in mind what Samuel said in I Samuel 15:22-23, **“Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king.”**

Again, this is not a matter of superiority and inferiority, it's a matter of authority and submission pure and simple.

And, when the Church submits to God's Word and functions willingly and joyfully in the roles He has ordained, the church is unified, blessed and effective in the work He has called us to!

VERSES 4-6

As you read this you may be thinking that Paul is making something out of nothing. What is the big deal with your head covered or uncovered?

The problem is this. It was showing authority and the order of authority. You see, it would be inappropriate for men to pray under a head covering. Let me explain it like this with this paraphrase of I Corinthians 11:4, ***“Every man praying or prophesying, having his (physical) head covered, dishonors his (spiritual) head (Christ).”*** I hope that makes sense.

Then Paul speaks of the women and how they are to have their heads covered. And Paul’s point, once again, deals with authority. You see, it would be inappropriate for women to pray without a head covering. Let me once again explain it like this with this paraphrase of verse 5 of I Corinthians chapter 11, ***“But every woman who prays or prophesies with her (physical) head uncovered dishonors her (spiritual) head (husband) . . .”*** Again, I hope that makes sense.

And let me also say this because I remember years ago, in the Roman Catholic Church, when I was growing up, women had to wear these little doilies on their head.

But we need to keep in mind that Paul is speaking of cultural practices that can be applied to our lives today, but women do not have to have their head covered!

Listen carefully to what was going on and I think you will see what I mean.

Women, in those days wore a veil to differentiate themselves from the prostitutes who wore no veil and even would shave their heads as a sign to their service to their god Aphrodite.

Now, it would seem that some of the Corinthian women saw their liberty in Christ and did not wear a veil and Paul is basically saying if you are going to do that, you might as well shave your head and identify yourself with the women of the world, with the prostitutes! And like I have said, the head covering also showed a submission to another.

Now some may wonder, “Does that mean women should put a cover or veil on their heads today?”

Not at all, it was a cultural practice and what a person wears or doesn’t wear, as long as it is not sexually suggestive, has no spiritual significance unless it did in the culture or society you are living in.

And if you really think about it, you can wear a veil and still be in rebellion to your husband, it truly is a matter of the heart!

Let me help you out here and show you that it is pretty easy to figure out if something should be practiced universally in the church today or if it was just unique for that period of time.

These principles are,

DID JESUS TEACH IT IN THE GOSPELS?

WAS IT PRACTICED BY THE WHOLE CHURCH IN THE BOOK OF ACTS?

DO WE SEE IT IN THE EPISTLES, SHOWING HOW IT IS TO BE PRACTICED IN THE CHURCH?

And this is easy to use. Let me show you how easy.

First of all, ***COMMUNION***. Do we see Jesus teach it in the Gospels? Yes, we do. Was in practiced in the book of Acts? Yes, it was. And, do we see in the epistles how it is to be practiced in the church? Yes, we do! Thus, Communion is ***universal***, it is for us today!

What about ***WATER BAPTISM***? Do we see Jesus teach it in the Gospels? Yes, we do. Was in practiced in the book of Acts? Yes, it was. And, do we see in the epistles how it is to be practiced in the church? Yes, we do! Thus, water baptism is ***universal***, it is for us today!

How about **FOOT WASHINGS**? Do we see Jesus teach it in the Gospels? Yes, we do. Was it practiced in the book of Acts? No, it was not. And, do we see in the epistles how it is to be practiced in the church? No, we do not! Thus, foot washing was *unique* for that time period and it is not for us today!

And the one we have spoken of here in I Corinthians, what about these **HEAD COVERINGS**? Do we see Jesus teach it in the Gospels? No, we do not. Was it practiced in the book of Acts? No, it was not. And, do we see in the epistles how it was practiced in the church? Yes, we do. Thus, head coverings were *unique* for that time period and it is not for us today!

Do you see how simple that is and yet, how many people get sucked into doing all kinds of crazy things that are not in the Scriptures. Be careful!

And if people still struggle with this head covering thing, they want to make this a universal practice in the church, but it is not, then look at I Corinthians 11:16, where Paul says, **“But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.”**

To kind of sum this up, one author wrote, “We know from secular history that various movements of women’s liberation and feminism appeared in the Roman Empire during New Testament times. Women would often take off their veils or other head coverings and cut their hair in order to look like men. Much as in our own day, some women were demanding to be treated exactly like men and they attacked marriage and the raising of children as unjust restrictions of their rights. They asserted their independence by leaving their husbands and homes, refusing to care for their children, living with other men, demanding jobs traditionally held by men, wearing men’s clothing and hairdos, and by discarding all signs of femininity. It is likely that some of the believers at Corinth were influenced by those movements and, as a sign of protest and independence, refused to cover their heads at appropriate times.”

Now let me add this because when you look at Jewish men, and you will see this as you look at them praying at the wailing wall in Jerusalem, they have their heads covered.

Why do Jewish men cover their heads when they pray? Because the Rabbis have misinterpreted Exodus 34:33 where Moses covered his face with a veil. Thus, Jewish men wear a yarmulke or head covering.

In II Corinthians 3:13 Paul tells us the reason Moses covered his face, “**unlike Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away.**” In other words, he wore the veil so they would not see the glory of God fading.

Here Paul is saying that if a man covered his head it would show he was under the authority of others and it would be dishonoring to Jesus who was the head of man.

Does that mean men are only under the authority of Jesus? Not at all, there are people who are in authority over us, such as pastor’s, bosses and-so-on.

Does that mean men should never wear hats? Of course not, just be aware of the cultural practices of the people you are ministering to.

Paul is going to continue on with this thought because it was a big issue in the church there in Corinth!

VERSES 7-10

This principle of a man in authority over a woman is seen in the church and in the home. Then, Paul speaks of creation and how woman was created out of man, and God made man responsible over his spouse, to care for her, to protect her, to provide for her, to nurture her. God did not make us lords over women, but leaders!

And yes, the head covering was cultural, but the point is universal in regard to authority!

I like the way David Guzik summed this up. He wrote, “Since one reason for male headship is the order and manner in which God created man and woman – something which was present before the fall – this passage makes it clear that before and after the fall, God has ordained there be a difference in the roles between genders, even in the church. The fall did not cause the difference in gender roles (in the church and in the home), and the difference in roles is not erased by our new life in Jesus.”

Now verse 10 is kind of strange. “**For this reason the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angles.**” What is that all about?

I like the way that John Stott puts it as he comments on Ephesians chapter 3. He says, It is as a great drama is being enacted. History is the theater, the world is the stage, and the church members in every land are the actors. God Himself has written the play, and He directs and produces it. Act by act, scene by scene, the story continues to unfold. But who are the audience? They are the cosmic intelligences, the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

- John Stott

In other words, the angels also know their place and show respect when they worship God, for they cover their faces (Isa. 6:2).

Also, in some special way, the angels share in the public worship of the church and learn from the church (Eph. 3:10; 1 Peter 1:12).

As one writer put it, "Public worship is a serious thing, for the angels are present; and we ought to conduct ourselves as if we were in heaven."

Now I do need to add this because some come to the conclusion that every woman is subject to every man, that they can tell you what to do?

I don't believe so even though some would like to have you believe that. In the church, women are subject to the leaders who are in authority over them, just as the men.

In the home the husband is in charge.

And when love is the basis for how we respond, there should be no difficulty in our relationship with others.

And men, let me say this. Your wife is a reflection of you, so if you don't like what you see, you need to change!

VERSES 11-12

Listen to what Barclay had to say about all this. He wrote, “Even after he has stressed the subordination of women, Paul goes on to stress even more directly the essential partnership of man and woman. Neither can live without the other. If there is subordination, it is in order that the partnership may be more fruitful and lovely for both.”

Now, keep in mind that in that culture women were nothing more than slaves, possessions of the man and even within the Jewish culture some men saw the role of a woman as nothing and had a prayer that went like this, “I thank God I was not born a slave, a gentile, or a woman.”

Jesus Christ came, and did more than women’s liberation could ever do. He made them equal with man and then re-established the order as He did in the Garden of Eden with man the head of the house, the spiritual leader of the family.

Paul, in Galatians 3:26-29 makes this very point, as he says, “**For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.**”

We are one in Christ and yet there is that willful submission to authority!

Now for those of you who have a problem with this still, listen to what Redpath tells us. He wrote, “A man who can only rule by stamping his foot had better remain single. But a man who knows how to govern his house by the love of the Lord, through sacrificial submission to the Lord, is the man who is going to make a perfect husband. The woman who cannot submit to an authority like that had better remain single.”

VERSES 13-16

Paul wants them to think about this and to use the wisdom that God has given them to judge this matter.

Now in regard to men's hair, is it a sin for them to have long hair? Of course not! If it is, what is the length that it needs to be?

The bigger issue is a man looking like a woman or a woman looking like a man, which today we see is a real problem!

Also, don't let the issue of hair, of head covering divide the church. Whatever the custom is, the practice where you are at, obey it unless it goes against what God has clearly said in His Word, but don't quarrel or fight over it!

VERSES 17-19

Paul knew their history, their problems, their divisions over issues (I Corinthians 1:10-17), and he is rebuking them for it. When the church, the body of believers got together it should edify, encourage, correct when needed, but instead they were tearing each other apart, cutting each other up, getting off in their little groups.

Sad to say I had to deal with this in our own church. There were some who would complain to others because they did not agree with what I was teaching. Another would sit in the church and say, "Heresy!" when I said things he did not agree with. And he said it loud enough for others to hear. And what they were doing was causing division within the church and that is wrong. Praise God that is no longer an issue with those people because they are gone.

But make no mistake about it, what was going on in the early church can happen in our own church and if it is not dealt with, look out!

Paul said in Hebrews 10:24-25, “**And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.**”

The Amplified Bible puts these verses this way, “**And let us consider and give attentive, continuous care to watching over one another, studying how we may stir up (stimulate and incite) to love and helpful deeds and noble activities, Not forsaking or neglecting to assemble together [as believers], as is the habit of some people, but admonishing (warning, urging, and encouraging) one another, and all the more faithfully as you see the day approaching.**”

What an important lesson for us to learn, that each of us are important in the body of Christ and we should not divide the body up but work together for the cause of Christ!

VERSES 20-22

Paul is speaking of the Agape feasts or love feasts they would have, sharing a meal and communion.

The problem here is some got to the table first and gorged themselves, even some getting drunk, while others were hungry, there was no more food.

You see, some Corinthian Christians were poor, others wealthy, and the poor ones, this could have been their only big meal and yet the wealthy were filling their stomachs and letting those in need continue to be in need.

Paul’s rebuke is if they are that hungry, eat at home so everyone may partake of this meal! Don’t be self-centered but others-centered!

Obviously, Paul is not happy with their behavior and either is the Lord. And listen to how serious this is as Paul speaks of what the Lord has done for us, His sacrifice and then the picture of communion, what that is all about!

VERSES 23-26

Keep in mind that this is an early letter and what we see here is Paul speaking of communion and specifically what that was all about. So this is very important for us to understand because it is part of the practice of the early church and it should be part of what we do today.

And keep in mind that the Passover meal was a picture of what Christ was to do and has done for us and it is here at the Passover meal that Jesus institutes communion.

The bread represented His body. The wine, the third cup or the cup of blessing or the cup of redemption, represented His blood which was shed for us, the new covenant which was found in His blood!

No longer was there the need to sacrifice a lamb for your sins for the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ came and took away our sins, He took away the sins of the world for all who would receive the free gift, for all who would receive Him!

Paul, in I Corinthians 10:16 asks some rhetorical questions, with the response being, of course it is! We are told, “**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?**”

As I have said, the sacrifice for our sins is complete by the shedding of His blood.

Hebrews 9:23-28 tells us, **“Therefore it was necessary that the copies of the things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another - He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of the ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.”**

This New Covenant that Jesus instituted at this Passover meal with communion we are to continue to celebrate, that is communion, as often as we like until the Lord returns! It is a beautiful experience with the Lord!

Now it is important for us to understand the Greek word that Jesus used for **“covenant”** when He was speaking of the New Covenant.

There is the Greek word SYNTHEKE, which speaks of a deal or arrangement or contract made by two people, each playing an equal part in this contract. If that is the word that Jesus used, then our salvation would be based on Jesus and on our faithfulness.

But that is not the word that Jesus used, he used the Greek word DIATHEK which is a deal or arrangement, or contract based upon one party, and here it speaks of God.

You see, this covenant is based upon the faithfulness of God and not man, which tells me you can't do anything to gain or lose your salvation, it is a free gift of God that you have to receive by faith, but that is not work!

It is as Jeremiah 31:31-34 tells us, **“Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah - not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”**

Praise the Lord for the New Covenant that is in His blood and cleanses us as white as snow! It is a work that He has done, and we receive by faith!

VERSES 27-28

This is an important point that Paul is making here. You see, the way the Corinthians were acting they were dishonoring the Lord and then they entered into communion, a oneness with the Lord while they were cutting up, tearing apart their brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Obviously that was very wrong behavior although they didn't see it that way, but Paul did and let them know it!

Now please, don't come to the conclusion that before you partake of communion you must be perfect, for that would exclude all of us.

The idea here is to examine your heart, prepare yourself to enter into communion with the Lord and if you have something against someone, then you need to deal with it.

One person put it like this, "To come unworthily to the Lord's table is to become **guilty of the body and blood of the Lord**. To trample our country's flag is not to dishonor a piece of cloth but to dishonor the country it represents. To come unworthily to Communion does not simply dishonor the ceremony; it dishonors the One in whose honor it is celebrated. We become **guilty** of dishonoring His body and blood, which represent His total gracious life and work for us, His suffering and death on our behalf. We become guilty of mocking and treating with indifference the very person of Jesus Christ (Acts 7:52; Heb. 6:6; 10:29)."

It is so important for us to understand that and learn from it and deal with those issues we have with others, so we don't dishonor the Lord.

Not only that but if you think about it, the Lord's table is a place where healing can take place.

Let me kind of put this into perspective for you. A doctor would never tell you to "Go home and get well and then come back and see me when you are healthy!" That would be ridiculous!

We can't make ourselves worthy to partake of communion, but we should open our heart to Him, give Him those things that are hindering our relationship with Him and enjoy His presence with us and in us!

Don't keep people away from communion but help them to prepare for it and we do that through worship and prayer.

VERSES 29-32

Many today feel that they can approach God anyway they want, and Paul makes it perfectly clear that you can't. Jesus said in John 4:24 that we must worship God in spirit and in truth.

That means we must be saved and then, we must worship God according to His Word and not how we feel.

And here we see the Corinthian church, not all of them, but some of them, have this irreverent conduct at the Lord's Supper and God gives them some corrective discipline, some even died or fell asleep! And the idea here is that if we will discipline ourselves, the Lord will not need to with His hand of correction.

We should realize that the Lord's body was given in order that our sins might be put away. If we go on living in sin, while at the same time partaking of the Lord's Supper, we are living a lie and risk being severely chastened by the Lord.

David Guzik says this about how the Roman Catholic Church takes this idea of "the Lord's body" in a unbiblical way. He wrote, "The words "**not discerning the Lord's body**" are used by Roman Catholics to support their doctrine of *transubstantiation*. Their thinking is, 'See, the Corinthians did not understand they were actually receiving the real body and the real blood of Jesus, and that is why they were guilty.' But this is a very narrow foundation that a huge building has been built upon. It is just as easy – and just as valid – to see **the Lord's body** as a reference to the church family, and it was the lack of respect and love for the church family that caused the problems of selfishness among the Corinthian Christians."

Please understand that this word "**judgment**" is the Greek word KRIMA (kree'-mah) and it speaks of judgment not damnation as the KJV translates. That is what Paul is speaking of here.

The word “**condemned**” or KATAKRINO (kat-ak-ree’-no) speaks of the judgment of the lost. And that is not the word that Paul uses here. Remember, KRIMA refers to the discipline of the saved.

In I John 5:16-17 we are told, **“If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that. All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading to death.”**

Yes, there is a sin that can cause you to be taken home early, but just because someone dies young does not mean they committed that sin.

The idea is, because God does not tell us how far that line is, don’t see how far you can push God, live for Him, bring Him glory and that will not be an issue for you!

VERSES 33-34

Paul is summarizing how they should conduct themselves at these Agape feasts. They needed to share, to love each other, look out for each other, put all their differences aside in Christ.

Remember what Paul, in Philippians 2:1-5 said, and this is from The Amplified Bible, **“SO BY whatever [appeal to you there is in our mutual dwelling in Christ, by whatever] strengthening and consoling and encouraging [our relationship] in Him [affords], by whatever persuasive incentive there is in love, by whatever participation in the [Holy] Spirit [we share], and by whatever depth of affection and compassionate sympathy, Fill up and complete my joy by living in harmony and being of the same mind and one in purpose, having the same love, being in full accord and of one harmonious mind and intention. Do nothing from factional motives [through contentiousness, strife, selfishness, or for unworthy ends] or prompted by conceit and empty arrogance. Instead, in the true spirit of humility (lowliness of mind) let each regard the others as better than and superior to himself [thinking more highly of one another than you do of yourselves]. Let each of you esteem and look upon and be concerned for not [merely] his own interests, but also each for the interests of others.”**

May we be like-minded, having the mind of Christ, live what we believe!

I love when we have our pot lucks because everyone comes together, we have those who set up, others cook, then there is the clean-up, and-so-on.

And what we see is a great time of food and fellowship and that is the way it should be. But, as we see here in Corinth, that was not always the case!

And the point here is that we need to live what we say we believe. It doesn't matter if we are at home, out at the store or in church partaking in an agape feast or pot luck!

And these love feasts or agape feasts were to show the love of God towards others and not divide and cause trouble.

Paul, in I Corinthians chapter 13:4-8a tells us what Agape love, God's love is all about and it is far different than what Hollywood tries to tell us.

Paul says, "**Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.**"

Put it into perspective, who are you living for, yourself or the Lord?

You see, this love cannot be manufactured, but it is God's love that is given to us as we surrender to Him, as we say, "Not my will, but your will Lord!"

You see, how you walk is manifested by where your heart is at, who is on the throne of your heart.

May it be the Lord as His love not only flows in us but through us! And may we be able to say as Paul said, "**Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.**" I Corinthians 11:1.