

**NEW LIFE
CHURCH CRAWLEY
DAVID DICKSON**

MESSAGE

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The story of a
sharply
divided
society

Building A Biblical Community



🔗 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, Paul calls the Corinthians to rethink their approach to this sacred meal of communion.

🔗 How can we build a biblical community through communion?

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**BUILDING A BIBLICAL COMMUNITY
THROUGH COMMUNION MEANS
ACKNOWLEDGING THE PROBLEM OF
DIVISION (v 17-22)**

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“When you come together, it is not for the better but for the worse” (v. 17)

The Lord’s Supper, a central aspect of Christian worship, became a point of contention & misunderstanding in the church.

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Called the “Agape Meal” or “Love Feast” BUT.....

- The way it was happening showed the Corinthian church was deeply divided along social and economic lines.
- Wealthier members would arrive early & feast, leaving little or nothing for poorer believers or slaves who came later.
- 1 Cor 12:13

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- 🔗 Division weakens the church's witness to the world.
- 🔗 Unity is not optional—it is central to who we are meant to be as the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:3 AMP "Make every effort to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the bond of peace [each individual working together to make the whole successful]"

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So think about some things when you join to gather with us:

- Passenger *or* Participant?
- Consumer *or* Consumed?
- Irregular attender *or* committed member?

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BUILDING A BIBLICAL COMMUNITY THROUGH COMMUNION MEANS REMEMBERING THE PURPOSE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (v. 23-26)

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“Do this in remembrance of me” (v. 24)

- 🔗 Paul reminds the Corinthians of the sacred origin of the Lord’s Supper.
- 🔗 It is a proclamation of the Lord’s death and a reminder of the unity Christ’s sacrifice brings.
- 🔗 It is taken from the very words of Jesus.

Luke 22:19

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THE PURPOSE OF THE LORDS SUPPER:

- A memorial aspect of his sacrifice on the cross
- An ongoing reminder of his death and the salvation it brings.
- An establishing of the new covenant – not one based on rules and rituals but relationship.
- A spiritual sense in which it is participation in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
- Reinforcing the identity of his followers as a community of disciples in Christ.
- It is also a sign of hope, pointing forward to the future fulfilment of God's kingdom.

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BUILDING A BIBLICAL COMMUNITY THROUGH COMMUNION MEANS UNDERSTANDING THE CALL TO SELF- EXAMINATION (v. 27-32)

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“Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup” (v. 28)

- Some Corinthians were partaking of the Lord’s Supper unworthily, leading to *spiritual* and even *physical* consequences.
- Paul emphasizes self-examination to prevent judgment.

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Paul's warning about eating the Supper unworthily is directed at the disrespect:

- Disrespect for the memorial of the body of Christ.
- Disrespect for the community of believers.
- NOT necessarily about an individual's personal moral worthiness or sinfulness.
- To partake unworthily means not considering the unity of the church.
- This failure to honour both is central to Paul's concern.

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Those who do so invite “judgment upon themselves”
(v. 29)

- **spiritual consequences** - out
of fellowship with God, impurity in the church
- **physical consequences** (v. 30) –
physical illness or weakness among those who
persist in unworthy way

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BUILDING A BIBLICAL COMMUNITY THROUGH COMMUNION MEANS LIVING IN LOVE (v. 33-34)

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“So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another” (v. 33)

- *“wait for one another”* was a practical step and a demonstration towards unity.
- It ensured that everyone, regardless of social status, could participate in the meal equally.
- **“WORSHIP” CANNOT BE DIVORCED FROM THE REST OF LIFE**

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Romans 12:10

“take delight in honouring each other”

WHAT MIGHT THAT LOOK LIKE?

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🔗 Equal participation in worship:

🔗 Building relationships:

🔗 Consideration for others:

🔗 Cultivating humility:

🔗 Practicing forgiveness and reconciliation:

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May we each play our part to be a church where everyone, regardless of background, finds a place at the table.

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