

A TIME WE CALL COMMUNION

⇒ **Text:** **1 Corinthians 11:23-34**

⇒ **Intro:**

- Ever since the early Christians met secretly in homes to remember the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, the church has been celebrating the Communion Service.
 - Of all the things we do in the church, this one event should hold the most meaning for us, and it should cause us to be humbled by the message behind the service.
- I think that, far too often, the Communion celebration is looked upon as being common place.
 - It is just something "**we do every few months**".
 - In reality, it is far more than this!
 - This time we call Communion is an opportunity for the church to worship the Lord Jesus by remembering what He did for us at Calvary and the garden tomb.
 - It is a time when we can rehearse the message of the Gospel in the ears of those who may not know it.
 - It is also a time to reflect upon our walk with Jesus as individuals.
- Today, we are going to partake of the Communion once again.
 - But, before we do, I want to draw your attention to what these verses teach us about this special time.
 - Allow me to point out several marks of this time known as Communion.
 - As I do, please look into your own heart and examine your life on the basis of what the Bible says about this event known as **The Lord's Supper**.

⇒ **I. IT IS A TIME OF COMMEMORATION - V. 23-25**

- A. These verses remind us that the Lord's Supper Service is a time for "**calling to mind**" the great sacrifice and victorious resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. When we gather at the Lord's Table for Communion, we are not offering a new sacrifice.
 - We are remembering His "**once for all**" sacrifice, **Heb. 10:10**.
- C. The idea of remembering is more than just recalling that an event took place.
 - It has the idea of stirring up the mind to relive with Jesus Christ as much of His life, death and resurrection as is humanly possible.
 - It is a time to remember that:
 - 1. He left heaven to be born in a human body - **Phil. 2:5-6**
 - 2. He became poor that we might be rich - **2 Cor. 8:9**

- 3. He bore our sins in His Own body on the tree - **1 Pet. 2:24**
 - 4. He willingly took our place on Calvary - **Isa. 53:4-6**
 - 5. He shed His blood for our redemption - **Rev. 5:9, 1 Pet. 1:18-19.**
 - 6. He conquered death for us forever - **Rev. 1:18**
 - 7. He ascended back to Heaven to finish His redemptive work and to serve as our High Priest forever - **Heb. 7:25**
- o D. It is a time to remember!
- ⇒ **II. IT IS A TIME OF CONTEMPLATION - V. 23-25**
 - o A. Not only are we to remember what Jesus has done for humanity, but we are to contemplate what His sacrifice means to us as individuals.
 - o B. Jesus died on the cross to save sinners, **1 Tim. 1:15.**
 - But, what does that mean to you?
 - Have you been saved?
 - Does His sacrifice move your heart toward Him in worship if you are saved?
 - Does the fact that He is alive forevermore thrill your soul and cause you to bow before Him in humility and worship?
 - o C. We should use this time to reflect on what the work of Christ means to us as individuals.
 - Our minds should reflect on what His death and resurrection has accomplished in our lives.
 - It is a great time to consider your personal walk with the Lord!
 - Is it all it should be?
 - Are you living in a manner that pleases Him?
 - Is your heart right with the Lord?
 - Consider your relationship to the Lord during this special time.
- ⇒ **III. IT IS A TIME OF IDENTIFICATION - V. 23-25**
 - o A. When we take the Lord's Supper, we are publicly identifying ourselves with Jesus Christ.
 - Now, it is possible for a lost person to partake of the Lord's Supper and never be saved.
 - This event holds no saving power!
 - However, for those who are saved, it is a time for us to declare publicly that we believe His death and resurrection were for us!
 - o B. Let us who have been saved by grace boldly identify ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ!
 - The Bible reminds us that those who know Him are not to be ashamed of Him, **Rom. 10:9-11.**
 - The world may call us fools.
 - They may say we use the Lord as a crutch.

- Regardless of what they say, let us take our stand with the redeemed and loudly proclaim our faith in Him and our dependence upon His sacrifice.
 - o C. The Lord's Supper Service is a prime time to identify yourself with the Lord Jesus!
- ⇒ **IV. IT IS A TIME OF DECLARATION - V. 26**
- o A. This verse reminds us that when we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we are declaring His death and resurrection to new generations of people.
 - This is to be a time of education as well as a time of worship.
 - We must always take the time to explain what we are doing when we take the bread and juice.
 - This service is a prime time for declaring the Gospel message to those who do not know it.
 - o B. That is why we preach the Gospel message!
 - We proclaim it so that men and women, boy and girls will have the opportunity to believe on Jesus Christ as all the redeemed have done.
 - Therefore, let us determine that we will ever remind this lost and dying world that there is only one source of salvation and that His name is Jesus Christ, **John 14:6, Acts 4:12.**
 - o C. In a day when many churches are becoming "seeker friendly" and others are abandoning the doctrines of salvation by grace through faith alone, let us determine that as long as there is breath in our bodies, we will strive to protect the message in this church!
 - We could compromise and draw a crowd, but I had rather preach the truth to a few than to drag a crowd behind me into a Christless eternity!
- ⇒ **V. IT IS A TIME OF EXPECTATION - V. 26**
- o A. We are also reminded that this time serves to stir up our thoughts concerning the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - The truth is, He died for us, He rose again for us and He ascended into Heaven for us.
 - There, He makes intercession for us at the throne of God.
 - But, let us not forget that He has also promised to return someday for us, **John 14:1-3; 1 Thes. 4:16-18.**
 - o B. The Lord's Supper service should serve to remind us of the fact that He is coming!
 - It should stir up our hearts by reminding us that one day soon, our Savior will return from glory to take His children home to Heaven.
 - Therefore, when the bread and juice are passed in a few minutes, remember, Jesus is coming and He is coming for a redeemed people.

- o C. Are you ready for His coming? - **Matt. 24:44!**
- ⇒ **VI. IT IS A TIME OF EXAMINATION - V. 27-31**
- o A. While all the other truths we have considered today are important, this final one is very serious in it's warning to you and me.
 - The Lord's Supper service is a time of reflection and worship, but it is also a time of self-examination.
 - We are warned against partaking of the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner.
 - This can mean several things:
 - 1. **It Is A Warning To The Lost** -
 - No one who has not been saved should take of the Lord's Supper service.
 - It is a dangerous thing to do so!
 - 2. **It Is A Warning To The Backslider** -
 - When we come to the Lord's table with sin in our lives, we open our lives up to God's judgment, **v. 29**.
 - He will chasten His children when they profess to be right with God, and yet they are harboring sin in their hearts.
 - 3. **It Is A Warning Against Taking It Lightly** -
 - Too often, people will come to the Lord's table and will not take the time to search their hearts for sin, nor will they consider the great sacrifice Jesus gave for their redemption.
 - They go through the motions, but ignore the emotions.
 - Others participate in it ritualistically and not with their minds and hearts.
 - Others trust the ceremony to save them and fail to trust the One to Whom the ceremony points.
 - Others come with bitterness and hatred in their hearts toward other believers.
 - All of these are dangerous and bring the chastisement of God into our lives.
- o B. When we partake of the Lord's Supper in a manner which degrades the truth behind the celebration, we are guilty of trampling under foot the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.
 - When someone walks on the flag of the United States in protest, they are doing more than damaging a piece of cloth.
 - They are actually dishonoring this nation and all it stands for!
 - The same is true at the Lord's Table!
 - Let us be careful to examine our hearts, our lives and our motives before we receive the elements of the Lord's Supper.
- o C. Paul's warning is serious!
 - He reminds the Corinthians that some of there number is dead because they came to the Lord's Table in an unworthy manner, **v. 30!**

- The remedy for this is for us to examine ourselves, confess our sins and right every wrong possible, before we come to the Lord's Table!
- If we will take the time to judge our own lives, the Lord will not have to judge them for us, **v. 31**.
- But, even when His chastisement comes upon us, it is for our own good, and is a product of His love for us, **v. 32**.

⇒ **Conclusion:**

- o As a child, many of us can remember our mothers telling us to **"wash up for supper."**
 - Well, that is what the Lord is telling you and me this evening!
 - Are you in a right condition to receive the Lord's Supper today?
 - Answer these questions right now:
 - 1. Are you saved?
 - 2. Is your life pleasing to the Lord?
 - 3. Are there hidden things in your life that need to be dealt with this evening?
 - 4. Is there ANY problem between you and another believer?
 - 5. Can you honestly say that your heart and life are pure?
 - 6. Are you ready to receive the bread and juice with a heart of true worship for God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ?