

COMMUNION

By Jeff Rath 4-2001

Communion, or Holy Communion as is it is often called, is a central practice and theme in Christian ministries around the world. When taught rightly and practiced rightly it is a source of deliverance to God's people. But communion is often taught and practiced incorrectly to the end that God's people are deprived of the deliverance that is rightfully theirs.

1 Corinthians 11:23-31 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:

11:24 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.

11:25 After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

It is taught by some that the bread literally becomes the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that the wine literally becomes the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. This doctrine is called *transubstantiation*. The truth of these verses is a figure of speech called a metaphor. If I go out to eat with you and I eat four large hamburgers; you might say, Jeff you eat a lot of food. That would be a simple statement of fact. If you said, Jeff you eat like a pig, that would be a simile. If you said, Jeff you are a pig, that would be a metaphor. I am not literally a pig, but the metaphor speaks to our minds with a picture and a comparison which communicates better than a simple statement of fact. Jesus Christ wanted to put emphasis on what he was saying here. This was the last meal he would eat with them before his death; he wanted to drive the point home so he used a metaphor.

11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.

11:27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, [Greek *anaxios* - out of alignment] shall be guilty [in his own mind] of the body and blood of the Lord.

These words here, unworthily and guilty, are used by some to beat down and suppress God's people into condemnation and unbelief. By our flesh we are not worthy of what God Almighty and Jesus Christ accomplished for us. But Jesus Christ made us worthy when he paid the price for us with his death. There is nothing we can do to become more worthy to partake in communion. We cannot get sanctified enough on our own to fellowship with him. But we can believe what God's Word says about us and believe that his body was broken for our healing and that his blood was shed so we could have deliverance from sins. The word unworthily is the Greek word *anaxios*, we get our word axis from *axios*. The earth spins on an axis, great cities are often laid out with several major axes to connect important parts of the city, so that they are lined up. *Anaxios* means that something is not lined up. This is referring to a believer partaking of communion, but not having his believing lined up with the truth of God's Word. This unbelief

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could be due to either wrong teaching, ignorance, or just refusing to believe the truth of the Word.

11:28 But let a man examine [Greek *dokimazo* – make an objective assessment of himself] himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.

11:29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, [Greek *anaxios* - out of alignment] eateth and drinketh damnation [Greek *krima* – judged guilty in his own mind] to himself, not discerning [Greek *diakrino* – doubting] the Lord's body.

Each believer must make an honest assessment of where his believing is. If we are out of alignment in our minds, and we are condemning ourselves with guilt and doubting God's Word then we will not believe to receive the great promises in God's Word about communion.

11:30 For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

When we do not believe and act upon God's Word then miss out on the promises of God. This is not God punishing us for being unworthy, but rather we miss out on an opportunity to receive God's best in our lives, which would be – deliverance from sin and health for our physical bodies.

11:31 For if we would judge [Greek *diakrino* – doubt] ourselves, we should not be judged. [Greek *krino* – judged guilty in his own mind]

Again, if we do not doubt God's Word, and do not condemn ourselves then we can receive the promises of God.

Romans 14:23 And he that doubteth [Greek *diakrino* – doubts] is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.

Romans 8:1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation [Greek *katakrima* – judging ourselves guilty] to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

To be “in Christ Jesus” is the same as to be in alignment with Christ Jesus; not doubting him or judging ourselves guilty.

James 1:6-8 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. [Greek *diakrino* - doubting] For he that wavereth [Greek *diakrino* – doubts] is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

1:7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

1:8 A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

If we are doubting and unstable in our minds then we don't receive the benefits of communion.

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We may go through all sorts of religious rituals, but that is no substitute for right teaching and right believing.

1 Peter 2:24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

The truth of communion is that Jesus Christ paid the price; his blood was shed so that we could have the victory over sin and Satan, his body was broken so that we could have healing and health. The act of communion has the purpose of bringing these truths to our minds. Our response to communion is to learn it, believe it, receive it, and teach it to others.

Here is a better translation of these verses from 1 Corinthians 11.

1 Corinthians 11:23 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:

11:24 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.

11:25 After the same manner also *he took* the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do you, as oft as you drink *it*, in remembrance of me.

11:26 For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death till he come.

11:27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, out of alignment or out of fellowship shall be guilty in his own mind of the body and blood of the Lord.

11:28 But let a man make an objective assessment of himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.

11:29 For he that eats and drinks out of alignment or out of fellowship judges himself guilty in his own mind, doubting the Lord's body.

11:30 For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many die prematurely.

11:31 For if we doubt ourselves, we are judged guilty in our own minds and don't receive the promises of God's Word.