

Our Partnership in the Gospel

1Corinthians 10:14-17

Keeping our Partnership Active

KSBC 11/22/09

Intro Remembering, especially memorializing someone or something, is to assign the person or thing remembered an active role in our life and world. The scriptures teach the importance of remembering the mighty acts of God, the poor, warnings from teachers and our leaders. Remembering is active. Remembering should transform both attitude and action.

Can you imagine remembering powerful acts of God and not coming away with greater courage to trust God for hard things in your life? Would it be fair to say you remember the poor without a renewed sense of compassion and an active expression of giving to help them? Is it appropriate to remember our country's veterans of war without somehow expressing gratitude or renewed effort to care for them? Remembering assigns something or something from the past an active role in our present life and world.

Forgetting is a huge problem for anyone who is serious about knowing and loving God. Forgetting is not assigning an active role to something or someone in our life. Forgetting is not 'not knowing' something. Forgetting is not 'not believing' something. Forgetting Jesus is a choice to assign an active role to other concerns and desires rather than to him. Forgetting Jesus is our allowing other concerns and desires to shape our attitudes and actions.

Jesus said, 'remember me.' Followers of Jesus are commanded to remember him in a specific manner with the bread and the cup. Prior to Jesus coming to earth and his command to remember him, God's people have always been encouraged to remember God and his loving kindness toward them. In ancient Israel it was repeated that in every generation a man must so regard himself as if he came out of Egypt. Even though the great acts of God to rescue Israel from the slavery and death of Egypt occurred centuries earlier, those truths were to shape attitudes and behaviors through worshipful remembering.

We gather around the Lord's Table this morning to remember Jesus Christ. Our desire is to do this obediently and intelligently. In other words, we pray that as a result of our remembrance, Jesus Christ will be assigned a more active role in our current lives and world. That he will actively be allowed to transform and shape our attitudes and actions.

We open our Bibles to 1Corinthians 10 to learn that it is possible for God's people to participate in the Lord's Table in an inappropriate manner. Rather than allowing Jesus Christ to have an active role in transforming their attitudes, these believers were using their participation at the Table to cover and express their own selfishness and pride. We read strong words of warning about using participation in the sacraments as a front to cover self directed living. We learn how possible it is that we senselessly try to honor both God and the devil with our lives. We are reminded of the disconnect between our careless attitude towards others and our participation at the table of the Lord. In other words, it is possible to actively participate in the Lord's Table while refusing to genuinely remember Christ – and leave feeling good about what you did.

Let's read and understand the teaching regarding the Lord's Supper recorded in 1Corinthians 10:14-17:

- 14-15 Stop setting your hearts on things other than Christ.
- 16 Consider your participation at the Lord's Table.
- 17 Consider your union with both Christ and others.

Three ways the Lord's Table causes us to connect with Christ . . . causes him to have an active role . . .

1. We examine our active confidence in Christ. 14-15; 10:1-5

Note the appeal to stop setting affections on things other than the one true God. This appeal is grounded in the love Paul has for these believers as well as the solid teaching these folks have received. We are urged along with the Corinthian church members to judge for ourselves how the truth of the gospel fits into our lives. Later in 11:27-29 this admonition is stated even more clearly. This examination of personal trust or confidence in Christ can be approached using the model or paradigm of the OT Israelites.

a. Exposure to saving power of God. 10:1-2

b. Participation in the spiritual worship of God. 3-4

c. Failure to please God in real life. 5

Cmp. 1Cor.1:30-31 – what do you boast in? 'covenant in my blood'; 'body given for you'

2. We affirm our absolute loyalty to Christ. 16; 6-13

The basic theme that connects idolatry – setting our hearts on evil things (6) – with the Lord's Table is the impossibility of honoring both God and the devil at the same time. As senseless as this sounds and as much as we have told ourselves we would never do this, we do it. The Table of the Lord is the place and time to prayerfully be drawn into purer allegiance to the one who bonded himself to us by his saving power. We have been delivered and purchased by the sacrificial death of Jesus, to whom we express unique and absolute devotion and loyalty.

Look for these 'common to man' loyalty concerns in your life . . .

a. The grip and appeal of the world to your over relaxed and undisciplined mindset. 7

b. The lack of your moral restraint when faced with opportunity for instant self gratification. 8

c. The presumption of immunity to spiritual danger due to overconfidence in your knowledge. 9

d. The acceptance of grumbling because you are a victim of trials too heavy and unfair. 10

Note the example/model paradigm: People who do not show loyalty to God are not delivered by him.

Cmp. Vs. 12 – watch out, it is opposite of what you think! V.13 – God is faithful in these!

Cmp vs. 21-22 trying to arouse the Lord's jealousy/anger?

3. We commit to loving one another for Christ's sake. 17; 23-24

Note the larger contextual issue of the strong vs. the weak in behavioral issues and personal freedom (8:9-13). The picture of one bread and many partakers points to the absurdity of a self-centered approach to our lives. We are drawn at the Table to a sacrificial concern for others like our Lord and Savior's.

a. You remember the people around you as precious for Christ's sake. 8:11-13

b. You remember to seek the welfare of others above your own as Christ did. 10:23-24

c. You remember to become the slave of everyone for the sake of the gospel. 9:19-23

cmp. 11:17-22 – lack of care and submission to one another

cmp. 1Cor 13 as response to core issue of Corinthian self centeredness.

Take Aways

1. Pray and reflect.

Ask God to search your heart and help you understand clearly where your confidence, loyalty and love are placed. Acknowledge to him your failures to trust and love him completely. Seek his forgiveness and restoration to fellowship.

2. Consider and commit.

Express your confidence, loyalty and love in new and fresh ways today. Assign Christ an active role in your life and world today in these areas.

3. Rejoice and give thanks.

Participate today in the Table of the Lord with renewed joy and gratitude for God's loving and powerful salvation from your sin. Assign Christ an active role in your attitude of joy, hope, contentment and gratitude today.

Study Questions

1. Read 1Corinthians 10:1-33. What are your observations about the link between the Lord's table and idolatry?
2. In what ways does 10:6 help you understand the command of 10:14? What is a paradigm? What is the paradigm or model being taught in 10:1-5 and 10:7-10? Does the paradigm relate to you today? Why? How?
3. Read and evaluate the definition of biblical remembering in the first 4 paragraphs of the sermon notes. What stands out to you as helpful, clarifying or wrong? Why?
4. What attitudes did the Corinthians bring to the Lord's Table that you find yourself relating to or perhaps sharing? Describe idolatry as it may appear in a contemporary Christian's life.
5. Do you think that appropriate participation in the Lord's Table is a way to flee idolatry? Why? How?
6. Share how you evaluate or examine your own heart regarding issues of confidence, loyalty and love. Support your examination method from scripture if possible.
7. Review the four 'common to man' loyalty issues in point #2. Which do you struggle with if any? Did these issues keep the Corinthian believers from participating in the Lord's Table? Should they have altered their participation somehow? How can you demonstrate greater loyalty to Christ in your life right now?
8. What is the connection between idolatry and care /compassion for people? What does becoming a slave to everyone (9:19) look like in your life? How is it connected to the Lord's Table?
9. What do you want to do, use or remember from today's study?