

World Communion Sermon

October 4, 2015

1 Corinthians 11:17-34

[Adam Dixon]:

First, here is the context - The Corinthians were viciously fighting over the meaning of the Lord's Supper. The Lord's meal has become a tool to divide instead of communion.

Unfortunately, Paul is not able to be here this morning – he is busy putting out fires in the Ephesus congregation. So, he sends Paulette, his partner on the mission field, to bring his message. Paul does not mince words – his tone is patronizing and he loses his temper. Today - Paulette is talking to the Corinthian Church about the Lord's Supper (paraphrased from I Corinthians 11) and Roger is the voice of a modern-day prophet (verses from Amos, Jeremiah, and Micah.

This is a hard message. You can see what you think.

[Joy/Paulette]:

I am not at all pleased with all these divisions. I get the picture that when you meet together it brings out your worst side instead of your best!

First, I get this report on your divisiveness, competing with and criticizing each other. I'm reluctant to believe it, but there it is. The best that can be said for it is that the testing process will bring truth out into the open and confirm it.

And then I find that you bring your divisions to worship—the exact place where we are to imitate Jesus and be the Body Christ. But when you come together, and instead of eating the Lord's Supper - you bring in a lot of food from the outside and make pigs of yourselves. Too many are left out, and go home hungry. Others have to be carried out, too drunk to walk.

I can't believe it! Don't you have your own homes to eat and drink in? Why would you stoop to desecrating God's church? Why would you actually shame God's poor?

[Roger/Modern Day Prophet]:

Children remain the poorest age group in America. Nearly 1 in 6 lived in poverty — nearly 11.9 million children. Your youngest children are the poorest and nearly 73 percent of poor children in America are children of color.

During Covid 19 those who are homeless, are twice as likely to be hospitalized, two to four times as likely to require critical care, and two to three times as likely to die. I hear your shelters do not have the space, medical and sanitation equipment, funding, or other resources.

Jeremiah said: "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord God, "When I will send a famine on the land, not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, but rather for hearing the words of the Lord."

[Joy/Paulette]:

I never would have believed you would stoop to this. And I'm not going to stand by and say nothing. Let me go over with you again exactly what goes on in the Lord's Supper and why it is so centrally important. I received my instructions from the Master himself and pass them on to you.

Jesus, on the night of his betrayal, took bread. Having given thanks, he broke it and said, this is my body, broken for you: (pause)

[Roger/Modern Day Prophet]:

Hear ye, hear ye! You are the body that speaks truth to powerful people. This is Jesus' body weeping because the African American mother grieves her son killed by those, she expected to protect him. This is Jesus' body broken because white supremacists are praised for divisive intentions. This is your body that keeps silence.

Amos: "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."

[Joy/Paulette]:

This is the body broken for you. Do this to remember me.

After supper, he did the same thing with the cup: This cup is my blood, my new covenant with you. Each time you drink this cup, remember your Lord

[Roger/Modern Day Prophet]:

Remember the covenant we have with the earth and every creature.

Remember your baptismal promise care for all children.

Remember the golden rule love one another as God loves us.

Remember “your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free”.

Remember to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.

Gospel of John says: “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

[Joy/Paulette]:

Jesus said, every time you drink this cup, remember me. What you must realize is every time we eat this bread and every time, we drink this cup, we are reenacting with our words and actions the death of the Master. And you will be drawn back to this meal again and again until the Master returns. You must never let familiarity breed contempt.

Anyone who eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Master with disrespect is like part of the crowd that jeered and spit on him at his death. Is that the kind of “remembrance” you want to be part of? Examine your motives, test your heart, come to this meal in holy awe.

If you give no thought (or worse, don’t care) about the broken body of the Master when you eat and drink, you’re running the risk of serious consequences. Anyone who eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Master with disrespect, is like part of the crowd that jeered and spit on him at his death.

[Roger/Modern Day Prophet]:

The UN reports around 7 million people have died - one in eight of total global deaths – as a result of air pollution exposure.

Climate change and global warming has reduced the amount of Arctic sea ice for Polar bears to hunt seals on. Their access to food sources, diminishes their natural habitat, and threatens their overall survival.

Micah says: “No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.”

[Joy/Paulette]:

If you get this straight now, you won't have to be straightened out later on. It is better for the Master to confront you now, than to face a fiery confrontation later. So, my friends, when you come together to the Lord's Table, be reverent -be courteous with one another. If you're so hungry that you can't wait to be served, go home and get a sandwich.

But by no means risk turning this Meal into an eating and drinking binge or a family squabble. It is a spiritual meal—a love feast. The other things you asked about, I will let Paul respond in person when he makes his next visit.

[Roger/Modern Day Prophet]:

What do you do in the meantime?

Speak out when you hear someone say something hurtful do another.

Be Earth Angels –

Reach out to the least of these

Wear your masks.

Love each other.

And pray a lot.

Take the Feast to the Homeless

He's already made it plain how to live, what to do, what God is looking for in you. It's quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbor, be compassionate and loyal in your love, And don't take yourself too seriously — take God seriously.

Joy: You are the Body and a Cup of Blessing for Christ – Amen.