

Come to the Table (Communion Service)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 05 July 2026

Preacher: Brett Sanders

[0:00] Amen. Amen. Children, we are ready for Children's Church at this time. You may make your way to the front over here. And as they're making their way out, I just want us to think about that last verse that we just sang for just a moment.

Listen to these words. Two wonders here that I confess, my worth and my unworthiness. My value fixed, my ransom paid at the cross.

What a wonderful reminder for us as we come together today to celebrate and think about Holy Communion. And as we get our hearts and minds prepared for that, I just also want to encourage you to think about those who aren't with us.

Some today may be on vacation. We have many that are doing that. But also, we've got a team, a group that is not here today because they left at about 6 o'clock.

It's more 6.30 this morning to make their way down to Clarkston, Georgia, where they will be spending the remainder of this week serving Clarkston International Bible Church and their camp encounter.

[1:08] And so I want to encourage you to pray for that mission team as they are in Clarkston this week. A few of us are going to try to make our way down throughout the week to see them, to encourage them.

It is a wonderful ministry that I'm so thankful that we get to be a part of. But in addition to that, we have some that will be traveling to Hong Kong this week. We have a dental bus that will be taking place here at the church later on at the end of this week.

So there's so many things that we get to be a part of, of serving and taking the gospel message throughout the world. But this morning, today, I just want to say happy 4th of July weekend.

This is a big year in the history of our country for 250 years now. We have been declaring our independence. And for us here today, we have the privilege of having many, many freedoms.

And let's be honest, a lot of times we take those freedoms for granted. As a nation, as a people who make up this great nation, we are grateful for and we celebrate our independence.

[2:19] But as believers, we come together today celebrating and observing the Lord's Supper, remembering the fact that we are to live in dependence on Jesus.

As a country, we celebrate our independence, that we do this on our own. But as believers, we come together today thinking about the Lord's Supper, thinking about communion, remembering the fact that we must live in dependence on Jesus for everything.

This week, we're going to be taking a break from Hebrews and looking at 1 Corinthians chapters 10 and 11. Now, if you brought your Hebrews journal with you, I'm so excited.

It blesses my heart each and every week to look out and see people take their Hebrews journals out, make notes in it. I love seeing that. But today, you may just have to put it beside you and grab a Bible in front of you if you want to follow along.

But we're going to be looking at some passages in 1 Corinthians 10 and 11 today. We're going to start reading in just a moment in chapter 16. But before we do that, in a church, there's always going to be some diversity.

[3:38] And this is a beautiful thing. This is a wonderful thing. We'll have diversity of age, background, class, and race, diversity in our preferences, in our different styles of worship that we prefer in technology.

We can celebrate all of these different diversities when it comes to the church. We even have diversity in our convictions over secondary matters and our political approaches.

And this is just to name a few. But Jesus' vision of the church was not uniformity in all things cultural, but a unity in Christ that outweighs many distinctions in these secondary things.

You see, as a church, we have strength in our diversity. It's wonderful that everybody is not just like me or just like you.

I'm thankful that you didn't say amen when I said everybody's not just like me. But we have diversity within the church. And this is a healthy response to what it should look like.

[4:47] There should be some diversity there. But there's things that we come together on, that we remain unified on, that help us with that strength in diversity.

For the Corinthians, the one place that should have most displayed their unity, their sense of coming together around the Lord's table only highlighted their divisions.

And so before we get into those divisions, I think it's important for us to see the Lord's table, the Lord's Supper as a place of unity.

And so in the passage, we're going to see the Lord's Supper is a time for coming together. The Lord's Supper is a time for coming together. Listen to those verses in 1 Corinthians 10, starting in verse 16.

This is what the Word of the Lord says. It says this, The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

[5:57] Because there is one bread. We who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. Paul here tells us that communion, the Lord's Supper, is a place that we should draw near to.

This should be a familiar place for us, a time that brings us together. There is a right place, there's a right time, there's a right people with whom we should regularly fellowship with.

At the Lord's Supper, we draw close to Christ in participation with our spiritual family. And I think we can oftentimes realize this when we begin to think about what a shared meal together does for us.

I've shared with you many times, one of the things that my family loves to do around the dinner table each night, is when we come together, we have a high, low, but you don't know.

And that means that we go around the table, and everybody shares something that was wonderful that happened to them that day. Their high for the day. And then everybody will share their low for the day.

[7:06] Something that didn't go quite according to plan. And then a bet you don't know.

Something that the rest of us may not know that happened to that person during the day. And rarely do we ever have to get this cake top because Charlotte will say, Hi, low, but you don't know, I'm going first.

And immediately starts sharing about her day. And so she loves to do that time. But this time together around a meal is a time for remembering.

Foods have a way of bringing us back. I can remember one of the most special times that we had on a mission trip from time to time is being in Managua, Nicaragua.

And we had been in some pretty remote places throughout the week. And during that time, every meal pretty much consisted of rice, beans, plantains.

Some of you are smiling because you were on that trip. And yet we had that every single day, just fixed a little differently for the different meals. And one of those special times was when we came back together and went to Pizza Hut.

[8:11] You know, we may not go to Pizza Hut all the time, but that was a time it just kind of brought us back home for a moment because it was something that we recognized. For others of us, it may be different times for holidays.

You know, Thanksgiving is just not Thanksgiving if you don't have this to go along with the meal. For me, I know this may offend some of you. I'm not a big fan of turkey. But green bean casserole, that means Thanksgiving for me.

That means, all right, this is, this is, Thanksgiving meal is not a Thanksgiving meal. There's not green bean casserole there. And we have these different things for us, these traditions that when we experience this food, it reminds us of something.

And so the Lord's table, the Lord's Supper should be a place of remembering. This table for believers should be a time that draws us together.

And this is one of the reasons we wanted to have a combined service today. A few years ago, we started this of every time that we have the Lord's Supper communion, we want to do this where we all come together.

[9:23] Because we do have differences in different things in our lives. We have, there's diversity within this church, and that's a wonderful thing. But we come together focusing on the most important thing, the thing that brings us together, and that is Jesus.

You know, it's not convenient to do this. It comes with challenges. There's a lot of confusion this morning on different start times of when we're doing things. Parking can be an issue when we do things like this.

But it's worth it because it reminds us we're able to come together around this table. The Lord's Supper is a time of fellowship that brings us together as a family and reminds us that while we may have many differences in our life, we can agree that our only hope in life and death is Jesus Christ. So we come to the table together today. And as we turn to chapter 11, we begin to see some issues that the church was having as they came together to participate in the Lord's Supper.

And so if you have that, your Bible's still open, turn it over to the next chapter, to chapter 11. And I want to encourage you to follow along as we start reading in verse 17.

[10:46] This is what the Lord says. It says, But in the following instruction, I do not commend you, because when you came together, it is not for the better, but for the worse.

For in the first place, when you came together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and I believe it in part. For there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized.

When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk.

What? Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you?

Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not. For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night that he was betrayed, took bread.

[11:51] And when he had given thanks, he broke it, and he said, This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me. In the same way, also, he took the cup after saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread and drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.

But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined, so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

[12:57] So then, my brothers, when you come together, eat. Wait for one another. If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that when you come together, it will not be for judgment.

About other things, I will give directions when I come. And so this passage gives us a word of warning when it comes to approaching the Lord's table.

What we see here is that there is a wrong way of coming to the table. From this passage, we clearly see there is a wrong way of coming to this table.

The warning comes in verse 27. It says, Whoever therefore eats the bread and drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord.

Let a person examine himself, and then so eat of the bread and drink the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself.

[13:57] That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. Now, that's a lot to take in. That puts a little different perspective on our lives when we think about taking the Lord's Supper.

Some people were taking the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, and Paul says that is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.

Well, what does this mean? Well, it means that some people got sick and died because they were taking the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner. Now, this doesn't mean that this is something that happens every time we take the Lord's Supper in vain.

This isn't something that's a guarantee to happen, just like someone who is dishonest about what they give to the church concerning their gifts, and it shows dishonesty there. It's not always

immediately struck dead like Ananias and Sapphira, but this is calling us to take this time seriously. It's calling us to think about our lives. This meal is for believers. The Lord's Supper is a holy and sacred practice in which believers come together as a body, as a unified body to remember, to meditate on, and to celebrate the atoning death of the Lord Jesus for the forgiveness of sins.

[15 : 24] Now, to understand the strong warning, we must understand the context in which this is written. In the city of Corinth, a meal was an occasion for gaining or showing a social status.

It was a time when you could kind of show off how well you were doing. You would have an extravagant meal and bring everyone in. It was in many ways regards a microcosm of the aspirations and aims of the culture as a whole.

This unfortunately found its way into the church. How often does that happen? Some of the negative things in our culture find their way into the church.

And because there were no church buildings, the church typically gathered in homes. And it was usually the home of a wealthy person since their homes would have been larger and big enough to house the church.

And this meant this meal that they were sharing wasn't just a cracker and juice. It would have been a full meal. Gathering information from this passage, it helps us to understand that what was actually taking place is that there were people, the wealthy people were inviting certain people to come in and gorge themselves and enjoy this meal before everyone else.

[16 : 43] And so that when everybody else came in, the poor people who were coming to church, there wasn't any food for them. They weren't able to experience this. They were eating and they were getting drunk. And then when the poor arrived, there was no place left for them and no food for them to eat.

So you have some who are feasting and getting drunk and others who had nothing. And they were calling this the Lord's Supper. And they were calling this a time of remembering Christ.

Now, no one in here is in danger of gluttony and getting drunk from crackers and Welch's grape juice. That's not going to happen. But it does call us to examine ourselves.

It does call us to look at ourselves. First and foremost, am I a believer? This special time is for believers, those who profess Christ.

Also, is there any unrepentant sin in my life? Are there unresolved issues with a brother or sister in Christ? Now, I'm not talking about for you to ask yourself, am I perfect?

[17 : 50] We're going to get to that in just a moment. But we are called to examine ourselves as we come to the table and make sure that we are approaching the table with the right heart.

And so finally, as we look at this passage, I want us to understand that since there is a wrong manner in which we can come to this table, we must genuinely ask the question in our lives, how do I come to the table?

How do I come to the table and partake in this meal? Much of this idea is wrapped around verse 26. It says, for as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

You see, the Lord's Supper calls us to look to the past as we remember our Savior's sacrifice for our sins on the cross. But now, Paul is also telling us to look to the future as well.

Yes, we look to the past. We look at what Christ has done. But it's also a time that we proclaim and look to the future.

[19 : 06] Danny Akin said it beautifully this way. It says, the Lord's Supper should certainly be a time of careful meditation and reflection. But it should also be a time of joyful anticipation and celebration.

Yes, Jesus died, but he rose from the dead and he's coming again. This understanding of the Lord's Supper is what excites me the most about coming together as a church, remembering what Christ has done, about coming together.

You know, for much of my life, and I probably would say that many of us in here could identify with this, that I had the solemn part of the Lord's Supper down pretty well.

You know, you're supposed to just sit there, head bowed, eyes closed, with a very serious look on your face, remembering what Christ has done. And there's part of that to it. But it's also a joyful time, remembering what Christ's sacrifice accomplished for us, that we get to have a relationship with him, that we get to experience a relationship with him.

Jesus said, do this in remembrance of me, not in remorse of me. We do this in remembering what Christ has done for us. So yes, we come to it very solemnly.

[20 : 23] But yes, we come to it with much joy in our hearts as well. So as we come to the table, first let us come with thanksgiving.

It says, For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it.

The table is a time where we proclaim our thanks to God. But also, as we come to the table, we recognize this meal is for sinners.

It says that when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, This is my body, which is for you. If you are a you here today, then I have good news.

No matter your background or the things that you've done, what Jesus accomplished on the cross can be counted for you. By placing your faith and trust in Jesus, you can go from death to life.

[21 : 27] And if this is something that you have done, place your faith and your trust in Jesus, then he invites you to the table. Not on the basis of your works, but on the basis of his works, of what he accomplished on the cross.

And so let us go to the Lord in prayer, asking him to prepare our hearts and minds as we experience the Lord's Supper. Father, thank you so very much for everything that you do for us. Thank you for the sorrow and the joy that come together at this meal. Be with us as we prepare our hearts and minds to remember all that you accomplished on our behalf.

Lord, I pray that this meal together, this time of fellowship will be a time of remembering and the sorrow of remembering the cross, but it will also be a time where we proclaim what you have done, where we proclaim the joy that we get to experience because of your finished work on the cross.

And so Lord, help us to remember well what you have done and the promises that we get to experience because of that. And we ask all of this in Jesus' name.

[22 : 49] Amen.