

Washington church of Christ

27 Grand Avenue, Washington, NJ 07882

Phone: 201-546-1284

washingtonnjchurchofchrist.com

The Washington Messenger

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November 9, 2014

Order of Services Sunday November 9, 2014

Song Leader	Tom Dolan
Prayer	Arnold Thompson
Preaching	Bob James
Lord's Supper	
Prayer for the Bread	Ralph Ruggiero
Prayer for the Cup	David Osinski
Prayer for the Collection	Brian Jeffries
Assisting at the Table	Bob DeGrado
Morning Closing Prayer	Scott Thomas
Evening Opening Prayer	Derald Sanchez
Announcements	Matt Grimaldi

Schedule of Weekly Services

Sunday Morning Bible Classes	9:30 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Classes	7:30 pm
Thursday Morning Bible Study	11:00 am

The Lord's Supper...

A few years ago I sat in a class where brother Sewell Hall conducted a class for men on Leadership. One of the topics he presented was how men should lead while performing the physical acts of our worship. When he addressed the Lord's Supper, he challenged us to create a short talk and not use the 1 Corinthians 11:23-34 passage. The objective of this exercise was to acknowledge that Paul's discourse in this passage is arguably the most used for the Lord's Supper, and to show us that there are many other passages of Bible scripture appropriate for the communion.

For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

(1 Corinthians 11:23-25 NKJV)

We learned a lot from this exercise, and Swell's point was well taken ... and yet whenever I prepare to speak at the communion table I invariably reflect on Paul's words in this passage. For in this brief account He makes at least four statements to remind us of the Lord's Supper's true meaning.

First, the Lord's Supper is about God's gift. We see the work of sacrifice in Christ's words "*this is My body which is broken for you.*" In this statement Jesus is identifying Himself with the lamb that was sacrificed in connection with the Passover. But we miss the full meaning if we interpret the admonition to "*do this in remembrance of Me*" (1Coorthinans 11:24) as a call to remember only His death. We are to remember that His death brings life ... but we are also to remember His life and His teaching, His Resurrection and the hope that it brings, and we are to remember His purpose in the world. Jesus, the Christ, wants us to remember everything about Him ... His love for us, His forgiveness, His purpose, His hope, His presence, and His power.

Secondly, the Lord's Supper celebrates a new covenant. The history of Israel was the story of a covenant that God initiated with them. It was a relationship in which He acted on their behalf and asked from them obedience in return. When Jesus said, "*This cup is the new covenant*" (1Cointhians 11:25), He was announcing that He was entering into a relationship with those for whom He was to die upon the Cross. We are more

familiar in modern times with contracts than we are with covenants. Often when we buy a house or sell a house, borrow money, or take a job, we are asked to sign a contract. This means that we enter into an agreement according to the terms of that contract. Paul's words in this passage remind us that we have entered into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and this relationship has demands connected with it.

Third, there is in the observing of the Lord's Supper a proclamation. Christ tells us that every time we take the communion we "*proclaim the Lord's death till He comes*" (1Corinthians 11:26). This proclamation is not in what we say, but in what we do. When we commune on the first day of the week we, through our actions, proclaim the Jesus' death and burial, while our faith in the phrase "... till He comes ..." declare His resurrection. It's almost as though in this Supper, Christ gave the church another way of preaching the gospel, a way for the eyes to see as well as for the ears to hear.

And finally, the exhortation Paul adds (1Corinthians 11:27-34) is an effort to apply the Words of Jesus about the institution of the Lord's Supper he has just referenced to the abuses being practiced in the church at Corinth. His main point was that the observance ought to cause everyone who participated to stop and examine themselves. The warning not to drink of the cup "*in an unworthy manner*" (1Corinthians 11:27) was not intended to introduce a new topic to the discussion ... but rather it was a reference to the divisiveness, the selfishness, and the drunkenness that had crept into the observance there at Corinth. Paul was in effect saying, "Take a look at what you are doing. Do you think your activity is worthy of such a sacred rite?" Unfortunately, there are many today who misunderstand Paul's words and as a result create all sorts of anxiety in their minds and hearts as they come to take the Lord's Supper.

What does it mean to take the Supper "unworthily"? Does it mean that we are to be unworthy of such a sacrifice? Does it mean that those who do not have perfect lives should not participate? Does it mean that if we can think of any way in which we do not measure up that we should not participate? The answer to all these questions is "no." This is not a discussion of the character of the worshipper but the conduct of the worship. The Lord's Supper is a continuing reminder that there is forgiveness for the sinner and strength for the weak through the sacrifice of Jesus. But the warning is not to come to it when we are insensitive to His presence, unloving to our fellow church members, or in general regretful for His great sacrifice on our behalf. If we are truly in the proper spirit of the Supper we will have a heightened sense of our own unworthiness and of God's grace. This awareness of God's love for us ought to make it easier for us to love one another. And after all, is love not what the sacrifice is all about?

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16 NKJV)

Our Prayer List...

For Spiritual Responsiveness – Those studying with us in the Thursday morning Perkin's Study ... All of our wayward members

For Physical Healing – Ellen Jinks - Bill Duryea's Parents ... Arnold and Ray Thompson ... Georgia DeLorenzo

For Wisdom and Good Judgment – The Leaders of our congregation ... the leaders of our nation

For God's Care and Good Providence – Our young people away at college ... Our young people here at Washington ... our members who are traveling ... the men and women in military service ... our congregation ... the Evangelist and Teachers We Help Support

EVENTS AND NOTES

- ▲ AREA GOSPEL MEETINGS...
 - PISCATAWAY NJ – NOV 14TH – 16TH, WITH LOWELL SALLEE.
- ▲ THE CHURCH IN FAIR LAWN WILL HOST A SONG LEADING AND CONGREGATIONAL SINGING CLASS ON NOVEMBER 21ST – 22ND. JOHN WIEGAND WILL CONDUCT THE CLASS. MORE DETAILS TO COME.
- ▲ BROTHER EDWARDS' LESSONS ARE ON THE WEBSITE. LET'S ALL SEEK TO USE THEM IN OUR EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS!
- ▲ OUR NEXT THURSDAY MORNING STUDY WILL BE ON OCTOBER 30TH AT THE PERKIN'S RESTAURANT IN PHILLIPSBURG STARTING AT 10AM. ALL ARE WELCOME TO PARTICIPATE WHENEVER YOU CAN ... MORE IMPORTANTLY INVITE THOSE WHO MAYBE SEEKING JESUS!
- ▲ DON'T FORGET TO JOIN OUR "MEET-UP" SITE ON THE WEB ... [HTTP://WWW.MEETUP.COM/THURSDAY-MORNING-BIBLE-STUDY-AT-PERKINS-IN-PHILLIPSBURG-NJ](http://www.meetup.com/Thursday-Morning-Bible-Study-at-Perkins-in-Phillipsburg-NJ) ... CHECK IT OUT!