

Coming Together for Better or Worse

Most believe the church is “unnecessary and irrelevant”

- Few want to study Bible on their own, much less in groups
- Of the few who do study, some say, “no church, no church...”
- Ignorance + bad press increases the problem

It is a serious matter to despise
the Lord's church: 1 Co.11:22

1 Co.11:

17: not suggestions but orders, commands; instructions

- They come together for the worse?
- Passover meal: Lord's supper established
- Did Corinthians turn it into a common meal? ...or revert back to Passover?
- Two features connect Passover and Lord's supper...
 - eating bread; drinking fruit of vine
 - these recall crucified body, shed blood

1 Co.11:

18: Not “if” but when: no church is so strong or mature that we can dispense with such meetings

- As a church (lit., ‘in church’)
- Athens: citizens assembled for political purposes
- NT: Christians meet in local congregation
- But the Corinthians were divided
 - There must be some truth in reports (1:11; 5:1; 16:17-18)

1 Co.11:

19: Factions – class divisions (rich vs poor)

- Also racism?
- Parties result from divisions

Evil tests our spiritual strength,
wisdom, leadership...

- Without tests, we don't know our mettle...

1 Co.11:

20: In same place, but not to eat Lord's supper

- In same place, but not same practice
- Merely swallowing is not enough
- They eat 'a' supper, not Lord's supper
- Whose supper is it?

1 Co.11:

21: 'Each goes ahead with his own meal' (ESV)

- Some ate before others could share
- A meal designed to express unity...
- Ac.2:44
- Corinth: stingy

1 Co.11:

21: 'Each goes ahead with his own meal' (ESV)

- 'Drunk': contrasts with *hunger*, not *sober* [*full* instead of *hungry*]
 - Is.55:10, water the earth (*soaked*)
 - Is.58:11, drunk field (*watered*)
 - Jn.2:10, normal dilution: one part wine, three parts water

22: Paul did not encourage drunkenness at home (6:10; Gal.5:21)

1 Co.11:

22: Contrasts 'haves' and 'have nots'

- 'Houses' contrasts with their meeting place
- Of all places to display selfishness and favoritism... Ph.2:21

1 Co.11:

23-34: restoration attempt: they must get it right

- Churches that met at homes had to distinguish between Lord's supper and regular meals
- 34: 'If you come together merely to satisfy your hunger, just stay at home'

Their coming together was
'for the worse'

I. Coming Together

Required

- “Come together” – 5 times: 11:17-18, 20, 33, 34
- “In church” – 1 time: 11:18 (assembly required)
- They assembled “every” first day of the week (16:1-2)

I. Coming Together

II. Carnal Coming Together

In coming together, they were coming apart

1. Rebuked by apostle, 17
2. Divisions, 18-29. 2 Co.2:14 (10:16-17)
3. Were not eating Lord's supper, 20-21
4. Selfish indulgence, 21-22
5. Ignored Lord's pattern, 23-25
6. Judgment, 27-30. 29, verdict: eat condemna-
tion upon oneself

How might we come together for the worse?

1. In ignorance, Gn.4; Lv.10
2. Forget blessings of worship, Isa.1
3. Ritual without meaning, Mal.1:12-13
4. With malice toward some, Mt.5:23-24
5. Practice doctrines of men, Mt.15:8
6. Change purpose of worship, 1 Co.14
7. Do what pleases us, Col.2:23

I. Coming Together

II. Carnal Coming Together

**III. Consecrated Coming
Together**

With understanding, Dt.6

With thanksgiving, Ps.100

With joy, Ps.122:1

With unity, Ps.133

With praise, Ps.148. Mt.8. Mt.4

With obedience, Jn.4:23-24

With remembrance, 1 Co.11:24-25

- Humility, 1 Co.14:25. Dn.3:1-12

- Gratitude, Lk.7

- Love, 1 Jn.4:19. Mt.26:53. Jn.12:32-33