

## SUMMARY AND REVIEW

1. Take 5-10 minutes to discuss last week's sermon.
2. How do you experience the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and what does it mean to you?

## INTRO TO THE TEXT:

In this passage, Paul is challenging the Corinthians not to eat food sacrificed to idols using the Lord's Supper as a comparison. He appeals to their sense of reason by asking thought-provoking questions about the cup and the bread. Ultimately, if participation (Gk *koinonia*) in the Lord's Supper results in union with Christ and union with other believers, then the logical conclusion is the same when eating food sacrificed to idols - namely union with demons. In light of this, Paul instructs the Corinthians in verse 14 to flee from idolatry

**READ** I Corinthians 10:14-17

## ANALYZE THE TEXT

- Read I Cor. 10:18-22. What is at the root of the seemingly harmless act of eating food sacrificed to idols?
- Read I Cor. 11:17-29. What serious offenses were the Corinthians committing regarding the Lord's Supper? How were they treating each other?
- Read verses 30-31. What was the punishment?
- What does this tell us about how God views the Lord's Supper?

## A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER:

The two main points to consider as we study this passage in light of World Communion is how the Lord's Supper, through the mysterious, transformative power of the Holy Spirit, ushers us into union with Christ and union with His body, the local and global church.

It is no accident that the original Lord's Supper took place during the Passover Feast. God gave provision for the Israelites through the blood of a spotless lamb on the doorposts. The Passover meal foreshadowed Christ's sacrifice and redemption for mankind as the ultimate Passover Lamb. When we eat the bread and drink the cup, we remember that His body was broken and His blood poured out for our salvation. When we feast on the Lord's Supper, our souls are also

nourished like the Israelites who received manna in the wilderness and encountered streams in the desert. God knows that we need this taste of His grace, provision, and forgiveness to sustain us through the trials of earthly life. There is also an eternal component as we look back on Christ's sacrifice with gratitude, gain sustenance for our own spiritual growth in the present, and look forward in hope to the Lamb's heavenly wedding banquet (Rev. 19:9).

When we participate in the Lord's Supper we also connect with other believers in Christ's church - past, present, and future. In any culture, sharing a meal together fosters fellowship, trust, and love, but even more so in the days of the early church when believers "broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts" (Acts 2:46b). Communion reminds us that we do not have to endure this journey alone. Just as many saints have gone before us and walk with us now, we also share in the process of making disciples that will bless future generations. This feast of love and fellowship should not return empty, but inspire us to share the grace and gift of God's love with others.

Consider Calvin's words: "It is a sacrament ordained not for the perfect, but for the weak and feeble, to awaken, arouse, stimulate, and exercise the feeling of faith and love, indeed to correct the defect of both."

## APPLY Break up into groups of men and women for the application.

1. What is your response to Calvin's quote? How does it impact your approach to the table?
2. Have you ever been moved to tears, great emotion, or conviction during the Lord's Supper? Share your experience.
3. How do the spiritual benefits of the Lord's Supper equip us to carry out our mission statement?

## MEMORIZE

Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we share the one loaf. (1 Cor. 10:17)

**The next time you approach the Lord's table prepare your heart in advance by reading John 13:1-17. Spend time in prayer thanking the Lord for His sacrifice. Ask Him to renew your weary soul, to show you where you might need confession or reconciliation, and to reveal ways of extending His great love to others.** Suggestions for further reading: *What is the Lord's Supper? Basics of the Reformed Faith Series*, Richard D. Phillips