

Before Passover

By this time of the year, we have begun taking time to examine ourselves as instructed by Paul in 1Cor 11:28-29 *“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body”* That examination is inspired by Jesus Christ's example (Heb 9:14; Phill 2:5-6) and His instruction to become perfect like the Father (Matt 5:48). Many brethren get trapped into thinking they are **not worthy** to take the Passover by what Paul wrote in these verses. But, what did Paul mean?

Let me remind us all, that Satan is the accuser of the brethren (Rev 12:9), this evil spirit of accusation, is motivated by his character which is to cause, division through inciting contention, which leads to anger, hatred and eventually separation from Christ. The end result if not repented of is eternal death, which is his goal for all humans.

Paul was addressing the Church at Corinth, it had various relationship problems. The major problem and the most prominent was division.

Reading through chapter one, we are made aware of how this problem developed. It was through “opposing factions or cliques.” Brethren were being influenced to draw away from one minister and go with another, even Christ was used in this diabolical effort to destroy the church.

Before correcting them about this problem Paul first reminds them in verses 4-9 That they were all called by God the Father and given to Christ, who would work with them right up to the time of His return, notice... *“I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; 5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; 6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: 7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: 8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

He then continues to tell them of their divisive problem, which was separating them from Christ. *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you* (Cor 1:10-11).

“Contentions” is just a nice word for quarreling and strife, and as I said, leads to severe relationship problems that end in division.

All of 1&2 Corinthians was written to this church, and are for our admonition... *“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples (Types): and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come”* (1Co 10:11).

One of the greatest challenges facing the people of God, is one of obedience to the Government of God. They struggle getting rid of the self and to bring every thought captive (2Cor 10:5-7). If these two challenges are not accomplished, the result is division and all that goes with it. As you know the spirit of separation began with Eve being deceived into disobeying God in the garden. Satan used the same age old ploy on us as he used on Eve such as “you are not being dealt with fairly” or ‘No one listens to me’ therefore I will leave the church or as they say on social media “un-friend you”.

So we come to the Passover, which represents God's greatest gift to us, the forgiveness of our sins through the blood of Christ and, the gift of eternal life through His resurrection to life (Rom 5:10).

So as it was common with people with a spirit of contention, they focused on the physical and Paul had to explain how, they were to observe the Passover in 1Cor 11:23-26. Then Paul continues in verse 27 “Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord”. The word **unworthily** actually means **in an unworthy manner**. He then continues in verse 28-29 “But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation (Judgment) to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.” Again in verse 29 unworthily is taking the Passover in an unworthy manner and this results in judgment to the self, because we do not discern the Lord's body! That is, we do not understand the sacrifice of Christ which IS THE FORGIVENESS OF OUR SINS! We take His sacrifice ONLY for ourselves! And because of that selfish attitude, we take the Passover while we still hold contempt in our heart for a brother in Christ. Jesus forgave his murderers (Luke23:24). How much more should we forgive a brother? “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother” (Mat 18:15).

This same Jesus Christ who was given by the Father for the forgiveness of our sins (John 3:16), tells us in Matt 5:20 “For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. 21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: 22 But I say unto you, That **whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment:** and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first **be reconciled to thy brother**, and then come and offer thy gift.”

My dear brethren, in the name of Jesus Christ, don't allow Satan to get advantage of any of you. DO NOT take the Passover if you have not reconciled with a brother/sister or have not repented of a sin – Jesus also said in Matt 6:14 *For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

Paul's instruction to us in Ephesians 4:31 *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*