

# Taking Your Place at the Table of Christ

1 Corinthians 10:15-33

Pastor Guy Gray

## **Not Giving Up On the Church**

The church at Corinth was a tangled mess of sin, hypocrisy, jealousy, pride and conflict. The more we get a feel for the situation of the church at Corinth, the more amazing it seems that Paul didn't just give up on the church entirely! Instead of giving up on the church, Paul put in an enormous effort to stir up the people of the church to change their way of thinking and behaving. There is a huge lesson in this for all of us. So many Christians these days are ready to give up on the church. They like Jesus, but they don't like the church. So they withdraw from the life of the church to live a Christian life that is confined to their own individual, private experience. The whole point of Corinthians is to counter that trend. Paul pleads with these Christians to make every effort to become one in Christ—to be the true community of Christ for the World. In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul comes to the high point of his plea to the Corinthians that they put aside their differences and actually begin to think and act as the true community of Jesus Christ. As he does, he introduces three of the most powerful themes of the Christian life: The table of Christ, the glory of God, and the “good of many.”

## **The Table of Christ**

There is an incredible feast taking place and you have been invited. That is the message of the Bible. It is a feast that has been put on at great expense. This feast is a tremendous celebration of an incredible achievement and a priceless gift. This meal will be shared by a group of grateful people whose lives have been touched, transformed and forever linked together by the Gift of God in Christ. Will you join in? Will you sit at the table? And if you do, what does that really mean in terms of your relationship with God and with the other people at that table?

Earlier in the chapter, Paul pointed the Corinthians back to the story of the Exodus (the Cloud and the Sea: 10:1-4). The point was to remind them of the miracle of redemption in the Old Testament. That miracle of redemption was celebrated by God's people over and over again in the sharing of the Passover Meal. It was an event so significant that it actually created a new community of lives forever bound together by God. Now Paul points to the sharing of another meal—the table of Christ—the Lord's Supper. In doing this he shows us that through the Cross of Christ, the lives of Christians are now bound together into a new community of Christ. The celebration of communion, the cup and the bread, in Christian Worship is our expression of this truth. We are bound together in the most profound way by our shared experience of redemption in Christ. Knowing this is true, how can we ever give up on the church? Have you taken your place at the table of Christ? If so, will you make the effort to build real Christian community in your church?

## **The Glory of God**

In verse 31, Paul says “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” In many ways, the real topic of this whole chapter has to do with the motivations for what we do as Christians. Does the sacrifice of Christ and our invitation to sit at the table of Christ motivate your heart to love Christ and His church and our world? What about the glory of God? The glory of God is one of the major themes of the Christian life. If you are more motivated by your own comfort or pleasure than by seeking to bring glory to God, then the church can never become the community of Christ for the world. What would it look like in your life if you were truly motivated to bring glory to God in all your decisions and actions? When we take our place at the table of Christ, we are invited to see and celebrate the glory of God in Christ. As we do, it begins to change the motivations of our hearts.

## **The Good of Many**

Finally, Paul says, “I am not seeking my own good but the good of many.” Again, it's a question of motivation. Paul is intensely aware of God's mission to bring people to salvation in Christ. He wants to see more people at the feast; at the table of the Lord! That's why he is willing to do whatever it will take to make the church a wonderful and compelling place that people will be drawn to. Finally he asks us to do the same, to follow his example as he follows Christ. May the Lord help us to be that kind of Church as we each develop a passion to see more people join us at the incredible table of Jesus Christ our Lord!

**Questions for Discussion & Reflection:**

This week, spend time reading through 1 Corinthians 10:15-11:1.

Reflect on the passage and the impact it has on your relationship with Christ.

How has it informed your understanding of the Lord's Supper (communion?) What did you learn about the significance of "participation in the blood and body of Christ"?

Verse 31 says, "...whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." If you were to evaluate your life against the teaching of this verse, how would it measure up? To what extent are your goals, decisions and actions motivated by a desire to bring glory to God? Is there anything in your life that needs to change? Commit these things to the Lord this week.

**Upcoming Events:****Wednesday 2/20****Straight Talk with Pastor Guy, 7-9:00pm @ RWLG Fellowship Hall**

All High Schoolers are invited to hear Pastor Guy speak openly, directly & honestly about the issues that relate specifically to teens and the world they live in. Straight Talk is based on Pastor Guy's recent sermons regarding behaviors, choices and sex. CD's will be available for parents who would like them. For more information contact Pastor Josh at 699.2226 or [josh@riverwest.org](mailto:josh@riverwest.org)

**Forgiven & Set Free**

Have you had an abortion? Has it been difficult to accept the promises and the grace and the unconditional love of God in your life? Please call Sheri Harkavy 503 887-7080 or Raffa Scanlon 503 449-1316 (personal lines) to get more information about this completely confidential study.

**FitBody Conditioning Class, Saturdays 8:30-9:30am @ RWLG**

All are welcome, regardless of your fitness level! Set to Christian music, FitBody is a class that will refine your body, spirit & soul. For more information contact Gina Kulper 636.8294 or [gina6855@hotmail.com](mailto:gina6855@hotmail.com). Childcare will not be provided.