

## Seven Reasons to Partake in Communion

### 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, 11:23-32

Online Sermon: [http://www.mckeesfamily.com/?page\\_id=3567](http://www.mckeesfamily.com/?page_id=3567)

#### Act of Remembrance

There are two ordinances instituted, commanded, and first observed<sup>1</sup> by the Lord Jesus Christ: baptism and the Lord's Supper.<sup>2</sup> While baptism is only done once we are commanded by the Lord to "remember His death" frequently until He returns.<sup>3</sup> While the sermon, singing,



reading the Bible and prayer are foundational to any church service that wants to truly honor God,<sup>4</sup> the Lord's Supper or Communion is one of the most important things a church does for it is truly "a solemn rite, instituted by our Lord with deep significance."<sup>5</sup> While none of us were present to view the emptying, birth, life, atonement and resurrection of our Lord, we are called to remember Christ's sacrifice on the cross not by imagining, dreaming, or channeling<sup>6</sup> these events with some sort of mysticism that only few can obtain,<sup>7</sup> but instead through faith accepting and being transformed by the historical facts

proclaimed in His holy word!<sup>8</sup> At the foot of the cross, we are called to remember that by "offering His life as a ransom for the many" (Mark 10:45), Christ broke the chain of sin that has so easily entangles and has enslaved us all (Hebrews 12:1; Romans 6:1-7)! The glorious

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<sup>1</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, "[The Right Observance of the Lord's Supper.](#)" in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 424–425.

<sup>2</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, "[The Right Observance of the Lord's Supper.](#)" in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 421.

<sup>3</sup> Craig Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 233.

<sup>4</sup> Anthony T. Evans, "[The Remembrance of the Cross' \(Part 12\).](#)" in *Tony Evans Sermon Archive* (Tony Evans, 2009), 1 Co 11:23–32.

<sup>5</sup> Leon Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 7, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 160.

<sup>6</sup> John Piper, *Sermons from John Piper (2000–2014)* (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

<sup>7</sup> John Piper, *Sermons from John Piper (2000–2014)* (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> Anthony T. Evans, "[The Remembrance of the Cross' \(Part 12\).](#)" in *Tony Evans Sermon Archive* (Tony Evans, 2009), 1 Co 11:23–32.

“message of the cross (1 Corinthians 1:18, 23; 2:2, 8)”<sup>9</sup> is that the Hades had no right or power to hold our Lord and in raising of Christ from the dead (Romans 8:11-13) He demonstrated His supremacy over all things seen and unseen (Colossians 1:16) which included sin, Satan, and the world!<sup>10</sup> In remembering the historical facts of the crucifixion, we do not do so to amass information but to see the bread and the cup as an invitation to continuously surrender our sins to He who conquered them and in doing so to be humbly and radically transformed<sup>11</sup> by His undying love by which we were purchased (1 Corinthians 6:20)! So, until we get to eat the bread and drink the cup anew in the Father’s presence (Matthew 26:29; cf. Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18)<sup>12</sup> may we observe Communion by not only by “eating, drinking, remembering,”<sup>13</sup> but in faith and grace may we be radically transformed by the One who set us free (John 8:36)!

## Act of Fellowship

Communion is not just an act of remembrance it is also an act of fellowship. “Because there is but one loaf,” Apostle Paul states, “we, who are many, are one body, for we all share in the one loaf” (1 Corinthians 10:17).<sup>14</sup> Salvation through belief in the atoning sacrifice of the Son means participation in a new church<sup>15</sup> of which its “members of reconciliation”<sup>16</sup> are to seek fellowship with one another as a unified, equal and caring body whose head is the Lord (Ephesians 2:11-22)! The Lord’s Supper is not to be seen as just any meal but for those who acknowledge the Lord as their Savior and gather as a family in which all titles of “rich/poor, Jew/Gentile, free person/slave”<sup>17</sup> are put aside because at the foot of the cross the ground is truly level! This means biases, prejudices and personal cliques and power struggles are not welcomed<sup>18</sup> at the Table of the Lord for no one purchased their salvation but received it as a sinner saved through faith in the atoning sacrifice of the Son (Ephesians 2:8-9; John 3:16)! As a family we need to value each person by seeing the image of God within them and by celebrating

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<sup>9</sup> David K. Lowery, [“1 Corinthians,”](#) in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 531.

<sup>10</sup> Anthony T. Evans, [“The Remembrance of the Cross’ \(Part 12\),”](#) in *Tony Evans Sermon Archive* (Tony Evans, 2009), 1 Co 11:23–32.

<sup>11</sup> John Piper, [Sermons from John Piper \(2000–2014\)](#) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

<sup>12</sup> John Piper, [Sermons from John Piper \(2000–2014\)](#) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

<sup>13</sup> John Piper, [Sermons from John Piper \(2000–2014\)](#) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

<sup>14</sup> D. A. Carson, [“The Lord’s Supper,”](#) in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), 1 Co 11:17–31.

<sup>15</sup> Gordon D. Fee, [The First Epistle to the Corinthians](#), ed. Ned B. Stonehouse et al., Revised Edition., *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014), 617.

<sup>16</sup> Marion L. Soards, [1 Corinthians](#), *Understanding the Bible Commentary Series* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 247.

<sup>17</sup> Gordon D. Fee, [The First Epistle to the Corinthians](#), ed. Ned B. Stonehouse et al., Revised Edition., *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014), 624.

<sup>18</sup> D. A. Carson, [“The Lord’s Supper,”](#) in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), 1 Co 11:17–31.

the spiritual gifting(s) and divine role(s) they have been assigned (1 Corinthians 12).<sup>19</sup> Apostle Paul states as brothers and sisters in Christ we are to have the “same love, one in spirit and mind,



and are to do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit but in humility value one another above ourselves, not looking out for our own interests alone but also the interests of others (Philippians 2:1-4). So important is our love for one another that John describes it as a “litmus test” for “walking in the light”<sup>20</sup> and even went so far as to state that those who “hate” a brother or sister do not love God (1 John 1:7, 4:20)! In the Sermon on the Mount Christ also stated that if anyone has anything against you leave your gift at the altar, go, and be reconciled first before offering it unto God (Matthew 5:23-24)! To come rightly to the

Communion table, one simply must love the Lord your God with all your heart and those created in His image for the blood of the Lamb not only justifies and cleanses a soul but also unites those who have been grafted into the vine with an equal status, sinners saved by grace through faith!

### Act of Giving Thanksgiving

Communion is also an opportunity to “give thanks” unto the Lord! Spurgeon once said, “we cannot rightly observe the Lord’s supper unless we come to the table, blessing, praising,



magnifying, and adoring our Savior.”<sup>21</sup> The bread we eat is not only symbolic of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross but also the truth that as “spiritual beggars”<sup>22</sup> we come to the Lord’s table to receive the crumbs of grace and mercy from the Master that are needed to feed and sustain our starving souls (Matthew 15:27)! How thankful we are that despite our unworthiness to untie even the Lord’s sandals (John 1:27), sinners though we may be, we can humbly and yet boldly rejoice for the Price by

which we have been set free has atoned for and sanctified even us wretches who have fallen

<sup>19</sup> Marion L. Soards, [\*1 Corinthians\*](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 247.

<sup>20</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, [“The Right Observance of the Lord’s Supper,”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 426–427.

<sup>21</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, [“The Right Observance of the Lord’s Supper,”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 422.

<sup>22</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, [“The Right Observance of the Lord’s Supper,”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 426.

short of His glory (Romans 3:23. 7:24)! Praise the Lord o my soul, may we not forget all His blessings, for He has redeemed us from the pit of sin, placed our feet upon the Rock of our salvation, clothed us with holiness not obtained by our own effort, and renewed our strength to soar like on the wings of eagles because we have chosen to find compassion, comfort and right living under His wings (Psalms 62, 103; Isaiah 40:31)! Thank you, Lord that the curtain of the Temple was torn in two and Your Spirit now lives inside of us (Matthew 27:51; 1 Corinthians 6:19). Thank you, Lord Jesus that You have given us every spiritual blessing in Your Name (Ephesians 1:3), forgiven our transgressions (1 John 1:9),<sup>23</sup> and have secured our eternal home in Your presence (John 4:13; 14:3)! Above all Communion ought to observe with a thankful heart, one that is like the disciples on the night that Jesus was betrayed;<sup>24</sup> rejoicing, faithful and above all filled with thanksgiving that the Father sent the Son to atone for our sin and make the way available to those who deserved nothing but hell but in grace and by faith receive life!

### Act of a New Covenant

Communion above all represents entrance into a New Covenant with our Lord! Covenants in the Bible were of great importance, always initiated by God and requiring the shedding of blood.<sup>25</sup> Under the Old Covenant established at Mount Sinai, the Covenant of works or the Law was weak because it was weakened by the flesh<sup>26</sup> and as a result each person had to offer many sacrifices for sin but no one never got released from being enslaved to it (Hebrews 10:11). Praise be that this Covenant got superseded by a new one,<sup>27</sup> requiring a once and for all sacrifice of our Passover Lamb, Jesus!<sup>28</sup> “The focus of the Old Covenant was the written Word (Exodus 24:1–8). The focus of the New Covenant is the Living Word (John 1:14–18).”<sup>29</sup> The world that was plunged into sin and brought death by the one man, Adam, was freed from sin by one man,

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<sup>23</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, [“The Right Observance of the Lord’s Supper,”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 427.

<sup>24</sup> Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, [The First Letter to the Corinthians](#), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 550.

<sup>25</sup> Anthony T. Evans, [“‘The Remembrance of the Cross’ \(Part 12\),”](#) in *Tony Evans Sermon Archive* (Tony Evans, 2009), 1 Co 11:23–32.

<sup>26</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, [“The Right Observance of the Lord’s Supper,”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 428.

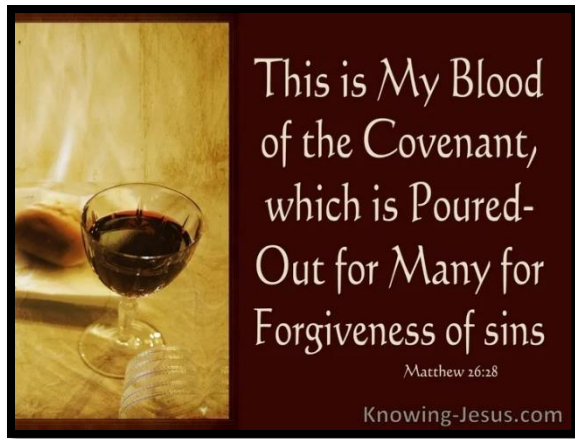
<sup>27</sup> D. A. Carson, [“The Lord’s Supper,”](#) in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), 1 Co 11:17–31.

<sup>28</sup> Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, [The First Letter to the Corinthians](#), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 550.

<sup>29</sup> David K. Lowery, [“1 Corinthians,”](#) in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 531.



Christ (1 Corinthians 15:44).<sup>30</sup> During Communion we celebrate that every born-again believer has entered into this New Covenant and as a result they now have a “unique relationship with God because of the Cross of Jesus Christ.”<sup>31</sup>



This covenant, one based on faith in the atoning sacrifice of the Son, gives believers the promised new heart of Ezekiel which means that the Law is no longer a burden but a source of joy for it has now been written by God’s own Spirit upon our very own hearts (1 John 5:2-3; Ezekiel 36:26; Jeremiah 31:33)!<sup>32</sup> The New Covenant which has been signed, sealed, and ratified by the blood of the Son marks the end of needing to offer sacrifices for all the Lord requires is faith in Him, a contrite heart and turning away from sin to be forgiven (1 John 1:9)! So, we come to the Communion table to

say thank you Lord Jesus for providing the cup, the way to have peace with God our Father!<sup>33</sup> We humbly submit to Your right to rule over our lives as we gladly stand on the glorious promise that which you knit in our mother’s womb (Psalms 139) can and will be constantly molded and shaped by the Potter at His table (Jeremiah 18:1-11)!

### Act of Anticipating His Return

Communion is to be celebrated considering the return of the Lord is imminent! The Lord commanded us to continue remembering His atoning sacrifice on the cross until “the trump of the archangel startle us,”<sup>34</sup> the dead in Christ raise and His own are called to go home and eternally be with Him (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)! What a glorious day that will be when the sovereign Lord wipes away every tear from our eyes, removes His people’s disgrace from all the earth, and takes us to the restored Garden of Eden where the Christ is its light of the Garden and nothing impure will ever be there, only those names written in the Lamb’s book of life (Isaiah 25:6-9; Revelation 21-22)! Until the coming of Christ when He will “consummate our

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<sup>30</sup> Anthony T. Evans, [“‘The Remembrance of the Cross’ \(Part 12\),”](#) in *Tony Evans Sermon Archive* (Tony Evans, 2009), 1 Co 11:23–32.

<sup>31</sup> Anthony T. Evans, [“‘The Remembrance of the Cross’ \(Part 12\),”](#) in *Tony Evans Sermon Archive* (Tony Evans, 2009), 1 Co 11:23–32.

<sup>32</sup> Leon Morris, *1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 7, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 158.

<sup>33</sup> Craig Blomberg, *1 Corinthians*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 230.

<sup>34</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, [“The Right Observance of the Lord’s Supper,”](#) in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 45 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1899), 426.

redemption”<sup>35</sup> may we live as those with assurance, hope, eternity firmly within our hearts and His light guiding our lives (Ecclesiastes 3:11)! “May the peace of Christ rule in our hearts, since as members of one body, we are called to have peace” (Colossians 3:15), not only with the Father through the Son but also with one another!

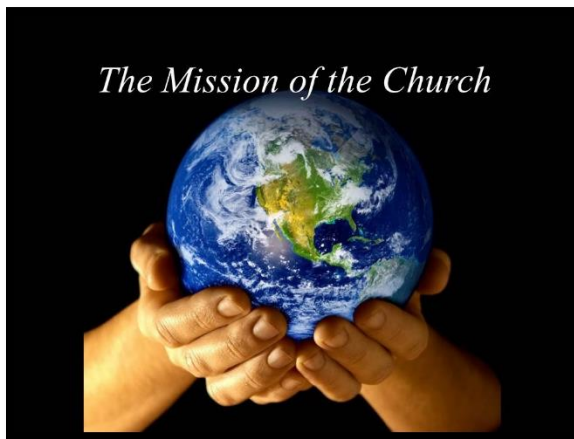


Until the Lord returns let us celebrate that our lives are not our own by perceiving the power and presence of the Lord<sup>36</sup> through faithful and joyful obedience! And while this world that is not our home rages with injustice, self-centeredness, and loving the broad path of unlimited choice and temporary pleasures; let us humbly and with sincere gratitude and rejoicing in our hearts come before the table of the Lord

with a bended knee and submissive heart. May the goal of our lives be to meet and worship Christ in our hearts rightly at His table until He returns and gives us the place, He has prepared for us in His Father’s house (John 14:1-4)!<sup>37</sup>

### Act of Proclamation

Apostle Paul states Communion is an opportunity to proclaim the Lord’s death. Paul has



two recipients in mind that we are to proclaim the Lord’s death too. First, I think we need to proclaim Christ’s victory over death and our subsequent atonement to ourselves to remember our freedom in the Lord! When we face the fiery darts of the lust of eyes, flesh, and pride of life of the “spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (1 John 2:16; Ephesians 6:12), we need to proclaim loudly that they “no longer have the right”<sup>38</sup> or ability to rule over our hearts! The cross has freed us from sin that so easily entangled us (Hebrews 12:1) for Satan and all his demons who could not hold Christ in

the grave cannot hold us on the broad path of destruction (Matthew 7:13) which through faith

<sup>35</sup> Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 554.

<sup>36</sup> Marion L. Soards, *1 Corinthians*, Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 240.

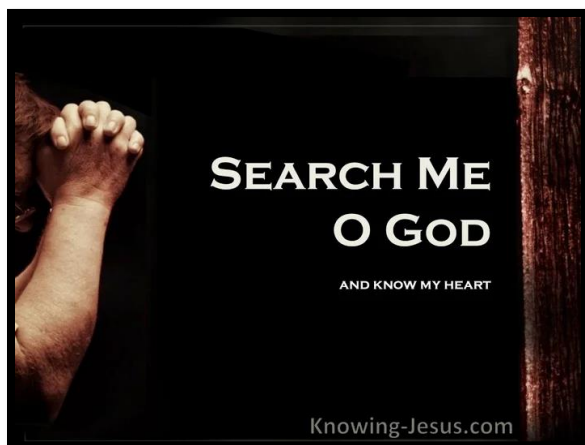
<sup>37</sup> D. A. Carson, “[The Lord’s Supper](#),” in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), 1 Co 11:17–31.

<sup>38</sup> Anthony T. Evans, “[The Remembrance of the Cross’ \(Part 12\)](#),” in *Tony Evans Sermon Archive* (Tony Evans, 2009), 1 Co 11:23–32.

and grace Christ plucked us from and placed us on the Rock of our salvation (Psalms 62:2). And secondly, since “proclaim” is the Pauline word for “preaching, for heralding, and for evangelizing,”<sup>39</sup> we need to be ready and willing to tell the world the reasons why we have hope in Jesus (1 Peter 3:15)! While participation in the Lord’s Supper is proclamation to oneself and other believers of the efficacy of the cross<sup>40</sup> its transformative effect on our lives should compel us to share the comfort we have received with the world (2 Corinthians 1:3-11)! We as the salt of the earth and light unto the nations are called to let our Light shine so that others might see the righteousness we have received from the Lord and acknowledge that He is the source of every spiritual blessing possible (Ephesians 1:3)! So, let us go and tell it on the mountain that Jesus died once and for all and that those who believe in His atoning sacrifice will be adopted into His family and have eternal life (Galatians 3:26-29; John 3:16)!

### Act of Examination

After Apostle Paul states how to remember the Lord’s Supper until He returns, he tells us to examine our hearts so that we don’t treat what is sacred as common!<sup>41</sup> Paul warns believers



that those who partake in Communion in an “unworthy manner” are subject to the Lord’s judgment which included becoming sick or dying (1 Corinthians 11:27-33). “Unworthy manner” means a variety of things for Paul. First, if one is to treat Communion as sacred then one simply must acknowledge and confess one’s sins rather than ignoring or nurturing<sup>42</sup> them and in doing so mock the price in which one’s freedom was obtained!<sup>43</sup> Paul is not saying we need to be sinless to partake of the Lord’s supper and therefore should practice some kind of hyper sacramentalism<sup>44</sup> and avoid

taking it altogether as some Christians have, but rather that we are to perceive and live the grace of the cross through confessing both individually and corporately (1 John 1:9; James 5:16) our

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<sup>39</sup> D. A. Carson, [“The Lord’s Supper,”](#) in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), 1 Co 11:17–31.

<sup>40</sup> Marion L. Soards, [1 Corinthians](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 242.

<sup>41</sup> Anthony T. Evans, [“The Remembrance of the Cross’ \(Part 12\),”](#) in *Tony Evans Sermon Archive* (Tony Evans, 2009), 1 Co 11:23–32.

<sup>42</sup> D. A. Carson, [“The Lord’s Supper,”](#) in *D. A. Carson Sermon Library* (Bellingham, WA: Faithlife, 2016), 1 Co 11:17–31.

<sup>43</sup> Gordon D. Fee, [The First Epistle to the Corinthians](#), ed. Ned B. Stonehouse et al., Revised Edition., The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014), 621.

<sup>44</sup> Marion L. Soards, [1 Corinthians](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 245–246.

struggles, sins, failures and shortcomings<sup>45</sup> to He who only can forgive us and make our lives a sweet offering unto Him! And secondly, to treat Communion as sacred then the meaning of the cross must “impinge formatively on one’s attitude and behavior towards others!”<sup>46</sup> We partake in an unworthy manner when we take the emblems with an “attitude of self-centeredness, of individualism or arrogance.”<sup>47</sup> Christ’s once and for all reconciling work on the cross<sup>48</sup> has created a new church where equality, justice and love for one another is paramount to pleasing Him and abuse of others based on perceived or actual sociological status can result in incurring God’s judgement!<sup>49</sup> In the spirit of “self-giving and interrelatedness”<sup>50</sup> we are to self-examine our hearts to make sure we are encouraging one another by doing good deeds to each other. Above all we are called not to dislike or ostracize anyone but to have fellowship with those whom we are family through the oneness of the Christ’s body!<sup>51</sup> So, while none of us are truly worthy to partake of the Lord’s supper let us take the time to ask God to examine our hearts and in doing so may we confess our sins, love our brothers and sisters and remember the unmerited, miraculous and gracious atoning sacrifice of our Lord and be truly thankful!

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<sup>45</sup> Anthony T. Evans, [“The Remembrance of the Cross’ \(Part 12\),”](#) in *Tony Evans Sermon Archive* (Tony Evans, 2009), 1 Co 11:23–32.

<sup>46</sup> Mark Taylor, [1 Corinthians](#), ed. E. Ray Clendenen, vol. 28, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2014), 276.

<sup>47</sup> Marion L. Soards, [1 Corinthians](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 246.

<sup>48</sup> Marion L. Soards, [1 Corinthians](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 246.

<sup>49</sup> Marion L. Soards, [1 Corinthians](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 247.

<sup>50</sup> Marion L. Soards, [1 Corinthians](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 246.

<sup>51</sup> Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, [The First Letter to the Corinthians](#), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 559.