

Correspondence-the Lord's Table

by H.J. Vine

The sermon emphasizes the importance of consistency in our walk with God, especially when participating in communion, and the consequences of inconsistency.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 11:27

Topics: "Communion", "Sanctification"

Description

H.J. Vine preaches on the importance of maintaining consistency and reverence in partaking of the Lord's cup and table, emphasizing the need for a worthy state of heart and mind during communion. He highlights the consequences of eating unworthily and the Lord's discipline towards inconsistency, rather than the assembly's judgment. Vine stresses the significance of communion with Christ's death and the call for a consistent walk, drawing lessons from Israel's past misconduct and punishment as a warning for believers today.

Transcript

On the principle of "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the rest judge" (1 Cor. 14:29), we publish the following letters and notes, only remarking that all must be tested by the Scriptures.

Beloved Brother, . . . As to 1 Corinthians 10 and 11. In the former we read of "the Lord's cup" and of "the Lord's table"; in the latter of "the Lord's supper." There is a distinct connection between all three doubtless; but in chapter 10 warning is given that grave inconsistency with drinking and eating provokes God's displeasure; in chapter 11 the order for the actual eating the Lord's supper in assembly is in view. It is "prescribed" from verse 17. The serious consequences of eating unworthily is not overlooked, however, as verses 29-32 show; but it is the state in which we eat that is spoken of, rather than that of the daily behaviour of the eaters as we have in chapter 10. In both cases the Lord Himself deals with us in punishment or discipline. It is not a question of assembly dealing.

We are told, "The Lord shall judge His people" (Heb. 10:30). This must be remembered. Where there is a carnal state, such as existed at Corinth, there is a predilection for raising unnecessary cases for judgment (see 1 Cor. 6:7), instead of suffering a personal wrong. There are cases, and the word is clear as to these, where assembly action is insisted upon; but that is not in view here.

The whole path of those who partake of the Lord's cup and the Lord's table is in view in chapter 10. The high honour of communion with His death calls for a consistent walk. Israel is given as an illustration. They

all ate and drank of the same "spiritual" provision, but their grave misconduct provoked God's displeasure. Lust, idolatry, pleasure seeking, fornication, murmuring, and other evil things were indulged in. God punished them accordingly; and "these things happened to them as types," and are recorded for our admonition (v. 11), lest those who drink and eat now should seek communion in evil things and "provoke the Lord to jealousy" (v. 22). He punished Israel, and He is not slack today. The question is asked, "Are we stronger than He?"

Consistency on the part of those who enjoy communion is in view, and also the Lord's own dealings with inconsistency such as is named,--not the assembly's dealings.

From verse 23 however, the "liberty" which is ours, consistent with conscience, is indicated. Those who belong to the Lord know that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." All things are to be done to God's glory, and others are to be considered. No occasion of stumbling is to be given to either of the three broad circles;--the Jews, the Greeks, or the assembly of God (v. 32); the first being connected with the altar, and the last with the Lord's table, while the table of demons had to do with the others.

The apostle used his freedom to seek not his own profit, but that of others, that "they might be saved" (v. 33). He pleased all in all things to that end. Salvation and not stumbling was his object.

With love in Christ Jesus.

Ever yours in Him,

H. J. Vine

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