

Growing Spiritually: Receiving Life at the Lord's Table
1 Corinthians 10:1-22
Sermon Outline

Introduction: The Lord has given us the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper to help us grow spiritually. The Lord's Supper brings Christ into our lives; but it does not automatically to this.

I) The sacraments bring Christ into our lives

A) Evidence

Participation in Christ

16: The cup of blessing...is it not a participation in the blood of Christ?

The Old Testament 'sacraments':

None merely symbolic

All gave actual life

They brought life because they brought God

By analogy, the sacraments of the NT also bring life

B) Application

Gifts more precious than life and freedom

II) The sacraments do not automatically bring Christ into our lives

A) Evidence

vv.1-5: All...all...all...all...Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

v. 12: Therefore let anyone who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

B) What do we do?

1) Pay attention: *v. 11: ...on whom the end of the ages has come*

2) Get real: *v. 16: ...is it not a participation in...Christ*

3) Flee: *v. 14: Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry*

4) Rejoice: *v. 16: The cup of blessing*

Questions for Reflection this Week

- 1) What are the meaning and purpose of the Lord's Supper?
- 2) What joys does the Lord's Supper bring you? What difficulties do you have with the Lord's Supper?
- 3) *1 Corinthians 10:16* says that the cup of communion is "a participation in the blood of Christ." The word "participation" is the Greek word "koinovia" which elsewhere is used to describe Christian fellowship. It means "a sharing in." Some say that the Lord's Supper is no more than the opportunity to recollect what Jesus has done for us; but Paul indicates that it is more than that. What is the 'more' that I intended by Paul's use of 'koinovia'?
- 4) In *1 Corinthians 10:1-4*, Paul uses NT sacramental language to refer to various provisions in ancient Israel's experience. What are the experiences that Paul lists and to which sacraments do they allude? Why does Paul use NT sacramental terms to describe these experiences and provisions? What do the OT 'sacramental' experiences teach about the meaning and purpose of the sacraments to which they allude?
- 5) Reflect on the following: "The crossing of the Red Sea, the manna, and the water from the rock only forestalled the death of God's ancient people. But baptism and the Lord's Supper represent and convey the life that can never be taken from us: the blood of Jesus cleanses every sin forever, the broken and risen body of Jesus guarantees the breaking and rising of our bodies, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit turns our stony hearts to hearts of flesh and sets us on a path towards God from which, thanks to God's faithfulness, we will never finally depart."
- 6) Is the Lord's Supper for you a participation in Christ—a reunion, a rediscovery of forgiveness, love, hope, and power? If not, what can you do to improve things?
- 7) Look at *1 Corinthians 10:5*. Paul's point there is that it is possible to squander the sacraments—even to have them become a curse. To avoid this we need to do a number of things: (1) We need to pay closer attention to what God is saying in them; (2) We need to get real with God—to bring the "real" us to the Lord's Table—the sinful, weak, proud, troubled, angry, discouraged, hyper, joyful, etc. selves; (3) We need to flee from sin and idolatry (vv. 6-14); (4) We need to come rejoicing over his grace and kindness. Make a plan for improvement in at least two of these areas.