



1 Corinthians

Messy

church

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (NLT)

For I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and said, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant between God and his people - an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it.” For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord’s death until he comes again.

V23 FOR I PASS ON TO YOU WHAT I RECEIVED FROM THE LORD HIMSELF.

Paul was not present at the Lord's Supper. He claims in Gal. 1:11-17 to have received revelation directly from Jesus and in Gal. 1:18-19, not to have received it from other Apostles or Jerusalem leaders. However, his words here reflect a knowledge of the Synoptic Gospels' traditions.

TOOK SOME BREAD

It is significant that Jesus did not use the Passover lamb as a symbol. It was linked too strongly with the Old Covenant (cf. Exod. 12). Bread became the new symbol of unity (10:16-17).

V24 AND GAVE THANKS TO GOD FOR IT. THEN HE BROKE IT IN PIECES

This points toward a specific historical act (i.e., the Passover meal in the upper room the night before Jesus was betrayed). Many Christians call the ordinance the Eucharist, which is from the Greek term for "*to thank*" (i.e., eucharisteō, cf. Matt. 26:27; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19).

This is obviously metaphorical. Cannibalism would be a horror to any Jewish person. Jesus is using the broken bread as a symbol of His broken body on Calvary. As bread gives physical nourishment and life to those who eat it, so Jesus' actions give spiritual life to those who receive it.

DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

This symbolic meal is to be repeated regularly until Jesus returns.

It is interesting that in the record of the Lord's Supper in Matthew and Mark's Gospel the phrase "*do this in remembrance of Me*" is not included. However, it

does appear in Luke 22:19 and 1 Cor. 11:24-25. It is so surprising that an obviously significant event in Jesus' life, which was to be repeated, is recorded with such variety in the Gospels and Paul's writings.

The NT does not specify how often this is to be repeated. Some groups of believers never do it, others do it every week. Those Christian groups that have a sacramental view of the Supper obviously make it a recurrent and central event. The early Palestinian believers may have observed it once a year in conjunction with the Passover. Those Christians who are nervous about repeated rituals losing their impact and significance and do not see it as a channel of grace, usually observe the Supper less often.

V25 "THIS CUP IS THE NEW COVENANT BETWEEN GOD AND HIS PEOPLE

This new covenant is specifically mentioned in Jer. 31:31-34 (described in Ezek. 36:22-36). The concept of a "*new covenant*" must have been shocking to Jewish people. They were trusting in the permanency of the Mosaic covenant. Jeremiah had to remind them that YHWH's covenants were conditional on a faith-repentant response.

CONFIRMED WITH MY BLOOD

This refers to the Hebrew concept of Jesus' sacrificial death (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21). Blood is an OT Hebrew idiom referring to a sacrifice given to God (cf. Lev. 17:11,14; Deut. 12:23). The first covenant was ratified with shed blood (cf. Exod. 24:8).

Notice that there is no specific times given here, or elsewhere, in the NT. In Acts the characteristic phrase to describe the Lord's Supper, "*broke bread*," is used of

- a daily experience (2:42,46)
- Sunday worship (20:7,11)

However, the phrase is also used of a regular meal (27:34-35).

YOU ARE ANNOUNCING THE LORD'S DEATH

This clearly shows the sacrificial aspect of Christ's death. The Lord's Supper is a backwards look at the death of Christ.

UNTIL HE COMES AGAIN

The Lord's Supper is a forward look to the Second Coming (cf. 1 Cor. 1:7; 4:5; 11:26; Mark 14:25).

COMMUNION

A *present* act, remembering the *past* event of the Crucifixion, looking forward to the *future* coming of the Lord. *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever."* Hebrews 13:8 (NLT)

Notes from http://www.freebiblecommentary.org/new_testament_studies/VOL06/VOL06A_11.html