

## Sharing In the Blood and the Body of Christ

1 Cor. 10:14-21

### Introduction:

1. Each of us that have partaken of the Lord's Supper this morning have confessed that we are sharers in the blood and the body of Christ.
2. It is NOT an insignificant event, but a powerful statement about our relationship with Christ.
3. Paul has reflected on how the Israelites were all baptized into Moses, ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink from the rock which followed them, which he identifies as Christ.
4. Yet, with most of them, he says, God was not well-pleased. They were idolaters and died as a result.
5. Paul then warns us to flee idolatry reasoning that we are sharers in the blood and the body of Christ.
6. But what does he mean when he says that we share in the blood and the body of Christ? What does this have to do with idolatry? We are not tempted to eat meat sacrificed to idols. Are we even in danger of idolatry?

### Discussion:

- I. Paul's argument is that since we share in the blood and the body of Christ we cannot share in idolatry.
  - A. Paul makes his argument in a variety of ways.
    1. We partake of one bread (17).
    2. Israel ate the sacrifices and thus shared in the altar of the Lord (18).
    3. The Gentiles sacrifice to demons and not to God. You cannot share in demons.
    4. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons.
    5. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.
  - B. Most of the world in Paul's day was polytheistic, but Paul's argument rests on monotheistic ground. For him there is only one God and none other. To suppose that one could share in the blood and body of Christ and share in idolatry was a violation of the most fundamental nature.
  - C. While this passage does not mention the word "covenant" it is shot through with the concept of undivided loyalty to God and that is what "covenant" represents. In verse 22 he asks, "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy?"
    1. The idea is that like a husband or wife is jealous for their spouse, because of the undivided loyalty promised in marriage, we provoke the Lord to jealousy when we violate our relationship with Him through idolatry.
    2. Idolatry violates the exclusive covenant commitment.
    3. Such jealousy language is used in James 4:1-10.
      - a. Note James condemns his readers as "adulteresses."
      - b. There is no congruence between friendship with the world and friendship with God.

- c. God jealously desires the spirit which He has made to dwell in us.
- d. Draw near to God. Purify your hearts, you double-minded.
- e. We might object to being idolaters, but James says that quarrels and conflicts, the pursuit of pleasure, lust, murder, envy, fighting and quarreling are signs of idolatry.
- f. If we use this as the test, the Corinthians were guilty.
  - 1) There were divisions among them (1:10).
  - 2) There was jealousy and strife (3:3).
  - 3) There was immorality, covetousness, reviling, drunkenness, swindling (5:11).
  - 4) They were going to law against one another (6:1ff).
  - 5) They were using their spiritual gifts to elevate and diminish one another (12:1ff).
- D. Such behaviors are not consistent with sharing in the blood and body of Christ.
  - 1. The word “sharing” is from the word “koinonia” often translated “fellowship” or “communion” in the English.
  - 2. To share in the blood of Christ means that we have experienced the benefits of His blood. The focus here seems to be on our relationship with Christ. His blood is “the blood of the covenant poured out for the forgiveness of sins” (Matt. 26:27).
  - 3. To share in the body of Christ seems to focus on our relationship to one another. Verse 17 says, “We who are many are one body.” The integration of the members of the body into one unit working together is addressed in 1 Cor. 12:14ff. While sharing in the blood is vertical (with Christ), sharing in the body is horizontal (with other members).
  - 4. There is unity first with Christ and then with one another, but there is NO UNITY with idolatry.
  - 5. The Lord’s Supper is expressive of this unity, but the Corinthian church had marred the very meaning of the Supper (1 Cor. 11:17-34).
- E. Those who partake of the Lord’s Supper are confessing to sharing in the blood and the body of Christ. “If you are observing the Lord’s Supper and there remember you’re your brother has something against you or that you have something against your brother leave the Supper and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and observe the Supper” (cf. Matt. 5:23-24). Is it not idolatry when there are quarrels and conflicts, envy, jealousy, and fighting that comes between us and our relationship with the Lord?

II. We could easily excuse ourselves from idolatry if we defined it as worshiping an image of gold, silver, wood or stone, but if we define idolatry as exalting other “things” as equal with God it is harder to excuse ourselves.

- A. Note that I did not say, “Exalting other ‘things’ above God.” To place anything as equal with God is idolatry.
  - 1. Polytheism’s problem is not elevating other gods above God, but about regarding other deities. Ex. 20:3 says, “You shall have no other gods besides Me.”
  - 2. Paul says, he does not mean to say that an idol is anything (1 Cor. 10:19). These idols are not gods.
  - 3. Those that sacrifice to them are sacrificing to demons (20). Who are these demons?

They are evil spirits acting under Satan and are therefore opposed to God. They deceive people and lead them into false beliefs often using human agents to accomplish their objectives. Eph. 6:12 says, "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness."

- B. There is no harmony between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan. Jesus said, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste . . . If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? If I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? . . . If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Matt. 12:25ff).
- C. God makes a radical distinction between listening to His revelation and false sources of information (Deut. 18:9ff). It is idolatrous to listen to such sources of information. There can be no partaking of the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. While we may agree with this the question remains, "Do we listen to the voice of the society or culture in which we live?" "Do we give authority to this voice?" The voice of sexual immorality? The voice of societal ethics instead of biblical ethics? Do we define "right" based on societal opinion or based on what God has said?
- D. If we operate outside of God's revelation, if we seek our own will (1 Cor. 10:24), if we give control to societal pressures (1 Cor. 10:28) rather than embracing the word of our heavenly Father, it is idolatry.

III. 2 Cor. 6:14-18 calls us to separateness from the unbelieving world. To be a participant in the blood and the body of Christ, to partake of the Lord's Supper is testimony to this fellowship that we have with Christ. It is testimony to our separateness from the world. Paul addresses the Corinthians as "the church of God, those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling" (1 Cor. 1:2) and he would have them walk in a manner worthy of that calling (cf. Eph. 4:1ff).

Conclusion:

1. Partaking of the Lord's Supper is NOT an insignificant event. It is a powerful statement about our relationship with Christ.
2. We cannot share in idolatry. Ours is an exclusive relationship with the Lord.
3. Our temptation is not to worship an idol of gold, silver, wood or stone. Our temptation is to listen to false sources of information rather than the truth revealed by God. Our temptation is to seek our own will, to give control to societal pressures as the standard of right and wrong.
4. The Corinthians were called out of the world. They were sanctified in Christ Jesus. They were saints by calling but needed to be warned to flee idolatry (1 Cor. 10:14). It is a warning that we will do well to hear.