

# His Supper For Me

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] I'd like just to turn back to 1 Corinthians chapter 11 and look at this passage which is the classic passage for Why we celebrate the Lord's supper for I received from the Lord from verse 23 What I also passed on to you the Lord Jesus on the night He was betrayed took bread and when he had given thanks he broke it and said this is my body which is for you do this in remembrance of me and all that goes with that and We know that the reasons that were given Here We're not just for Corinth, but they're for the whole church and they're for us as well and it's important again for us to remember the context in which Paul gives this Holy Spirit inspired Advice to the church. They had love feasts in Corinth Which they were they celebrated the Lord's supper, but things had gone badly wrong They were they couldn't be more unlike our

Celebration of the Lord's supper really in many ways Even when they were done with the right motives and in the right way, they were very different They were genuine meals. They were coming together. They were probably much more informal Than we know and we experience but things had gone wrong When they first started happening in the congregation, they were great times of unity and blessing and closeness the gospel had turned the world of these people upside down and the social The social stratas and the social classes In Corinth, which were very strong were all being broken down so that rich people and poor people free people and slaves Jews and Gentiles men and women were coming together at this feast and celebrating that they belong to the same family that they belong to the Lord Jesus Christ that there was this radical transformation and they were part of a new kingdom and new society a new community and while it was all in its kind of very early Prototypical stages as it were this was what Christ had come to do to break down barriers and to bring people together and a symbol of that was this union and Communion together at the Lord's supper, but as time went on things were going wrong with the celebration of that Lord's supper Which was remember a sacrament which was related to the Passover in the Old Testament and What was happening was they were coming together on the Lord's day and the people who were well to do who were rich They were kind of luxuriating. They didn't have work to go to they didn't have things to do So they were gathering early in the day and they were they just they just ate their meal They started really enjoying the feast and they weren't waiting for for example the slaves Who had to work all day in the Lord's day and who could only come together together at the end of the day when all their work was done and so that there was disunity because you know Paul says you know there's divisions among you What you know what are you doing when you come together some of you eat some of you have already eaten some

Of you have drunk too much. You're sure they were there all day and they were getting drunk Everything was wrong about it. There was cliques and Everything that had come to do everything that had come to symbolize was slowly disintegrating because they were going back to unspiritual ways of celebrating and and doing things they weren't coming together They were doing it lightly. They weren't thinking about what it meant. They weren't thinking about the cross They weren't thinking about what Jesus has done and they were just going ahead and not caring for one another and one was eating and drinking While the others weren't hadn't arrived and things had all gone wrong You know one remains hungry another gets drunk don't you have homes to eat and drink in you despise the church and humiliate those who have Nothing, what shall I say to you? I'm gonna please you for no, I'm not pleased and so he gives these instructions about what the Lord supper is about and We look at them briefly for us and was hugely significant in the context and for us is communion is

That they were coming together and if you flick back in your Bibles to chapter 10 and verse 16 and 17 he says Is not the cup of thanksgiving which we give a participation in the blood of Christ and is not the bread that we break a Participation or communion in the body of Christ because there is one

loaf we who are many are one body and we partake of the one loaf So there's this Symbolism that the Lord supper was all about communion It was all about coming together with the New Testament word is Coynonia Which is the word that we get for communion And it's also part of the word of communicator say a little bit about that But there's this great coming together in partnership and in fellowship And so the Lord supper and what the Lord came to do was to remind us that we're in The Lord's work together and we celebrate the communion together That's why in in free church tradition. It's called very often the communion that we celebrate the Lord supper

[ 5 : 29 ] The sacrament it's a communion. It's a it's a coming together and in the old days The elders would find out how many people had communicated on any given Sunday and that doesn't literally mean that you they were finding out who talked to one another It's just that old-fashioned use of the word communion who had taken part in the communion service who had communicated it that way and That is hugely significant. Isn't it? It's it's more than just Bear remembrance service because we are in fellowship with one another in the sacrament and in fellowship with Christ We're one body and we participate participate in the blood and in the body of Christ and he is with us And isn't it great that that same communion that same communication?

links in with Christ being the word who speaks to us that we looked at last week and that genuine communication is not about It is about is about relationship is about fellowship with God. It's not just about God Blasting truth down at us and I was not listening or and God wanting fellowship with us and has not been in fellowship with him genuine communion genuine Communication genuine conversation is always between people who are listening to one another and who are in relationship with one another Otherwise, it's just you know see the hand And so there's this sense in which it reminds us of This communion we have with God Through Jesus Christ that that's what his death has come to do for us. It's come to bring into Us into relationship with God again through Jesus Christ And there's a blessing in that and a blessing that we remember each time we celebrate the Lord's support. It's about fellowship. It's about communion. It's about participation in in believing and in following Jesus Christ and

It is about communion with one another Because of what he has done. This is a really significant element of The Lord's Supper very Significant element that we do so together and it's there to help us each time we celebrate to realign our lives along That lines that we realign ourselves in fellowship and communion with Jesus and with one another In Christ hugely significant In the context of what this is given to us in where there was division where there was separation where the church was living like they weren't Christians There was division and separation it's not optional It's not allowable It's not just well shrug our shoulders. That's just well. It's just what we we are we come together Under Jesus Christ and there's union so the sacrament is a this communion this fellowship, but it's also a sense

For us of light and darkness that for me today is very relevant And I'll hopefully say a little bit more about that tonight about suffering and the and just the the complexity of living in a world of darkness, but You know Jesus says to Paul when he gives this instruction to him to give to the church the Lord Jesus on the night He was betrayed took bread and when he'd given thanks So it's on the night he was betrayed and there's this you know God Jesus in glory when he speaks to Paul and Paul Goes into heaven to receive these things and comes back Jesus reminds him he says it was on the night he was betrayed So it was in it was in this you know, what does Jesus say in the upper room?

He says this is dark. This is the hour of darkness. This is darkness finest hour and yet in the midst of that darkness is the revelation of Christ's greatest victory and There's a there's a real sense in which the Lord supper our salvation and our Communion is in the midst of darkness as well you know, we can't forget that reality that we eat the Lord supper in dark in Surrounded as it were in spiritual battles and darkness and struggle and very often will come to the Lord's table and we're battered and we're tired and we're opposed and we're failed and We're struggling with darkness and we're struggling with circumstances and we're struggling with loss and we're struggling to understand Why God allows Certain things to happen And

[ 10 : 32 ] At times like that the Lord's supper is there to take us into the inner courtroom of the king To the place where he says I have won the victory It's not escapism. It's not a pretence that battles and struggles and difficulties and Brutality isn't a reality in our lives But it's to remind us that that ultimate victory has been won and There's not meaninglessness and randomness in the darkness that we face It was on the night he was betrayed and It was also the night of the Passover and

Again, there's a tremendous significance. We haven't time to look at that today, but there's that great significance of linking right the heart of the Old Testament this great institution of Passover with the Lord's supper and the symbolism from the old

Applying to the new the fusing of the two together in the Passover speaks of Rescue from the Old Testament it speaks of the rescue of the people of God from darkness and from slavery in Egypt by the covering of blood on the door lintels of the lamb To that place where they are set free and it's on that basis that they're redeemed and And there's that constant then reminder to us today as we come together to celebrate the Lord's supper and to remember His death but also until he comes because he's resurrected that there's this need we have of a redeemer that There is judgment on sin and sin is either judged on the sacrificial substitutionary lamb of God or We remain those on whom the judgment lies hugely significant hugely important words from the creator of the universe the redeemer that he says

That our salvation is based on his shed blood poured out covering us his righteousness covering us And so he goes on to say that this is my body Which is for you so each time you take the bread we're reminded of that that Jesus came With this we have the symbolism of the bread that Jesus came bodily and gave himself bodily On the cross is true human and true God on our place the totality of his being this is my body This is me That dies on the cross God whatever else we struggle with we recognize that it is God who Gives himself to us and there's this picture of you know the one loaf that we break now sim there's a lot of symbolism and in the way we do things but You know ultimately this this idea and

Probably be nice just to even get back to that visual imagery again now better organized or do that just to have a loaf of bread that we break to remind us of the That this is I think there's two things There may well be a sense in which it speaks of his brokenness Because we know that while not one of his bones was broken on the cross We also know that he was battered and bruised and in his human humanity. He was absolutely physically destroyed in many ways in the cross, but I think there's the Breaking of bread speaks also of sharing the one Sharing the Christ that we all share and I think in the context that's more powerful It's in the context of the people being divided and so he says you divide the bread in order to show your your unity as Christ who was broken and Christ who is Took our sin upon himself so that we are united and that we are one and we share that so the bread goes round us all and

We share that we share that Recognition of Christ and we take that and we recognize that He gave himself in all of his being in a way we can never truly understand for us And he says this is my body which is for you Don't know what's that I feel I'm getting shot here every time that happens, isn't it? [ 15 : 22 ] It must be a loose connection is it not in my head Although that might be the case. This is my body which is for you. Great words Now it's not easy for us in our understanding of English language sometimes to see the difference. It's for you plural It's for you In other words, so this is my body which is for you the church It's for all of God's people so in the context of unity. It's in the context of church It's in the context of a people of a kingdom of a people together and he says this is for you. These are the best words The any Christian here because it is also for you as an individual There's the the double entendre as it were the double meaning here is it is of course for all and It is for all in unity, but it is also this is what I've done for you And there's this great recognition that we sit at the table. We share the bread and the wine we pass that on but we take individually

And eating as I've said many many times before here eating is an individual act People people can't eat for us got to eat for ourselves to get the nourishment and bless and I mentioned that last night When we looked at Proverbs about you know looking after your heart because it's this wellspring of your life No one else can look after your spiritual condition apart from you in relationship with God But we do also recognize the huge significance of doing so together To support and uplift one another We're not just random individuals walking this life with a kind of personal private relationship with Jesus And no one else knows about and no one can touch or talk about we're people together And the Lord's supper is all about that and there's so the symbolism of the bread and there's the symbol Symbolism of the wine after the supper. This is the new covenant in my blood do this whenever you drink it in remembrance of me the wine Symbolizing his life poured out You know not quite so significant to us in our culture in our background and in our sophistication our advancement, but you know blood and blood being symbolizing wine with a hugely significant thing in these days where blood is so clearly symbolized for us life life for life

Speaks of substitution Speaks of atonement speaks of his life being poured out in our place Greater love has no man in this city lay down his life for his friends God's wrath Just and justifiable wrath against sin being poured out on himself as the Redeemer and We acknowledge that That our hope is in Jesus Our hope is in Christ our hope is in what he has done and that we as believers. I've entered this great covenant You know this is a new covenant in my blood covenant such an important Aspect system important emblem throughout the the Bible of God's role that God's sovereign coming into our lives and making promise making covenant with us determining to save us determining to love us and the whole theme of covenant

Rising throughout the Bible and you have these great words in Jeremiah prophetic words in Jeremiah chapter 31 and in verse 31 what he says, you know the time is covenant coming when I will make a new covenant With the house of Israel I Will put my law in their minds and right on their hearts. I will be their God. They will be my people From the greatest to the least declares the Lord for I will forgive their wickedness and remember their sins no more This great new covenant Sealed in the blood of Jesus Fulfilled in him and where the fulfillment of that and it will be even greater fulfillment of it yet when we join with him in glory Covenant that speaks of freedom forgiveness For our sins that speaks of God being with us Emmanuel God in our hearts. It's a personal God and Covenant and a committed God and we look at life and we look at the darkness

In the light of the light and In the light of the fact that we are encouraged to walk in the light Even though we struggle with so many different things in this world and with the inexplicable Sufferings that some people go through So we remind ourselves just as we close of the importance of the Lord supper and the simplicity of it the simplicity of the way he Gives us this symbolism. It's very simple isn't it bread and wine you'll be invited to Sit at this table with us. We kind of some again symbolic. We don't really have a table that we do it We mark out the middle here. I hope there's enough room for everyone if there's not then we can sit at the sides but it's nice even symbolically to be coming as much as possible together sitting together and and Remembering the significance of that and as we do so we need to also always remind ourselves that the context of the communion of the Lord supper is not only in

[ 21 : 07 ] Union and communion and fellowship with one another, but it's also in the context of individual self-examination in our lives, you know so that a Man a person ought to examine themselves before the bread and drink the cup so there's this great recognition that self-examination matters in the kingdom and in the participation Because he says you know if we drink the cup of the Lord and worthy manner We will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of Christ and that doesn't mean that we can drink unworthily as if somehow We work up a merit in and of ourselves to participate it means that we just Are participating in a way that is not worthy of our Lord and Savior who has died for us in other words We are maybe participating in the kind of doing the kind of things the Corinthian church was doing divided

Gossiping separate Gluttonous drunken whatever it is that we're doing that is separate and not understanding the significance of a unity Coming ritualistically as if somehow it's just something we do a religious ritual doing coming unforgiving bitter cold He wants us to recognize the need for repentance and for coming to the Lord's table with grace You know when we don't Will be weak he says and sick and will spiritually be asleep Because he asks us to rattle our cages spiritually through this and say look Stop judging others stop looking at the mistakes and the failures and the weaknesses of others Stop using that as our means of justifying your own behavior and says come together in unity Because this is a new kingdom. This is a new citizenship. This is a new Family that is governed by grace and by the ethics and morality of Jesus Christ So do so with discernment, you know For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment So we need to wreck we need to be discerning mean to understand What we're doing Recognize it's not cheap but it's significant and May it be that that is how we participate today in the Lord supper So can I challenge you today if you're not a Christian to?

Not participate in the Lord supper if you're not a Christian Because you don't discern the significance and you haven't put your faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ but can I ask you to consider him and consider that his sacrifice is unchanging and it is Absolutely there as an offer for every single living human being Because there is no other way and there's no other salvation. So we have this great significant offer even in the Most intimate of Christian sacraments is an offer to come to faith and to do your business with the Lord Jesus Christ your Creator your Redeemer and your judge And also for us as Christians to consider our spiritual health. Are we sick?

Are we weak? Have we fallen asleep? Are we spiritually far from God? Sometimes we just get so far down that road that we think oh man, it's just a nightmare and We think it's too hard. We think there's too. It's too difficult a road to get back into fellowship with God through Jesus Christ Sometimes because that's what it's like with one another You know when we break trust when we Sin against one another it can be a long and rocky road back to fellowship and friendship Because we're both sinners but it's not like that with Jesus. Remember the parable of the prodigal son the prodigality of the father How his arms were open how we was longing for the child to return and that is how it is with us He wants us simply to return that there's no Trial period there's no

[ 26 : 10 ] Amount of time that we need to spend somehow making things up to God will never make things up to God That's not they that's not the That's not the formula is it where that's not the way it is He has done all that he has done for us freely and fully by his grace. We can add nothing to it Sadly we often take away from it. Maybe that we come back and recognize who he is and seek him and find today fellowship and communion and food for our soul Enjoy the silence of the few moments that the bread and the wine has been passed around because these are good times and remember that it is Communion that we celebrate together and yet take Individually from the bread and from the cup Let's bow our heads in prayer Father God we ask and pray that as we celebrate the Lord's Supper today that it would be a great a great celebration for us a

Great time of thankfulness a great time of reflection That we would stop and Think and consider our own lives that we would be reminded of the reality that we are not promised another day and the significance of Accepting What Jesus has done for us redeeming us from the slavery of death and sin and granting us eternal life That doesn't change Lord That need is always there and you have said it is finished on the cross you've done that great work of redemption and of reconciliation and Ours simply to receive Help us to do that and help us to live that help us to remember that the communion is in the context of fellowship and of community and of communication and of love trust of respect of understanding and of forgiveness and it is

Testimony of personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ So help us and so doing to remember these things today in Jesus name. Amen