

SPIRITUAL VITALITY

1 Corinthians 11:17-22

Central Idea: Believers must understand how the Lord's Supper is to be observed. Do you observe the Lord's Supper in the scriptural way?

Introduction:

The transition between the two sections can be seen in the contrast between the two phrases: "Now I praise you..." (11:2) and "Now...I do not praise you..." (11:17).

Accustomed as we are to the service of Holy Communion being the most solemn and dignified of services, this passage comes as something of a surprise. Clearly the service was far from edifying, or even dignified, in first-century Corinth. The passage is important as throwing light on the way the service was conducted, and as giving us important teaching on the theology of Holy Communion.

Paul's declaration was an authoritative command.

I. The Church Was Divisive, vv. 17-19.

1. Paul rebukes the church, v. 17.
2. Marked by divisions, v. 18
3. Characterized by heresies, v. 19

II. The Church Was Selfish, vv. 20-21.

1. In attitude, v. 20
2. In action, v. 21

III. The Church Was Shameful, v. 22.

Conclusion:

The Corinthian church had begun to abuse the Lord's Supper. Instead of sharing, everyone sat off in their own little group of friends and shared their food only among themselves.

There was no real Christian fellowship or love whatsoever being experienced. And although the church was partaking of the bread and the cup, it was not celebrating the Lord's Supper. What they were doing was totally meaningless and useless. What they were celebrating was a feast to the evil spirit of selfishness and indulgence, not to the Lord!