

How Should Believers Attend the Lord's Supper? 1 Cor 11:27-34

Summary of 11:17-23

Paul has stated the problem with the Corinthian worship practice as they assemble together for the Lord's Supper (11:17-22). They have "divisions" as they eat their meal that precedes the Lord's Table. The rich or "haves" are eating among themselves and not sharing their food with the poor or "have-nots." This has fractured the church into social and economic strata, causing "shame" to the poor. Furthermore, these actions literally "despise" the church which is supposed to be representing the body of Christ as one spiritual family.

Before Paul gives instructions for correcting this problem (vv 27-34), he reminds the Corinthians of the teaching he "delivered" to them when the Lord instituted the Last Supper (11:23-26). This teaching would serve as the foundation for his corrective advice. It would remind them of the spiritual truths that the bread and cup signify. Paul was not teaching new truth but taking the apostolic tradition from the Lord and applying it to this situation. "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes."¹ Thus, Fee rightly asserts that his passage has had a long history of being read at the Lord's Supper independent of its original context. To focus on the biblical teaching of the Lord's Supper as only personal or introspective is to miss Paul's intent. The Lord's Table depicts salvation through Christ's death and this has instituted a new community of people that are called Christians.²

Exposition of 1 Cor 11:27-34

Just as the teaching of vv 23-26 is most often taken from its context, the corrective measure of this passage is also interpreted apart from vv 17-26. Added to this mishap, Paul's theme of judgment portrayed in different Greek words can be misconstrued when reading the English. Also the phrase "the body of the Lord" has enough ambiguity that Paul's argument can be missed entirely.³ Finally, several key words such as "unworthily" (KJV), "examine," and "guilty" can conjure different English meanings than the Greek intends. Unfortunately, this has led to wrong conclusions and applications of the Lord's Supper. Paul is concerned with the Corinthians' abuse of the Table. It has been

¹ John MacArthur Study Bible, *The New Kings James Version*. © 1979, 1980, 1982, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers. All Scripture quotations will be from the NKJV unless otherwise noted.

² Gordon D Fee, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Ed. F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987), 538-539.

³ Ibid, 559.

manifested in two ways. One, the wealthy have eaten their supper apart from those who have less and thus have created an atmosphere defying a common meal. Two, this divisiveness has actually defamed the Lord by desecrating the very nature of salvation.

So as Paul ended v 26, "eat this bread and drink this cup," he begins v 27, linking the teaching with a stern warning. "Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." "In an unworthy manner" is actually one Greek word, an adverb, correctly translated "unworthily" (KJV). Sadly, this translation has yielded an improper interpretation to the Lord's Table by not differentiating the use of an adverb to an adjective. An adverb modifies a verb, telling something about the action that is taking place. On the other hand, an adjective describes something about another adjective or noun. Paul's use of "unworthily" (GK *anaxios*) modifies how the Corinthians are eating/drinking. They are doing it "in an unworthy manner." That is, they are either not waiting for some to assemble and eating before they arrive or hoarding their own food and not sharing. However, if one thinks of "unworthily" as an adjective (which would properly be "worthy") then he or she will conclude it describes something about the person. Matt 8:8 gives an example. "The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof." Here, the centurion is describing something about himself not something that he has done. Thus taking "unworthily" incorrectly, one would surmise the need to be worthy before taking communion. This would entail a personal judgment if he or she has been "good enough" to merit partaking.

Clearly, Paul is not advocating worthy humanness in order to take of the Lord's Supper. For if this were the case, there would never be anyone "worthy" to take communion.⁴ Simply put, the Scriptures are replete with man's sinfulness and inability to come and stand in God's presence (Rom 3:9-20). Hence, the very meaning of the Lord's Table is the recognition of Christ's death for one's sin. It is this act of remembrance that renounces any attempt of self-righteousness and embraces Christ's worthiness. Moral or self-perceived perfection is not Paul's admonition in order to partake.⁵ Conversely, neither does it mean to dwell on a consciousness of unworthiness nor the absence of doubt, misgivings, or a weak faith. These indicate the realities of our human weakness and the very need of Christ's sacrifice. Instead, Paul is warning them not to come to the Table in a careless, irreverent spirit only interested in satisfying their physical hunger to the neglect of fellowship with their poorer, different brothers. To do this apart from a desire to

⁴ Walter C. Kaiser Jr., Peter H. Davids, F. F. Bruce, Manfred T. Brauch, *Hard Sayings of the Bible: 1 Corinthians 11:29, One-Volume Edition, 1996* in *Quick Verse Bible Software* (Omaha, NE: Findex.Com, Inc., 2007), CD-ROM.

⁵ Simon J. Kistemaker, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Bake Academic, 1993), 400-401.

commemorate the Lord's death as the sacrifice for their sins is to be "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord."⁶

What does Paul mean to be "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord?" The word "guilty" (Gk *enochos*) is a legal term expressing liability. They are liable for the death of the Lord. Paul is saying their actions have aligned them with those who took part in Christ's crucifixion (1 Cor 2:8; Heb 6:5). He is not saying they are now lost or condemned to hell, but they have placed themselves in such a position to be vulnerable to God's judgment, as vv 29-32 will indicate.⁷ Just as those who crucified the Lord opposed who He was and what He came to do, certain believers in Corinth who partook unworthily actually opposed Christ's sacrificial death. Their loveless behavior contradicted what Christ did on the cross. His death created a new covenant community out of a fragmented sin-cursed world. This new spiritual family was now to model the selfless sacrifice of Jesus, giving themselves to the need and good of others.⁸

It may seem Paul's warning is too severe for the actions of the Corinthians. However, Paul is placing before these believers the magnitude of Jesus' sacrifice and how their contempt for others denigrates His death. In the Greek the two words "unworthily" and "guilty" are juxtaposed. That is, they are placed side by side to highlight their importance. Partaking unworthily the bread and cup automatically implies guilt or liability of Jesus' death. Kistemaker gives this example. To burn the flag shows disrespect or disdain for one's country. The flag is more than cloth; it is a symbol of one's country. Likewise, to disparage the bread and cup by discriminating between believers due to social, economic, or racial status is to take the place of those who killed the Lord.⁹

With the severity of the warning in place, Paul changes direction with the word "but" to offer the solution for the unworthy participation at the Table that will incur so much guilt. "But let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup." The word "examine" is an imperative that is in the present tense and active voice. It is

⁶ Charles Hodge, *An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, reprint 1974), 231.

⁷ David E. Garland, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: 1 Corinthians*, Eds. Robert W. Yarbrough and Robert H. Stein (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 550.

⁸ Kaiser, Davids, Bruce, Brauch, *Hard Sayings of the Bible: 1 Corinthians 11:29*.

⁹ Kistemaker, 401.

usually translated "to prove," "to test," "to examine," or "to try."¹⁰ Paul's solution is not an option but a command that is to be done by the person whenever he or she comes to the Table. Furthermore, this examination is to precede God's exam, which for some had already occurred, v 31. Based on the problem (vv 17-22) and the teaching (vv 23-26), they were to examine their behavior toward their brethren and their attitude toward the Table. Clearly, Paul wanted them to change both their spiritual and physical behavior. Thus, "examine" should be viewed as a positive command not as a negative threat.¹¹ The connecting words "and so" amplify this point. They link the command to "examine" with the commands to "eat" and to "drink." When the Corinthians genuinely tested themselves to the perfect work of Christ, Paul believed their work would be proven either true or false. So as Hodge remarks, humility is the key to partaking rather than perfection in word, deed, or faith. Jesus bids His people to come and to remember, because the Table is His!¹² Within this framework of humility, it can be said that communion is a means of spiritual grace. Not that the outward partaking is a means of grace, but the act of humbling oneself.¹³ "God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble" (Ja 4:6).

Sadly, Paul's call to "examine" oneself has been interpreted to mean more than the context allows. Since "examine" is the command to rectify the "unworthy manner," Bible editors such as Charles Ryrie footnotes "unworthily" as unconfessed sin.¹⁴ Similarly, MacArthur notes on this verse, "It is necessary to set all sin aside before the Lord."¹⁵ In fact, MacArthur writes in *Pastoral Ministry* that one should never partake if there is known,

¹⁰ Wesley J. Perschbacher, ed., *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1990), 105. The Greek word is dokimazo. It can be used for testing metals, 1 Pet 1:7; to test something's worth, Lk 14:19; Rom 12:2; to test by an outside source, 1 Thess 2:4; 1 Tim 3:10; to test one's works or faith, Gal6:4; 2 Cor 13:5; to approve after trial, Rom 14:22.

¹¹ Fee, 561.

¹² Hodge, 232. Paul does not specify "when" to examine but that it should be done so communion can follow.

¹³ W. Harold Mare, *The Expositors Bible Commentary, Romans through Galatians*, Vol10: *1Corinthians*, Ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 260.

¹⁴ The Ryrie Study Bible, *Kings James Version*. © 1977, 1978, The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1635.

¹⁵ MacArthur, 1746.

unconfessed sin.¹⁶ One more example should suffice and this is from Kistemaker. He insists this self-examination is paramount because the Table symbolizes the holiness and sacred presence of the Lord. No one should enter that has not sought and obtained remission of sin for the Lord tolerates neither unbelief nor disobedience.¹⁷ Despite the obvious biblical truth that God always wants His people to confess their sins, Paul does not make this the correction for the Corinthian problem. Instead, he emphasizes "examine" or test to prove that one's views and actions are correct in the meaning and application of the Lord's Supper. If they are not correct, then change must occur or judgment will likely follow. There is no doubt that sin was involved with the Corinthian church, and a general application for today is to test oneself that sin is not the cause of an improper view of Christ's death or how one is treating their fellow believers. Once this test has been assessed then if confession is needed it should be done and then communion be taken. As Hodge states of this examination, it is not essential one be assured of their good estate, but they simply have the intelligent wish to obey what Christ requires at His Table.¹⁸ Yet, those who insist that communion examination implies a deep and thorough search for sin as the requirement for partaking have either forgotten the events of the original Last Supper or have brought with their teaching the almost 2,000

¹⁶ John MacArthur, *Pastoral Ministry: How to Shepherd Biblically* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2005), 290.

¹⁷ Kistemaker, 401.

¹⁸ Hodge, 232.

years of church tradition¹⁹ that have corrupted this ordinance.²⁰ This is why Fee decisively avows that the command to "examine" one-self is not a clarion call for deep personal introspection to determine one's worth at the Table. Rather, it is a call for a correct spiritual behavior accompanied with a pause to those who are not ready to obediently proclaim the Lord's death.²¹

A look back to the institution of the Last Supper sees twelve disciples consumed with rivalries, jealousy, and selfishness. As they neared Jerusalem for that last week of Jesus' life, James and John asked the Lord if they could sit on either side of his throne in glory. The remaining ten were indignant with their fellow disciples. This attitude did not vanish in one week as they partook of the Last Supper (Mk 10:35-41; Lk 22:14-24). Later during the Supper after Jesus remarked of a betrayer, they selfishly asked, "Is it I?" (Mk14:17-19). In all the passages where the Lord instituted His Supper (Matt 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25; Lk 22:17-20; Jn 13:12-30; 1 Cor 11:23-26), neither is the word "holy" used or an admonition from the Lord for confession of sin in order to partake. Rather, the words "remember" and "do" are the imperatives. Jesus wanted his disciples then and now to partake and remember the meaning of His death for their sakes and their fellow believers. Simply put, Paul's demand to "examine" is a self-test to prove that Christ's death is necessary due to one's sinfulness. At the cross, all are on the same level; all are honored

¹⁹ Earle E. Cairns, *Christianity through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 112, 116, 153, 193, 287, 302. By the end of the 4th Century the bishop had grown in power by the doctrine of apostolic succession (power and authority derived from Peter) and the Lord's Table had increased dramatically in importance. The Lord's Supper was considered a sacrament and required a priest to perform it. Taking the central place for the worshipper and the liturgy, it soon evolved into a sacrifice. By the late 9th Century the teaching began that by a divine miracle the bread actually became Christ's body and the wine actually became His blood. Although the Reformers did not hold to this doctrine, they have left a legacy in Protestantism (Presbyterians, Lutherans, Anglicans, and Methodists) that still have remnants of the Table as a sacrament or Holy Communion.

²⁰ Leonard Verduin, *The Reformers and Their Stepchildren* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1964), 136-159. As early as the 3rd Century the word "sacrament" came into the Christian community. Its meaning derived from the Latin word *sacramentum* which stood for the Greek work *mysterion* or mystery. This was used in the Roman pagan sacrifices where the devotee was infused by the god when he or she ingested the sacrificial victim. This transaction was called a *mysterion*. Thus as Christianity was absorbed into Roman culture, the Lord's Supper became perverted. First it took the name as a sacrament. Second, the Table replaced the altar where the officiating minister became a priest. Third, partaking or "take eat and drink" was replaced with the ritual of imparting. The congregant was no longer active but passive. All the recipient had to do was let the mouth hang open and the priest would act. So by the 4th Century, the technique of salvation by Sacrament replaced salvation by the preached Word. "Holy Communion" imparted grace and the need arose for priests to administer this grace, called sacerdotalism. This practice has continued with the Roman Catholic Church to present day, and many other sects of Christianity still have remnants of this perversion. Thus, the Baptists refuse to classify the Lord's Table as a sacrament but refer to it as an ordinance.

²¹ Fee, 561.

guests of Jesus; all are blameworthy, but all are forgiven. There are no class divisions, no dignitaries except one, Jesus.²²

Paul has given the solution for eating and drinking unworthily by the exercise of self-examination. Now in v 29 he gives the reason for the command "For (because) he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner²³ eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." This verse begins Paul's use of "judgment" words which is a key to vv 29-34. Obviously, the Lord's Supper is a meal unlike any other and must be treated circumspectly. Spiritual peril is pervasive if the Supper is eaten in a cavalier manner or with a segregating approach.²⁴ However, the spiritual peril is not God's eternal judgment for the word "judgment" lacks the definite article. Hence, examples of judgment are put forth in v 31 as some became weak, sick, and asleep.²⁵

Yet, the reason for their judgment is due to the lack of discernment of the Lord's body. Here, the idea of self-examination is closely linked with discernment of the Lord's body. The word "discerning" could be rendered "to recognize" and its meaning is to separate or discriminate one thing from another in the sense of judging rightly.²⁶ There seems to be three possible choices for what the Corinthians did not discern. All three hinge on the phrase "of the Lord's body."²⁷ One is the difference between the Table and common food where "the body" signifies a holy meal. Two is that "the body" addresses the church, and the Corinthians did not discern that all believers are the body of Christ. Three is that "the body" represents a shorthand expression of the body and blood of

²² Garland, 551.

²³ Kistemaker, 402. In the KJV/NKJV the words "unworthily" or "in an unworthy manner" are not found in the better manuscripts. According to Bruce Metzger in his *Textual Commentary* the shorter reading is preferred due to better textual support and that in ancient times a scribe would usually enlarge a text rather than condense it. Nonetheless, the longer reading does not change the interpretation when the context is adhered.

²⁴ Garland, p550. The "judgment" words are as follows: krima = to judge (vv 29, 31, 32, 34); diakrino = discern (vv 29, 31); katakrima = condemnation (v 32).

²⁵ Mare, 260.

²⁶ Hodge, 233.

²⁷ Kaiser, Davids, Bruce, Brauch, *Hard Sayings of the Bible: 1 Corinthians 11:29*. They assert as do Kistemaker, Fee, and Garland, that some of the earliest and best Greek manuscripts omit "of the Lord." Hence, Paul is saying "discerning the body." Yet, in either case, Paul is simply speaking about the reality of what the body designates.

Jesus as the elements or the Lord himself.²⁸ It seems doubtful Paul is asking them "to discern" between the Table and the common meal for this does not answer the abuse that has occurred between the rich and poor. Fee argues extensively for the second choice and Kaiser-Davids-Bruce-Brauch concur.²⁹ Conversely, Garland, Kistemaker, and MacArthur defend the third choice.³⁰ Paul's ambiguity is probably on purpose so whether the discernment is how they should be acting toward one another or how they should be representing the Lord through the bread and cup, the offense is still the same. So to do harm to Christ's body as the church or to Him directly is to oppose God's purposes for which His body was broken and His blood was shed.³¹

Once again, Paul's argument flows with a reason to support his previous statement. Paul can be decisive that their judgment is due to a lack of discernment (v 30) "for this reason many are weak and sick among you and many sleep."³² Here, the nature of the judgment is spelled out. Having heard of these calamities³³ among the church, Paul under the guise of the Holy Spirit makes a prophetic observation of cause and effect. Thus, the warning (v 27) to those who partake "unworthily will be guilty" has now turned into an observation or proof that Paul's declarations happen to those who despise Christ's body, (v 22, 29).³⁴

However, the judgments that the Corinthians are suffering did not have to take place. This is easily seen by Paul's use of "for" in v 31, "For (better rendered "but" yet "because" also works) if we would judge (discern) ourselves, we would not be judged."

²⁸ Garland, 552.

²⁹ Fee, 563-564; Kaiser, Davids, Bruce, Brauch, *Hard Sayings of the Bible: 1 Corinthians 11:29*

³⁰ Garland, 552-553; Kistemaker, 402; MacArthur, *Pastor Ministry*, 290.

³¹ Kaiser, Davids, Bruce, Brauch, *Hard Sayings of the Bible: 1 Corinthians 11:29*

³² Kistemaker, 404. The weak were temporarily inflicted with some illness. The sick were in failing health and had no hope of recovery. Those asleep had actually died since the term is a euphemism for death, Jn 11:11-14; Acts 7:60. Ananias and Sapphira illustrate believers incurring the discipline hand of God unto death, Acts 5:1-11; cf 1 Jn 5:16-17.

³³ R. C. Sproul cautions against deducing that the illnesses or deaths of Christians are the results of their spiritual shortcomings when they have partaken of communion. The context of 1 Cor 11:17-34 is far more specific in nature. The Reformation Study Bible, *English Standard Version*. (Ed. R. C. Sproul © 2005, Ligonier Ministries), ©1979, 1980, 1982, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers, 1659, note under 11:27-34.

³⁴ Fee, 565.

The "judgment" words replay v 29. Discerning will remedy the consequence of judgment. Interestingly, the sentence structure is a contrary-to-fact conditional. It can be rephrased this way. But if we would discern and examine ourselves (which we are not doing), then we would not be judged (which is actually happening).³⁵

Although Paul has described some of the judgments in v 30, he has not stated if these judgments are punitive or corrective. The adversative "but" in v 32 signals the judgment-discussion is headed in a different direction. Up until now, it seems these judgments have taken on a penal quality that manifests God as angry. Nonetheless, Paul is now going to disclose the divine nature of these judgments. "But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world." Much to the joy of the Corinthians, Paul includes himself into their misery by using the personal pronoun "we." This is due in part because of the universal biblical truth just rendered. God chastens His children (1 Pet 4:17; Heb 12:5-10) and desires for them to repent. Their sufferings have an eternal purpose of mercy. They cannot be judged (condemned) as the world because they are not of the world. Hence, even in their obtuse irreverence, their sin is not without pardon.³⁶ Sadly, the world is already condemned because they refuse the only sacrifice to pardon them, Jesus Christ (Jn 3:18). Thus, Paul's point is that God punished Christ for our sins. If He needs to punish us for our sins then Christ would not have endured all our sins on the cross. Since God is just, He will not punish both Christ and us.³⁷

Verses 33-34 bring Paul's admonition to a close in the same manner as he began v 27. This conjunction refers back to the preceding discussion.³⁸ "Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come." So as vv 27-32 responded to vv 23-26, these verses (33-34) respond to vv 17-22. Additionally, the use of "judgment" (34) draws this passage into vv 27-32. Consequently,

³⁵ Garland, 554.

³⁶ Hodge, 261. The verb tenses of "chastened" and "condemned" are present and aorist (past completed action) respectively. This shows the difference between God's children and those who are not. God's children constantly experience discipline for they are loved. In contrast, those who do not belong to God await the final reality of the future judgment.

³⁷ Kistemaker, 404.

³⁸ Perschbacher, 445. The Greek word (hoste) can be translated "so that," "so as that," "therefore" or "consequently."

it concludes Paul's theological warning and addresses two practical solutions. One is to "wait for one another." The second one is to "eat at home."³⁹

Looking at the first practical solution, it is easy to see Paul's connection to vv 17-22 with the phrase, "come together," for this is used twice (vv 18, 20). Prior to the key command of "wait for," Paul addresses the entire church as "my brethren." Although the previous warning has been forceful, this term of endearment conveys both love and concern for their wayward worship to be correctly realigned.⁴⁰ Thus, he offers a realistic solution to their worship problem "wait for one another." This word (Greek ekdechomai) has also been translated "receive."⁴¹ Regardless of the word choice, those whose houses where the meals are located should be extending all the Christian hospitality afforded to guests when eating. Simply awaiting late comers and then each eating their own food does not solve the worship abuse. Plus, by waiting or receiving one another, the shame that was brought to bear on the poor and the church being despised is eliminated.⁴²

A conditional clause creates the framework for the second practical solution, "if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home." Here, the conditional with the verb tense issues the reality that will happen rather than a choice to be made. When they "come together," physical sustenance is subordinated to spiritual sustenance.⁴³ It is primarily the rich to whom Paul is addressing, and he is not giving them an option to stay home and dine to the neglect of those who are impoverished. Likewise, it is not an option to stay home and eat so as to avoid judgment.⁴⁴ Paul's warning of "judgment" focuses on the fact they are supposed to "come together." Otherwise, if they are still operating with the same divisiveness in their meal as they assemble for the Lord's Table, judgment is inevitable. Thus, the correction to "eat at home" is attitudinal, summoning the church to a truly

³⁹ Fee, 566-567.

⁴⁰ Kistemaker, 405.

⁴¹ Fee, 567-568. He shows that "wait for" is commonly used because it refers back to verb in v 21 which means to "eat beforehand." Yet, the root "dechomai" is routinely translated "receive" and when used of people gives the idea of receiving as in Christian hospitality, see Rom 12:13.

⁴² Garland, 554-555.

⁴³ Kistemaker, 405.

⁴⁴ Garland, 555.

common meal.⁴⁵ Real fellowship expresses sharing in love just as Christ did in the Last Supper.⁴⁶

Paul concludes this passage with an addendum that when he arrives in Corinth he "will set in order" the rest. Only conjectures are made as to what is "the rest." Yet, it is safe to assume it dealt with other worship corrections, possibly other issue concerning the Lord's Supper.

There is no more instructive passage on the Lord's Supper than 1 Cor 11:17-34. It must be remembered that this is to correct improper worship practices. The Corinthians had no problem meeting regularly in the form of a common meal followed by the observance of the Lord's Table. Regrettably, their meal was not shared with all believers, but segregated along social and economic lines. This made a mockery of the very meaning the Lord's Supper. Paul reprimanded and reminded them of what the initial Last Supper proclaimed. Then he applied this teaching to corrective measures, so the church could worship in spirit and in truth. These are the type of worshippers the Father seeks (Jn 4:23-24), and Jesus prayed for their unity (Jn 17:11). Hence, the Supper memorializes His death in which the Spirit baptizes all into one body (1 Cor 12:12-14). Fee aptly summarizes this truth. "The Lord's Supper is not just any meal; it is the meal, in which at a common table with one loaf and a common cup they proclaimed that through the death of Christ they were one body, the body of Christ; and therefore they are not just any group of sociologically diverse people who could keep those differences intact at this table. Here they must "discern/recognize as distinct" the one body of Christ, of which they all are parts and in which they all are gifts to one another. To fail to discern the body in this way, by abusing those of lesser sociological statue, is to incur God's judgment."⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Mare, 260.

⁴⁶ Garland, 555.

⁴⁷ Fee, 564.