

Answering Key Questions Concerning the Lord's Supper – 1 Cor 11:17–34

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Q1 – Is there a time that believers should abstain from the Lord's Supper?

Answer: The question needs to be answered from both a personal position and a congregational position.

1) From a personal position: Sadly many believers have been told from preachers or Bible teachers that one should abstain from the Lord's Table if there is known, unconfessed sin in one's life. This is proposed by John MacArthur.¹ Since Paul's teaching on the Lord's Supper is the only one that broaches this topic, it is imperative to apply this question to the passage. There seems to be two possibilities this admonition could arise.

The first possibility is Paul pronounces guilt and judgment on those who are taking the cup unworthily in 11:27–32.² The context teaches that these Corinthians have been treating their fellow brethren with contempt by not sharing their food or not waiting for them in a common meal as it precedes communion. By doing this, they have profaned the Lord himself, because the Lord's death shows that all those who are in Christ are one (Gal 3:28; 1 Cor 12:12–13). Reasoning from this guilt and judgment, it seems logical to abstain so as not to incur guilt or God's judgment for taking the cup unworthily.

The second possibility is Paul's admonition to "examine" oneself before taking the cup. Otherwise, if one does not examine oneself properly and cannot discern "the body" or "the body of the Lord," he or she will drink judgment to himself or herself. Thus, the practice of self-examination is put in place by Paul to stem the sentence or consequence of God's judgment. The words "examine" coupled with "unworthily" are taken as a deep introspection of sin and a call for

¹ John MacArthur, *Pastoral Ministry: How to Shepherd Biblically* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2005), 290.

² For a more detailed explanation of the passage see my paper "How Should Believers Attend the Lord's Supper, 1 Cor 11:27–34?" This will help explain many of the terms that are used in the passage.

confession and repentance.³ Once again, reasoning from the command to "examine" oneself and then finding sin or a lifestyle that does not match with how a Christian should be living, abstention is recommended until the sin or sinful life can be rectified.

A general response to both possibilities is first in order. **Nowhere in this passage or in any of the Gospel renditions of the Lord's Supper is there a call to abstain.** This is extremely important because Paul never gives this option for the Corinthians who are abusing the Table. After Paul gives his warning (v 27), he gives his solution in command form. First one is to examine himself and then second he is to eat and drink. Paul's point is obvious, quit doing what is wrong and start doing what is right. There is simply no alternative to keep doing the wrong and skip taking communion. Why would Paul say this? Obviously, the context ties the whole abuse problem with the Lord's Table. They could not skip communion because their "coming together" was interwoven as a church assembly as noted in Acts 2:46; 20:7. If they just assembled to have a meal that did not solve the abuse. They could skip the meal and Paul definitely alludes to this in v 34. Yet, this is not Paul's solution. Rather, they need to "wait" or "receive" one another so they do not take of the Table unworthily. Interestingly, v 34 really does not condone eating at home in lieu of not eating together. It is a call to eat together a common meal, sharing with those who do not have. The rich can still eat their delicacies or with whom they want but this is unacceptable as a common meal. So, for Paul, there is no option to stay disobedient. The examination is call for corrective behavior.

A closer look at the guilt and judgment is necessary. For believers to take the approach to abstain from the Lord's Table due to impending judgment is to miss the context and biblical truth. The context shows the judgment has already taken place (v 30) and is put there for corrective measure (vv 31–32). Paul's admonition is that this judgment will continue as long as they keep partaking of the Lord's Table in this unworthy manner. The easiest and obvious solution is to cease. Paul is not addressing some hidden sin but what is known by him (and now them if they are too obtuse to know) in how they are desecrating the meaning of the Lord's death that the Supper proclaims (v 26). In

³ The Ryrie Study Bible, Kings James Version. © 1977, 1978, The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1635. See his footnote on 1 Cor 11:27, "unworthily." Other Ryrie Study Bibles such as the NASB will have the same footnote.

regards to the biblical truth, God chastens His people, those whom He loves (Heb 12:6). To avoid the Lord's Supper due to wrong doing so as not to incur God's judgment (the meaning here is obvious, discipline not penal punishment or eternal damnation) is missing the biblical truth. God already knows one's heart and the disobedience that lies there. The chastening hand of God is already on the believer who is in sin and refuses to repent. Abstaining from the Table does not give one a reprieve. In fact, the abstention is another form of disobedience because one is refusing to "proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (v 26) as well as saying "no" to God in the command "do this in remembrance of Me" (vv 24-25).

Much of what has been written above covers the misapplication of the word "examine." Yet, some comments are in order that comprises both the context and biblical truth. The context is not calling for personal introspection of sin but a "testing" or "proving" of the actions the rich have been displaying toward the poor. This also includes their attitudes on the very elements of the Supper. Yet, these attitudes are directly related to their actions as stated in 11:21-22. Hence, Paul's directive after the examination, "and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup." If Paul were calling on the Corinthians to deeply inspect their lives due to any sin, it would seem reasonable for him to use words such as "confess" or "repent." Instead, the examination which calls for a personal test is enough to correct the wrong behavior. Albeit, if one still wants to use "examine" as a catch-all action for any sin, then the biblical truth of 1 Jn 1:9 is in order. Regardless of the sin or longevity of sin, confession to God mandates His forgiveness and cleansing. The erroneous view of abstention from the Table in order to rectify a believer's disobedient lifestyle is imbedded with self-works or self-righteousness. There was no requirement for a sinner to come to the cross and receive salvation except by faith. Likewise, to come to the Table requires faith and examination. If in this examination, God reveals sin then the proper response for any Holy Spirit conviction is repentance. In fact, this is exactly what Paul concludes about the Supper, "it proclaims" Jesus' death. What other memorial does a believer have to show their gratitude for sins forgiven and to show others what Christ means?

There are two other issues that are regularly brought up with either one's examination or disobedience. It has been argued that one should abstain from the Table if certain sins have been revealed that need to be addressed with others. For example in Matt 5:21-26, Christ says,

You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny. (NKJV)

Applying this verse to the Lord's Supper would admonish the examiner (who now realizes there is an offended brother) that he or she must get reconciled before partaking. There are several problems with using this verse with 1 Cor 11:28. 1) Matt 5 context is dealing with anger and in particular with indebtedness not with the issues Paul addresses. 2) If one applies this as a sin from examination, there still is no call for abstention. Paul simply says "examine and so partake." One may ask, what should be done with the sin to a brother? The answer is to seek forgiveness from God who is the only One that can forgive. If there are other actions to be taken such as confession and reconciliation, then do this in an expedient manner following communion. Why not skip communion and go to the offended brother first? There is no Scriptural precedent to forego the Table. Remember, the Table declares an acute knowledge and attitude of one's forgiveness and Christ's sacrificial gift. Confession to a brother is necessary to show one's authenticity and obedience as a believer. Confession to Christ is paramount to receive salvation and daily cleansing.

The second issue is that of baptism and the Lord's Table. Many preachers have argued that one should abstain from the Lord's Table if as a believer they have not been baptized, especially when this could have already taken place. Reason being, this is classified as the believer's first act of obedience. Consequently, refusal to be baptized is disobedience. Once again, there is no precedent to abstain from the Table upon using the word "examine." Paul's command is not in this context and to make baptism a requirement for the Lord's Supper is making a selective inference that Paul just does not require. This selective

inference is the choice of disobedience. Exactly in which area of disobedience are believers supposed to avoid the Table? Numerous facets in Christian's lives have gone either without submission or an unwillingness to yield. God does not expect believers to be instantaneously mature, and He is longsuffering through disobedience. Thus, to choose baptism over an addiction or a judgmental spirit is selective. Paul's point of taking the Supper is to show the Lord's death, the sweetness of forgiveness by Christ's sacrificial death. It is not a call for sinless perfection or registering a certain level of holy living. Agreeably, the New Testament does not show a dichotomy between baptized believers and non-baptized ones. They all seemed to have been baptized with maybe the exception of the thief on the cross. Yet, the Bible addresses many accounts of salvation where baptism is not even mentioned. Furthermore, in the present culture, baptism has a vastly different meaning than the first century. Almost two millennia have passed with many perversions of the biblical meaning of baptism ranging from salvation to membership into a local church. Far too many people have given testimony of being baptized apart from saving faith in Christ. The concern for the souls of lost people should be more important than their baptism as a prerequisite for communion. Everyone does not come to saving faith in the same sequence of events. God grows faith and this includes saving faith. Even more so this should be applied to children. It is not that a certain age or time line is required for baptism but a true confession as Paul said to the eunuch.

Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. (Acts 8:36-38 NKJV)

No, a believer should not avoid baptism but desire to follow the commands of Christ. This act of obedience should be done as soon as possible. However, neither Paul nor Jesus makes it a prerequisite for communion. One needs to remember the twelve disciples in their roles of disobedience the night of the Last Supper. All would deny Jesus; one would betray Him, and all were consumed with self and inter-rivalries (Lk 22:14-34). Instead of a preacher making selective reasons for not partaking, emphasis should be placed on

"self-examination" where the Holy Spirit does the convicting of sin and disobedience. When this is accomplished, a believer will follow the Lord's guidance rather than a biblical inference that has no scriptural mandate. Thiessen argues similarly in the foregoing quote.⁴

The conditions of participating in the Lord's Supper are regeneration and a life of obedience to Christ. That regeneration is a condition is evident from the fact the Lord gave the ordinance to His disciples (Matt 26:27), that the disciples observed it among themselves (Acts 2:46-47; 20:7; 1 Cor 11:18, 20, 22), and that each participant is asked to examine himself as to whether or not he is qualified to partake of the Supper (1 Cor 11:27, 29). That a life of obedience is a condition is evident from the Church (1 Cor 5:11-13; 2 Thess 3:6, 11, 15), as also those who teach false doctrine (2 Jn 10-11; Ti 3:10) and promote divisions and dissensions (Rom 16:17). Baptism should precede the Lord's Supper, but it is not a condition to participation in it. There is no precept to that effect, and there is no proof that believers were excluded from the Lord's Supper until they were baptized (Acts 2:47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:1, 7; 9:31, 35, 42; 11:24). Nor is church membership a condition. This is the "table of the Lord" (1 Cor 11:21) and not the church's table. This is evident from the fact that the individual is asked to examine himself as to his fitness to come to the Supper; the church is not authorized to sit in judgment upon believers, except in the case of disorderly conduct, false teaching, or participation in unscriptural practices (1 Cor 11:27-32).

It should be observed in Thiessen's quote that his definition of obedience is not sinless perfection or a detailed life of avoiding certain sins. Similarly, it is not living some prescribed "good lifestyle. Instead, it is gross unrepentant sins after having been confronted by the church. The references (1 Cor 5:11-13; 2 Thess 3:6, 11, 15) includes sexual immorality and overt disobedience to scriptural teaching. In both cases, church discipline is enacted. So for example, if a disciplined church member were in attendance for communion, they would not be allowed to partake. Abstention is not their choice because the elders of the church would not give this as an opportunity. These cases as well as "disorderly

⁴ Henry C. Thiessen, *Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1949, Reprint 1975), 431.

conduct, false teaching, or participation in unscriptural practices" are exceptions for when a believer would be forced to abstain.

2) From a congregational position: Should a congregation ever abstain from communion? Much of what has been written to refute personal abstention is applicable to a congregation. There seems to be two reasons why any congregation would undergo a deliberate postponement (other than scheduling problems) or cancellation. One is a misunderstanding of the word "divisions" (v 18). This type of reasoning is based on the fact that some or many in the congregation exhibit divisiveness due to personal or theological issues. This divisiveness does not have to be sinful but normal disagreements on the above issues. On the other hand the divisiveness could be sinful on a personal level or even on a congregational level if the issues have been public. When these occur, the "judgment" factor is applied and abstention is the solution to avoid God's disciplinary hand. This is an incorrect application of "divisions" in v 18 because those divisions are socioeconomic.⁵ Paul's admonition does not include personal or theological differences. If this were the case, Paul would have made comment to this effect because Corinth had those issues as well. Also, other churches had these differences and Paul never admonished that everyone had to be in unison. In contrast, it was to love one another despite the differences. If the divisiveness is sinful and is on a personal level, this should be handled easily with confession and repentance. However, if the congregation is divisive on public issues that could range from decorating preferences to personalities and even to theological choices (e.g. eschatology), this still does not call for abstention. Again, if sin is involved, confession needs to be made. Otherwise, differences of opinion⁶ are not tantamount to being one in the body of Christ. The Lord's Supper is what reminds the church of who they are in Christ by His sacrifice. Abstention is not an option due to disagreements, but rather the Table demands a humbling of oneself before the Lord. Believers that have stretched or tenuous relationship should remember Phil 2:14.

⁵ For a more detailed explanation of the passage see my paper "What Type of Divisions Disrupt the Lord's Supper, 1 Cor 11:17-22?" This will help explain many of the terms that are used in the passage.

⁶ Differences of opinions that are not sinfully expressed have their origin within the church as manifestation of gifts. People who exercise their gifts often see their service or emphasize certain doctrines over others through the lens of their giftedness. Paul addresses these differences in 1 Cor 12 but maintains unity as opposed to uniformity.

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. (ESV)

Q2 – Should unbelievers abstain from the Lord's Supper?

Answer: Paul does not address this question because his letter is directed toward believers in the church at Corinth. Nonetheless, the tradition that Paul received from the Lord is given for believers (v 23). Simply put, this Table is the Lord's. Unbelievers cannot proclaim the Lord's death by partaking because they have never accepted His death for their sins. So as Paul notes in v 27, they are still "guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." Furthermore, Paul states that the Lord's discipline on the unworthy actions of the Corinthians is so that they "may not be condemned along with the world." Those that have refused Christ's sacrificial gift of salvation are condemned already (Jn 3:18). If they take of the bread and cup, their judgment cannot be any worse than what awaits them. However, they have no reason to partake and run the risk of experiencing temporal "judgment" while alive (v 30). Clearly, unbelievers should not partake of the Table, but it is not the purpose of Paul's teaching to "examine" who is lost and who is saved. It would be naive to think that lost people have never participated in the Lord's Supper. At the same time, lost people have partaken due to peer pressure or self-esteem, not wanting their friends to think poorly of them. Paul's admonition of examine is still for each person and so is any judgment from the Lord. God does not punish the body of Christ due to the sinfulness of an individual whether saved or lost.

Q3 – Should believers be fearful to take the Lord's Supper?

Answer: Believers should never be fearful to partake of the Lord's Supper or for any other occasion to appear before God. The "judgment" words (vv 29–34) are predicated on the abuse that the Corinthians have displayed on their fellow believers while taking the Lord's Supper. Paul is not admonishing them to continue taking the Table in fear but to stop partaking in their unworthy manner. The judgments are evidence of their wrong actions and will continue to plague them if they persist. Moreover, if they would "discern" or "judge" rightly their actions and the purpose of the Table, these disciplines (judgments) would

not be necessary. The correct view of the Lord's Table is to "proclaim the Lord's death until He comes," (v 26). This proclamation has the idea of preaching Christ or the gospel. Therefore, it signifies the good news, and for believers there is nothing to fear about the good news. Rightly understood, believers rejoice with the mere thought of coming to the Table as those early Christians did in Acts 2:46–47; 20:7. What has been twisted in the minds of many current believers is the preoccupation with "examine" and "judgment." Sadly, they have entered the anticipation of partaking with worry and the dread of being rejected by Christ due to their sinfulness or unworthiness. However, what Paul has indicated in vv 23–26 is the good news of Jesus' broken body and sacrificial blood that has pardoned every sin and made the believer worthy to be called a child of God, a heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ (Rom 8:16–17). Remember, the infatuation with "examine" and "unworthiness" is a total misapplication with the context and was dealt extensively under question one. Besides, Paul and John have written succinctly about the believer and fear. Paul told Timothy that "God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power, of love, and of a sound mind," (2 Tim 1:7). Specifically, this sound mind will aid believers in "discerning" what the meaning of the Table is and in particular the "body of the Lord." They should be able to confidently come to the Table in worship, ready to praise and receive welcome from the Lord. If Christians can come boldly to the throne of grace due to Christ's work, they most certainly can come to the Table in the same manner, (Heb 4:16). Likewise, John told his readers that "there is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love," (1 Jn 4:18). Jesus told his disciples and Paul reiterated this that they were to come to the Table and "do this in remembrance of me." Do what? They were to celebrate by remembering the meaning of His death, not fear the meaning of his death. Yes, Christ's death should bring humility because of one's utter sinfulness and his great gift. Simultaneously, it brings joy for Christ is returning and his redemptive act has made each follower a new creation. If there is fear in taking the Lord's Supper, then there is a love problem.

Q4 – Should believers be apathetic toward the Lord's Supper?

Answer: In American Christianity, many professing believers respond to the Lord's Table with indifference. This is corroborated by infrequent attendance or a lack of prioritizing their schedule not to miss a communion service. They have either not learned the tremendous significance of the Supper or avoid it due to

fear and maybe misunderstanding. As the book of Acts clearly shows (see above references), those early Christians broke bread each week if not each day. These common meals created their solidarity or community and confirmed their faith in a hostile world. Distressingly, today's believers see little need in Christian community and reaffirmation of their faith. American Christianity is so geared toward independence they have missed what the Lord's Supper teaches. In much the same way, those abusers in Corinth despised the common meal and violated many of the "one another" commands (v 33). The gravest danger portrayed in apathy toward the Lord's Supper is the refusal to "proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." Another danger is the contempt for the church or body of Christ. No, the contempt is not active as in purposely avoiding other believers within a communion service. Rather, it is passive. Indifference to fellow believers reveals contempt, because their personal lives take precedent over others in the church. If there is good news from the 1 Cor 11 passage, it would be that they had no problem "coming together." Paul did not denounce their assembling; he criticized the manner in which they assembled. Today's believers just do not assemble for this divinely mandated memorial! Probably the greatest rebuke for not coming to the Table is from the words and actions of Jesus. Luke writes of Jesus just before the Last Supper, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer," (Lk 22:15). Jesus desired earnestly to be with His disciples at the Passover which would institute the Last Supper. If Jesus had such a committed purpose to attend this meal in which He knew all the shortcomings of His followers, how much more should today's believers commit to the Table that memorializes everything about their salvation.

Q5 – Should a church practice "closed communion" for the Lord's Supper?

Definition of closed communion from Elmer Town's Theology for Today:

Those who hold this position teach that only a member of the church in good standing should have access to the Lord's Table of the church. They teach that the church decides who can participate. Since God will punish the sinning Christian who partakes, the church uses the Lord's Table for disciplinary purposes. Since the church should know who is walking with God or not, the church is responsible to close communion to outsiders and allow only those in fellowship with Christ to partake. They also teach communion is for fellowship among believers because they do not know the spiritual condition of outsiders. Next, they

close communion to insure correct baptism and/or correct church testimony. Finally, they believe closed communion brings power to their church. If they obey God and keep their table clean, they feel they will have His blessing in their ministry.⁷

Answer: The word "church" means an assembly of believers. In the New Testament the predominant usage refers to a local body. Nevertheless, it is clear from Jesus' use in Matt 16:18, the "church" has the meaning of all believers in Christ. In addition, Paul writes that Jesus loved the church and gave himself for her in order to sanctify her, having cleansed her so that he might present the church to himself in splendor (Eph 5:25–27). Clearly, all believers constitute the body of Christ, and it is Jesus by the Holy Spirit who "baptizes" them into one body (1 Cor 12:12). No man-made system or church leadership or church congregation decides who is in the body of Christ. Nowhere in the Scriptures does God command a church to decide who can participate in the Lord's Supper other than those who are under discipline. This discipline covers all functioning fellowship activities not just the Supper. Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper to His disciples, not a local church. It is clearly meant for all believers where ever they assemble. Jerusalem's house churches were many, probably over 20,000 in the first few months after Pentecost. The record of Acts gives no such prohibition.

In regards to the Lord's Table for disciplinary action, this is a misuse and faulty application of 1 Cor 11:17–34. Paul is correcting their abuse of the Table not instituting it for disciplinary purposes. As stated above, Paul gives no option for abstention but correction so they can partake. He does not create a discipline task force to forbid the bread and cup, but calls on each one to "examine himself." Moreover, the church's role for discipline is in accordance with known sins that have been approached for confession. (See the discussion on page 4 under baptism and the Lord's Table) Otherwise, it is absolutely foolish to think a church knows who is walking with God or not as it pertains to their assembly. Besides, what are the criteria for "walking with God" other than the Scriptures?

To use the authority of a local church to exclude "outsiders" from partaking is to denigrate the very meaning of Christ's body. This is exactly what the Corinthians were doing that Paul detested. They violated the unity of the body by creating divisions between rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, or free and slave.

⁷ Elmer L. Towns, *Theology for Today* (Belmont: Thomson Learning, 2002), 707.

When a local church tells "outsiders" that they cannot participate in the Lords' Table, this makes the body of Christ divided. These believers who may be visiting either locally or from a distance are now relegated as those who are not the same in Christ. Although, they are born again and true believers, this local church casts them as unfit to fellowship with them. Just as some in Corinth would say, "Oh yes, we believe you are a Christian and can call you brother or sister, but we really do not want to fellowship with you at the Table because you are different." Now the Corinthians did not do it out of fear; they did it out of arrogance and selfishness. Nevertheless, a close-communication church does it out of fear along with arrogance. They are absorbed with fear that if they allow an "outsider" to take the bread and cup, their church will not be clean and this will rob them of spiritual power. Paul's use of judgment is for each individual that abuses the Table, not the collective assembly. Also, Paul's use of judgment is to correct behavior not instill fear. As far as the concern about spiritual power, this is absolutely absurd. To think God is advocating His power based on how the Table is administered is a total lack of scriptural knowledge. If this were the case, then Jesus would have failed miserably at the Last Supper. The Table is for sin-soaked believers to come and humbly remember Christ's sacrifice while giving tremendous thanks for His forgiveness. The church's power is not based on the sinners' purity but on the purity of Christ's sacrifice and work. Thus to forbid fellowship due to the unknown spiritual condition of an "outsider" is a direct violation of loving one another. Paul writes two chapters later that "love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things," (1 Cor 13:4-7). This love is not just among "church members" but all of God's children, the body of Christ.

When a church promotes closed-communication, they desire to control others rather than let each "examine himself" and trust the Holy Spirit for conviction and repentance. No better example can be given but by their incessant worry of correct baptism and/or correct church testimony. Although the issue of baptism was taken up earlier, this can also mean mode of baptism such as sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. Still, it can apply to where a person was baptized as in certain types of churches and specific doctrines. If any of these differ in the slightest manner, the person would be denied fellowship at the Table. Concerning "correct church testimony," it could be dealing with known

sins that have been placed under discipline, but this seems unlikely. The Bible already gives proper guidelines for walking in the Spirit, and there is no adjective that relates to "correct" walking in the Spirit. One either walks in the Spirit or walks in the flesh. So, this has to imply a code outside of the Scriptures so people can evaluate whether it is adhered to or not. Sadly, many churches practice this. Yet, Paul never promotes or hints that this is his way of correcting the Corinthian's unworthy manner of eating and drinking the Lord's Supper. Once again, it is simply examine oneself, discern the body of the Lord, and so partake. When one removes the fear, self-absorption, and all of man's extra rules, the Table can be the wonderful memorial of fellowship that proclaims Christ's death until He comes.