

#69 Remembering the Lord

1 Since this is a communion service tonight I would like to take a message in commemoration of that night when our Lord Jesus decided to step into His role as the Lamb that was slain before the foundations of the world.

2 1 Corinthians 11:17 Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. Now what is Paul saying here? He's saying, Regarding this that I want to speak to you, I'm not at all pleased. I am getting the picture that when you meet together it brings out your worst side instead of your best! Notice now as The apostle begins to show the church just what condition they are in. he says, 18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. He says, I hear that you are divisive with each other, competing with each other and criticizing each other. It's hard to believe, but this is what I have been told. But then he tells them why they are acting this way with each other... 19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. In other words, what Paul is saying is that this condition of fussing and debate in the church is because the people are not settled in the truth. They have heresies among themselves, and those heresies bring out the worst in them, in their carnal nature, but that is ok, because it also verifies who is walking in the Light and not just talking it, and who is not.

3 Then Paul speaks of the communion table. And he says, 20 When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. Notice Paul is saying here, I am shocked by your behavior, for instead of coming together to partake of the Lord's Supper, you come together to play games, and instead of your fellowship being around the Word of God, it has become a social thing, and an almost gluttonous affair. And then I find that you are also bringing your divisions into the worship when you come together, and instead of eating the Lord's Supper,

4 Now, verse...21 For in eating every one taketh before others his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken.

5 Look at the attitude that these people were demonstrating by their actions. They were coming together for soup suppers, and church dinners as brother Branham would put it, and not that the Word of God is against the people having fellowship with the breaking of bread, because we find in the Book of acts that this was how the people fellowshiped, was around the table and as they broke the natural bread, they also broke the bread of Life.

6 ACTS 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. Now, I want you to notice that there were four things preeminent in the early church. It says that they continued steadfastly in these four things. And the word steadfastly means that they were earnest in what they were doing, and they were diligent and constant in the doing of these things.

7 It wasn't just a once in a while thing, but it was a pattern of behavior in the early church. Number one they continued constantly and diligently in the Doctrine. Notice that in verse 42 here. Doctrine is mentioned first and foremost. And when the early church backslid what was their sin? They left their first love.

8 Revelations chapter 2:1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; 2 I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say

they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: 3And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted. 4Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. 5Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. 6But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

9 This first Church age had began to drift away from their first love. They had adopted the leadership of man rather than the Word of God to lead them. They began to get churchy as Paul warned the Corinthians church, and the love for the Doctrine was replaced for the love for fellowship and a social Gospel.

10 Church Age Book Chapter 3 - The Ephesian Church Age P:63 John understood what it was to love God. That great apostle of love would certainly see it when the church began to lose that first love of God. In I John 5:3, he says, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments (His Word)." One little deviation from that Word was a step away from Christ. People say they love God, they go to church, they even shout and rejoice and sing and have a great emotional time. But when it is all over, watch and see if they are in that WORD, walking in it, living in it. If they go through all the other and then don't walk in that Word, they can say they love God but their lives tell another story. I wonder if John didn't see a lot of that before he died; people saying they loved God but not obeying His Word. Oh, Ephesian Church, something is happening to you. Someone is trying to either add to that Word or take from it. But they are doing it so subtly that you can't see it. They haven't made a move so big you can see it out there in the open. It is under cover, and they are bringing it by way of reason and human understanding and it will take over unless you refuse it.

11 And again from the Church Age Book Brother Branham said in Chapter 3 - The Ephesian Church Age P:76 All right. Now what was the spiritual climate of that church? It had left its first love. Leaving its first love of the Word of God was revealed to us as having fallen from its origin, which was Pentecost. In plain English, that means this church was in danger of being taken away from the leading of the Holy Spirit, the control of the Spirit. This was exactly what took place after Moses led Israel out of Egypt. The way of God was to lead them by the cloud of fire, prophetic utterance, miracles and signs, and God-given wonders. This was to be accomplished by `God-selected', and `God-ordained', and `God-equipped', and `God-sent' men, with the whole camp being dominated by a Holy Ghost move. They rebelled and wanted a set of rules and creeds to go by. Then they wanted a king. Then they wanted to be exactly like the world and went into complete apostasy and oblivion. That is exactly how the first church age started, and it will get worse and worse, until the Holy Spirit is completely rejected and God must destroy the people.

12 And again brother Branham said in the Church Age Book Chapter 5 - The Pergamean Church Age P:149 That is what has happened in every age since. God delivers the people. They come out by the blood, sanctified by the Word, walk through the waters of baptism and get filled with the Spirit; but after awhile the first love cools off and someone gets the idea that they ought to organize in order to preserve themselves and make a name for themselves, and they organize themselves right back in the second generation and sometimes even before then. They no longer have the Spirit of God, just a form of worship. They are dead. They have hybridized themselves with creed and form and there is no life in them. Now, that is not a very good thing that he is saying here but it's the truth and it's happening right in this Message as well, for it has to fulfill the pattern, that "Alpha Has become Omega."

13 And still again, brother Branham said in His Church Age Book Chapter 3 - The Ephesian Church Age P:60 THE COMPLAINT OF GOD Revelation 2:4, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." To understand this you must realize that the Spirit is not speaking to the original saints of Ephesus

alone. This message is to the entire age which lasted about 120 years. Its message, then, is to all the generations in that span. Now history keeps repeating itself. In the generations of Israel we see revival in one generation, only to see the fires fading in the next. In the third generation, embers may be glowing slightly, but in the fourth there may be no vestige whatsoever of that original flame. Then God lights the fire again, and the same process is repeated. It is simply the manifestation of the truth that God has no grandchildren. Salvation is not passed on by natural birth any more than is there any truth to apostolic succession. It isn't in the Word. You start out with truly born-again believers, and when the next generation comes along they are no longer just plain Christians, but they have taken a denominational name and are now Baptists, Methodists, etc. That is exactly what they are, too. They are not Christians. You have to be born of the will of God, not the will of man, to be saved. But these folks are all coming together now by the will of man. I don't say that some of them aren't right with God. Not for a minute do I say that, but the original fire has died down. They are not the same any more. P:61 The fervent desire to please God, the passion to know His Word, the cry for reaching out in the Spirit, all begins to fade and instead of that church being on fire with the fire of God it has cooled off and become a bit formal. That is what was happening back there to the Ephesians. They were getting a bit formal. The abandonment to God was dying out and the people weren't too careful about what God thought of them as they began to be careful about what the world thought of them. That second generation coming on was just like Israel. They demanded a king to be like the other nations. When they did that, they rejected God. But they did it anyway. That is the history of the church. When it thinks more of conforming to the world instead of conforming to God, it isn't long until you see them stop doing things they used to do, and start doing things they wouldn't do initially. They change their manner of dress, their attitudes and their behavior. They get lax. That is what "Ephesus" means: relaxed--drifting.

14 Now, let's get back to the original church in the Ephesian Church age to see what brought them together and how they were motivated. We are told that in ACTS 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' (Now, notice what it was that they were continuing in. 1). doctrine and 2). fellowship, and 3). in breaking of bread , and 4). in prayers. Then I want you to notice that in doing so in this order (doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer) that it created an atmosphere of expectation among the early church. 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. Notice that their attitude was not about self, but they were focused on the family of God, 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, (and how can you be in one accord if every person has their own agenda. That is why when a young man goes into the marine corps, the first thing they do is to strip you of our own identity. They shear your hair off like a lamb before her shearers, and then they take away your clothes and you put on clothes that are all alike. Then they run you through a lot of humiliating exercises and test every soldier to the edge of their breaking, so they can strip you down so that they can build you up in the image they want for you to be in. And God is no different. You come in a bunch of individuals with your own will and your own mind, and he gives you His Will and he gives you the mind of Christ, and he dresses you in robes of right-wise-ness. Not robes of your choosing, or robes of your own understanding. But he dresses you in robes of His Right-wise-ness, and then gives you the mind that was in Christ, bringing you into the image of His Dear Son who was brought into the World in the Image of His Father.)

15 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

16 So we see the early church and it's love for God, but then we see it began to relax and it began to drift away from it's first love, and we know that it is ordained to take place again in this hour, for Alpha has become Omega.

17 Therefore in returning to Paul's admonition to the Church at Corinth, he said in 1 Corinthians 11:22 What? have ye not houses to eat in and to drink in? or is it that you actually despise the church of God, and shame them

that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. Notice, Paul is telling them that what they are doing shows that they actually have no respect for the House of God.

18 The Message had become common to them. Now, the church at Corinth was not in a very good spiritual condition here as the apostle Paul mentions to us here. There was a lot of carnality going on and the people were not focused on the Doctrine of Christ, but rather they were focused on themselves and on each other. In essence what Paul was saying is that instead of coming together for the Lords, supper you would rather come together for a soup supper.

19 He says, You bring in a lot of food from the outside and make pigs of yourselves. Some are left out, and go home hungry. Others have to be carried out, too drunk to walk. He says, I can't believe it! Don't you have your own homes to eat and drink in? Why would you stoop to desecrating God's church? Why would you actually shame God's poor? I never would have believed you would stoop to this. And I'm not going to stand by and say nothing. Paul had guts. He told it like He saw it, and he wasn't afraid to speak on God's behalf.

20 Now, verse 23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, (in other words, Paul says, Look, what I am telling you, I didn't get it from some seminary, or some school book, I got this from the Lord Himself directly, and this is what happened...) That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. (notice, he said what you are doing is a symbol of how my own body was broken for you. My challenge to you is to look deep into your soul when you come forth tonight to take the bread and wine and remember the tremendous beating to the point of his skin being ripped off and his blood spilled to the ground all for you. Then when you take that bread to your lips do it in remembrance of the that night 2000 years ago when he walked that lonely hill to Golgotha to have nails slammed through his wrists and feet to impale him upon that cross, to suffocate as he tried to draw each breath. I challenge you to set your minds on Christ this night to live out that scene in your minds as you come forward to partake of these symbols. He said, what we do. We do to remember Him. He said in doing this you will be remembering me. So then what attitude should we have when we come to the communion table? It should be very reverent and very much in deep contemplation of our own shortcomings, and our own lax attitudes and then we should be asking God to have mercy on our sinful nature, and to give us the nature of His Son.)

21 Now, verse 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. (And when you take the cup of wine to your lips, remember Me he says, remember how my blood was spilt out so the the Spirit Life that was running thorough my veins, might be released back upon you so that you might live.)

22 Now, verse 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. What you must solemnly realize is that every time you eat this bread and every time you drink this cup, you reenact in your mind, your own words, and your own actions my death for you...

23 Then Paul warns us in verse 27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Paul is saying, you must never let familiarity breed contempt. So what does Paul mean to do this unworthily. The Greek word that was translated as unworthily was an "axios" which means irreverently. He that would approach this table for the Lord with a lack of reverence, is what Paul is warning us about. Look, this isn't just some form we do, or some ritual we do, it's a very serious time of reflection in our soul of our own condition and why it was necessary for Jesus to make the ultimate sacrifice, because we just are not worthy of God-Life, so He gave us His. The very mask that housed the God-Life in the Son of God. The very Life of God that came from God and entered into this chosen vessel. By having that vessel stripped of his skin and emptied of His blood, it allowed that God-life that flowed through those veins to

freely flow into your soul and mine. Anyone who eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Master irreverently is like part of the crowd that jeered and spit on him at his death. Is that the kind of "remembrance" you want to be part of? Examine your motives, test your heart, come to this meal in holy awe.

24 So Paul says in verse 28 Therefore, let a man examine himself, that he might eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

25 And then he says in 29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily (that means irreverently), eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. If you give no thought (or worse, don't care) about the broken body of the Master when you eat and drink, you're running the risk of serious consequences.

26 30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. That's why so many of you even now are listless and sick, and others have gone to an early grave. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. If we get this straight now, we won't have to be straightened out later on. Better to be confronted by the Master now than to face a fiery confrontation later. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

27 33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. when you come together to the Lord's Table, be reverent and courteous with one another. 34 And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; If you're so hungry that you can't wait to be served, go home and eat first. that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come. But by no means risk turning this Meal into an eating and drinking binge or a family squabble. It is a spiritual meal, it's a love feast.

28 Now, let's change the order of service while our brothers make ready the bread and wine, and let's open our Bibles to the record of that night and that last supper in which Jesus gave us the example to follow.

29 John 13: 1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. 2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; 3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; 4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. 5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. 6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? 7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. 8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. 9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. 10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. 11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. 12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? 13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. 16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. 17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. 18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. 19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. 20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. 21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. 22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. 23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. 24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that

he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. 25He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? 26Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. 27And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. 28Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. 29For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. 30He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night. 31Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. 32If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. 33Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. 34A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.