

“In Remembrance of Me”  
Pastor Wally Contreras  
June 27, 2021

“But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. When you come together, it is not the Lord’s supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not. For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when 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.” In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world. So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another—if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home—so that when you come together it will not be for judgment. About the other things I will give directions when I come.” (1 Corinthians 11:17-34)

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We see in 1 Corinthians 11:34 that the issue regarding the Lord’s Supper as it was being observed by the church in Corinth could not wait until Paul’s arrival in Corinth to be resolved. It needed their immediate attention so he wrote and sent a letter to them prior to his arrival. What does this tell me, if anything, regarding the importance and priority that I need to give to Paul’s instructions regarding the Lord’s Supper? Explain.

Pastor Wally said that the church in Corinth was an “interesting” and “innovative” church in that they looked for new ways to do things. Fast-forwarding to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, what are some things that I see churches doing in order to make church services more “interesting” and why?

Manufacturers love to advertise that their product is “new and improved” because it is enticing to customers to buy their product again to check out this “improvement”. Sometimes we find that the “new and improved” product isn’t actually better; it’s just different. When it comes to church, have I entertained thoughts that it would be nice if we could just “shake things up a bit” to make the worship service more “interesting”? Explain.

Does the way I worship sometimes outweigh why I worship? If so, how so? If not, why not?

Pastor Wally pointed out the “natural” division that exists in a church: 1) true, genuine believers in Jesus; 2) “seekers” who have not yet committed themselves to God; and, 3) the “BNOs” (By Name Only) who only attend but whose status is maintained through self-achievement (see Luke 18:9-14). What are some unnatural divisions that have occurred in churches and why do I think such divisions occur?

Speaking on the passage found in 1 Corinthians 11:24 (“Do this in remembrance of me.”) on January 7, 1855, Charles Spurgeon once pointed out: “It seems, then, that Christians may forget Christ. The text implies the possibility of forgetfulness concerning him whom gratitude and affection should constrain them to remember. There could be no need for this loving exhortation, if there were not a fearful supposition that our memories might prove treacherous, and our remembrance superficial in its character, or changing in its nature. Nor is this a bare supposition: it is, alas, too well confirmed in our experience, not as a possibility, but as a lamentable fact...It appears almost impossible that those who have been redeemed by the blood of the dying Lamb should ever forget their Ransomer; that those who have been loved with an everlasting love by the eternal Son of God, should ever forget that Son; but if startling to the ear, it is alas, too apparent to the eye to allow us to deny the fact. Forget him who ne'er forgot us! Forget him who poured his blood forth for our sins! Forget him who loved us even to the death! Can it be possible? Yes it is not only possible, but conscience confesses that it is too sadly a fault of all of us, that we can remember anything except Christ. The object which we should make the monarch of our hearts, is the very thing we are most inclined to forget...I appeal to the conscience of every Christian here: Can you deny the truth of what I utter? Do you not find yourselves forgetful of Jesus?” And???

When it comes to my need to remember Jesus when I am participating in the Lord's Supper, R.C. Sproul once pointed out that "Jesus also understood the traditional Jewish link between apostasy and forgetting. Linguistically, that link is found in the very word apostate, which means "a letting go of or forgetting." An apostate is somebody who has forgotten what he once was committed to. We remember Psalm 103, where David cries, "Bless the Lord, O my soul! And forget not all of his benefits." Ouch! Have I in some way(s) "forgotten what (and to whom) [I] once was committed"? If so, why? If not, what has helped me to "forget not all of his benefits"?

John Piper, in discussing the Lord's Supper, said that "[t]he Lord's Supper is a stark reminder, time after time, that Christianity is not new-age spirituality. It is not getting in touch with your inner being. It is not mysticism. It is rooted in historical facts. Jesus lived. He had a body and a heart that pumped blood and skin that bled. He died publicly on a Roman cross in the place of sinners so that anyone who believes on him might be rescued from the wrath of God. That happened once and for all in history. Therefore, the mental action of the Lord's Supper is foundationally remembering. Not imagining. Not dreaming. Not channeling. Not listening. Not going into neutral. It is a conscious directing of the mind back into history to Jesus and what we know about him from the Bible. The Lord's Supper roots us, time after time, in the nitty-gritty of history. Bread and Cup. Body and blood. Execution and death." Is it important for me to fully realize that the Lord's Supper is a historical event being remembered and not simply some church "tradition" that is performed on a recurring basis? Explain.

Corporately, we take time to "proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" by celebrating the Lord's Supper once a month. How about individually? Beyond the regular monthly observance, how frequently do I take time to remember and reflect on the price that Jesus paid for my forgiveness?

Pastor Wally said that "Right behavior and attitudes arise from beliefs and relationships towards Jesus Christ". What yardstick does the world want me to use to determine right and wrong behaviors and attitudes?

What or who is driving my behaviors and attitudes on a day-to-day basis?

Do I need to make some adjustments in my life regarding my behaviors and attitudes?