

Growing Together Discussion Questions from Sunday's Sermon

(For Personal Study, Review, Meditation and Mid-Week Group Discussion)

April 21, 2013

I. **Getting to know you ~ Questions for Group Discussion:**

- a. With whom have you lost touch but still wonder about?
- b. What makes you stand to your feet and cheer?
- c. When was a time you were in need and someone met that need?

II. **Getting into the Bible ~ Points from Sunday's Message:**

a. Some Key Scriptures & Points from Sunday's Message:

i. Key Scripture:

1. *Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."* Matt 26:26-29 (Mk. 14:22-25; Lk. 22:14-23)
2. The Corinthians Correction: 1 Corinthians 11:17-34
3. *The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. Consider the people of Israel: are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar?* 1 Corinthians 10:16-18

ii. Key points: The Lord's Table – Proclamation & Participation!

1. The Lord's Table proclaims the Lord's death & is our participation in its benefits by faith.
2. The Lord's Table proclaims the vital union of the believers with the resurrected Lord & and is our participation with one another as members of His body.
3. The Lord's Table proclaims the future return of Jesus and & our anticipated participation together with Him at His return.

III. Getting into Life:

- a. Baptism is a one-time individual experience of a person publically proclaiming their faith in Jesus and their union with Him in His death and resurrection.

The Lord's Table is an on-going community experience of publically proclaiming Jesus' death and resurrection, and the continuing fellowship with Him and with one another in the body of Christ as we await His return.

- i. When did you respond to the Gospel and place your faith in Jesus?
 - ii. When were you baptized?
 - iii. When did you begin participating in the Lords' Table?
 - iv. Do you think the early church had any non-baptized participants at the Table?
- b. In *1 Corinthians 11* Paul corrects the church in Corinth concerning their celebration of the Lord's Table. In his correction he communicates that they were "*despising the church of God and humiliating the poor*" by their loveless and selfish behavior when they gathered.
- i. Why did it take an "outsider" to point out this sinful behavior?
 - ii. How do you think those who were gathering to celebrate the Lord's Table responded to being told they were "despising the church"?

In the same context he challenges the Christians to "*examine themselves*" before partaking of the bread and the cup.

- iii. Is the self-examination to be a time of introspection – or a time of evaluating our attitude and behavior with other members of the Christian community?

Is it possible to examine your own heart and your "personal" spiritual life apart from considering your relationships within the broader Christian community?

- iv. If our self-examination only leads us to examine our hearts and our own private relationship with Jesus, could we not unknowingly be guilty of the same sin of the Corinthians (participating in the Lord's Table with no thought of others)?
- c. How should the Lord's Table be both celebratory and serious – reverent and full of rejoicing? How is our attitude different at a baptism ceremony than at the celebration of the Lord's Table?

They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Act 2:42