

Sermon Outline: “What Is the Proper Lord’s Supper?” 1 Corinthians 11:17–34

December 7, 2025 — Joint Worship Service

(Tomikawa Evangelical Church & Hidaka Christian Church)

Introduction

- As we celebrate the Lord’s Supper in this joint service, we ask: *Is our observance truly proper?*
 - Paul sharply rebukes the Corinthians for their misuse of the Lord’s Supper.
 - Today we learn the essence of the Lord’s Supper and the heart attitude required to partake rightly.
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I. The Lord’s Supper in the Early Church & the Problem in Corinth

The Lord’s Supper in the Early Church

- Believers gathered in house churches even on weekdays for meals, prayer, teaching, and the Lord’s Supper.
- Celebrated as “the Lord’s Supper” within an evening meal (following the Last Supper).
- The fellowship meal (agape feast) and the Lord’s Supper were practiced together (Acts 2:42, 46).

Paul’s Strong Rebuke (vv. 17–19)

- “I have no praise for you.”
 - Their gathering brought “harm rather than good.”
 - The Lord’s Supper was practiced without unity and in a wrongful manner.
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II. Specific Problems in the Corinthian Church (vv. 20–22)

Division Caused by Economic Differences

- Wealthy members arrived early, ate their own meals, and some became drunk.
- Poor members arrived late after work, finding almost no food—only a small portion of bread and wine.
- The poor were made to feel ashamed and humiliated even within the church.

Social Background of Corinth

- Corinth was marked by sharp class distinctions; such treatment was common in society.
 - Paul insists that such behavior must not be carried into the church.
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III. The Essence and Meaning of the Lord’s Supper (vv. 23–26)

The Supper Instituted by Jesus

- Breaking of bread: symbol of Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross.
- “This is My body, which is for you”: offered for all the disciples without distinction.
- The cup: the “new covenant” through Christ’s blood—salvation by grace.

Purpose of the Lord’s Supper (v. 26)

- Not only a remembrance of personal salvation,
but a corporate remembrance of the grace given to the entire body of Christ.
- Proclaiming the Lord's death until He comes.

The Heart of the Problem in Corinth

- Self-centered eating and lack of concern for the poor.
 - Their behavior contradicted the essence of the Supper—Christ's sacrificial love and grace for the whole church.
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IV. Warnings Against Improper Participation (vv. 27–32)

What Is an Unworthy Manner? (vv. 27–28)

- Not merely having personal sin,
but partaking without love toward brothers and sisters.
- Self-examination includes attitudes and actions toward others in the church.

The Lord's Discipline (vv. 29–30)

- Those who partake without discerning the body bring judgment upon themselves.
- The illnesses and deaths in the Corinthian church were a form of the Lord's discipline for their loveless actions.

Purpose of Judgment (vv. 31–32)

- Not to cause them to lose salvation,
but to restore them through the Lord's loving discipline.
 - When they discern themselves rightly, the discipline is removed.
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V. Positive Exhortations for the Lord's Supper (vv. 33–34)

- "Wait for one another": show love and consideration for others.
 - "If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home":
the fellowship meal is not for satisfying appetite but for affirming unity and grace in Christ.
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Conclusion

Remembering the Essence of the Lord's Supper

- The Supper is not for relieving physical hunger.
- It is to remember Christ's love and sacrifice given to the whole people of God.

Examine Yourself Before Partaking

- Not only personal sin, but whether you are showing love and consideration to others.
 - Are we avoiding behaviors that create shame or exclusion for brothers or sisters?
 - Partake in the Lord's Supper with love.
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Application Questions

- Do I love the brothers and sisters in this church?
- Do I act daily with love and consideration so that no one feels inferior or excluded?