



## Cultures in Conflict, Session 4, PART TWO

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#### WHY LEARNING COMMUNITIES?

To become better and better disciples of Christ TOGETHER so we can face **anything** through...

1. Deeper learning of Biblical truth
2. Stronger “iron sharpening iron” relationships

**Ephesians 4:12–16**

**Remember... it’s all about putting God’s truth into action in everyday lives**

#### OPENING CONVERSATION

#### REVIEW PART ONE:

We live in a world of class division – constant evaluation of who is more valuable. Religion does the same. It was not so in the beginning and has never been God’s intent, so a facet of Jesus’ work was to restore the value of all people. Christ followers, though living in a world of class separation, must follow Jesus’ teaching and example to value every person, especially practicing it to bring true unity in local congregations which are the expressions of the Body of Jesus Christ.

Last week’s takeaways...

Put a bookmark in your Bible at 1 Corinthians 3:1, 12:12, 13:1

#### SESSION 4, PART TWO, “The Lord’s Supper: Discerning the Body”

***Even deeper than refusing to divide ourselves by classes in the world is living in true unity within the Body of Christ.***

➔ **Paul’s countercultural message: we are one in Christ!**

But there was a problem in the Corinthian church... “***divisions among you!***”

#### **1 Corinthians 3:1–9 (ESV)**

✓ **Ways those in the Corinthian church were practicing divisions:**

- 1 Corinthians 5: You’re divided in your own marriages
- 1 Corinthians 6: You’re taking each other to court in front of outsiders
- 1 Corinthians 12: You’re divided over spiritual gifts, as if some are more important
- 1 Corinthians 12: You argue about worship, which prevents outsiders from coming to Christ

*The whole book is about being divided. We live in a broken world. How will we communicate that what we have in Christ is real if we can’t get along, divide over the unimportant, can’t stay married?*

✓ **Another metaphor: ASKLEPIEION, (hospital) in 1 Corinthians 12:12f**

#### **1 Corinthians 12:12–28**

➔ **The Lord’s Supper** - A different kind of meal for Christ-followers

“SULHA”: the cultural meal when there’s been an offense. Those involved sit down to break bread together as a way to say it’s forgiven and commit to never mention it again. Examples include the parable of the Prodigal son and Jacob with his father-in-law.

In some sense Lord's Supper is such a meal. Communion – Jesus died, redeemed us from penalty of our sins, and He sits with us at our table to break bread and say those sins and offenses don't exist. The meal is the meal of reconciliation, of bringing together the separated. He paid a high price to bring us together. But in Corinth it was doing the opposite.

**1 Corinthians 11:17–20 (ESV)** <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>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, <sup>19</sup>for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. <sup>20</sup>When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat.

They were letting the Roman class system invade the Lord's Supper – the very meal which says “we are all one” was being held like it was a feast in a wealthy Roman triclinium.

It is to be practiced as a reminder that we are all one in Christ.

**1 Corinthians 11:27–29 (ESV)** <sup>27</sup>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. <sup>28</sup>Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. <sup>29</sup>For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

“The Body” refers to both the body of Jesus sacrificed and the Body of Christ, which is the church Jesus established.

### ➔ Visible proof that the gospel is real

**1 Corinthians 13:1–8a, 13**

**1 Peter 2:12 (NIV84)** <sup>12</sup>Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

### DISCUSSION and APPLICATION

- ➔ What caught your attention... convicted you?
- ➔ Why are such practices so damaging?
- ➔ Where might we still be blind
  - red flag that Corinthian Christians were so blind and evidently didn't realize they were.
- ➔ What are the antidotes to being blindly caught up in culture and self-focus that led to divisions?
- ➔ Look at 1 Corinthians 3 and 12 – what are applications for us to help us be one in Christ, everyone of equal value but different in roles, gifts, skills, responsibilities, influence, etc?
- ➔ How does this inform the mission Christ gave us?

### TAKEAWAYS...



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