



1. Sunday Summary: This Sunday we talked about how the Lord's Supper is a practice that helps us to cultivate the community we find in the church. It does that because it's a meal that connects us in a number of ways. It's easier to see the structure of the passage in the Greek language, because the word *sunerchomai* (συνέρχομαι or bring together, connect together, unite) is repeated 4 times. Each time Paul uses the word he shows us another way the Lord's Supper connects us.

First, the Lord's Supper connects the past with the present. It is a memorial supper that tells the story of our release from slavery to sin in a tangible way.

Second, the Lord's Supper connects our hearts and souls to God. The supper is a remembrance. That word "remember" means to fuse together (think re-member, the opposite of dismember). In the supper we are fusing the truth of what Christ did on the cross to our hearts. It happens mysteriously to be sure, but it does happen.

Third, the Lord's Supper connects individuals to the community. As members of the body of Christ, who are feeding on Christ's body and blood, we have to recognize that every one of us is here by grace. It's not through anything that we've done that we belong. That levels the playing field, such that we have to recognize each one of us got here only by Christ. That means we can't hang on to un-forgiveness, or grudges, and we should only participate in the supper if we're reconciled with all our brothers and sisters.

Fourth and last, the Lord's Supper connects us with the future. Paul said we that "whenever you eat this bread, and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death, *until he comes again.*" He is coming again to set the whole world right. When that happens we'll all be invited to the great wedding feast of the Lamb (Revelation 19). What we do now at the Lord's Supper is just "the appetizer of our future bliss." And through it, the Lord tells us that he is completely dedicated to getting us from where we are today to that eternal supper where we will be fully satisfied.

2. Connecting Questions: (Interactive, life sharing, thought & feeling type stuff)

- Talk about your experience of the Lord's Supper. What's been the most important aspect of the Lord's Supper for you? In your experience, what has the church emphasized over the years with respect to the Lord's Supper? Is the Lord's Supper important to you? Has it been a sacrament that has built your faith? If it has, why? If it hasn't, why not?
- Have you ever thought about not participating in the Lord's Supper? Why? What should keep someone away from the Table of the Lord?

- How often do you think we should celebrate the Lord's Supper as Church?
- How might we as a church highlight that the Lord's Supper is a meal that helps to create community?
- What insights from today's message were most helpful for you?

3. Truth Questions: (What does the Bible say?)

- Think together about some other passages that deal with the Lord's Supper. Can you think of any? Talk about them.
- Read John 6:53-55. Is Jesus talking about the Lord's Supper here? If he is, what is he trying to say? As Reformed Christians we often highlight that the elements are "just symbols." Sometimes we take that to mean that nothing real happens in the Lord's Supper. Is that true?
- Read 1 Corinthians 10:14-22. What is this passage about? What does it mean to "participate in the blood... and body of Christ?"

4. Formation Questions: (Taking it further, How does the Truth change the way I live?)

- What concrete steps can you make to sink the gospel truth that we dealt with today deeper into your life throughout this week? What will you do about the message you heard today?
- One of the things that the Lord's Supper does is help us to deal with divisions that happen in the church. But we don't need to wait for the Lord's Supper to examine ourselves and "discern the Body of Christ." How will you continue to discern the body in the days and weeks to come?

5. Resources for Further Study:

1. Torrance, James B., *Worship, Community, and the Triune God of Grace*. (Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL. 1996).

