

1 COR. 10:11 – 11:34

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7. Those attending cultic meals with a sense of security must wake up to the danger (10:11-13)

a. Paul reiterates that the O.T. episodes to which he has referred serve as negative examples for them and were written down as a warning for us, for those in the time following Christ's incarnation.

b. That being so, those who think they are standing firm, i.e., those who attend the cultic meals with a sense of security, must become aware of the danger they are in or they too will fall.

c. Verse 13 reassures the church that the danger of their falling is not posed by overpowering external circumstances, by testing that falls upon them; God is faithful and will not allow such tests to be inescapable. Rather, the danger lies in their *choosing* to test Christ via idolatry (see, 10:22), in their voluntarily seeking out what is contrary to his will. There is no escape from what one actively seeks.

8. They must stop attending the temple meals (10:14-22)

a. The conclusion (v. 14) is that they must flee from idolatry. They cannot continue to pursue it, to attend the temple meals, and expect to avoid God's judgment. Their baptism and participation in the Lord's Supper will not protect them.

b. Paul uses their knowledge of the nature of the Lord's Supper and O.T. sacred meals to show how sensible his prohibition is.

(1) The Lord's Supper has profound spiritual meaning; participating in it is an act of worship, not simply the eating of a meal.

(a) The cup of blessing, the fruit of the vine, for which we give thanks and the bread which we break in taking the Lord's Supper is a sharing with one another of the God-given symbols of the blood and body of Jesus Christ. It is an affirmation of our being bound together in the atoning death of Christ, of our being the one community of redeemed people, the one body of Christ. Our corporate taking of the one bread, which is the body of Christ, says that we together comprise that one body.

(b) The implication is that cultic meals in pagan temples also carry religious significance in the sense of devotion to the idol and are therefore totally incompatible with the membership in the body of Christ that is proclaimed in the Lord's Supper.

(2) Paul adds a further analogy of the sacred meals in Israel, probably because the Lord's Supper did not involve eating food that had first been offered in sacrifice (as did the temple meals). Those who shared in the meal following the sacrifice were in that act sharing together in the sacrificial worship of Yahweh. The implication is that eating the cultic meals in pagan temples is also a sharing in the worship of the idol.

c. In vv. 19-20 Paul clarifies his argument to make clear that he is not implying that the idols to whom sacrifices are offered in the pagan temples are actually gods. He and the Corinthians are in complete agreement that there is only one God. Rather, his point is that, though idols are not gods, they do represent demonic powers. Paul does not want them to be sharers in sacrificial offerings to demons.

d. In v. 21 Paul both warns and prohibits them: "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons."

e. In v. 22 he asks, "Or should we try to provoke the Lord to jealousy?" meaning "Will you continue eating at both meals and thus arouse the Lord's jealousy, as Israel did in the desert?" They will not win that battle because surely they are not stronger than God!

9. Sacrificed meat that is later sold in the marketplace for home consumption (10:23-11:1)

a. Having finished his discussion of eating the temple meals with a strong reiteration of his prohibition, Paul now addresses the subject of sacrificed meat that is later sold in the marketplace for home consumption.

(1) Some in Corinth apparently were accusing Paul of being a hypocrite with regard to such meat because on occasions he would refuse to eat it but on other occasions he gobbled it down.

(2) Paul spells out the Christian's freedom and responsibility regarding sacrificed meat in a non-temple setting and, in the process, explains his own actions.

b. The rule in such cases is indeed freedom, just as their quoted slogan indicated, but Paul reminds them that this freedom is not absolute; it must be qualified by concern for the welfare of others. The principle of freedom is clearly declared in vv. 25-27.

(1) The Christian is free to eat everything sold in the meat market. Before buying it he is not to investigate the meat's history for possible religious contamination because, as suggested by Ps. 24:1, God is the ultimate source of all food, even food that was previously offered in sacrifice. The implication is that nothing that is done to food makes the food itself taboo (as opposed to the context of the eating).

(2) Likewise, the Christian who accepts an unbeliever's invitation to dinner is free to eat whatever is served without conducting any kind of investigation into the food's origin. All food is acceptable for eating, regardless of what someone may have done to it along the way. So food *per se* is not to be a matter of Christian conscience.

c. *But* if someone attending the dinner at the unbeliever's house privately (implied in the word) informs the Christian that the meat was offered in sacrifice, then the qualification of freedom comes into play; the Christian is to abstain.

(1) It is probable that Paul's hypothetical informant is himself an unbelieving fellow guest.

(a) It is unlikely that a Christian who objected to eating sacrificed meat would accept an invitation to a pagan dinner, but more importantly, Paul has the informant describing the meat to the Christian in pagan terminology ("offered in sacrifice") rather than in Jewish-Christian terminology ("sacrificed to idols").

(b) Verses 32-33 suggest that the emphasis here, as in 9:19-23 to which he alludes, is on not hindering an unbeliever's path to salvation.

(c) The unbeliever may be trying to help the Christian out in the mistaken belief that Christians had the same view of sacrificed meat as Jews. In other words, the unbeliever would tip him off to prevent his Christian fellow guest from unwittingly violating the dietary scruples that the unbeliever mistakenly ascribed to him. If, for example, you thought a fellow dinner guest was religiously opposed to consuming alcohol in any form, you might warn him that the desert had been made with liqueur.

(2) Paul says that in such a situation, the Christian is to abstain on account of the informant and conscience, and then he immediately clarifies that he means the conscience of the informant, not the Christian.

(a) He adds the clarification because he does not want someone to conclude that the actual knowledge imparted by the informant changes what he has twice said about food not being a matter of Christian conscience. He wants it clear that the Christian is to abstain as a matter of freedom, as an *entitlement* he is giving up, not as a matter of conscience, not because he believes that eating such meat is inherently wrong.

(b) The Christian is to abstain for the good of the informant who will potentially be harmed by the Christian eating something which the informant, for whatever reason, thinks he should not be eating ("conscience" in the broad sense of moral consciousness or moral expectations, a sense of ought). This dissonance between the informant's expectations and the Christian's practice may negatively taint the informant's view of Christianity. Given that eating sacrificed food is completely optional for the Christian, the risk of such alienation is totally unnecessary.

(c) It's similar to Paul's decision in Acts 16:1-2 to circumcise Timothy so as not to create an unnecessary obstacle to his evangelism among the Jews (see, 1 Cor. 7:19). If, on the other hand, some had been insisting that abstaining from sacrificed meat was necessary for salvation, then I suspect that the welfare of others would demand that the Christian stand for the truth of freedom by eating the food, just as when Paul refused to circumcise Titus when some insisted that circumcision was necessary for salvation (Gal 2:1-5).

d. Having made the point that abstaining in such situations is not a matter of the Christian's conscience, Paul in vv. 29b-30 turns the discussion to his own situation with the rhetorical question, "For why should my freedom be determined by the conscience of another?"

(1) The understood answer is that it should not, but that is precisely what they were doing in holding him to the limits of the person's conscience to whom he had deferred. He abstained at some pagan dinners purely as an accommodation for the good of another person, a concept they could not seem to grasp, not because he had any moral qualms about eating such food. His abstaining was not an expression of his own conscience on the matter.

(2) That being so, there was no justification for their charge of hypocrisy, their reviling of him, for his eating sacrificed meat on other occasions. When properly understood, his actions were perfectly consistent. He always believed it was permissible to eat the meat; he simply decided that on occasions it was not expedient to do so. As he asks in v. 30, "If I partake with gratitude (i.e., with a conviction that it has been provided by God for his eating) why am I reviled because of that for which I give thanks?"

e. Conclusion (10:31 - 11:1)

(1) The conclusion is that whatever optional conduct a Christian might engage in, whether eating, drinking, or anything else, it must be done to the glory of God, meaning in a way that brings him glory, honor, and praise.

(2) An important aspect of this is to avoid being a "stumbling block" to Jews, Greeks or the church of God. A Christian is not to use his freedom in such a way that it hinders someone else from hearing the gospel or alienates someone who is already a brother or sister. As with Paul, our concern for the salvation of others is to control our exercise of freedom. In that, we are to imitate him as he imitates Christ!

V. Conduct in the Assembly (11:2 – 14:40)

A. Maintaining cultural sexual distinctions in attire (11:2-16)

Preliminary remarks

1. The impropriety involved in 11:2-16 is not women praying and prophesying but their doing so uncovered. Paul doesn't suggest that they shouldn't pray or prophesy; he says only that they must be covered when they engage in those activities. So it is clear to me and to virtually all commentators that Christian women were indeed authorized to pray and prophesy publicly in some setting.
2. That makes it easier to understand how removing the head covering, which I take to be a culturally expected piece of female attire, had become an issue. As I said last week, public speaking in that day and age was a male activity. If women in Christ were authorized to pray and prophesy publicly, you can see how that authorization would feed the notion we've already seen in Corinth that sex distinctions were no longer relevant to Christians. They've entered the new age of the Spirit and are now "like the angels." They easily could interpret the fact that as Christians they were authorized to engage in the male activity of public speaking as supporting their view that sex distinctions were obsolete.
3. For those women who believed that male-female differences were indeed irrelevant in the church, it would make sense to discard cultural symbols of sex distinction. Since sex distinctions were no longer relevant, neither were items of apparel that marked those differences. In Christ they were free to pray and prophesy *as men*, which meant without the covering that distinguished them.
4. A question we wish Paul had answered clearly is *where* the women were authorized to pray and prophesy. More specifically, we want to know whether either or both of those activities were authorized in the worship assembly. But Paul is not concerned here with the issue of what public forums were appropriate for women to pray and prophesy. His point is that wherever such speech is appropriate, something he previously would have passed on to them, it is appropriate only if done with the covering, that cultural mark of femaleness. So we are left to do some detective work, and people come to different conclusions in that process.
5. Rather than go through all the possibilities, I'm just going to tell you how I see things. Please let me finish these preliminary comments before you decide to stone me. You'll see at the end that the practical implication of what I'm saying is not as radical as it may sound. If you think my understanding is flawed, which it may be, then by all means reject it. I'm just a limited human being giving it his best shot.
6. It seems to me that at least some of the female speech Paul is addressing in 11:2-16 took place in the worship assembly. This is suggested by several lines of evidence.
 - 11:17-34 deals with an assembly in which the Lord's Supper is shared, so that is clearly a reference to the gathering of the church for worship on the Lord's Day. Not only is there no hint of a change in setting between 11:2-16 and 11:17-34, but the parallel language in 11:2 and 11:17 ("Now I praise you"; "But in giving this

instruction, I do not praise you") is a rhetorical clue that there is some connection between the two discussions.

- The phrase "on account of the angels" in 11:10 is best understood as a reference to angelic oversight of the worship assembly of the people of God. Angels were said to be present at the community gatherings at Qumran, and certain people (those with a bodily defect) were excluded from the assembly "out of reverence for the angels."
- When Paul appeals to the practice of "the churches" in 14:33b, he clearly does so with reference to the gathering of the whole church for worship. He makes a similar appeal in 11:16.

7. So I am convinced that at least some of the female speech Paul is addressing in 11:2-16 took place in the worship assembly. You say, now wait a minute, 1 Cor. 14:33b-36 forbids any kind of female speaking in the assembly. Paul there commands the women to be silent. So neither female praying nor prophesying could have taken place in the worship assembly.

8. But as you'll hear when we get to 1 Corinthians 14, I don't believe 14:33b-36 is a blanket prohibition of female speech in the assembly. In context, I believe Paul there says that women are forbidden from participating in the prophetic process in the assembly, meaning they can neither prophesy nor challenge (weigh) the prophecies delivered by others. The rationale for the prohibition is the same as in 1 Tim. 2:11-14: women in the assembly are to express their divinely ordered submissiveness to men by refraining from *authoritative* speech. In other words, in the assembly women are not direct the men, not to set them straight, by delivering God's authoritative message to them. Women are forbidden from doing that either directly by prophesying or teaching or indirectly by challenging the prophecies or teaching of others.

9. I know this difference in roles rankles some, but it is not because women are less intelligent, less capable, or less moral than men. It is because God in his sovereignty chose to place the leadership responsibility on men. You say, well why limit prophesying and teaching in the assembly to males given that some women are capable of doing it? Why not open those roles to all who are capable of performing them regardless of their sex? You just as well could ask why God gave the tribe of Levi the exclusive responsibility to care for the Tabernacle, or why he gave the family of Aaron the exclusive responsibility of serving as priests. Why limit those roles to people who happen to be born in a certain lineage rather than allowing everyone equal access to the roles based on ability? Certainly there were people from other tribes who could carry the tabernacle furnishings as well as Levites.

10. The answer is that it was God's sovereign choice to do so. And the refusal to accept God's right to restrict roles to specific groups is precisely what led to Korah's rebellion in Numbers 16. Korah, a Levite, and 250 community leaders opposed Moses and Aaron on the basis that they should have equal access to God. All Israel was holy, so no one family

line should be exalted to the priestly function. It was a challenge to God's right to choose select groups for specific roles. And, as you know, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were swallowed by the earth, and the 250 community leaders were incinerated by God.

11. Now, if I am correct in thinking that at least some of the female speech addressed in 11:2-16 took place in the worship assembly and if I also am correct in thinking that 14:33b-36 precludes female prophesying in the assembly, then the female speech that took place in the worship assembly was prayer. In other words, my understanding is that women in Christ were authorized to pray publicly both in and out of the worship assembly but were authorized to prophesy publicly only outside the assembly.

12. Prayer, being a noninstructive expression of devotion to God, is not a way of directing men, and therefore, in my understanding, it is not inconsistent with the submission a woman is required to manifest in the assembly. I think Acts 1:14 and 4:23-24 probably are examples of women praying publicly with the gathered church, but that conclusion is not certain.

13. I am aware that some believe that 1 Tim. 2:8, where Paul says he wants "the *men* in every place to pray," means that women are not to pray in the assembly, but I don't think that follows. He does not say he wants the men to pray; he says he wants the men to pray *without anger and argument*. He assumes they will be praying and urges them to do so with the proper attitude so that their prayers will not be hindered (e.g., 1 Pet. 3:7). If on the brink of recess a teacher said, "I want the boys to play without fighting," no one would think the teacher was thereby excluding girls from playing. Rather, they would conclude that the boys had a problem with fighting that the teacher did not want carried over into recess.

14. I think the issue Paul is addressing arose with regard to women in the assembly who were seeking to pray without the covering. Paul in 11:13 identifies the specific focus of his concern: "Judge for yourselves: Is it proper that a woman *pray* to God uncovered?" Though the immediate issue is covering during prayer in the assembly, Paul mentions women prophesying because the argument being made to justify women praying in the assembly uncovered also would justify women prophesying outside the assembly uncovered. If the right to engage in the traditionally male activity of public speech justifies doing so "as men," meaning without the culture's distinctive mark of femaleness, then it would justify doing so whether that public speech was in or out of the assembly. Any ruling on the assembly situation would by logic also be a ruling on the non-assembly situation, so for this purpose, Paul treats the two situations as indistinguishable.

15. Now, before anyone gets too upset with me, if I am correct in thinking that women prayed publicly in the assemblies of the early church, it doesn't necessarily follow that women are permitted to "lead" prayers in a church gathering. Whether that's acceptable boils down, in my judgment, to whether female participation in that role would violate the biblical principle of male leadership. I'm inclined to think that it would because that role has a sense of leadership that is not present in some other contexts. The person who "leads" prayer in our assemblies is not merely praying personally; rather, that

person is appointed to speak to God on behalf of the assembly. I don't believe that is the kind of public praying women did.

16. But in a context like "open praying" (i.e., where all are invited to pray personally without any appointment or designation to speak for the assembly), which I suspect was more common in the house churches of the early church, that concern wouldn't seem to apply. Of course, even in a congregation that utilized "open praying" in its assemblies, the potential impact on congregational unity would have to factor into any shift in practice from all men to both men and women.

17. Wherever the women were praying and prophesying, the problem here is that some women were pressing to do so without the customary female covering.

1. Given continuing relevance of sexual distinctions for those in Christ, it is inappropriate to reject cultural sex distinctions in attire when speaking publicly to or on behalf of God (11:2-6)

a. After praising the leaders for following the practice he had passed on to them, Paul proceeds to give them reasons for the practice, something they could surely use in defending their position.

b. He begins by denying the notion that sex is completely irrelevant in the church. He does so by asserting that the relationship between men and women in Christ is not reciprocal with regard to leadership. Men are given the leadership responsibility in the church. Man is the head of woman but woman is not the head of man. He phrases the difference in these terms because "head" plays into the issue of head coverings.

(1) This in no way means that man is superior to woman in character, intellect, or capabilities. They simply have been given different roles or functions. The man is to lead and the woman is to be a helping partner in the joint enterprise of glorifying God.

(2) Nothing makes this clearer than the statement that "the head of Christ is God." A basic confession of the Christian faith is that the Son is one with the Father in nature; he is in no way inferior or less worthy. The difference between the Father and the Son is merely one of role or function. The Son embraces the leadership of the Father.

(3) I think James Hurley has captured the spirit of male leadership in his book *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*. Though his comments deal with a husband and wife, I think they are applicable to male leadership in general (p. 151):

The manner in which such decisions are handled is crucial. The husband may not be high-handed and stubborn, knowing that she will finally have

to give way. That is not the model of Christ's headship. Neither may the wife be grudging and resentful. That is not the manner of our response to Christ. In the last analysis, when the two can devote no more time to individual and joint seeking of the grace of God to permit them to come to one mind or to be willing to yield to the other, an exchange along the following lines is in order:

Husband: "Not because I am inherently wiser or more righteous, nor because I am right (although I do believe I am or I would not stand firm), but because it is finally my responsibility before God, we will take the course which I believe is right. If I am being sinfully stubborn, may God forgive me and give me the grace to yield to you."

Wife: "Not because I believe you are wiser in this matter (I don't) or more righteous, nor because I accept that you are right (because I don't or I would not oppose you), but because I am a servant of God who has called me to honour your headship, I willingly yield to your decision. If I am wrong, may God show me. If you are wrong, may he give you grace to acknowledge it and to change."

c. Given the continuing relevance of sex for those who are in Christ, it is inappropriate to reject cultural sex distinctions in attire, to engage in a kind of "cross dressing," when publicly speaking to or on behalf of God.¹

(1) Just as it would be disgraceful for any man to pray or prophesy with a female covering on his head,² so it would be disgraceful for a woman to do so without it. It is disgraceful because it is an act of rebellion against the created order and as such it brings shame both on the rebel and the rebel's leader/head.

(2) The sexual nature of the shame is evident in vv. 5b-6. The woman who prays or prophesies without the cover disgraces her head, "*for* she is one and the same thing as the woman who has been shaved." Verse 6 emphasizes the closeness of the parallel.

(a) The shame of the woman who had been shaved was the shame of appearing as a man, appearing contrary to her sex. A couple of passages in the writings of Lucian, a second-century Greek satirist, clearly show that short hair on a

¹ A head covering was culturally expected attire for Jewish, Greek, and Roman women appearing in public. See, e.g., Garland, 520-521.

² Oster has shown that Roman men pulled a toga over their head in the context of prayer and prophecy, but that covering must be distinct from the covering under discussion, as the covering under discussion is *required* for women and *forbidden* for men. Men praying covered is not an actual problem Paul seeks to correct (Garland, 517) but something that would be recognized as inappropriate. Garland's suggestion that men pulling togas over their heads would be recognized as inappropriate because of its connection to pagan devotional practices stumbles on the fact women are commanded to wear the covering.

woman was considered mannish.³ There's no contemporary evidence for the view that short hair or a shaved head was the mark of Corinthian prostitutes.

(b) Her shame was not from the short hair itself but from the fact short hair was culturally defined as the hair of a man. In the same way, the shame of going uncovered was not from the attire itself but from the fact the lack of a cover was culturally defined as the attire of a man.

2. Further reason why a man should not wear the covering but a woman should and a word on mutual dependence (11:7-12)

a. Verses 7-10 provide a further reason why a man should not wear the cover but a woman should. This kind of "cross dressing" not only violates God's creation order; it also ignores the fact that woman's existence glorifies man (in addition to God) whereas man's existence glorifies only God. This difference in the object of glorification has implications for who is a suitable candidate for wearing female clothing.

(1) Woman's existence glorifies man because man "gave birth" to woman and because woman was made to help the man, to be a nonleading partner. According to Gen. 2:20-23, God made Eve from part of Adam's body, not independently from the ground, and he did so that she might be a helper for Adam.

(2) Given that woman is the glory of man, it is fitting that she be under a sign of authority when publicly speaking to or on behalf of God because however glorious man may be, he remains under the authority of God. Since man is the glory of God, a sign of authority over him would not be appropriate because there is no authority over God.

(3) The head cover qualifies as a sign of authority precisely because it was a distinctly feminine piece of attire. Given that women were assigned a subordinate or nonleading role by both culture and God, clothing that was distinctly feminine naturally symbolized being under the leadership of another. (Paul does not address how or why certain items of apparel came to be distinctly feminine; he simply accepts that some did.)

b. Verse 10 says that a woman should also have a sign of authority on her head, meaning the female covering, "on account of the angels." As I have already mentioned, the best way to understand this is to recognize that angels observe the worship assembly and are concerned that the creation order be honored in that forum.

c. Vv. 11-12 make clear that the sex differences about which he has been speaking and which must continue to be honored are not a matter of superiority/inferiority. Men and women in Christ are mutually dependent, each needing the other that mankind may be what God intended it to be. Evidence of this mutual dependence

³ There also is evidence that a shaved head marked a woman as an adulteress (see, Garland, 520), but that seems less relevant than the sex angle.

is that, whereas womankind initially came from Adam, all subsequent men have come from women, and all things (men and women) come from the one God.

3. Appeal to cultural analogy of long hair (11:13-16)

a. Paul appeals to what they already recognized about long hair to make his point that women should not pray uncovered. (The fact he mentions only prayer lends some support to the notion that the two practices of praying and prophesying were in some way distinguished.)

b. Their natural sense of sexual propriety taught that if a man in that culture wore long hair it dishonored him but if a woman wore long hair it honored or exalted her. The reason was that long hair had been culturally assigned as a kind of female covering; it was inappropriate on a man. Paul's point is that the head covering in question functions the same way.

c. Regardless of whether some want to argue the point, Paul says that neither his group nor other churches of God engage in the practice of women praying or prophesying uncovered.

B. The Lord's Supper (11:17-34)

1. The problem of maintaining social divisions (11:17-22)

a. Paul had praise for the way the leaders handled the matter of women praying (and prophesying) uncovered, but he had no praise for the way the church assembled to eat the Lord's Supper. He had heard that when they came together there were divisions among them.

(1) He is not referring here to "horizontal divisions" where understood equals divide over different practices or beliefs but to "vertical divisions" where the body is being stratified by the maintenance of social rankings.

(2) Though his informants were not disinterested observers, he was willing at least partly to believe the report about the division, not only because of the credibility of those who told him but also because he thought that factions were necessary in Corinth in order that the genuine believers may be set apart or distinguished from the imitators.

(3) In other words, Paul's view is that differences need to exist between genuine and imitation believers, that mixed congregations such as Corinth should be "factious" in that sense. By giving that as an additional reason for believing the report, he was casting the social divisions at their gatherings as divisions between genuine and imitation believers. In other words, he's suggesting that the discriminators, those who are segregating themselves from their "lower" brothers and sisters, are in fact not genuine believers at all. That greatly raises the gravity of the situation.

b. The fact they maintained social divisions in their gatherings meant that they had missed an essential aspect of the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper simply cannot be eaten in a segregated, class conscious assembly; it denies the very oneness that the Supper symbolizes (1 Cor. 10:17). Our fellowship in Christ transcends social divisions and maintaining them when assembling for the Supper contradicts that truth.

c. The social nature of the division is clear from vv. 21-22.

(1) The Corinthians, along with other first century Christians often, if not always, celebrated the Lord's Supper in conjunction with a larger fellowship meal. This is the "love feast" mentioned in Jude 12. The Supper proper, meaning the bread and juice, probably was eaten at the end of the meal. (The fellowship meal was an optional act of benevolence and fellowship that early on was separated from the Lord's Supper, which is a remembrance and proclamation of the death and resurrection of Jesus. It eventually was dropped, at least as a regular practice.)

(2) When the Corinthians gathered, the wealthier Christians, who no doubt supplied most of the food for the fellowship meal, somehow were taking a disproportionate share of it, eating their "own supper." The haves had more than enough, as indicated by the excess of wine they consumed, but the have-nots were left hungry and were humiliated in the process.

d. In doing this, Paul suggests that the wealthy were showing contempt for the church of God and repeats that he has no praise for them in this matter.

2. Their keeping of the Supper was inconsistent with its original intent (11:23-26)

a. Paul cannot praise them for keeping the tradition of the Supper because they did so in a manner that was inconsistent with the Supper's original intent. He points that out by reminding them of what he had previously taught them about the Supper.

b. As instituted by Christ himself, the Supper is a memorial of the salvation that he has effected through his death and resurrection. By the wealthy discriminating against the poor in the fellowship meal, they were negating the very point of Christ's death -- to create a new people for his name, a redeemed community in which the old distinctions of human fallenness no longer hold sway.

3. The seriousness of their sin regarding the Supper (11:27-32)

a. Given the significance of the Lord's Supper, whoever participates in it in an unworthy manner, meaning those who eat it while maintaining social divisions, "shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord."

(1) This probably means that by thus missing the point of the Supper, which is to proclaim salvation through Christ's death, they place themselves under the same liability as those responsible for that death.

(2) Alternatively, it may simply mean that they are guilty of sinning against the Lord in doing this.

b. To avoid that guilt, each person needs to examine himself in terms of his attitude toward the members of the body before participating in the Supper. If he fails to do that, if he eats without recognizing the reality and oneness of the body of Christ, as some of them were doing, that person will incur God's judgment.

c. Because some were participating in the Supper without appreciating the body, because they had not been examining themselves in that regard, God had permitted sickness and death to come upon the community, but he had done so as a form of discipline. He was trying to get them to correct what they were doing wrong.

4. The solution (11:33-34)

a. Paul here gives the solution to their problem: When gathering to eat they need to "receive" or "welcome" [*ekdechomai*] one another in the sense of demonstrating normal Christian hospitality. (This meaning is preferable to "wait for," especially if the verb in v. 21 [*prolambano*] is translated "devours" or "consumes" rather than "eats beforehand.") The haves cannot continue to discriminate against the have-nots in the distribution of the food.

b. If one of the well-to-do is hungry, he should satisfy that hunger at home rather than seeking to satisfy it in the fellowship meal at the expense of the have-nots. As Paul has already indicated, maintaining such a social division when assembling to eat the Lord's Supper will result in judgment.