**Sunday 21st May 2017 Message**

**Communion - the meal that heals**

**Introduction**

Today we come to the second part of our focus on “Communion”, the Lords Supper, Eucharist. Last week we focussed on the blood today we will focus on the body of the Lord and the benefits we can receive by partaking of this meal in faith.

I have entitled todays message “Communion - the meal that heals” because if we partake of this meal in faith and in the manner I believe Christ wanted us to take it, we will experience the fulness of the salvation He purchased for us on the cross.

**Slide** – The Lords Supper – in remembrance of Me

The way we partake of this meal is meant to be in remembrance of all that Christ achieved through His death on the cross. He made a blood covenant with those who will believe that has bought us total remission of all our sins, power over sin, power over death and fulness of life.

Paul says in partaking of these elements we PROCLAIM the death of our Lord Jesus (and all that it achieved) till He returns. You are in effect performing a prophetic act, you are reminding your body by taking into yourself the nature of Christs sin free life blood and disease free body. You are saying, Christ in me, is the assurance of kingdom of heaven experience in my body, soul and spirit.

To not remember those truths, to not believe those truths, and to not proclaim those truths as you partake of this table, would be to do so in an “unworthy” manner.

We examine ourselves before we partake of this table to set our minds and hearts on receiving what Jesus has made available, accepting, confessing and determining to put right anything in our lives that Holy Spirit highlights is where we are living in denial of the truth. We so examine ourselves with the help of Holy Spirit to prepare ourselves to receive.

In context, Pauls teaching in 1 Cor 11 was an examination of ourselves to determine we were in right relationship with the body of the Lord, and His body “the church”. The fulness of His lifeblood and body cannot flow through our physical bodies or the church when we are divided and in unforgiveness.

**Unworthy Manner Consequences**

**Slide** – ***1 Corinthians 11:30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.***

This is the only verse in the NT that tells us quite clearly why so many are weak, sick and dying prematurely.

Doctors on the whole would agree – that unforgiveness and bitterness are the major cause of many physically, emotionally and spiritually broken lives. So many people I know have received their healing when they have been able to forgive someone who has hurt them whether that be physically or emotionally.

**Slide** – if we partake in a “worthy manner”

However, Paul is talking specifically about what happens when we do not remember and accept all that Christ achieved on the cross in terms of reversing the curse on this world, by living as His power to forgive was beyond our ability.

The lifestyle that God had always intended for mankind, on earth as it is in heaven and as it was in the garden, is one of strength, health and long life. The exact opposite of what we experience when we do not believe and receive in a worthy manner.

**Slide** – For God so loved the world

This table is the constant reminder before the church worldwide that God so loved the world He sent His Son so that we may be “saved”.

**Slide** – sozo

That is completely saved, body soul and spirit from the effects of the curse that came upon the world because of sin.

We are to be made whole in body, healed. I believe that all sickness, disease and deformity in human life has come about, and is coming about, as a result of the acts of mankind living outside of Gods presence and doing their own things.

Our souls, our minds and wills have been emotionally and psychologically damaged by abuse of our bodies, the environment, and the worldly systems we live under. North Korea.

Our spirits have been tainted by what we have engaged our bodies and minds in, which are distant from Gods relationship with is.

Jesus paid the price for us to be set free from all those things.

**Slide** – 1 Thess 5:23

He is cleansing every area of our lives so they are faultless – AND he has made it possible for them to repaired and healed also.

**Slide** – Passover – flesh and manna – manna foreshadow of the bread of life – but it only sustained, the bread of life preserves for eternity – manna had to be crushed and ground – it gave strength, preservation and feet that did not swell

**Slide** – Jehovah Rapha – Exodus 15:26 – God has always been the Lord that heals.

**Slide** – Matthew 4:23-24 – Jesus ministry revealed the heart of the Father to heal those who were broken ***wherever*** the kingdom of God was proclaimed – even at this table.

**Johns Gospel – the deep meanings**

**Slide** – John 6:53-59 read together

John is the only gospel which does not describe the Lords Supper as it took place and recorded in Matthew, Mark and Luke. That is fairly typical of Johns style, as you will remember when we looked at the start of his gospel as his account of the genealogy of Jesus went right back before creation rather than earthly parentage. John wrote some 70-90 years after the other gospel writers and had chance to reflect on their writings and decided to underline and unpack the theological truths of Jesus words and ministry.

When he focuses on Jesus’ teaching about the body and blood he looks at meaning rather than the act of the Lords Supper. He reminds his readers of how God had provided manna in the wilderness but that Jesus was here as the eternal Bread of Heaven to give those who partake of the cup and the bread eternal life.

***you have no life in you*** unless you partake of this table as a proclamation of what the death and resurrection of Jesus has made available to you. Life – in its fulness, full of strength, full of health and fullness of time on earth and in heaven. Life is in the blood ***Lev 17:11***Jesus life blood and all that it carries is made available to us in faith in these elements.

***remains in me, and I in him*** John underlines Jesus’ teaching that we remain in Him when we partake of these elements, and He in us. The more frequently we partake of this Table then the greater our focus will remain on what we have in Christ.

These teachings, probably earlier in Jesus ministry than the last supper is often remembered for the offence it caused to Jews who were forbidden to drink blood. We can dismiss the elements as it seems a strange saying but there is spiritual and supernatural impact when we partake in faith. Many get concerned that when we associate the supernatural with this table it may be considered occultish, let us remember the devil has often mimicked the truth.

**Slide** 1 Corinthians 10:16 – **participation, communion, koinonia**

Paul makes it clear that we actually have intimate fellowship (koinonia) with Christ through the cup and the bread. We have a common union with Christ and one another in the partaking of this table.

**Slide** – John 6:58 **live forever**

This bread not just the blood, means we will live forever. Remember the matzo – unleavened bread. When we eat this bread we are proclaiming our body is renewed to be like the body of Christ without sin. Not only has it been cleansed by the blood but it has been renewed by the body, healed, repaired, reconstructed. Hallelujah.

**Slide** Isaiah 53:5 by His stripes

Whilst this verse is often rightly quoted as a claim for healing of our bodies, it really applies to the whole work of the cross and the complete healing of body, soul and spirit.

It is amazing that Isaiah some 600 years before Christ so accurately described the scourging and crucifixion of Christ when crucifixion had not even been invented.

Depending of the translation you use this verse is either translated wounded or pierced, both are possible. I believe the Spirit inspired the prophet to reveal that Jesus would be pierced, crucified for out transgressions. Transgressions means the **rejection of God**, which is clearly portrayed by Christ on the cross, as man’s rejection of God’s gift.

The passage goes on that he was bruised which could also be translated crushed which again I think is very accurate description of the scourging and beating Christ received at the hands of the soldiers before His crucifixion. He was bruised/crushed for our iniquities that is our **disobedience to Gods order**.

By His stripes (chabbuwrah (khab-boo-raw') we are healed. The word stripes in Hebrew accurately translated would be a weal (or black-and-blue mark itself) Not only is this matzo striped, pierced but is blistered (bruised) The mysteries and design of God before things happen tell me He has everything provided for.

Everything our enemy has done to scar us physically with sickness, disease, weakness, infirmity, deformity of body through the acts of mankind’s sin was beaten on Christs body during the scourging, along with all emotional and mental damage.

**Review- Purpose of the Lords Supper**

1. To make us face continually the real reason God sent His Son
2. To bring is to intimacy with Christ (John 6)
3. To enjoy the Lord’s presence in a special manner (Luke 5:17) come expectant
4. To have more of Him in us!
5. To proclaim both the body and the blood
6. To affirm the church as the body of Christ