

Dr. Gary Meadors, 1 Corinthians, Lecture 27, 1 Corinthians 11:2-34, Paul's Response to the Questions of Public Worship, 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

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This is Dr. Gary Meadors in his teaching on the book of 1 Corinthians. This is lecture 27, 1 Corinthians 11:2-34, Paul's Response to the Questions of Public Worship. 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, The Community of Believers in Worship before God.

Well, welcome back to our lectures on 1 Corinthians. We're looking at 1 Corinthians chapter 11 today. This is your note pack number 13, 1 Corinthians 11, verses 17-34, the last half of this chapter.

And it's an interesting piece because we've had so much in the first half of the chapter on male-female, and then we just completely moved to another topic, and we moved there without the typical structural indicators such as peri-death, now concerning. That raises a question in the minds of some as to whether Paul is now addressing questions that came in that letter, 1 Corinthians 7:1, or whether something is on his mind about that congregation that comes up in this particular situation, and he treats it. It's just right there, and it's a completely different feel from even the more controversial parts of chapters 1-6.

In this particular chapter, he is really railing on the Corinthians for their practice in regard to the community, meals, and particularly in relation to what they were seeing as a celebration of the Lord's Supper. Well, let's take a look at it now. 1 Corinthians chapter 11 and verses 17-34, this point number two on page 170 in your notes, the community of believers in worship before God continuing this theme, this time in relation to the Lord's Supper primarily.

In 11, 17-32, Garland says, the strong or wealthy turn to the Lord's Supper, they turn the Lord's Supper into a festival meal, in the course of which socially deprived or economically dependent latecomers are treated as hangers-on who may have to eat differently than those who are already there and in a different part of the house, thereby undermining the four others of the cross itself, which the Lord's Supper proclaims out of 11-26. So instead of being a social meal that should draw the church together as a community before the Lord, we've got divisions, we've got vying for a position, and we've got some very, very raw elite status treatment of those without status. As Winter said, to argue that the behavior of some of the Corinthians can be accounted for because at the Lord's Dinner, they follow the socially accepted

convention of private dinners in secular Corinth, and that's how he accounts for their behavior, and so do a number of the other commentaries.

Now, the problem of the Lord's Supper in the Corinthian assembly in verses 17-22, this section begins with perhaps Paul's most blatant censure. In 11, 17, in the following directive, I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good. That is exceedingly blunt, more blunt than many of the things we've read so far, even though there have been very important issues at stake in regard to Paul's treatment of them.

It does not appear that Paul is responding to a Corinthian question from 7-1, but that he's addressing an urgent public worship issue about which he has learned. Talking about males and females and worshipping before God has probably stimulated him to move into the treatment of this problem. Consider some of the red flags in 11, 17-22.

Let's look at this text. In the following directives, I'm reading from the 2011 NIV, in the following directives, I have no praise for you, says Paul, for your meetings do more harm than good. In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions.

That harkens back, doesn't it, to the earlier part of Corinthians. There are divisions among you, and to some extent, I believe it. That's a sort of euphemism, for I do believe this.

No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval. That's rather sarcastic, but you can see the status issue coming to the surface here to see who has God's approval at the social structure level. So then, when you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, but when you are eating, some of you go ahead with your own private suppers.

As a result, one person remains hungry, and another gets drunk. Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the Church of God by humiliating those who have nothing? There's the status question, the haves, and the have-nots, if you would please. What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? Certainly not in this matter.

He begins this paragraph in verse 17 with no praise. He ends it in verse 22 with no praise. Let's look at some of the red flags that come up down here.

First of all, there were divisions among you in 11:18, and this smacks back to the earlier part of the epistle where he dealt with divisions and rivalries, competition, which happens with people of status. There's a status conflict in 11:19, as we've read. There have to be differences among you to show which of you has God's

approval as if just your flaunting of your status is supposed to signal that God has approval of you.

The nature of the gathering follows Roman status and meal protocol, 11:20 and 21 particularly. Garland cites Pliny the Younger's description of such events, quote, the best dishes were set in front of himself, that is, the host, and a select few, his featured guests, and cheap scraps of food before the rest of the company. He had even put the wine into small flasks, divided into three categories: one for himself and us, another for his lesser friends, and his friends are all graded according to Pliny, and the third for his and our freed persons.

So, you can see the social structure and status at work in Pliny's criticism of the meal that was happening, and it seems that we're seeing some of that here in 1 Corinthians 11. Furthermore, in the next bullet point on 170 at the bottom, Paul denies them the claim that it's the Lord's Supper. Very forward, he says, so then when you come together, it's not the Lord's Supper you eat.

They were sort of claiming this evidently as part of their weekly worship in the community, but Paul is not going to give them credit for that. Note that Winter consistently refers to this section as the Lord's Dinner. Now, Supper, Dinner, it's all the same Greek word. There's a common Greek word that's used throughout all this, but I sort of wonder when I'm reading Winter and his focus on the Lord's Dinner that perhaps he himself has chosen to do that to sort of pun on the fact that we're not even going to give them the credit of the word Supper, which is so common with that meal.

And by the way, there was a meal as well as bread and a cup in the early church for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. They met together during many of their meetings over meals, and then they would also celebrate what we call the Lord's Supper, which is just the bread and the cup. Note that Winter consistently refers to this as the Lord's Dinner, perhaps punning on its illegitimate nature of the event.

The Greek term is common, but for some reason he chooses Dinner rather than Supper, which sort of doesn't sound the same. I mean, in Christian parlance and vocabulary, Lord's means something. Lord's Dinner, well, what does that mean? And so I think perhaps he's done that on purpose.

The Dinner, the Supper, becomes the typical drunken setting of the status banquets and totally marginalizes the non-status believers both in food, drink, and presence. In 20 to 22, it's not the Lord's Supper you eat, verse 21, for when you are eating, some of you go ahead with your own private suppers, probably on the inside of the house as well. There are status places to be geographically as well as there is status between individuals.

Jerome Murphy O'Connor may do the most to lay out some of the archaeological issues here. You may be hearing thunder. Remember I'm in Florida.

It's afternoon in the summer, so it's thundering and raining. Hopefully, we won't have an issue with electricity here. As a result, one person remains hungry, and another gets drunk.

Don't you have homes to eat and drink in even though they were at a host home? Or do you despise the Church of God by humiliating those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? Certainly not in this matter. Paul is being about as clear as he can be that he is very, very unhappy with how they're treating this religious event, this sacral meal in terms of fellowship together and then the bread and the cup we call the Lord's Supper. He abrades this behavior in no uncertain terms.

In verse 22, he makes it very clear: no praise, period, for your behavior. And it's not at all difficult to see leaking from almost every one of these verses the issue of social status, which was delineated in banquets and meals and when gatherings took place. They had carried this over directly into the church and were being extremely abusive and even abusive to the point of abusing God in terms of eating and drinking and drunkenness, which was a part of Roman meals but should not be a part of celebrating the Lord's Supper that Jesus had left us.

So, he gives the problem here in verses 17 through 22. There's very little that's unclear in this regard. He sets it out, he states it very clearly, and we have talked enough about the backgrounds to Roman Corinth to, I think, begin to see what this might have looked like in terms of the various class struggles that were going on in Corinth.

The proper tradition concerning the Lord's Supper comes next. After Paul slams the worldly dinner setting in 17 to 22, he rehearses the Dominical tradition of the Lord's Supper. In 23 to 26, he picks up from the Gospels the introduction by Jesus of what we call the Lord's Supper.

The terms translated and received, excuse me, received and delivered. For I received from the Lord what I also passed on or delivered to you. And then he says the Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed.

There are two technical terms right at the beginning of verse 17, excuse me, verse 23, that set out that Paul is referring now to the authoritative transmission of tradition. Paul was writing this in the 50s. The Gospels, maybe Mark, had been composed, and some of the others were in process.

He knew the community. I'm sure he had information about Matthew particularly. But nonetheless, the Dominical tradition of Jesus introducing the Lord's Supper was a major part of the oral traditions in the early church.

And Paul understood that. In fact, we'll see that he repeats it very much in relation to the Gospels here in 1 Corinthians. Paul plays on the term, especially the term delivered.

He says in verse 23, I received from the Lord what I passed on to you. The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread. So, he's got this play going on the concept of delivered.

It's the parodicist that we talked about earlier, the tradition. It came up in the early part of chapter 11. Parodicist and paredwka, the verb form, are technical terms for the authoritative transmission of tradition of information that is considered to be part of the requirements within the church.

Now, I'm not going to talk a lot about ordinances and sacraments here, even though we could take an excursus on that. We're not going to do that. But I'll just ask you, how do you define ordinance? Or how would you define sacrament? I'd like to suggest to you that there are pieces to, I'll use the word ordinance, that you should have.

Number one, an ordinance is a practice instituted by Jesus. An ordinance is also a practice commanded by Jesus to be perpetuated. We have this both with the Lord's Supper and with baptism.

One could even argue that the foot washing could be included here. There are some denominations and religious traditions that practice that. Furthermore, not only is it instituted by Jesus, commanded by Jesus to be perpetuated, but it is actually in practice perpetuated by the apostles in the early church.

Here's where foot washing runs into a little bit of a block, although one can see it in Timothy because he washed the saints' feet. There are some issues there that are debated among denominations that we won't go into here. But it's good for you to think about what is it that really sets the Lord's Supper, sets baptism apart from other practices.

And it is very much this issue of Jesus instituting it, Jesus commanding for it to be perpetuated, and the apostles actually perpetuating it in the early church. Now for convenience, I've given you a chart here of the gospel sayings about the Lord's Supper where Jesus instituted it. Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

We can have John as well, but I've restricted it to the synoptics because I want to have 1 Corinthians 11 in here as well. And you can see how close these are. In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, he took a cup, and after giving thanks, he gave it to them, saying, drink from it all of you.

Virtually the same thing in Mark. And also, it comes in a different order down to verse 20 in Luke, and he did the same with the cup after supper. It's a slightly different variation because Luke has more about the meal than the bread and the cup.

And that becomes important for another reason I'll mention later. 1 Corinthians 11, he took a loaf of bread in verse 25 in the same way he took a cup. The loaf of bread, broke and said this is my body; that is for you and so forth.

So, Paul follows the same dominical tradition layout in relation to the bread and the cup. You can see that clearly from the gospels compared to 1 Corinthians. But that's not all there is.

In Paul's rehearsal of the Lord's Supper, Winter makes an observation that, quote, Paul has changed the word order of the institution narrative. Not only do we have the institution of the bread and the cup and then the repetition of it by Paul in Corinthians, but we have behind it the Greek in the Synoptic Gospels and the Greek in 1 Corinthians. Bruce Winter's close read on this surfaces an interesting thing that he writes several pages about.

He notes Winter proposes that Paul was sending a message to the Corinthians here. The personal pronoun *mu* in Greek, which means of me or possessive my or mine, is moved forward. Now, I've listed the underneath of this.

In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, And that's translated this, the *touto* is a demonstrative pronoun, this, the verb is, then the body of me is my body. And each of them says that exactly the same way in the gospels.

However, in 1 Corinthians 11:24, Paul says *touto mou estin to soma*. He has this of me, which is the body, which is given for you, which is another issue there. But he puts the *mu*, which comes about the fifth word in the other ones as the second word.

Now, these personal pronouns, particularly the possessive pronouns, move around a lot. Greek doesn't have a significant, I shouldn't say that, Greek doesn't have a demand on the word order. It can put words in different places for various reasons.

That even supports a little bit what Winter is saying, which is that Paul has deliberately deviated from the Dominical tradition. And as a result of that, Winter

sees Paul making a point. Now, you'll have to read Winter and think about it. Do you agree that it's that big of a deal, but he thinks that it is?

I'm not going to give you the entire quote, but I'll give you the end of it right after the chart here, where Winter says, quote, it becomes clear that Paul's purpose in quoting the Eucharistic words was not simply to repeat a tradition that he had already delivered to them, but to explain why that tradition did not endorse their conduct, but condemned it, for I received from the Lord. See, there's that authoritative transmission.

He has been authorized to define what that meal and what the bread and the cup should be. He has the authority to speak on that issue, not these Corinthian leaders. He goes on to say that by rearranging the word order of parts of that tradition, he explicated the significance of Jesus' action as a servant giving himself up on their behalf to incorporate them into the covenant.

His action thoroughly condemned the Corinthians' own self-centered conduct exhibited at the very dinner, which Jesus instituted for them to remember his death. Jesus' self-giving is abused by their own selfishness and seeking of status. Little wonder that Paul declares that this cannot be the Lord's dinner in 1120, for they imposed the obligation for being the Lord's supper or, being the Lord's dinner, imposed the obligation to imitate Christ in their relationships.

And they were doing anything but imitating Jesus. This imitation theme comes up. It's already come up.

It comes up here and comes up on occasion in Paul's writings to imitate Christ or to imitate Paul as he imitates Christ. This is a repetitive theme in Paul. In this Corinthian, a certain group of the Corinthians here are not following the imitation motif that Paul has taught them.

And he's not happy about that because he's jealous for Christ. He's jealous for the Lord's supper being celebrated in an appropriate manner. The attendant question to the event of Jesus initiating the supper in the Gospels is this, did Jesus actually eat the Passover meal? That's another complete question that is usually addressed in the canonical Gospels in relation to whether Jesus ate the Passover in regard to setting up the bread in the cup celebration.

There's a lot of literature on this in gospel literature. I'm not going to take an excursus on it here. This issue relates to the chronology of Passion Week when the Passover would have fallen, and how those events sequence themselves.

That's a notorious domain. Harold Hohner, now deceased formerly of Dallas Seminary, wrote a dissertation, then a fine book on the chronology of the life of

Christ. That's a great little book to have for a number of reasons, but I would suggest that you think about Hohner, H-O-E-H-N-E-R, Harold Hohner, Chronology of the Life of Christ, to work some of that out.

You can surface plenty of literature to address whether Jesus ate the Passover or whether he didn't. Garland even takes an excursus on that question, and I'll leave that for your reading. Secondly, Paul's pronouncement of judgment on a community that abuses the Lord's Supper in 27-34.

So, he starts in 17-22, upbraiding them for a practice that was not acceptable. Then he shows them the Dominico tradition in 23-26. Then he comes back in 27.

So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood. So, he comes back to the condemnation feature of this. So, there are three segments in relation to the Lord's Supper.

It's malpractice, how it should be practiced, and the results of practicing it the wrong way in 27-34. The pronouncement of this in 27 that I just read. But I want to mention one thing.

In the King James Version, being a very literal translation, it says something along the lines of whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily. Something along that line. I don't have it in front of me here.

But the NIV, in its dynamic functional equivalence, says in an unworthy manner. That's an adverb, see. Some people struggle with celebrating the Lord's Supper, the bread and the cup.

Because even as Christians, they feel unworthy to do so. Perhaps during the week, they haven't lived up to their commitments. And they come in on Sunday morning, and it's Communion Sunday.

And they're embarrassed to participate in the Lord's Supper. Well, depending on the sin of the week, there could be justification for that. And maybe one should abstain from time to time.

But that's not what this verse is about. This verse is not talking about your worth. It's not talking about you.

It's talking about how the Lord's Supper is celebrated. If you're sitting in a church pew or in some place where you're celebrating the Lord's Supper, and things come into your mind that say, I'm not worthy. Confess it.

Deal with it. You can do that in a very short order. The very fact that you might be convicted, for example, is a good sign.

And God knows that. He knows you. He knows all this stuff.

Anyway, there's no secrets. So confess and ask for forgiveness. And that is your worthiness.

Because it's not talking about whether you're taking the Lord's Supper. You never are. It's talking about an unworthy method, which we've already seen described here, an abuse of the Lord's Supper.

From the social strata, structures, and practices of the Corinthians, Paul nails them. And anybody who celebrates the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, that's a good rendition of that. Is guilty of sin against the body and blood of the Lord.

Now that's a serious offense. They could have confessed. They could have fallen, as it were, on their knees and asked God to forgive them for their behavior and for their lack of attention to the holiness of this ordinance, this sacrament.

But they didn't do that. And Paul is pointing out that they are drinking and eating condemnation to themselves as a result of their not dealing with sin. 1 John 1, 9, if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father.

If we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us. That's the Christian's responsibility to keep those accounts up to date, daily, weekly, even momentarily. So, this pronouncement of the problem is saying that if you're in a situation where the Lord's Supper is being abused by the context of how people are doing it, get out of there.

He's not talking about your worth. He's talking about the manner in which the Supper is being celebrated. Secondly, the expectation of self-examination, at the bottom of 172.

The expectation of self-examination at the taking of the Lord's Supper in verse 28, everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. The Lord's Supper is a serious thing. I think we underdo how we celebrate the bread and the cup in our churches on many occasions.

We don't have to do it every week. We don't have to do it once a month. I think probably once a month would be sort of a minimal expectation, but you don't have to do it every day or every week like they did in the book of Acts.

The Acts is descriptive, not prescriptive. But when you do it, do it seriously. Do it with an explanation of what these things mean.

Give people time to think and to pray. Don't clutter up the Lord's Supper with a lot of stuff. Sometimes, in American churches, there's got to be noise all the time.

People can't stand silence. Well, here's a good place for it. Silence ought to get our attention because of our cluttered lives.

The expectation of self-examination is part of the Lord's Supper and its celebration. Furthermore, the bullet at the very bottom of the page, the third one, is the consequence of the failure to do self-examination. Verse 29.

For those who eat and drink without discerning the seriousness of the body of Christ, I gave you a little something there, eat and drink judgments on themselves to take the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, to be flippant. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. A euphemism for died.

Now, there's a statement that we have no historical background in the book of Corinthians or otherwise to answer, but Paul has said some people are dead. I don't think he said that flippantly or hyperbole, but I think he's referring to some things that have gone on in that community that people will identify with and realize that what has fallen upon them as a result of their flippant practice of the Lord's charge. In verse 30.

Weak, sick, dead. That ought not to be taken lightly. It goes on.

The immediate resolution to the problem, until Paul returns, is in 11:33 and 34. Actually, I need to do 30. Look at 31.

It continues in verse 30. Some of you are even dead. You've fallen asleep, but if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment.

Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world. This is a little variation on chapter five. Do judgment in the house of God, and God won't have to come down and do that judgment himself.

It's very serious stuff. I think we tend to gloss over it in our current churches because we can get away with murder as it were in Christianity today, but not in the sight of God. God keeps account of these things.

Verses 33 and 34, the resolution. So then, now, look what he says here in verse 30. So, then, my brothers and sisters.

Wow. I mean, this chapter has been strong. Paul acts as if he had a whip in the temple with the money changers.

He's been beating them up one side and down the other over these issues. And then he comes to verse 33. So, then, my brothers and sisters.

Well, that's the way it ought to be. Frankly, we ought to be able to talk about hard things in straightforward and serious ways but not lose our relationship in the process. He's still counting them as Christians in spite of how far they have gone away, even so badly that some of them are sick and dead.

So, then, my brothers and sisters, when you gather to eat, you should all eat together. It's a Christian gathering, not a status gathering. Anyone who is hungry should eat something at home.

Don't come here expecting to have a carry-on. So that when you meet together, it may not result in judgment because you're out of control. And when I come, I will give further directions.

Paul ends on a friendly note, on an encouraging note, on an educational note. He softens it, but just a tiny bit in terms of the judgment that he's meted out on the Corinthian community about their abuse of the Lord's Supper. It's a very important text.

It's a text that ought to be preached when you have communion. You know, there are lots of texts in the Bible that could be preached preceding the celebration of the bread and the cup, and this is one of them. Now, to be a little ministerial here, I've included on page 173 what I have done in settings like Good Friday, which covers this issue of the Lord's Supper.

I'm going to give you, on page 173 and 174, an overview of the leading up to and the Good Friday, and then I'm going to give you a sermon that I've preached and would preach again, in different places, of course, of a Good Friday sermon, so that you can see how communion fits and particularly within the Gospels and within the metanarrative of the Bible. For example, on page 173, the proper practice of the Lord's Supper, framing the Lord's Supper within the Jewish Passover history. I think that's very important.

That's our heritage. We have a Judeo-Christian heritage, and the Passover is a major imagery that Jesus fulfilled in his own death, and he brings to our remembrance by the bread and the cup. Exodus 12 and 13 lays that out.

I'm not going to read all this to you, but there it is for your convenience. It lays out the observance in the family context in Exodus 12. The lamb is slaughtered the twilight of the eve of Passover in 12.

The lamb's blood is ritually applied to the doorframe. A meal with unleavened bread and bitter herbs in verses 8 through 11. I always kind of get upset with the bread we use in communion.

It's always leavened, isn't it? The head of the family rehearses religious tradition during the meal, and then the package in the seven-day festival of unleavened bread that required a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in regard to it. So, in Exodus 12 and 13, Jesus himself and the Holy Family traveled from Nazareth down to Jerusalem. We have occasions that are early in Jesus' life, and then we see it in Jesus' ministry later because the Passover becomes the major event, the major calendar event, that helps us to measure the time of Jesus' earthly ministry.

There are about four Passovers that are recorded. One of them is not as clear, but is still considered to be a Passover in John. So, four Passovers, so that means Jesus has a three and a half to four-year earthly ministry.

Deuteronomy 16:1 to 8, and you can compare 2 Chronicles, reflects a move of Passover celebration from the family unit to the national context. It started as the family in the Exodus, and then it was picked up as a religious celebration in Deuteronomy as Moses continued to teach. Deuteronomy is the second law.

It's a repetition of the law that Moses preached before they went into the land, without him even, and he reiterates it in Deuteronomy 16. It brings about a few changes, and here they are. It goes from the home to a national pilgrimage festival.

The animal may be either sheep or cattle, and the time of the sacrifice has changed, probably for the convenience of the pilgrims, and it goes from roasting to boiling. So there are certain issues that Moses, for a variety of reasons, probably mostly pragmatic, has changed in their religious Israel celebration that comes up in Deuteronomy. You can also see how the Passover develops in Second Temple Judaism.

In the intertestamental period from about the third century up and even beyond into the time of Jesus, up certainly to the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD, you have what we call Second Temple Judaism. They wrote a lot of literature during that period. If you look at Jubilees 49, which was about 150 BCE, and then in the Mishnah, the Pesharim is the Passover tractate, as we call it, the literature on that.

That was written was codified about 200 AD or CE, which was way after the time of the apostles, but it existed in some sense in oral tradition in the first century. That's another issue altogether: how you take certain rabbinic material that was never codified until several hundred years after the time of Jesus. Although some of it could have been in oral tradition in the first century, that's another whole arena to be discussed.

I've given you the references there, you can go look at them and do some historical study on the Passover within Jewish history. Then, as we come into the New Testament, I point out Matthew 26:17 to 46. I've chosen Matthew as the place to unpack it.

You'll notice that Mark 14 has even a longer section, 1 to 52, and Luke, I haven't counted the words, trumps Mark a little bit in Luke 22:1 to 53, and then John 13, which is part of the Upper Room Discourse, provides a basis to understand the historical setting and sequence in which the Lord's Supper was initiated. This is a huge thing. There are books written on the Lord's Supper because we have so many texts and such a tradition when you tie it to the Old Testament and to the intertestamental Jewish issues for us to contemplate.

There is plenty of preaching here. You could preach for a decade from different places on the Lord's Supper. The variations between the Synoptics and the Johannine traditions is probably due to the use of various counters between religious groups, or to the writer's thematic interest, or to Jesus' rescheduling event for framing purposes.

We will assume that Jesus did indeed eat the Passover meal with his disciples the night before he was crucified. That's just setting the context. So, we've got the preparation for the Passover.

What I've done here is laid out for you from the Gospel narrative of Matthew: the four big movements, the preparation for the meal, the purging that took place in relation to Judas, and the partaking. Judas departed before the bread and the cup. Very important to see that.

You won't see these things if you don't study the Gospels closely, and sometimes you need a harmony where you see the passages laid out side by side to be able to see some of the flow. Then, there is the prayer at the end of that situation. So, we've got the preparation for the Passover, the occasion, the Feast of Unleavened Bread and Passover.

You have the instructions, my time is at hand, he says in 26:18 and 19. It reveals that Christ came to fulfill God's will, and Christ's omniscience in regard to this comes up in Mark 14:13. So there are lots of details in the Synoptic Gospels of this.

I'm just sort of letting it flow from the Matthean narrative. So, in the purging, you got the disclosure of the betrayer. What a fascinating narrative we have there with Judas.

All 12 were present. Judas is one of the 12. Jesus informs them that he will be betrayed.

I think it's a sign of maturity when Jesus said that in the Synoptics, they all wondered, is it I? Would I betray Jesus? That's a sign of maturing. They weren't pointing fingers at anybody. And I find it fascinating that they didn't just all raise their hand and say, Lord, it's got to be Judas because we know Judas.

No, John talks about Judas doing it, but he does it post facto. He hasn't done it from a historical moment. He does it by looking back and putting the pieces together.

Judas was accepted as part of the group. And we need to be careful with this. Jesus focused on Judas at the meal.

There's an incident, Bethany with Judas, that is part of the issue with Judas going to the religious leaders to betray Jesus. But in the upper room, there's this confrontation. He washes Judas' feet.

He gives Judas a place of honor by feeding him first. And then you've got his departure, which is before the bread and the cup. And so, very fascinating issues here with Judas.

Be careful about how you treat Judas. That needs some research. There have been writings done on this.

We don't have a lot of information. There are a lot of assumptions that we have to make in relation to Judas. But Judas was with the 12.

He was one of the 12 at that point. Nobody suspected Judas. They may have seen him do some things they didn't like or they thought of, but it didn't impress them to the point where they pointed their finger to Judas when Jesus said, I'm going to be betrayed.

Think about that. The predictions that Jesus gives in the purging they're going to be scattered. He's going to rise from the dead.

And then you've got Peter's denial that comes up. There's another whole narrative of the cock crowing and Peter trying to take the pressure off himself in the courtyard. What an interesting narrative.

Then you've got the partaking. This is immediately after the purging. The partaking Judas is gone.

They thought he went out to give to the poor or buy some more provisions. But now we've got Jesus with the 11. We're the institution of the supper, the symbolism, the prophetic promise he's going to eat it again in the kingdom, a farewell message in the upper room, which is John 14.

Then you've got a hymn and the departure in verse 30. It says that after they sang a hymn, they departed. Well, if you get into a harmony on this, you'll see there was a little space of some things going on before they actually left that are recorded by John.

In the Passover festival, in the Passover meal, the Hallel Psalms are part of the liturgy. The Hallel Psalms, the Psalms of praise, were sung during the Passover. Those are Psalms 113 to 118.

You should read Psalm 118 in light of the Lord's Supper. There's more preaching to be done. It's probably the last hymn or a Psalm that was sung before they left the upper room.

According to Matthew 26:30, they sang, and then they left. It was probably Psalm 118. There's a lot of interesting stuff about Psalm 118.

It is a messianic Psalm. There are incidental oddities. The middle verse of the Bible, in the English Bible, the middle verse of the English Bible is in Psalm 118.

And that middle verse, it's better to trust in the Lord than to put your trust in man, if I remember that correctly. And I think I do. But there's another famous verse in Psalm 118.

This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. I've heard people use that verse for everything under the sun, their own personal verse.

That verse is about the death of Jesus. That verse is about his giving himself for the church, for his people, for those who believe in him. It's not just your precious day that's good.

The goodness is the death of Jesus and his sacrifice for sin. That's what that passage is looking off to in Psalm 118. Preach it.

The hymn and the departure. Then we've got the departure to Gethsemane. And just before they walk out, I think, we have the discourse in John 15 to 17.

They sang the hymn, but before they really get out of the room, Jesus starts talking to them. And he may do as much as John 15 to 17, but he might be doing it along the way. We don't know all the details here, but that's the upper-room discourse.

You need to take that into consideration. So, there's a ton of fascinating stuff about the Lord's Supper in the synoptics that you need to get your arms around. And then there's the prayer in the garden when he says, may this cup pass from me.

That cup probably relates to his burying the sin of the world. When on the cross, he says, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? In the economic trinity, the son's role in its imagery separates him from the father. Now, the trinity doesn't have an ontological split, but in the imagery, we call it the economic trinity.

The son has that moment of separation from the father to bear the sins of the world because God, the father, God is the trinity, has to turn their back on sin. They can't look at it. That's the imagery that goes on.

So, there's a sermon in and of itself. You got four points here in this sermon. For the disclosure, actually, you've got three, I should say four.

You've got the preparation, the purging, the partaking, and the prayer—three sermons for you in Matthew 26. You can have a series of four sermons if you want to really do it upright, but show them the total package, then break it out.

That's better for people to remember. Don't get so lost in the forest that all you see is the trees, okay? Now, there's Matthew's portrayal. Now, here I've given you what I have preached for a Good Friday sermon.

I've done corporate Good Friday sermons with a number of churches and groups of churches, and this is how I did it, at least one way. Watch how I use this word good, and I'm going to pun when we get to this is the day the Lord has made. Be glad in it.

It's a good day. Notice you'll see in some bold print how I work this theme. Today is Good Friday.

When we understand what these last 24 hours in the earthly life of Jesus contained, it seems like calling it Good Friday is an oxymoron. What is good about it? Anger, jealousy, hatred, and cowardice seem to triumph over reason and justice in this last day. What is good about such things? What is good about the physical torture and death of an innocent man? Whatever one's opinion about how Mel Gibson in the movie *The Passion of Christ* images the day, this was in the annals of history a very ugly day.

Yet, in the plan of God, it was a good day. The last song sung at the last supper, late the night before, was probably the last in that series of the halal psalms used at the Passover celebration. Psalm 118 would still be ringing in the ears of Jesus.

Perhaps the words of this psalm were part of his struggle in the prayer in Gethsemane. Read Psalm 118. See, Jesus is singing this, knowing what's going to happen to him.

Here's the middle verse, verse 8. The stone which the builders refuse, here's a Petrine imagery that he brings up in his epistles, has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing. It's marvelous in our eyes.

This is the day which the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. There's that verse.

Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for he's what? Good. For his mercy endures forever. Wow.

Well, you get this in its context. What a text. In spite of the horrific circumstances and evil deeds of all present on that day of suffering and crucifixion, it was a good day.

For Jesus, as a unique son of man and servant of the Lord, it was a day of exaltation and humiliation. We, human observers, might want to emphasize the humiliation aspect and leave the exaltation to resurrection Sunday. But that would not be God's view of these events.

The death of Jesus was a victory in the plan of God. For our reflections this Good Friday, please turn to Isaiah 52, verse 13 through 53, verse 11. And then, read the Bible in your public services.

Don't just say, well, we don't have time. We're not going to read the Bible. Well, you'd be better off shutting up and reading the Bible sometimes.

Read the Bible in your public services. Explain the text. Well, that's what I'm about to do.

And you'll notice here that I have the setting of the servant's song, which is this messianic text in Isaiah 52 and 53. The setting of the servant's song, number two on page 176. The structure and message of the servant's song in Isaiah.

And then number three is the rest of the story. And what I do is I walk through Isaiah in broad sweep and talk about Isaiah and its messianic presentation, delineating the work of the servant. Jesus was the servant of the Lord.

Now, here's an interesting little thing for you to know. And I say it in the notes here, but I'm not going to read all this to you. When we look at Isaiah 52 and 53, where it talks about Jesus dying for us, we see that as messianic.

If you read that to a Jew, they're not impressed because the Jews take this text as applicable to the whole nation, not to an individual messianic figure. So, if you think you're going to impress them by reading Isaiah, if they know their Bible, they're not going to be impressed. They've already been conditioned to think about it as referring to the nation, not referring to an individualistic Messiah.

But in retrospect, we see it as applicable to Jesus, the Messiah. When you get done looking at that section of Isaiah, notice what it said. I said, it's a good day after all.

Then the second is the structure, the message of the song. Here is an interesting chiasm that I've talked to you about in other sense. The Bible, as well as being God's word, is a highly crafted piece of literature.

How could anything less really honor the great God of all creation? The servant's song in Isaiah 52 and 53 reflects thoughtful organization. For the greatest impact on the hearer, the text is laid out in a literary form known as a chiasm—the enigma in 52, 13 to 15.

The revelation in 53:1 to 9. And the solution in 53:10 to 12. Then, I will talk about each of those items as part of this point. Once again, I'm giving it to you.

You make it your sermon. Freely take it and use it. And I hope that it might help you.

So, when we come to page 177 in the middle, so we have the message of the suffering servant wonderfully contained in the structure of Isaiah 52, 13 to 53, 12. But what's the rest of the story? Well, as you listen to the story of the suffering servant who died for our sins. By the way, that suffering servant theme, Jesus picks up in his baptism with John.

Go back and study the baptism. He's the servant of the Lord there. The suffering servant of the Lord.

And guess what? In Acts, Paul picks up the gauntlet that Jesus laid down as the suffering servant and applies it to himself. There's a great article by a fellow named Edward Fudge, F-U-D-G-E, Fudge, which is an interesting name. Edward Fudge, E-D-W-A-R-D, I believe.

Paul was picking up the gauntlet of the servant of the Lord in his ministry. Fascinating stuff. As you listen to the story of the suffering servant who died for our sins, you

might wonder why an Old Testament text doesn't convince Jewish persons that Jesus is indeed the Messiah.

I mentioned this. The issue is, in one sense, simple. They view the suffering servant as the nation of Israel, not as an individual who bore the sin of the world.

Indeed, history has provided much suffering to God's ethnic people, the Jews. A rather outspoken first-century Jew, however, did get the point of Isaiah. Peter, in his first epistle, 2:21-25, contains the most extensive reflection of Isaiah 53 in the New Testament.

I usually read that text in my conclusion. So, as we bring our reflections to a close about the death of Jesus and Good Friday and the bread and the cup that celebrates that event, I just want to read an old hymn. Yet a hymn, yes a hymn, in America that unfortunately people have forgotten about hymns and hymn books.

And they sing choruses. We call them 7-11s, seven words repeated in a hymn. 11 times.

There's not much power in that, frankly. An old hymn that says, what will you do with Jesus? That's the title of it. What will you do with Jesus? Neutral you cannot be, for one day you'll be asking, what will he do with me? What God does is all related to what he did on the cross.

The death of Jesus, the cross that Paul has talked about, the bread, and the cup that celebrates that event. That's why Paul was so jealous in chapter 11 for Christ. Jealous that the supper was being abused over the issue of elite status.

What a pathetic thing. But Paul comes full circle after abrading them and says, brothers and sisters, quit it, get right, and I'll talk to you more when I get there. Well, I hope you invest yourself in thinking about the Lord's Supper and looking at the great wealth we have in scripture that celebrates this theme all the way from Exodus, even into the book of Revelation.

When Jesus, at the end, will sit down and celebrate it once again with us in the new earth, the eternal state. God bless you.

This is Dr. Gary Meadors in his teaching on the book of 1 Corinthians. This is lecture 27, 1 Corinthians 11:2-34, Paul's Response to the Questions of Public Worship. 1 Corinthians 11:17-34, The Community of Believers in Worship before God.