Study in 1st Corinthians 13 - Part 5

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Preacher: Rev Kenneth Stewart

[0:00] I'm seeking the Lord's blessing if you'll turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 13 and verse 4.

Amen.
Especially the first statement of verse 5.
Charity does not behave itself unseemly or does not behave itself inappropriately. And I want to look at this verse with you in connection with the passage that we just read.
So perhaps you could turn back to 1 Corinthians chapter 11. And I'll make the relationship between the verse and this chapter, I hope, quite plain as we go on.
[1:30] But perhaps we could look especially at verse 28 of chapter 11. 1 Corinthians chapter 11 and verse 28. Now I'm conscious that I've looked with you at this particular text before.

But still I think it's necessary and good for us to look at it again for two reasons. First of all, because it is very relevant in connection with 1 Corinthians chapter 13.
That great passage on love. I hope you'll remember that. I've noticed a couple of times with you that 1 Corinthians 13 is written really in connection with everything that was wrong in the Corinthian church.
There were so many divisions and so many problems. And the apostle is rooting many of them in a lack of love. And for one thing he says, love doesn't behave itself inappropriately or it is not unseemly.
And that refers, amongst other things, to their conduct at the Lord's Supper. It was inappropriate and it was unseemly. And the reason for that lay really in their lack of love for each other.
[2:54] It was not what it ought to be. So that's one reason. In other words, we're looking at 1 Corinthians 13 anyway. And it's relevant to this. The second reason that I want to look at it again is simply that the Lord's Supper is due to be administered again in the congregation.

And I think it's always good for us to be refreshed as to what the sacrament actually means. And how we should come to it and what it means to examine ourselves.
And especially if we have maybe mistaken views of the sacrament or mistaken views as to what it means to examine ourselves. Or maybe we don't really understand what it means to come worthily to the table or to come unworthily to the table.
So it doesn't do any harm to look at it again for that reason too. Now as I've said, a lot of these problems in the Corinthian church lay in their lack of love.
And Paul is telling them to grow in love and to practice love. And it's so important to do that because as he tells us in 1 Corinthians 13, without true Christian love in our lives, then we are worth nothing.
[4:07] And one area where this lack of love came out very clearly was just here in the way that they observed the Lord's Supper. And when they came to observe the Lord's Supper together, the divisions among them were very obvious.

Verse 18. But first of all, when you come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you. And I partly believe it.
In fact, he said, these divisions and their misconduct was so great that their supper was hardly worth calling the Lord's Supper at all.
And I think that's what it means in verse 20 when he says this. When you come together, therefore, into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper. In other words, I can hardly call it the Lord's Supper.
Because, in verse 21, in eating, everyone takes before another his own supper. And one is hungry and another is drunken.

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[5:07] What, he says, do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or are you despising the church of God? And so after rebuking them like that, he then explains to them clearly what the Lord's Supper actually means and what it's all about.

And he tells them that it's something that the Lord himself gave him. It's something that Christ told Paul personally. And something that he gave Paul to give the church.
And that's what it means in verse 23 when it says this. Now, when Paul speaks as emphatically as that, what he means is this.
He says, I didn't even get it from the other apostles who were apostles before me. It wasn't something I learned from Peter or from James or from John. And they were all believers long before me.
He says, the Lord personally taught me this. And he taught it to me very plainly so that I would teach it to you. And here, he says, I have to tell you again because the supper has degenerated in your midst.
[6:18] And so in God's providence, we have a clear explanation here of what the Lord's Supper means. And of what it means to come properly to the Lord's table. And in connection with that, he gives us the words of our text in verse 28.

But let a man examine himself. And so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. So he's asking us all to examine ourselves with respect to the way in which we are coming to the table of the Lord. Now, the word examine just means simply to test. We have to test ourselves. And we're to test ourselves to see whether we come in the way that we should come to the Lord's Supper.
Now, if you're sitting any test or any examination, it's very important to know what the pass mark actually is. In other words, if you're going to examine yourself with respect to coming to the table, you've got to know what you're looking for.
If you don't, you'll never know whether you pass or fail. And if you're looking for the wrong things, well, that's not going to help. It's important that you look at yourself and that you ask yourself the right questions.
[7:33] How should I examine myself and what should I be looking for? And he tells us very clearly what we should be looking for in verse 29. He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment or chastisement to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

In other words, that's what's wrong. If people are not discerning the Lord's body in the sacrament, then they're not coming to it properly.
We must discern the Lord's body or we must recognize the Lord's body. And what that means is this. We must recognize that the bread and the wine are speaking to us of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ.
Take first of all verse 23. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread.
And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, take it, this is my body. Now he took the bread and this took place during the Passover meal.
[8:54] At one particular point, he took the bread. And from that moment, he distinguished what was going to happen from what had happened before. He broke the bread, broke it visibly.

I'll come to that in a moment. And he blessed it. He gave God thanks for this bread. He blessed it. He broke it. And he said, take it, eat it.
This is my body. In other words, that bread was to speak very clearly to the disciples about the body of the Lord Jesus Christ.
It was to be a memorial of that body. It was to be a sermon about that body. It was to preach to them. The bread was to remind them of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ.
I'll say more about that in a minute, but just now we can just leave it there. And then secondly, the wine too, in verse 25. After the same manner also, he took the cup when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament or the New Covenant in my blood.
[10:05] This do ye as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. In other words, this wine represents or speaks of my blood, which is sealing the New Covenant, which is putting the New Covenant in place.

My life that I am pouring out is what brings the Covenant into operation, what makes it effective. So you drink this wine, remembering my blood, my life.

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My life that I give for the world. Let my life be spoken of by my blood. Let my blood be spoken of in the wine.
So the wine speaks again of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. So the bread speaks of Jesus Christ giving his life.
The wine speaks of it, and the bread also speaks of his body. So in other words, we recognize this meal as a holy meal. It is no longer a common meal.
[11:14] Yes, it is just bread. Bread that you can buy anywhere. And it is just wine. Wine that you can buy anywhere. There's nothing sacred or special about these things in themselves.

But from the moment we pray, and ask God's blessing on these symbols, they become something more. They become sermons. They become meaningful and powerful reminders of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
I hope to say a bit more again about that in a moment. Now, it's important to notice this. It's not just that they speak to us of his body, but they also speak to us of what his body actually means.
Let me put it this way. I mean, you could easily ask a question. Very well, I understand what it means that the bread tells me about his body. And I can understand what it means that the wine tells me about pouring out his life.
But what is it about his body? Or what is it about his life that I should remember? What is it about this body that should come to me with power and that should come to me with conviction?
[12:29] What is it that I should look for at the Lord's Supper? Well, there's first of all this. You have to recognize that it's not just a body. And it's not just any body.

But it is a particular somebody. It is a distinctive body. First of all, it is a suffering body. And every time you eat that bread, you're to remember a suffering body.
That's important. It's of the essence of the Lord's Supper that it's a suffering body in verse 24. When he had given thanks, he broke it and said, Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you.
Now, it was actually quite a common thing. It was the done thing when a person would break bread. When a person gave thanks to God, he would break bread. That was a done thing. But the point here is that Christ invests this action of breaking with a new meaning and a profound meaning.
He broke the bread and he says, Take this as my body broken for you. In other words, from this moment onwards in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the breaking of the bread was to speak of the breaking of his own body.
[13:52] His body was a broken body. Now, that seems strange in connection with another part of the gospel which tells us that no bone was broken.

In John chapter 19, we're told that the soldiers didn't break his legs, but that they pierced his side when he was on the cross. And John tells us that they did that so that the scriptures of the Old Testament would be fulfilled, which said, Not one bone shall be broken.
So a bone was not broken in his body. But that doesn't mean that his body wasn't broken. His body was broken. It was lacerated. It was cut. It was bruised.
It was bleeding. The body of the Lord Jesus Christ in that respect was broken. It suffered. It was a suffering body.
And that is why the action of breaking the bread is important in the Lord's Supper. And it is something that should be done by the minister doing it in such a way that the congregation can see it.
[14:54] Because the tearing of the bread is important. Sometimes when one piece of bread is put round the congregation, which is a particularly beautiful and meaningful way of taking the Lord's Supper, if one piece of bread is taken round, then when each person breaks off his own part, he should again see that breaking as being significant.

This is the suffering of the Lord. It's a suffering body that is given you. A body that has suffered. But certainly when the minister holds it up and breaks it, it should be in the sight of all and it should preach to you.
It is a suffering body because Jesus Christ suffered. But there's more to it than that too. It's not just a body that suffered, but it's a body that suffered to death.
The suffering reached the point of death. And here's where the wine comes in. Because to shed your blood, or for the wine to be poured out, means that the Lord Jesus Christ poured out his soul unto death.

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As Isaiah prophesied 800 years before the Lord's own birth, he prophesied that the Messiah would pour out his soul unto death. He would pour out his life.
[16:11] And that's what the Lord did upon the cross. He poured out his life. He gave his life. He gave it. He died. The Lord Jesus Christ, the living one, the one who said, I am the resurrection and the life.

He died. He bowed his head and he yielded the ghost. He died. And that pouring out of the life is symbolized in the wine.
And we remember there that the Lord Jesus Christ suffered to the point of death. For some reason, he gave his life.
He gave his life. And then again, there's this. It's not just that he suffered. And it's not just that he suffered to death. death.
But also this, that he suffered to death as a sacrifice. He died a sacrificial death. In other words, the death of the Lord Jesus Christ was not just a death.
[17:15] It was not just the death of a man in God's presence. It was the death of somebody who was giving himself to God in a particular way.

It was the death of somebody who was actually being set apart there to God as a sacrifice. He had a relation with God to fulfill in Calvary. The Lord Jesus Christ was put apart onto the cross.
Not just by the hands of wicked men, but he put himself apart on the cross. God put him apart on the cross. He put him aside. Here is a sacrifice.
Here is someone giving himself in order to make amends with God. Here is someone setting himself apart to make an atonement, an atonement, to make us at one with God and to make God at one with us.
It is an atonement. He's there as a sacrifice, a sacrifice for sins. And is that not what the Lord means when he says, this cup is the New Testament or it is the new covenant in my blood.
[18:25] As much as to say, when I die, when I give my life, when I pour it out, that is the seal of this new covenant.

That is the finishing of my work. That's the finishing of the work of salvation. Everything is accomplished and everything is done. When I die, my work is finished.
That's all that God requires of me. That's everything that my life was about. It was about my death. It was about my self-giving. All my life I gave myself and supremely in my death I give myself as a sacrifice to the Father.
that seals the new covenant. It finishes it. It puts it into operation. In other words, this death brings down all the blessings of God upon you if you are in Christ.
if you believe this brings down all the blessings upon you. His death. And it is your only means of salvation.
[19:40] And that is how you discern the Lord's body. You discern it as a body that suffered, a body that suffered to the point of death and a body that suffered to the point of death as a sacrifice.

You are stating, yes, this is my sacrifice. I bring no other. I can't justify myself any other way. I don't bring any other covering, any other sacrifice.
This alone, this body is my sacrifice. That's what I cleave to and that's what I look to. But there's one other thing too. Not just a body, not just a body suffering.
Not just a body suffering to death and not just a body suffering to death as a sacrifice. But one more thing. A body that suffered to death as a sacrifice but is now alive.
And that's fundamental too. It is a body now living. Once dead. Once dead as a sacrifice but a body now alive.
[20:45] And that's so important. Why? Because Christ never ceased to be. The life of Christ never stopped. When he poured out his soul to death, what happened to his soul?

What happened to his life? It went immediately into the presence of his father. Did he not say that? He said, it is finished on the cross and then immediately he says, father, into thine hands I commend my spirit.
And that tells us that immediately his soul left his body. Immediately he died. The moment he died and the moment there was this separation, his soul went straight into the presence of his father.
Now I think that's very, very important for us to remember in connection with the Lord's Supper. In fact, in connection with everything. I've often had reason to say this. Pardon me for saying it again.

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The blood of Jesus Christ is not just his death, it's his life. Leviticus 17, the life is in the blood. The importance of that in the Old Testament was this.
[21:53] When the priest came with the sacrifice, he sacrificed the animal. But he took the blood of the animal and he took it inside the Holy of Holies where God was.

He took that blood inside and he sprinkled it on the mercy seat. In the presence of God he did that. And then he came back out. And that God turned away his wrath from them.
Now that's so important. When the high priest took the blood into God's presence, it wasn't the high priest saying, here is a death.
That wasn't what he was saying. But here is a life. Here is a life. And God looks at this life. And is he pleased with this life?
Yes. That's what happens when Jesus Christ dies. He must die. His life must come to an end. But then he brings his life, he brings his soul into the presence of his Father.
[22:58] And he asks the Father, are you pleased with what I did? Are you pleased with the words I spoke? Are you pleased with the miracles I performed? Are you pleased with my sermons?

Are you pleased with my walk? Above all, are you pleased with my death, with my sacrifice? I gave myself there on Calvary's cross. Are you pleased with it? And the Lord says, yes, I am pleased with it.
And what's our token of that? The resurrection. When Christ came back from the dead, that was the Father saying, yes, I accepted that sacrifice.
that blood was pleasing to me as the only sacrifice that really deals with sins. In other words, this life that died is a life that's given to us as our only source of blessing.
Christ rose again to become our life, to live in you and to live in me. If you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that doesn't just mean that you believe in the power of Christ's death.
[24:03] That you believe that that's a sacrifice for you. It means that Christ comes into your heart to live in you, to guide you, to steer you in your prayer, to help you to repent, to overcome sin, to go forward.

Christ lives in you. And when you come to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, you're coming to look at memorials of a living body, not a dead body.
When you eat the bread and when you drink the wine physically, let's look at it physically for the moment. When you eat bread and when you drink wine, what happens to it?
It becomes part of your body. That's what happens to all your food except what's waste. It becomes part of your body. It becomes your flesh. It becomes your muscle, your sinew, your bones.
It's turned into what you are. Well, that is true of the Lord's Supper. You partake of Jesus Christ as your spiritual life.
[25:07] He is your nourishment. You are saying, yes, I discern these symbols as speaking to me of a living Christ who is keeping me alive today.

They speak to me of the living Christ who sustains my body just as bread and wine sorry, sustains my soul just as bread and wine sustains my body. Just as food keeps me going in this life and builds up my body so the living Lord Jesus sustains my soul in this world.
He is my life and he is my strength. And I think in fact we should even go a little further than that. It's not just that the sacrament is a sign that Christ is your life.
It's not just that you're saying this symbolizes that he is my life but Christ actually lives in the sacrament for you who believe. Now, we have to be careful there.
We have to be careful that we don't say too much but we also have to be careful that we don't say too little. Let me just put it like this. if you come to this supper in faith when you eat this bread and when you drink this wine the living Christ is actually strengthening you.
[26:31] He is blessing that sacrament to you. Blessing it to you so that just as the word nourishes you so does the sacrament nourish you too.

the sacrament nourishes you too. It ceases to be just a reminder to you. It's not just a symbol but it is an actual nourishment. That is why it's called a means of grace or a means of strengthening.
God actually blesses that sacrament to you. It makes you stronger. And that's the sad thing about Christians who for some reason or another don't come to the supper. You're putting past yourself something that will strengthen your faith and strengthen your assurance.
There's a strange paradox here because many people sometimes don't come to the table because they don't have a strong enough assurance. And the paradox is this that the supper strengthens

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your assurance.
It strengthens your certainty that Christ loved you and gave himself for you. It actually makes you a stronger Christian person to be sitting at the Lord's table. and it makes you a weaker Christian person if you are not sitting at the Lord's table.
[27:47] So it is a body suffering. A body suffered to the point of death. A body suffered to the point of death as a sacrifice but a body no living.

Jesus Christ lives with flesh and with life and he gives you that flesh life even in the bread and in the wine if you have faith.
If you have faith. Now if you're discerning the Lord's supper like that you'll desire to do two things. First of all you'll desire to remember him by partaking of it. Verse 24 when he had given thanks he broke it and said take it this is my body which is broken for you this do in remembrance of me.
Now that tells us very very vividly that we are to use this sacrament as something to remind us of all those truths. I hope through this pulpit and other pulpits that those truths are being brought home to us in different ways constantly.
[29:01] But the Lord's supper brings it home in a special way. There's no doubt about that. That sitting together as one body with one cup and one bread brings before us all what this supper actually means and it brings before us the death of Christ.

And I'm sure that when the word is preached along with the sacrament this death becomes particularly meaningful to you. It becomes particularly meaningful. So we remember him and don't we do it friends with gladness and with joy in our hearts.
It's a strange mixture of emotions. We joy at the suffering of somebody who gave himself for us because he lives to make us alive too. We rejoice.
We rejoice in it. We remember him. And the other thing it makes us desire to do is to announce him.
Verse 26. Now I want to pause here too because this is important.
Verse 26. As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you do show the Lord's death till he come. You show it.
[30:15] You announce it. Well who do you announce it to? Well you announce it to everybody who sees it.

It's an announcement. Let me here encourage people who aren't at the Lord's table to come to the Lord's supper. I think it's probably a tendency that's increasing for people who aren't at the table themselves just to stay away.
I think it's important even if for some reason you don't think you should be at the table. I think it's important for you to come to see the table. Because there's a proclamation to you too when someone else partakes of the table.
They are making an announcement and it is like a sermon. And it is a sermon I think that you should see and that I think you should hear. So I would urge you to come when the Lord's supper is being dispensed because his death is being announced.
You do announce or proclaim the Lord's death till he comes. Now what do you proclaim? Well you proclaim his death. You proclaim the truth of it.
[31:28] You believe it. You're proclaiming that this Jesus did die. And you're proclaiming this death as your only hope before God. That's what you're proclaiming.

You're proclaiming that you have no other standing before God except this death. Except what Jesus Christ did for you. Now that again is very, very important.
Why? Because it puts the whole emphasis at the table not on you but on Jesus Christ. On Jesus Christ. And I think that all too often we lose that emphasis.
You're professing him at the table. You're not professing yourself. How often is it said that you're professing your faith at the table for the first time?
You're professing Christ at the table by faith. Let's understand that there's a difference between those two things. You're professing Christ by faith.
[32:29] You're not professing your faith. One puts the emphasis on you at the table. The other puts the emphasis on Christ at the table. And it's not yourself you're announcing.

You're not announcing your faith. You are announcing Christ's death. for you by faith. That's what you're announcing. You're not at the table saying look at me.
The announcement that you're making at the table is look at him. He is my hope. He is my life. In his death and in his life he is everything.

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It is about an announcement of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what it's an announcement of. And I hope and pray that everyone at the table will be led not to who's at the table but will be led to the Lord Jesus Christ.
That's what the supper is. What he is and all you who will be looking at the table and looking at the bread. We are all announcing Jesus Christ as a saviour who is well worth believing him and well worth committing yourself to him.
[33:37] And it is a kind of sermon. And how we would desire that every single one of you would yet come to that place where you would show him. Where you would desire to proclaim him as the source of your life and the source of your hope.

That's what it's about. You remember him and you announce him. You proclaim him to anyone who desires to see that he is your Lord and that he is your hope. Well then, what does it mean to come unworthily?
Well it means to come with a lack of recognition of all these things. It means that you're not coming in that kind of way.
It means that you're lacking respect, that you're lacking reverence, that you're lacking appreciation of what the Lord's Supper is all about. For example, verse 21, in eating he says, every one of you takes before another his own supper.
One is hungry and another is drunken. Verse 33, wherefore my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. Wait for each other.
[34:44] Verse 34, if any man hungers, let him eat at home, that you come not together to condemnation, and the rest will I set in order when I come. Now what does that indicate?

Well it indicates this, that, well it's hard to believe really the disorder that had come into the church in Corinth, but it came because of the divisions. It would appear to be the case, this is the way Thomas Boston takes it and I think he's right, that people were eating in their parties.
They were coming together as groups and they were eating apart and devouring the whole food before others had even arrived. Now I think to set that in order, I have to say this, that in the early church the Lord's Supper was kept in the midst of an actual feast feast, that believers actually ate together, probably after a service of worship or probably after the proclamation of the word, they would eat food together.
And it was during that food that they would pause and that bread and wine would be set apart. And there the bread and the wine would be taken.
But what had happened was because of the disorder and chaos, the bread would be eaten. There would be no bread left, sometimes no wine left, simply because of the various kinds of disorder that had crept into the church.
[36:06] And Paul says, what is this? I can hardly call it the Lord's table at all, he says. Some of you are drunken and some of you are eating their own supper before others arrive.

You're not even waiting for each other. What, he says, do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Are you coming to gorge yourselves to the table of the Lord rather than coming to remember his death? He says, you're coming together to condemnation.
You're coming together unworthily. And instead of that, you should stop and examine yourself as to your own standing and then eat of that bread and drink of that cup.
And here, as I've done before, I want to notice this word in verse 29 with you. He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.
Now, I hope I don't really need to emphasize just how misleading that word has been for year after year, that that word has been translated damnation.
[37:07] I think it has caused unnecessary grief in the church of Christ. It's not translated like that, of course, in the Gaelic. Gaelic. It's a much softer word translation in the Gaelic, and it ought to be, because the context makes quite clear that what's actually spoken of is the chastisement that can come upon God's people by their unworthy partaking.

It doesn't speak of damnation for unbelievers here. What it is speaking of is the condemnation or the judgment or chastisement that is coming on the Lord's people because they're not respectful at the table as they should be.
You read the context and it becomes crystal clear. Let's read again verses 29 and 30. He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh judgment or chastisement to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

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Listen, for this cause many are weak and sick among you, and many are asleep. For if we would judge ourselves, like I'm telling you, we would not be judged by God.
But, now listen, when we are judged by God, we are chastened by the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Now, it's important that we understand that.
[38:29] What the apostle is saying is simply this, many of you in the Corinthian church, he says, are weak and sick in your bodies, and some of you have even died because of the Lord's chastisement upon you as a people.

And the reason he's chastising you is because you're not carefully observing the Lord's supper. But, Paul says, you should be thankful that he's chastising you like this, because it's better to be chastised than to be condemned along with the world.
That's what he means. And that's why he's urging them to examine themselves and to put themselves right, to deliver themselves from the Lord's chastisement, in other words. Now, you know as well as I do what the Lord's chastisement is, and I'll try to bring this to a close.
The Lord's chastisement is what comes upon us when he's not happy with us. When we are doing something in a wrong way, when we take a wrong step and we persist in it, the Lord has to come with a chastisement.
Sometimes it can be a physical sickness. Many, he says, are weak and sick among you, and many even sleep. Some have died because of the Lord's chastisement.
[39:41] That would have been a chastisement to others. It would also have been a chastisement to themselves if they knew that their death was coming. And in it, the Lord was pointing them towards something that was grievously wrong in their lives.

That's what chastisement is doing. And the harder we are to hear it, the more difficult we become, the more obstinate we are, the more he has to chastise. chastisement is.
But Paul says he's chastising you so that you won't be condemned with the world. And the cure for that, he says, is that if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.
If we would only look at ourselves and remember what the supper is, we wouldn't be chastised like that at all, he says. And I suppose that brings me back to where I started. Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and let him drink of that cup.
I wonder what things might be making yourself unworthy to come to the table. Is it a refusal to forgive someone, in spite of the fact that they're asking you to?
[40:46] Is it a failure to recognise the wonder of the supper, what it actually speaks to you about? Is it maybe some persistent, ongoing, willful disobedience in your life, that's seen and known by others?

These things can make us unworthy recipients, and if we are, and if we come in that way, then one way or another, the Lord's chastisement will come on us. It's far better to put these things right, and then to come to the table of the Lord.
By the way, it's not a matter of somebody being unhappy with you. Many people can be unhappy with you for lots of reasons, but if your conscience is clear, then that is what matters with respect to coming to the table.
Finally, let me say this, if you are today the Lord's, and it's strange, you know, that some people will actually say they are the Lord's, but they feel that they ought not to go to the table.
If you are the Lord's, the Lord's supper is a blessing that you're putting past yourself. If the sins that you have in your life are what you would call sins of infirmity, just part and parcel of being a sinner, if there's things that you're striving by God's grace to get over, if there's things you feel sorry for and repentant for, you should take your place at the table of the Lord.
[42:19] You should take your place there. If you're not willfully callous and careless, you should take your place there. Because if you don't, it encourages your unbelief.

It encourages your unbelief and it greatly weakens your faith. And the devil uses that to mar your witness in thousands of different ways.
Let me take away that, I try to take a different way sometimes each time, let me try and take away that maybe you've never even thought of. Let's suppose you're a Christian man or a Christian woman, but for some reason you've never come to the table because you think yourself not good enough to come to the table.
Think of one effect that that might have on the world. They might look at you and say, well, that person is actually more upright in their walk than that person who comes to the table.

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And they use the fact that you're not at the table to exalt themselves and maybe to do down people that are already at the table.
[43:25] In other words, unconsciously to yourself, you're giving the credit for your life to yourself and not to Christ. Have you ever thought of it that way? That by staying away from the table, you are making a statement too.

You are saying, well, yes, I'm walking according to Christ's way as best I can. I'm keeping worship in my house as best I can. I'm striving to cleave to Christ and I hope I'm trusting on his word.
But every time the Lord's supper comes round, I'm making a statement that it's all in my strength and not in his. Isn't there something about that you should put right immediately? That you shouldn't announce yourself, but that you should announce Christ?
That you should make his to say, yes, my life is what it is by the grace of God and by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. To announce the death of Christ and the power of Christ until he come.
you know, we very often think of the Lord's supper and we approach it as a privilege. We seldom think of it as a duty. I know that it altered my perception of the Lord's supper the minute I saw it as a commandment.
[44:36] And I've spoken to other people too and their conception of the Lord's supper radically altered the minute they saw it as a commandment. In other words, remember my death becomes just as imperative as thou shalt not kill.

It becomes just as imperative as love one another. It becomes just as much an imperative of do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
It is Christ's commandment. And if Christ commands it, then it is my duty to obey it. It is like that. By all means view it as a privilege, but make sure too that you view it as a duty.
it is for those who look to the Lord Jesus Christ. I hope that's helped you maybe to view the supper the way that Paul brings it before us in 1 Corinthians chapter 11.
And I would hope and pray that if anyone here is in Christ and looking to him, that they would recognize that their place belongs at the table of the Lord.
[45:43] Let us pray. Lord, our God, we are thankful that thy word brings before us the Lord Jesus Christ in his life and in his death and in his ongoing life which is the source of our own.

And we pray to recognize him in the supper as one who was dead but is now alive. And may the bread and the wine speak to us of what he was in his death and what he is to us now in our life.
And we pray that all of us might come to know him like that and that we would one day take of place by faith at the table of the Lord for it belongs to thy people.
Pardon our many sins for his sake. Amen. Amen.

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