

On the First Day of the Week part 11

We Eat with Glad and Sincere Hearts Acts 2:46-47

Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 9:1-7

Confession of Sin: Psalm 32:1-5

Sermon: On the First Day of the Week, We Eat with Glad and Sincere Hearts Acts 2:46-47

Benediction: Luke 14:13-15

Acts 2:46-47 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, (47) Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

They worshiped together in the temple courts.

They then went to homes and broke bread.

-I don't think the idea is "they were done being together and all went home"

-I think the idea is that they were not content just to meet in the temple, but continued together in eating their meals; it's just that thousands of people couldn't all go to one place to eat; they had to assemble in smaller groups to fit into people's homes to eat

They ate their food

CAUTION: The NIV says "ate together" but the "together" part is not in the text. I think that's the idea, but that is an expounding of the text, not the actual text.

-with gladness of heart

-I was led down this line of thought by Brian DeJong, Grace OPC Sheboygan, WI

-God made his earthly creatures with the need to eat and drink

-by His grace, He made that food and drink easy to get and pleasant to eat

-but the eating of one prohibited food was our first sin

-so there was a cursing of the ground, so that now we must work hard to make the ground bring forth its fruit; we fight thorns, we endure drought, bugs eat what we grow; if we do not manage the soil well, its nutrients will be depleted

-yet God is merciful; He still allows and helps us earn the food we eat

-and when we eat of this food, our bodies are refreshed and sustained

-and our hearts are made glad; we enjoy the eating

-and eating is all the more enjoyable when we are sharing it with those we love

-yet for the sinner, guilty before God, even the joy of food can be lost; and there is an emptiness or shallowness to the joy of eating, because it is only a temporal enjoyment

-when God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world, He came not as an ascetic, but as a man who ate and drank; in fact, He ate and drank with sinners in need of salvation

-when crowds came to hear His preaching, Jesus multiplied the available food so all could eat all they wanted

-when Jesus spoke, He spoke of how His disciples eat and drink Him

-in His book of Revelation, we are told that believers in Christ eat at the marriage supper of the Lamb of God

-and we sinners who have been saved by God's grace through Jesus Christ, and who are eating all the spiritual blessings of Christ, can eat and drink unto the Lord, enjoying the taste of the food the Lord has provided, and having that enjoyment amplified, multiplied by the sharing it and eating it with those fellow Christians we love so much in the Lord

APPLICATION: So, let us enjoy what the Lord has provided. (Ecc 9:7) Go, eat your bread with joy, And drink your wine with a merry heart;

-with simplicity of heart

-NIV sincere; KJV singleness; NKJV, YLT simplicity; ESV generous

-*phelleus* stony ground, in the sense of being a path where you easily stumble; this word comes from *a-pheles*

-VWS: “simple or plain”

-Clarke: “without deceit and hypocrisy”

-so, neither causing offense nor taking offense

-I am very thankful to have this food; I gladly serve you some of mine; I gladly eat some of yours; I’m thankful that we’re together to eat it

APPLICATION: This is a good way for those who have much, to share with those who have little. When eating together with the whole church, or when inviting smaller groups of believers to eat a meal in my home, I, who have no lack, can supply what is lacking for others.

-praising God

-I think “praising God” has a more general place in this description than just describing how they ate their food; yet

-it certainly can be made use of here; we can know that they were praising God as they ate their food with gladness and singleness of heart

-as we eat our food, and as we do everything else, let us praise God in it

CONCLUSION

I gave you these statement at the beginning of this series. Here they come again:

As the elders of this church, Christ has given us the oversight. He has made us shepherds. We don't delight in discipline for discipline's sake, but we see the need for discipline in the church as in any organization of human beings, so that a basic peace and unity is established and maintained, so that the church can fulfill its purpose. The church is to make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all that Jesus has commanded. A poorly disciplined church will not do this well, and all will suffer for it. A well-disciplined church will do this well, and all will benefit from it.

Your elders understand that every person here is unique. God deals with each one in unique ways, according to his own personality, experiences, and situation in life. We are not trying to stamp everyone into a little mold, to where we are all perfectly uniform. This is a long, often slow process, where we learn and grow in different areas at different times. God is dealing with us patiently, and we must deal with each other patiently.

We also understand that the Christian religion is not composed of following orders from the clergy. I do not mean to dictate to you rules that you have to follow because I'm up here and you're down there. Instead, I hope that by thinking about and acting upon the lessons learned during this study, you will learn to do what the church does

-not by rote, but with understanding

-not for mere conformity to the form, but out of conviction of the truth

-not under compulsion, but for conscience' sake

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ said that God is seeking worshipers who will worship Him in spirit and in truth. So we know that what we actually DO physically is not the essence of the matter of worship. Yet we also know that the Lord Christ did leave us instructions about what we are to do!

When we began, each of us had some area where the church does something in obedience to Christ, but we didn't do it. And each of us had something we were in the habit of doing, that must not be done in Christ's church. Now eleven of these things have been addressed from the scriptures. I see in my own mind and heart that there are some of these things that I am doing better with, and some that I am not doing as well in. Each of us is the same way. But I observe that in a number of you, there are some of these areas where you don't appear to accept the instruction. Perhaps you have said in your mind, "I can see the bible says that. I've heard the pastors exhort me to obey. But I'm just not going to do that." Perhaps you have purposed in your heart, "I can see from the bible that what I've been doing is wrong. I heard the pastor point it out as wrong. But this is what I've been doing for years, and I'm not going to change." Be warned! Being ignorant of some of the bible's teachings is normal for a Christian. Warring against the desires of the flesh, but succumbing to temptation from time to time is just the normal condition of the Christian life. But stubbornly refusing to obey biblical doctrines that you have learned and been urged to obey is a very dangerous business before God. Do not harden your hearts against the discipline the Lord gives us through His word.

We rest from the work of the previous six days.

- from the actual doing of it
- also from the concentrating on it and talking about it
- God has been very gracious to give us six days for our work, reserving only one for Himself; let us honor Him on it, not stealing from Him

We prepare ourselves ahead of time for worship.

- men put aside contention and be ready to pray in unity
- women put aside pretention, dress modestly, and be ready to worship with a quiet and submissive spirit
- on a very practical level---this is when you walk or drive to the meeting place, deposit casseroles in the kitchen, take kids to the bathroom, turn off your cell phone, etc. We do this ahead of time, before the worship meeting begins. consider these three biblical principles:
 - Ecclesiastes 3:1 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:
 - 1 Corinthians 14:40 Let all things be done decently and in order.
 - Philippians 2:3-4 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. (4) Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

We assemble with Christ's church.

- we are essentially those who are called out of this world to assemble in the name of Jesus Christ
- we are part of the great heavenly assembly of the firstborn
- but while we live this life, we assemble in the local manifestation of that---the local church
- we don't assemble as uncommitted observers, but as baptized believers who consent to be considered fellow members of the body of Christ

We greet one another.

- this need not be done beforehand, but that is a good time for it; although it can also be done well afterward
- this is not to be done out of its place
 - it is a beautiful thing to greet one another when it is time for that
 - it is a very distracting thing to try to do it during prayer or hymn-singing

We pray (all kinds of prayers for all kinds of people).

- because your God is also their God

-because the One Mediator through whom you have been saved must also be the One through whom they must be saved

We sing (psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs).

- the physical act of singing helps build up the church
- the music we make in our hearts is worshipful to God

We devote ourselves to the Word of Christ.

- we read from the Bible
- someone gives an address, explaining and applying the scriptures
- we talk about the truth of the scriptures in our conversation

We obey Christ's ordinances.

- we submit to baptism
 - anyone here who is a believer in Christ, but has not been baptized, be baptized! Come to one of us elders; we will talk it over to you, and see that you are baptized as soon as possible
- we share in the Lord's Supper

We bridle our tongues.

- we say what is helpful for building up others
- we refrain from all kinds of ungodly speech
- we refrain from saying just whatever comes to mind

We give our offerings.

- preachers who have been sent as missionaries, local church pastors whose work is preaching and teaching, widows who are truly left alone---these must be cared for by the offerings of God's church
- the expenses of a basic meeting place must be paid by those who meet there
- in order to do these things according to a biblical pattern, we set aside something on the first day of the week, store it up as a church, and place it in the hands of trustworthy people to administer it

We eat our food with glad and sincere hearts, praising God

Morgan:

The influential Church is the company of loyal souls who "continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and the prayers," who eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, who manifest in their individual lives and corporate capacity the strength, the beauty, the glory, the compassion of the Christ. Wherever there is such a Church you will find the Church that has favour with the people.

MacLaren:

They were one family, and lived as such. Their 'breaking bread at home' includes both their ordinary meals and the Lord's Supper; for in these first days every meal, at least the evening meal of every

day, was hallowed by having the Supper as a part of it. Each meal was thus a religious act, a token of brotherhood, and accompanied with praise. Surely then 'men did eat angels' food,' and on platter and cup was written 'Holiness to the Lord.' The ideal of human fellowship was realised, though but for a moment, and on a small scale. It was inevitable that divergences should arise, but it was not inevitable that the Church should depart so far from the brief brightness of its dawn. Still the sweet concordant brotherhood of these morning hours witnesses what Christian love can do, and prophesies what shall yet be and shall not pass.

Barnes:

Here it means all kinds of sustenance; what nourished them - τροφή τροφή - and the use of this word proves that it does not refer to the Lord's Supper; for that ordinance is nowhere represented as designed for an ordinary meal, or to nourish the body.

It is a way to show your love
as David did to Mephibosheth
It teaches us to share all things

There is the simple joy of sharing food, when you share everything else, also.
There is the opportunity for the rich to bless the poor.
There is the opportunity for the established member to bless the outsider or newcomer.

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- Part 2 On the First Day of the Week, We Rest from Six Days of Labor
- Part 3 On the First Day of the Week, We Prepare Ourselves to Worship
- Part 4 On the First Day of the Week, We Greet One Another
- Part 5 On the First Day of the Week, We Pray
- Part 6 On the First Day of the Week, We Sing
- Part 7 On the First Day of the Week, We Devote Ourselves to the Word of Christ
- Part 8 On the First Day of the Week, We Obey Christ's Ordinances
- [Part On the First Day of the Week, We Confess Our Sins]
- Part 9 On the First Day of the Week, We Bridle Our Tongues
- Part 10 On the First Day of the Week, We Give An Offering
- Part 11 On the First Day of the Week, We Eat with Glad and Sincere Hearts