

Podcast: Confessing The Faith

Episode 18: The Lord's Supper - Fencing the Table

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What does it mean to fence the Table?

1. It is the process of inviting people to the Table in a way that makes the biblical meaning and significance of the Supper clear. What kind of meal is it? What does it symbolize? Who is invited? What dangers are associated with partaking in an unworthy manner? To fence the Table is to warn against partaking in an unworthy manner.

Is there biblical warrant for fencing the Table?

1. 1 Corinthians 11
2. It is a simple pastoral task. It is a way of exhorting the congregation to repent of sin.

When should a person not partake?

1. The goal is to have people partake!
2. If there is unrepentant sin; division; etc.
3. In the case of church discipline (excommunication) - Matthew 18, 1 Corinthians 5:11

How does Emmaus fence the Table?

Brothers and sisters, let us come to the Table with thankful and repentant hearts, remembering all that Christ has accomplished for us in his life, death, resurrection, and ascension to the Father. Let us come in faith, so that we might feast upon Christ, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. All are invited to partake so long as they are believing upon Christ, have been obedient in baptism, are a member in good standing of this church, or are visiting from another like minded congregation. If you are new to Emmaus, but not yet a member, you are also invited to partake. We look forward to getting to know you in the weeks to come! Our concern is that it is those who have faith in Jesus, who are living in a way consistent with the faith, who partake. "Whoever... eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself."

(1 Corinthians 11:27–29, ESV)

Let's talk about the individual components of this statement:

1. Believing upon Christ (are you comfortable with the idea of non-Christians receiving baptism? Why not?)
2. Baptized
3. Members in good standing
4. Visiting from another like minded congregation
5. If you are new to Emmaus, but not yet a member, you are also invited to partake. We look forward to getting to know you in the weeks to come!
6. Our concern is that it is those who have faith in Jesus, who are living in a way consistent with the faith, who partake.

Some may claim that this is legalistic. What's your response to that?

1. Let us define "legalism". The accuser needs to demonstrate that we have gone beyond the scriptures if the charge of legalism is to stick. Is it legalistic to say "thou shalt not commit adultery?"
2. It may be that this sounds legalistic to your ears due to the tradition you grew up with (maybe antinomian).
3. We are simply handling the Lord's Supper as if it matters.

How is this issue connected with other ministry issues?

1. The way a church handles the Supper is a manifestation of their overall view of the church and their philosophy of ministry.