

For our text today we are going to focus on Paul's words about preparing for the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:23-32:

*"23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.' 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*

*27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. 30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. 31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world."*

**Dear Fellow Redeemed,**

Would you agree with this statement? Millennials feel more entitled. That is the most common description of young people born around the turn of the century? ENTITLED! Of course that is a stereo type and is not true of all young people by any means. In fact I think it is a relatively small percentage of Millennials that give the whole generation a bad name. But I'm sure you have all seen some young people who do seem to feel like they are entitled to all the good things in life without really working for them. In the work place some of them don't do much, yet they expect to be praised. They seem to think they deserve special privileges. They often act like they are above the rules. In general, they act like the world owes them something. Everything revolves around them.

We are no doubt seeing the results of all the emphasis on self-esteem in the 90's and 2000's. It was considered harmful to a child's self-esteem to have winners and LOSERS. So everyone was given awards just for participating no matter how hard a child worked at it. There were many people who were sounding the alarm that such philosophy of child rearing will only lead to a generation of entitled children. Well here we are!

That attitude is having consequences in our society and in the work place. These individuals don't really contribute much yet they expect to be paid more than others. It also shows itself in the way they treat others. They give off an air of superiority which often looks down on others as if everyone is their servant. Such an attitude can also have a detrimental affect on the entitled individual as well. It is setting them up for great disappointment and even depression when people don't bow to their desires and give them what they expect. Of course it is always everyone else's fault, never their own. So the cycle continues. The more entitled one feels, the more unhappy they are because nothing lives up to expectations.

When you see someone like this, don't you just shake your head and think, Oh Boy! They are too much. — Have you looked in the mirror recently?

I don't bring this up so that we can rant about this generation. We don't come into the Lord's house to point out the sins of others and make ourselves feel better in the process. In order to prevent receiving the Lord's Supper unworthily and receive some judgement from the Lord, the Apostle Paul urges us: "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup." We are to examine ourselves and come before the Lord in humble repentance.

Millennials may be very extreme examples of feeling entitled so we can easily recognize that and the consequences of it. But what about ourselves? As we were talking last week about how Covid 19 has led to a lot more complaining about the government, it occurred to me just how much we all

act like those entitled Millennials.

Think about it a minute, how many times have you complained about the restrictions that are imposed on us? How many times have you complained about your boss at work because he or she is so unreasonable? Or about someone else getting a promotion or a raise instead of you? How many times have you complained that your wife doesn't \_\_\_\_\_, or why can't my husband be more \_\_\_\_\_? You fill in the blank. Why don't my friends call me when they know I am hurting? My children don't appreciate everything I do for them? It goes on and on. The list of things we complain about is endless.

Aren't these all signs of our own feeling of entitlement? We have certain expectations about how other people should act and how other people should treat me; expectations of what my life should be like. And when those expectations are not met we feel cheated and deprived. It's not supposed to be this way, so we complain and grumble about it. That is a classic sign of feeling entitled. I deserve better than this!

I deserve better! That is the dreadful lie of Satan that has been engrained in our sinful human nature. That is the same lie that Adam and Eve fell for. They already had everything perfect. They literally couldn't ask for anything any better, yet they thought they deserved more. They wanted to be like God. God must be holding out on them. What a horrible insult against God who had given them everything. They were calling God a liar and saying that He wasn't doing enough for them. They were accusing God of not treating them the way they deserved!

That is exactly what we are doing whenever we feel like we haven't been treated the way we think we deserve. The truth is, we don't deserve anything, yet we act like we deserve everything. We are like someone who literally does nothing at work all day but look at our phone, and then think we deserve a raise. The worst type of entitlement is when we think and act like we deserve good things from God. We have gotten so used to God's grace and forgiveness that we begin to think we are entitled to it, as if God owes it to us.

When we examine ourselves in this mirror, we see a pretty ugly picture of ourselves, don't we? We don't like to look at that picture. We don't like to admit it is really me. That mirror must be faulty, that's not my life. Yet that is exactly the picture we need to see. When God tells us to examine ourselves, we need to look into the mirror of God's law which shows every imperfection and filth of sin. Our attitude about our life is just one small part of the picture and it isn't pretty, but we need to see the truth about ourselves. We need to see the blackness of our sin. We truly are like filthy rags.

When we see ourselves for what we truly are and what we deserve, then we are truly prepared to come into God's presence confessing our sins to God and pleading for what we do not deserve—God's forgiveness and blessings. When we examine ourselves in that way and eat of the bread and drink of the cup in that attitude of humble repentance, then we will receive the greatest joy and blessings from our God. Then Jesus comes to you personally and says, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for YOU." And again, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood." Yes Jesus gives you the very body which hung on the cross for your sins. He gives you the blood which He shed for you in order to establish a new covenant between you and God—the covenant of Grace.

What great joy that brings. It's like you are a convicted murderer on death row, awaiting your execution, then someone comes into your cell and says, your punishment has been paid, you are free to go. What unbelievable relief and joy. To know that you deserve Hell as God's punishment for your sins, living in dread awaiting that punishment to come, and then Jesus comes to you and says, "Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven you." I died your death and suffered your Hell. You are free to live with God forever in paradise. See, here is my body and blood to prove it.

That is the joy that we receive today. Whatever sins you have committed, however great they may be. You are forgiven; pardoned of all punishment. With that great news we can truly "depart in

peace” and “serve the Lord in gladness.” Think about how that will affect your life when you live every day conscious of the fact that you are pardoned by grace rather than feeling entitled.

An entitled person expects great things and is almost always disappointed. Life becomes one thing to complain about after another. An entitled person always expect things from others and is disappointed when they don’t meet those expectations. An entitled person usually doesn’t have any real friendships or lasting relationships, because people grow tired of their conversation always revolving around themselves, and always thinking of themselves. Feeling entitled leads to a miserable life. And worst of all, feeling entitled to God’s grace will leave you empty and cast out because Grace is never deserved.

But when we realize that we deserve nothing but God’s wrath and punishment we will be overjoyed to know that God forgives us in His grace. When we don’t expect good things to happen every day, we will be delighted with every good thing the Lord brings into our life. If you are not feeling like you deserve better, you will not be disappointed but be happy and thankful for what you have. When we don’t expect people to do certain things for us, but consider ourselves the servants of all, then we will have meaningful and rewarding relationships and the joy of helping others. This is not just about lowering your expectations. It is about seeing the truth about what you deserve and rejoicing in everything as a gift of God’s amazing grace. The forgiven life is a joyful life.

Thanks be to God who does not give us what we deserve, but has given us His own Son to take our place. Thanks be to our Lord Jesus Christ who has given us His own body and blood to pay the penalty for our sins. Thanks be to the Holy Spirit who has given us the faith to know and believe this amazing truth. Thanks be to our Triune God who gives us so many good things. Every day we enjoy the blessings of God’s grace.

**Live the Forgiven Life and Rejoice!**

Amen.