Victory Everlasting Gospel Church

January 13, 2018

The title of today’s sermon is:

**Unworthily**

Let us turn in our Bibles to John chapter 6 verses 53-55

6:53 **Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.**

 6:54 **Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.**

 6:55 **For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.**

Now among the crowd that He was addressing were the 70 disciples who were faithful in their office to which Jesus had appointed them. They like the 12 disciples had the experience of going to towns and cities, preaching and healing and casting out devils. But they could not comprehend this message of Christ. They did not seek any spiritual application. They could not picture themselves literally eating the flesh of Jesus and drinking His blood so as we read in verse 60,

6:60 **Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard [this], said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?**

This literal, canabalistic interpretation must have caused them to murmur amongst themselves that “we must have been duped by this man, He must not be the true Messiah, He must be a deceiver” and in verse 66 we read,

6:66 **From that [time] many of his disciples went back,** **and walked no more with him.** Seeing these flee from Him Jesus’ reaction is in verse 67,

 6:67 **Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?** It is very easy to come to Jesus when we hear of His love for us and His death to save us, but so many who have come, also have left. You may know some who were once strong in the faith, and for a time were believers in tithing and dress reform and ate and drank that which conformed to what God gave our prophet to give to us and maybe they were active in medical missionary work as well. But something happened with the passing of time. Like the 70, they went back, back to the perverse diet, back to the sports and amusements they used to enjoy, back with their former associates they could not bring to the light, and so they chose the darkness and walked no more with him. Surely you must have known some of these people, as this has been an occurrence that has been happening around the world, in this tarrying time as we await the second coming.

How is it with you? Has discouragement been a factor with you? Has the lure and excitement of the world or the thought of your former so called foods been a temptation to make you wonder if it has all been worth the surrender?

But as we survey the choices, on the one hand Satan has an entire smorgasbord of food and drink and entertainments that has absolutely no restrictions. And what is the final reward that he can offer us? Why the second resurrection.

On the other hand is the lowly Jesus and a cross. He offers us self-denial, persecution from family, friends and the world, and sometimes from church members and He offers a cross to bear and suffering and possibly a martyr’s death. And what is the final reward that he can offer us? Why a resurrection at His coming, a youthful, healthy body that will never suffer sickness or aging, an eternal life of joy with the Savior of mankind and His Father whose love for us was so great He did not withhold His Son’s ignominious death to save us.

The real question is why would anyone want to take the Judas trail, betray and walk no more with Him?

Turn in your Bibles to 1 Corinthians 11 and we will read verses 23-25 together,

11:23 **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:**

 11:24 **And when he had given thanks, he brake [it], and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.**

 11:25 **After the same manner also [he took] the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink [it], in remembrance of me**.

And what is it that entering this service makes it so serious and so solemn? We read in the next verse 26,

 11:26 **For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.**

We show the Lord’s death and never should the communion service be entered into lightly or with common talk. Much preparation should be done in the days before communion Sabbath.

The subject of this sermon is found in verse 27.

11:27 **Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink [this] cup of the Lord,** ***unworthily*, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.**

The SDA Commentary Vol.6, page 765 says this in regards to those who would eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord ***unworthily.***

“That is, without due reverence for the Lord, whose suffering and sacrifice are being commemorated. The unworthiness may be said to consist either of unbecoming conduct, or in lack of vital, active faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ.”

Verse 27 also says that such “shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” The SDA Commentary, same page 765, says regarding **“shall be guilty,”** would be one who fails to appreciate the incalculable debt he/she owes to the Savior and who treats with indifference the ordnance appointed to keep fresh in the minds of believers the death of Christ, guilty of disrespect toward Him. Such an attitude is akin to that of those who condemned and crucified the Lord. One who displays such an attitude at the Lord’s Supper might well be considered as rejecting his/her Lord and therefore sharing in the guilt of those who put Him to death.

Adam Clarke’s Commentary says this regarding verse 27: That to eat and drink the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper unworthily, is to eat and drink as the Corinthians did, who ate it not in reference to Jesus Christ's sacrificial death; but rather in such a way as the Israelites did the passover, which they celebrated in remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. Likewise, these mongrel Christians at Corinth used it as a kind of historical commemoration of the death of Christ; and did not, in the whole institution, discern the Lord's body and blood as a sacrificial offering for sin: and besides, in their celebration of it they acted in a way utterly unbecoming the gravity of a sacred ordinance. Those who acknowledge it as a sacrificial offering, and receive it in remembrance of God's love to them in sending his Son into the world, can neither bring damnation upon themselves by so doing, nor eat nor drink unworthily. God was serious when He gave Jesus for us and He expects us to be serious as well. We may see the elements as a piece of unleavened bread and a glass of grape juice, but we are in effect spiritually eating the Lord’s flesh and drinking His blood and never should we do so unworthily. **Adam Clarke Commentaries**

I like how the **Barnes Commentary** puts it: **Unworthily**. Perhaps there is no expression in the Bible that has given more trouble to weak and feeble Christians than this. It is certain that there is no one that has operated to deter so many from the communion; or that is so often made use of as an excuse for not making a profession of religion. The excuse is, "I am unworthy to partake of this holy ordinance. I shall only expose myself to condemnation. I must therefore wait until I become more worthy, and better prepared to celebrate it." It is important, therefore, that there should be a correct understanding of this passage. Most persons interpret it as if it were unworthy, and not unworthily; and seem to suppose that it refers to their personal qualifications, to their unfitness to partake of it, rather than to the ***manner*** in which it is done. It is to be remembered, therefore, that the word here used is an adverb, unworthily is an adverb and not an adjective, and has reference to the *manner* of observing the ordinance, and not to their personal qualifications or fitness. It is true that in ourselves we are all unworthy of an approach to the table of the Lord; unworthy to be regarded as his followers; unworthy of a title to everlasting life: but it does not follow that we may not partake of this ordinance in a worthy, a proper manner, with a deep sense of our sinfulness, our need of a Savior, and with some just views of the Lord Jesus as our Redeemer. … The term unworthily means, in an improper MANNER; in a manner unsuitable to the purposes for which it was designed.

Looking at verse 27 again, **Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink [this] cup of the Lord, *unworthily*, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.**

 The phrase "the body and blood of the Lord," in this connection, obviously, refers to his death--to the fact that his body was broken, and his blood shed, of which the bread and wine were symbols; and to be guilty of that, means to be guilty of putting him to death; that is, to be involved in the crime, or to do a thing which should involve the same criminality as that.

**Barnes Commentary**

 We can find a fit for the word "unworthily" in 1Cor. 10:21, **“Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.”**

H ere is good counsel in verse 28 of 1 Cor. 11, 11:28 **But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of [that] bread, and drink of [that] cup.**

We see in verse 28, that preparation for communion is highly important, introspection should uncover any spot or wrinkle in our person that needs to exit our being. This is not to be a short breathed prayer just 5 minutes before the service. No, this should have been the activity of the whole week before the communion Sabbath. And why, we read in verse 29.

 11:29 **For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.**

The 1828 Webster’s dictionary defines damnation as “Sentence or condemnation to everlasting punishment in the future state;” or in other words, the fiery second death.

A serious warning …

Let us pray …

Now for the ordnance of humility, ladies in the fellowship hall and men down the hall to the last room on the left.