Communion Focus
Are you worthy?

9.30a.m. Sunday 2 July, 2017

Delivered by Senior Pastor Marshall Muller @ the Laidley Baptist Church (Qld).

As a child growing up in the Church I had many questions. One of these questions was - Can we take communion with sin in our lives? My logic was that if anyone took communion with sin their life, they would therefore be eating/drinking in an unworthy manner?

The fact is that sometimes people feel they cannot take communion because, for one reason or another, they feel they are unworthy. Many times in my life I felt this way, and so I would opt out of participating in the Lord’s Supper or Communion as it was offered.

Let me say as I have ‘grown up’ in the Lord and grown in my understanding of His Word, I believe this response comes from an incorrect understanding of a passage in 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 11:26-29 - “For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. So then whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For those who eat and drink without discerning the Body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.”

Earlier in the letter to the church in Corinth, Paul is speaking with regards to contentions, divisions, drunkenness and the uneven distribution of food to the poor at their regular love feasts where communion was conducted. Paul then introduces the subject of the Lord’s supper and encourages the Corinthian church to examine themselves in verse 28.
In this context it seems most likely that Paul is telling people to examine their behaviour at their celebrations and love feasts. He is encouraging the Corinthians not to conduct themselves at communion in an unworthy manner by despising the poor or having divisions in the church. He is not saying do not take communion if you have sin in your life.

In reality none of us are worthy, we are all sinners who desperately need Jesus. Our participation in communion proclaims and demonstrates our dependence upon his work and grace to overcome sin. The bread and the cup remind us that we are sinners in need of a saviour, that we are forgiven and that we can draw strength from God to overcome sin.

Let’s pray …

Gracious God & our Heavenly Father,
We come freely admitting that we are not worthy of your gift of life because of our sin. We are, each one, sinners, in need of salvation in this life. Only You, Jesus are capable of providing salvation and overcoming sin at a personal level in each of our lives. Only by grace do you do that for us through the cross.

By taking these 2 emblems symbolizing your body & blood we demonstrate our dependence upon you Jesus as our Saviour. Without you and your death we are dead. Without your victory over the grave we would be without any hope or future.

As we take the bread & the cup, we proclaim the LORD’s name until He comes. By sharing in this simple meal we acknowledge that your perfect sacrifice provides our righteousness before God. Thank you Jesus for this great gift. Thank you that it is free to whosoever will come to you, and accept it.

Thank you that we can live in freedom because of Jesus. Amen

Please take the bread, a symbol and reminder of Jesus’ body given for us on the cross. Take and eat in your own time giving thanks to God for Jesus’ perfect sacrifice – the answer and solution to our sin.

You will then be served the cup, a symbol and reminder of Jesus’ blood – important, because without blood there can be no forgiveness. For the believer, who has accepted Christ by faith into their heart, Jesus’ blood removes the stain of sin, leaving us clothed in Jesus’ righteousness.

We will drink the cup together as a family – the Body of Christ.