

Hesed

2) Discerning The Lord's Body

***'He has shown you, O man, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk
humbly with your God?'***

(Mic.6:8)

Jesus came to reveal the Father's heart of *hesed*:

- ✓ **He quoted Hos.6:8 twice.** *'Go and learn what this means...'* *'If you had known what this means...'*
- ✓ **In 8 parables, *hesed* is the central theme**

Examples:

- ✓ **The unforgiving servant:** *'Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?'* **(Matt.18:33)**
- ✓ **The Good Samaritan, 'Go and do the same'** (Lk.10:37). **In the Hebrew mind *hesed* is always something you do. And we can do it because He lives in us. It is a verb**

God wants us to know *hesed*. It amazes Jesus when we understand it. The greatest thing that can happen to us is that we will have a revelation of *hesed*. Because:

- 1. It will transform our relationship with God.**
'... to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God'. 'There is no fear in love...'

2. It will transform our relationship with others. If we fail to show *hesed* it is because we do not know God. 'Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us' (1 Jn.4:7-12)

**When Jesus instituted the communion service
it was for two reasons:**

- 1) That we may know we are in union with
Jesus, therefore eternally secure**
- 2) That we may know we are in union with one
another**

***'The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not
the communion of the blood of Christ? The
bread which we break, is it not the communion
of the body of Christ? For we, though many,
are one bread and one body; for we all partake
of that one bread'
(1 Cor.10:16-17)***

It is clear from this that the bread is meant to represent, not the physical body of Christ but His spiritual body

- ✓ **This is why it's called the *breaking* of bread. Because pieces are broken off from one original loaf. By breaking bread, we proclaim our union with each other**
- ✓ **Paul had earlier said the Corinthians were unleavened bread and Christ is the Passover Lamb. In many other scriptures the Church is called the body of Christ**
- ✓ **Jesus' physical body was not broken, it was pierced. Matthew, Mark and Luke never say His body was broken for us**

Both Jesus and Paul want us to remember the covenantal nature of communion where we celebrate God's loyal love and faithfulness

The covenant God made with His Son binds us together in a very deep sense of loyal love for each other

This is a solemn truth which was causing a problem for the Corinthians

'Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper'

(1 Cor.11:17-20)

When we break bread together we should be blessed and the better for it

But in the case of the Corinthians it had the opposite effect. 'Many' were sick and some even died. Why? What was happening?

'For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you'
(1 Cor.11:21-22)

Some of the Corinthian Christians refused to wait to eat the Lord's Supper until all of the Corinthians had time to arrive

Those who arrived early seem to be the affluent members of the church, while those who came late were poor and probably were slaves

Business owners could leave work early, but not slaves

The whole church had not assembled but the 'early birds' were happy to eat even though many were missing. They had no regard for their union with one another

'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. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment'

(1 Cor.11:27-33)

Discerning the Lord's Body

***By having a greater regard for the breaking of bread**

***By honoring Jesus' blood which makes us worthy to partake**

***By honoring the body of Christ:**

Is someone missing?

Do I need to forgive someone, or ask for someone's forgiveness?

In what ways can I show undeserving love?

In what ways can I show loyal love?