

Wise Up – Common Wisdom
1 Corinthians 11:17-34
Maundy Thursday
April 13, 2017

In the following directives I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good. In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval. When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk. Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not! For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Therefore, 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. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world. So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment. And when I come I will give further directions.

The word "common" has several meanings. It can describe something that is ordinary, the common housefly. It can describe something that is below normal expectations, outside of common decency. However, it can also describe some thing or things that are shared with other people, a common interest in the city of Farmington Hills.

Tonight, we are going to focus on things we have in common. Even though the world has more people today than probably any other time in the past, people are growing farther and farther apart. People are allowing technology to isolate them. How many people do you know who would rather text a message you than call and talk to you? We need to reclaim our common bonds.

All people have certain things in common. For instance, we all have common parents, and I'm not speaking of something that crawled out of some primeval slim pit. God created Adam and Eve as the original parents of all people. That is why when Adam named Eve Scripture says: *Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living* (Ge 3:20 NIV). How different this world would be if people understood that we are all brothers and sisters.

All people also share the curse of sin. After Adam and Eve sinned, they could only produce sinful offspring. Two dogs will never give birth to a kitten. The prophet Isaiah tells us: *We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way* (Is 53:6 NIV), he also writes: *All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags* (Is 64:6 NIV). The apostle Paul says: *All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Ro 3:23 NIV).

Another thing all people share in common is God. I'm not saying that all people believe in God. I'm saying that God is God over everyone whether they believe in him or not. Not believing in electricity doesn't allow you to stick your finger in a light socket without getting the shock of your life. In his letters to the Romans, Paul writes: *It is written: As surely as I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.* (Ro 14:11 NIV).

The God that we all have in common is a loving God. That's why he sent his Son to be the common Savior. While only those who believe in Jesus as Lord will be saved, Jesus died for the sins of all people, so that anyone who believes will be saved. Scriptures declares this to be true: *At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord* (Php 2:10-11 NIV).

Within the group of all people, there is a sub-group called Christians. Christians are those who truly and firmly believe that Jesus is the only Son of God. They believe that Jesus came to earth to live as one of us and to die for us. They believe that his death paid our debt of sin. They believe he rose from the grave, ascended into heaven, and now sits at the right hand of the Father.

All these Christians will share a common inheritance. All believers are co-heirs with Jesus in the kingdom of God. Whether they are called Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals, Catholics, or Lutherans, all true believers will spend eternity with their Lord and Savior.

Inside the group of all Christians, there is a sub-group of believers which make up Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. All of our members have commonality. We have a common history. Whether you have been here for thirty years or thirty days, you share in the history of this church as it is being written one day at a time.

All the members of Prince of Peace share a common love for this particular body of Christ. The beautiful building, the style of worship, the music, the companionship of our friends and fellow believers, the purity of Word and Sacrament, all bring us here week after week. The common love for this church shows every time you drive by a dozen other churches to come here.

This is Maundy Thursday. This is our celebration and remembrance of the night Jesus instituted another thing we have in common. There is nothing that better shows our commonality than Holy Communion. We have communion in common. Both the words "common" and "communion" have the same Latin root words: *cum*, which means with;

and *uno*, which means one. Communion means to be one with.

In Holy Communion we are one with one another. There is no closer human bond than the bond shared with fellow believers in the body and blood of Christ. It may be argued that the bond between spouses or the bond between parent and child are closer, but these are temporal bonds and will one day fade away. The bond we share with our fellow brothers and sisters in the faith will last for eternity.

In Holy Communion we share a commonality with the believers of all times. The bread and wine, the body and blood, draw all believers of all times into a common union. Though we are separated by thousands of years, we share in the same body and blood of the same Savior.

The most important thing we share in Holy Communion is a common bond with Christ. Here we receive the true body and blood of our Savior, given and shed for us for the forgiveness of our sins. This is a closeness with God and other Christians that only true believers experience.

What we have in common here tonight transcends all barriers of race, age, gender, and ethnicity. What we have in common here tonight bridges all economic barriers, education barriers, and social barriers. What we have in common here tonight disperses all barriers of time and space.

What we have in common here tonight is the closest bond we can achieve with each other and with the Lord until the day we leave this earth to be with him for our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks he gave it to his disciples saying, "Take and eat, this is my body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me."

And in the same way also, after supper, he took the cup. When he had given thanks he gave it to them saying, "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."