

# The Four Perspectives of Communion

Mankind tends to create large and fanciful memorials for great men, women, and accomplishments. Yet the memorial for the greatest man and the greatest event is profoundly simple. The Lord's Supper is a memorial feast in which Christians commune together each first day of the week. The elements and procedure may be simple enough, but there is much going on when Christians commune. When Paul gave instructions concerning the Lord's Supper, he didn't just prescribe a ritual—he highlighted the importance of knowing and understanding what takes place during the memorial feast. When we read Paul's instructions, we find there are four directions in which we “look” while communing:

1. **We Look Backward:** The Lord's Supper is a “memorial” feast—Jesus commanded it be done “in remembrance of Me” (Lk. 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24-25). When we commune, we remember the terrible price Jesus paid for our sins.
2. **We Look Forward:** Paul said that as often as we commune, we “proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.” The communion reminds us to look forward to the Lord's return, when the faithful will be with the Savior forever.
3. **We Look Inward:** Paul said that a person should “examine himself” (1 Cor. 11:28) when communing. Remembering the Lord's death and His promised return prompts us to evaluate our own lives—this reminds us of God's grace and mercy, and encourages us to reach for new heights of service and obedience.
4. **We Look Outward:** Paul said that when we commune, we **proclaim** the Lord's death. Faithfully observing the Lord's Supper is a proclamation of the Gospel—an acted out sermon reminding all of the death of Jesus for sinful man, and celebrating the sacrificial love of our God.

## Questions:

1. Why did Paul make himself a servant to all?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Who was the spiritual Rock that followed Israel? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What has been given to a woman for a covering? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How do you think one might “examine himself” when partaking of the Lord's Supper?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What was the source of all spiritual gifts? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is love? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What is love not? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. “The \_\_\_\_\_ of death is \_\_\_\_\_, and the strength of sin is the \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_ be to God, who gives us the \_\_\_\_\_ through our \_\_\_\_\_.” (NKJV)
9. How is the Christian commanded to give? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# “That You May Grow Thereby...”

*A weekly Bible reading plan*



## 1 Corinthians 9-16 A More Excellent Way

### Overview

Having dealt with the foundational problem of division and the moral issues confronting the Church at Corinth, the Apostle Paul begins focusing on some meaty doctrinal issues in 1 Corinthians 9-16. He addresses problems of liberty and idolatry (Ch. 9 and 10). He rebukes departures from the gospel pattern regarding headship, a woman's hair, and how to observe the Lord's Supper (Ch. 11). He also tackles a major problem for the Corinthians—spiritual gifts. While the age of miraculous gifts has concluded (see 1 Cor. 13), the principles laid forth in chapters 12 and 14 are still important for the Church today.

Paul didn't just rebuke and correct. He also showed the Corinthians the right way; the “more excellent way.” Chapter 13 is brief, but it is powerful. It is the divine definition of love. Paul also deals with the all-important issue of the Resurrection. For Christians to be successful in their walk with Christ, they must have a proper perspective of eternity, and a right understanding of the resurrection. Thus, in chapter 15 Paul addresses what his whole letter has referenced and built towards—the Resurrection. With some final admonitions in chapter 16, Paul closes out the important letter to the Corinthians, and a letter that will serve us well to study again and again.



There are two directions the Christian should always look: backwards and forwards. We need to look back to the cross, and forward to the resurrection. That is what Paul reminded the Corinthians of constantly throughout his letter. Over and over Paul calls them back to the simplicity and truth of the cross to remember what Jesus accomplished for them there. He also points them to the Lord's promises and the hope of resurrection for the faithful. When we remember what Jesus has done for us already, and what He has in store for us in the future, it will enable us to live faithfully for Him. Go back through the letter, and see how often Paul truly uses the cross and the resurrection to make his points to the Corinthians:

Factions (1-3)  
Case of Incest (5)  
Legal Issues (6)  
Immorality (6)

Marriage Questions (7)  
Idol Food (9-10)  
The Lord's Supper (11)  
Spiritual Gifts (12-13)

### Suggested Reading Schedule

Monday: 1 Corinthians 9-10  
Tuesday: 1 Corinthians 11-12  
Wednesday: 1 Corinthians 13-14  
Thursday: 1 Corinthians 15  
Friday: 1 Corinthians 16

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