

THE LORD'S SUPPER
May 24, 2009

The Canadian personality is given to casualness. We can go with the flow and not feel that we are tied in.

We are on the "fringe", not committed, samplers, tasters, but not in for the full-meal deal.

We are like the Costco shopper, going from sample table to sample table ... snacking ... and not making a purchase.

Is it possible to approach life with the "NIBBLE" mindset – we taste and sample whatever, and no one should interpret our sampling as anything more than sampling.

We have our commitments ... and if our sampling goes contrary to our commitments ... then no one should get too upset, because our sampling is just that ... we are still committed on the other side.

Paul in **I Corinthians 10:14-17** reminds us THAT NIBBLING IS NEVER JUST SAMPLING ... It goes beyond that. It moves us into a confusing realm ... of being neither here nor there.

Idolatry is the matter of discussion. Some attempted to argue that nibbling on IDOLATRY and EATING AT GOD'S TABLE, presented no difficulty.

We are committed to God and a bit of stuff with IDOLS is no problem.

But Paul states: It is a problem ...

Then he takes us to the Lord's Supper.

¹⁶Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

When we "NIBBLE", "SNACK" at these Bits and Bites, something is happening that is more than munching and washing it down.

This is not a casual event.

It comes carrying weight. It represents a reality ... even if we are unaware of what we are portraying.

To accept the "bread" and the "cup" is to indicate alignment, acceptance, agreement with the intent of this meal – that we have placed ourselves at God's mercy and asked Him for the forgiveness of all our sin ... and that first step indicates that we are giving Him our entire life.

Whether we intend that or not, that is what we show when we participate in The Lord's Table ... or in any other kind of "sampling" we may do.

In other words, THIS IS A SIGNIFICANT EVENT. IT CARRIES LUGGAGE WITH IT. IT IS LOADED WITH MEANING. There is nothing casual in what is being done.

What we do, what we participate in, defines us (again, not just at this Table.)

It always does, whether we are serious about it or not.

Why? ... why is this so?

¹⁷ **Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.**

Replace the figurative language ...

... there is only ONE Jesus

We, who come from differing backgrounds and places, are made into ONE family,

because we are all kept alive by one Source – the ONE and only Jesus.

What we do defines us because it explains ...

- **WHAT has gotten INTO us**
- **WHO we have BECOME**

WHAT has gotten INTO us

Remember when we do something that people do not expect us to do, they ask, "What has gotten into you?"

Jesus has.

He has entered into the inner core of our being. Like food, He gets into us.

He, like BREAD, becomes our nourishment to life.

We stop being Samplers, Nibblers, Snackers

Jesus becomes our solitary and exclusive source for life.

Jesus is central. He is the "LOAF", our nutrition.

This is of prime importance.

Transition:

Trailing closely behind that is the fact that the **MANY INDIVIDUALS** who have accepted God's grace are identified as **ONE BODY**.

... WHO we have BECOME

Jesus, our nutrition, our life is such an outstanding source of life, so effective, so rich, so powerful, that He pulls all who accept Him into ONENESS, THOUGH WE ARE DIVERSE.

He shapes us into a singularly TIGHTLY KNIT GROUP.

We have become FAMILY feeding on Jesus alone.

Put in another way - Jesus distributes His "goods", "His grace", "His benefits" to only one group ... His family ...and only His family

Now that something has gotten INTO us, it has changed us so that we are no longer who we once were.

This morning we want to get a handle on ONENESS at this Table.

As a family, we wake up in the morning and go-go-go ... not just through one day, but Monday through Friday, possibly getting a break Saturday, going to Church Sunday morning, and then Sunday afternoon finding a few more hours of relief before returning to start it all over again for another five days.

We will then rush by each other ... waving, smiling, darting in and out ... and that isn't bad. Life has its order.

This morning we pause ...

Here we are welcome to God's Family Reunion ... partially prematurely.

One of the family is unable to be here today, but He sent His regards.

The ONE that is missing, is alive, but not able to be present and He asks to be remembered at the gathering.

He wants us to remember Him by doing what is normally done when the family gets together ... have a home-cooked meal, eat and talk ... get reconnected, caught up on what's been happening, remembering the family name and reputation.

We EAT and DRINK in a particular way, to remember Him.

He is the reason that we have gotten together today.

He pulls all together.

He wants us to remember that we are now all family.

He is the HEAD, the Leader in the family, the One who pulls us all together ... with our differences, nationalities, languages, schedules, ages, interests.

Take Him out of the meal, and we are back to just having a good time around some food ... a social.

Our Triune God has brought us together to ONE PLACE where we do not have a smorgasbord, but we have ONE LOAF.

And as we have this family reunion, we realize, that we are not each just doing our own thing. We are ONE BODY, not just running our own agendas ... God and "I" ... but "WE" connected ... and the time where we see one another is AT THE TABLE.

We gather here to get caught up on the NEWS about JESUS.

Last weekend Pastor Trevor and our High School Youth went through an important experience that is preparing them for their Mexico Mission Trip.

It was where they gathered, not to have a party, a fun time, but to gather around Jesus.

They worked for Living Bible Explorers – with inner city kids telling them about Jesus while breaking up fights

- Siloam Mission

- handed out roses to prostitutes

- presented Jesus at the juvenile correctional centre in our city just off Route 90 and Corydon last Sunday morning

Why? ... because they had nothing to do last weekend?

No – they gave up their agendas, their preferences, to be gathered around the ONE LOAF.

It was a most important gathering around Jesus that was essential for ONENESS. Not just any kind of ONENESS, but JESUS – ONENESS.

They fed on Jesus.

We have BECOME FAMILY.

This is not just Jesus and Me. This is Jesus and US.

It is Jesus who is big enough to pull us away from our business and get us to sit down together ... to give up our snacking, sampling style of life and TO FIND IN HIM, the ONE LOAF a wholesome nourishment for all of life for all of God's family.

At the TABLE is where FAMILY is shaped.

We are invited by Jesus to come to His Table, but not by yourself ... with the FAMILY.

This is where we realize not a one of us is above any other. We are all alive in the FAMILY because of the ONE LOAF – JESUS.

Jesus died to save us and keep us – not abandon us – in a FAMILY that finds Him fresh and nourishing every day.

As we glance around this room, we see many faces, many which we do not know, but we begin to see that because of Jesus' death and resurrection ... we have been drawn together.

THIS JESUS, invites us to His Family Reunion, so that we might remember **WHAT HAS GOTTEN INTO US**, and **WHO WE HAVE BECOME BECAUSE OF WHAT HAS GOTTEN INTO US**.

This is a TABLE for a FAMILY recalling Jesus' amazing work, the "championship" game"; the battle that won the "war"; the critical event that turned the tide.
It was never meant to be eaten alone ... but together.

Let this mull around in your mind. Often we get together with the family and wonder how it is going to be today, because of what so and so said, or what happened last time set us at odds.

There is only ONE LOAF at this TABLE and only ONE FAMILY.

Mull over the Family Reunion as we listen and join in the song:
COME TO THE TABLE

Mull over **WHAT IT IS THAT HAS GOTTEN INTO US** ... and realize that it is JESUS.

Mull over **WHO WE, not YOU, but WHO WE HAVE BECOME**.

It is high time that we get to the table with the family and get things right so that we can have a "good" time ... that's why He came.

WORSHIP TEAM SINGS SONG

As usual, I (William Willimon) was busy. There were letters to be written, next Sunday's bulletin to be done, another hospital to visit.

"I can make a quick call before lunch," I thought to myself. So I turned the car down the street where Mrs. Smith lives. Mrs. Smith has lived alone "since the war" when her husband died. Her little white house sits surrounded by trees, to birdfeeders, and a vintage era, black Dodge.

My quick visit to Mrs. Smith was not to be.

Once in her living room, seated in a rose-colored rocker, I was told by this tiny woman, "You'll be staying for lunch." I protested, listing all the things I had to do. "You are too busy," she responded. "Everyone has to eat. I'll get the table ready." And that was that.

"Please don't go to any trouble for me," I said, settling back in the chair, realizing that I was here for the duration of lunch, busy or not. Out of an oak buffet came in ancient linen tablecloth, looking as if it had been folded there since time began.

"Be sure not to go to any trouble for me," Mrs. Smith continued, oblivious to my protests.

The ritual of preparation had begun, and she was not to be diverted by my irrelevant chatter. Her attention was fixed now upon the china cabinet. Crystal glasses were lovingly taken in hand; rich, Irish, glass cut – gifted to her wedding day, I thought. Then the plates, platters, butter dish, and vessels were ready. "I really wish you would bother yourself. I'm on my way back to the office anyway and I..."

"You'll have to stop talking," she said, "I'm going to be in the kitchen for a few minutes. You amuse yourself in here. ... don't follow me into the kitchen. I don't like people staring at me when I'm cooking gravy."

Again I settled back in the rose-colored chair as she disappeared into the holy of holiest to concoct a meal. I would not witness those mysteries today.

But I could smell the biscuits rising to a golden brown, the ham sizzling in the pan. I could hear the ice cubes tinkling into the glasses. I contented myself by looking around her living room of faded pastels and browning pictures of "Mr. Smith," as she called him; a tattered, old Bible rested on the coffee table, not for show but for daily use.

The priestess. burst forth from the kitchen with dishes steaming like incense and announced, "come to the table."

I was seated in a large oak chair with arms - "Mr. Smith's chair," she said. I was then told to "give thanks." I did and we began.

After a few wonderful mouthfuls of food and a few inane comments by me about how good everything was, she said to me, "Preacher, perhaps you forgot how difficult it is to eat alone. I never feel alone in my house, except at meal times. Mr. Smith said when we invited company for dinner - which we did nearly every other night - "the Lord never intended us to eat by ourselves.'"

Service Format

- **Christy Bergen: The Lord's Prayer**
- **Men wash hands and break the bread**

ONE LOAF ... ONE BODY

We a people, submitted to God, united together.

We gather because of Jesus ...

This is a family reunion. No "snackers, nibblers, or samplers." This is the full-meal deal in Jesus – He alone is our life, our sin-remover, our everything.

We eat together ... because Jesus has taken care of everything.

"The Lord never intended us to eat by ourselves."

- **Distribute the Bread**
- **Congregational Person Prays**

1st Service:

Jim Burns – Bread
Bart Boon - Cup

2nd Service:

Don Unger – Bread
Debbie Woodall - Cup

- **Distribute the Cup**
- **Close with Song**