

Lord's Supper Participation

I had a call from an individual with whom we've been studying via phone, online, and/or occasional one-on-one. Questions arise that are simple to understand, but there is always a barrier due to a lack of understanding of the scriptures and the purpose and intent of an action. On one occasion, the subject related to the Lord's supper: "Why are some individuals allowed to participate, but others are 'passed over'?"

Communion is defined as: "a having in common (koinos), partnership, fellowship... of sharing in the realization of the effects of the blood (i.e., the death) of Christ and the body of Christ, as set forth by the emblems in the Lord's Supper, 1Cor.10:16" (Vine's). The same (Greek) term is in 1 Jn. 1:3, 6-7 "of sharing in the resurrection life possessed in Christ, and so of **fellowship** with the Father and the Son" (Ibid.). So, in the participating in the Lord's Supper, there exists a "sharing" limited to the context under which the practice is being observed. This is seen in the apostle Paul's statement, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14). The purpose, and intent of participation is defined by the source of the fellowship. Paul said, "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have communion with demons. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of demons" (1 Cor. 10:20-21). Thus, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body. For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep. But if we discerned ourselves, we should not be judged" (1 Cor. 11:26-31). Participation, therefore, requires 1) A worthy person (i.e., a person who is "in" fellowship with the Father and the Son, 2) Partaking in the Lord's Supper requires a proper purpose and intent.

Darkness and Light are incompatible with one another. Paul clarifies this point, saying, "for ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8). Thus, "giving thanks unto the Father, who made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins" (Col.1:12-14).

Do you desire to participate in the Lord's Supper? "But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17-18). Simple. Ross Triplett, Sr.