

DSBC
PT: Ron Adema
STUDY: Sunday Special

DATE: 9/7/03
TEXT: 1 Cor.11: 17-34
FILE: D030907

LESSON: AGAPE FEAST

We have celebrated the Agape Feast every year, since our beginning as a church in 1974. It is an annual reminder of the reason for our existence, as a group of Christians in the Birmingham Alabama area.

THE REASON FOR OUR BECOMING A CHURCH, IN 1974 WAS TO TEACH THE SCRIPTURES CATEGORICALLY, UNDER THE PRINCIPLE OF I.C.E (Isagogic, Category and Exegesis). AND UNDER THE PRINCIPLE OF "MILK AND MEAT" TO ENABLE SPIRITUAL GROWTH (Heb.5: 11-14; 1 Pet.2: 2).

Jesus taught us that the commandment of the New Covenant was TO LOVE (agape) ONE ANOTHER.

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, *even as I have loved you, that you also love one another*. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35) (Jude 12-13)

Paul began, like a good teacher by praising them and then scolding them (11:2). Our section of study involves Paul admonition, “But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together NOT for the better, but for the worse.” (11:17)

The Greek word *come together (sunerchomai/ assembly)* is mentioned four times (11:17,18,20,33). Heb.10: 25 instructs us not to forsake our assembling together. The Corinthian church didn't forsake assembling together, but according to Paul they did it for WORST.

Today study will study the Agape feast of 1 Cor.11: 17-22, 33-34 and partake in the Eucharist of 1 Cor.11: 23-32.

The Agape Feast will be studied by the following three homiletical points.

- **Directive** (17,34)
- **Division** (18-19)
- **Despise** (20-22, 34)

1. **Paul referred to his discussion on the Agape Feast as a directive (paraggello/ p.a.ptc nsm) (11:17).**

Paraggello refers to transmitting a message or directive down the ranks. *This directive was passed down to correct an assembly problem of exclusion of fellowship.*

The local Christian church should be the ONE PLACE IN ALL THE WORLD where all barriers are broken down – “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all ONE IN CHRIST.” (Gal.3:28)

The church is composed of redeemed believers called out of the world by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

2. Paul said that the assembly problem of "exclusion of fellowship" was causing division in the church (18-19; Titus 3:9-11).

"I hear that division (schisma/ prejudices) exist among you; and in part, I believe it. For there must also be factions (haireisis/ doctrinal/ heresis) among you, in order that those who are approved (dokimos) may have become (ginomai/ a.m.subj) evident among you."

Division and factions test those with Positive Volition towards the truth of God's word, regarding their handling of others with doctrinal truth and the same love that Christ handles them.

The Eucharist demands fellowship and unity with one another as well as the Lord.

3. Paul asked those believers involved in this type of thinking and behavior an important question: "do you despise (kataphroneo/ p.a.ind/ to think down) the church of God, and shame (kataischuno/ p.a.ind) those who have nothing? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you." (22) (20-22).

The Believer's carnality, evidenced during the Agape Feast, which preceded the Eucharist, was creating divine discipline associated with the Eucharist (11:20-22, 30-34).

Paul emphasized the importance of discernment between the privacy of the believer and the public assembly of believers.

- Personal privacy - "Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink?" (22)
- Public assembly - "So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another." (33)

The early church met in private homes until persecution forced them to meet anywhere that was safe (Acts 12:12; Rom.16: 5; 1 Cor.16: 19; Col.4: 15). The church building didn't come into prominence until Constantine.

BECAUSE OF CARNALITY ASSOCIATED WITH THE AGAPE FEAST, PAUL WARNED BELIEVERS, ASSEMBLED THAT PERSONAL PREPARATION PRECEDED PERSONAL PARTICIPATION IN THE EUCHARIST.

The Eucharist will be study by the following three homiltical points.

- **Elements** (23-25) – bread and cup
- **Examination** (26-28) – 1 John 1:9 – confession for spiritual fellowship
- **Evaluation** (29-33) – divine discipline for participation without confession of personal sin
 - Mental Attitude Sins (M.A.S)
 - Sins of the Tongue (S.T)
 - Overt Sins (O.S)