

Battling Anxiety Through Participation

Partaking in the Lord's Supper

1 Corinthians 11:23-28

G- Give Thanks (1 Corinthians 11:23-24) *Look Up!* The Greek for give thanks is the word *eucharizo*, which is where we receive the word Eucharist from. When we give thanks we **look up** to God the Father who has blessed us. (Psalm 103:1-4) ***"Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,"*** When we give thanks to God, we start to release the grip of our anxiety and replace it with gratitude of the miraculous work of God! The gospel message, the fact that we are sinful people, deserving hell and separation from God, but that God loved us so much that He sent His only son Jesus, which is the reason to give thanks! When we participate in the Lord's Supper, we are giving thanks for His mighty work in us on the cross and we are **looking up!**

R- Remember (1 Corinthians 11:24) *Look Back!* *"Do this in remembrance of me."* The Lord's Supper is not a sacrament, but an observed memorial. Like baptism, it is a symbol of what Jesus did for us! It symbolizes Jesus' body and blood which were given on the cross for us. We should **look back** to the sacrifice of Christ to relieve our anxiety. Look back and remember the time before you had given your life to Jesus and take great joy in the peace you now have as a result of what Christ has done. Joshua used memorials to remember God's mighty hand against the enemy. (Joshua 4:19-24) ***"The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they encamped at Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. And those twelve stones, which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal. And he said to the people of Israel, "When your children ask their fathers in times to come, 'What do these stones mean?' then you shall let your children know, 'Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.' For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever."*** My prayer is that we can look back to the cross during this memorial and know that Christ is helping us battle anxiety! Did you know that the most calming memorial during chaos on the battlefield is the Lord's Supper? It gives us the opportunity to **Look Back!**

A- Acknowledge (1 Corinthians 11:25) *Look Around!* The Lord's Supper was instituted as an expression of unity for the body of Christ. Paul reproved the Corinthians for not coming together and recognizing the body because they had split up. We see this in (1 Corinthians 11:17-19) ***"But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come***

together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized." The church was meant for us to come together in order for us to **look around** and see what God has done. We live in a time when church attendance isn't prioritized as in days past. Our gathering is what allows us to look around acknowledging the work of God. I like how the writer of Hebrews states it. (Hebrews 10:24-25) *"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."* I like the quote that says, "You never know which church service will profoundly touch your life, but it won't be the one you missed." When we acknowledge the new covenant, we **look around** acknowledging God's work, His Church! The body of believers is God's design to help us, His church, to not be anxious!

C- Communicate (1 Corinthians 11:26) *Look Ahead!* Jesus anticipated the day when he would share this supper again with his followers. Paul wrote that we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes by doing this symbolic act. We are to **look ahead** as we celebrate the Lord's Supper. Think about how **looking ahead** can relinquish anxiety. If you are so enthralled into looking ahead towards Christ, the present isn't as concerning. Paul told the Romans in Romans 8:18 *"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."* When we look ahead, by partaking of the Lord's Supper, we are communicating that the work of Christ has changed us, and He is more than able to deliver us from anxiety.

E- Examine (1 Corinthians 11:27-28) *Look Within!* The bible instructs us to examine ourselves before we take the Lord's Supper to be sure we are not taking it in an unworthy manner. To be unrepentant and harboring sin cuts across the meaning of the meal. We should take a moment to look within to be sure there is nothing held back from complete surrender to Christ. This also teaches us that the eligible participant for the supper is one who has been saved. To examine is to **look within**. Reflection upon the fact that Christ has saved you, changed you, and is continually transforming you, is an awesome way to replace anxiety with the promise of resurrection through Jesus Christ!

It's important to see how participating in the service of Christ and partaking in the symbols of Christ cause us to look up, look back, look around, look ahead, and look within, which in turn God uses to conquer our anxiety for our good and His glory!