

The Cure for Carnality

1 Corinthians 11

Sermon Transcript by Rev. Ernest O'Neill

Let's look at I Corinthians Chapter 11 and it's the part of God's word that explains the communion. So, brothers and sisters if you're here maybe for the first time this morning and you think taking communion is all wrapped up with whether you're a member of the church or not, just forget that. You know, that's not what it's about. So you can take communion this morning if you really understand what it's about and if you are willing to submit your will to the things that God outlines in your life through your conscience. So, it's important to see that it's not connected up with church membership but with whether you're willing to live your life the way your God wants you to or not.

So, this might help you to see that and I Corinthians in 11:23, Paul says, "For I receive from the Lord what I also deliver to you. That the Lord Jesus, on the night when He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way also the cup after supper saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord."

"Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment upon himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we should not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are chastened so that we may not be condemned along with the world." I pray that that may apply to everybody here. Amen.

Smallpox has been virtually wiped off the face of the earth. Forty years ago it was a killer disease. It was known as one of the most disfiguring and fatal diseases that we human beings experienced and yet, now it hardly exists anywhere in the whole earth. Why? Because of the almost universal use of smallpox vaccine. Not because of the discovery of small pox vaccine, not because of the existence of small pox vaccine but because of the almost universal use of small pox vaccine. Now I think you see the difference.

One of the places we visited in India, 30 years ago, the people there knew that the smallpox vaccine was effective but they decided not to take it and they all died. So it wasn't enough for them to believe that the smallpox vaccine was effectual. If they didn't take it, it was not the remedy for the disease in their own lives. Loved ones, every secretary that ends up in bed with her boss, every cold war and every home represented here that destroys a beautiful Saturday and turns the Sunday into a hell, every one of you here who has experienced somebody stabbing you in the back, all those situations are the result of a disease among us that is far more disfiguring of beautiful lives and far more destructive of health and happiness than smallpox ever has been or ever will be. That disease is just sheer carnality, just carnality -- just determination to get from people what they should get from God. That's why some dear girl is taken advantage of by some guy. That's why you even in your own apartments and your own homes, why we all can hurt the people that we say we love

the most. Loved ones, it's because of carnality, because of selfishness, because of wanting to get from others what you can only get from your Maker. The tragedy is that this disease will not only destroy your health, will not only destroy your body but it will project yourself into a lonely eternal darkness after this life is over, unless you get it remedied.

Loved ones, there is only one remedy for it and that is Jesus' death. That's the only remedy. There are thousands of people even in Christendom who say if you believe that, you'll be healed. It's dumb! Believing that the smallpox vaccine cures smallpox heals nobody, unless you take the vaccine and apply it to your own life. It heals nothing. Loved ones, I plead with you, don't you see the great deception that runs through all of us here? We wouldn't dream of thinking that way. In ordinary medical problems, we wouldn't dream of it. You know you wouldn't. You know fine well that believing that smallpox vaccine cures smallpox does not cure smallpox. Believing it does not cure, only taking the vaccine cures.

Now it's the same with this dear death here that we remember here on this communion table. This death of Jesus will cure carnality in you, not if you simply believe but if you believe in a scriptural sense -- and the scriptural meaning of believe is "believe and submit to." Now loved ones, you have as selfish a personality as I have. We're all equally caught here this morning in the desire for our own pleasure and our own gratification and our own aggrandizements and our own advancement and our own glory. You cannot get free from that any easier than you could get free from smallpox. Loved ones, there is only one cure for it and that is the cure that God, our Creator, worked 1900 years ago in Jesus when He put all of us with our selfish personalities into His son and destroyed them there. That death can cure that carnality in you this morning, not if you believe but if you believe and submit to that death this morning.

And so the reason we gather together today is not to keep urging each other to believe; there is too much easy believism in Christendom today. Believing never cured anybody but believing in the sense of the Greek word in the New Testament "pisteuo", which means submit or obey, that cures carnality. So why we've gathered together is to receive this dear remedy into ourselves afresh this morning, and that's why I have come to communion. But you're mistaken if you think I've come to explain it to you. I've come to communion this morning because I want to receive this death of Jesus into myself in a new way that I know I need to receive it. There's a new way in which I need to die to what I am expecting from other people or from the world. There's a new way in which Jesus wants to show me what happened to me when I died with him on Calvary. Now loved ones, it's true with all of you.

Do you realize that you break hearts and I break hearts? We break hearts. Our loved ones and our friends and our relatives get used to us, but we break hearts. God is able to cure that in you this morning. He is able to give you a light about some way in which you're still expecting too much from your dear roommate, some way in which you are expecting too much from your colleague at work, some way in which you are looking to them for the significance and the acceptance and the recognition and the security and the happiness that your God alone can give you. I ask you, brothers and sisters, to join with me this morning in receiving this dear vaccine of the death of Jesus into yourselves.

There's a verse in the Bible that expresses it. It says death is at work in us but life in you. That's it. Every time you let Jesus' death work in you in a new way, you begin to spread life to somebody that you meet week by week. Really, it's true. So I ask you, will you deal with the Holy Spirit yourself? Ask Him, "in what way. Holy Spirit, is my Lord trying to draw me into His death on Calvary, so that I may experience His resurrection?" Loved ones, that will cure carnality, honestly it will. And it is a continual remedy that needs to be applied day-by-day and week-by-week.

So loved ones, the Holy Spirit will presumably say to you that you keep expecting your husband or your wife to do this, will you die to that? Probably say to you if you live with your roommate, you keep getting resentful when your roommate doesn't do this or doesn't do that, will you die to that? And will you be prepared for a clean heart towards it, to have a pure heart towards him, no resentment? Will you die to your right to have him act reasonably and will you accept that it is your right to have him act unreasonably and yet you will still love him. The Holy Spirit will deal with you in ways like that and I ask you what I am going to do is say yes when He shows me what it is because I know the Holy Spirit will then bring the beauty of Jesus into my life that is new and that will spread life to the loved ones I meet this week.

So loved ones, if you are ready to do that, if you are ready to submit your will and maybe this is your first time, you should take communion. I know a brother here who came to me through the week and this is his first communion and this is his first commitment to Jesus; that "Lord, I'll no longer try to fix my own life but I am going to come under the influence of your Holy Spirit and allow You to fix it for me. I'll respond by submitting my will to what you say" -- and maybe if this is the first time for you then just do it. Don't feel you have to go through some other ceremony, just do it this morning and deal with the spirit of Jesus as he talks to you during the communion service.

Now if you are ready loved ones to do that, will you stand?

You that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins and are in love and charity with your neighbors and intend to lead a new life following the commandments of God and walking from henceforth in His holy ways, draw near with faith and take this holy sacrament to your comfort and make your humble confession unto almighty God. Let us be seated as we pray.

Lord Jesus, we know we're pretty coarse people and we know Lord that there are all kinds of cracks that we're trying to cover up. Lord we know that those seem to be cracks to us but to the loved ones that we work with during the week and live with during the days, they are ugly disease that spoils their lives continually. Lord, we want to be free and so we ask you by your Holy Spirit to show us in what way you are asking us to enter in more deeply to the dear miraculous cosmic death that we experienced in Jesus. I want to thank you Lord for getting us into yourself. We want to thank you Lord Jesus for bearing needlessly the pain that our carnal selves bring upon us. Lord we thank you for that. We know the least we can do this morning is to ask You to explain to us what particular part of the remedy You want us to receive this morning. Amen