

# IMPROVING OUR SERVICE

## Lesson 5

### Around the Lord's Table

#### I. INTRODUCTION.

##### A. The Lord's Table.

1. As with the topic of prayer, there are many aspects of this subject that should be studied: institution of the supper; purpose of the supper; names for the supper; elements of the supper; time of observance; participants in the supper; attitude of the participants; etc.
2. This lesson focuses on the oral and mechanical aspects of serving around the Lord's table.

##### B. The Lord's Table Is Important Because...

1. It is a "meal," but not a common meal (1 Cor. 11:20-22).
2. It is a memorial. Jesus, speaking of the supper, said, "do this in remembrance of me" (Lk. 22:19).
3. It is a time for self-inspection. In 1 Corinthians 11:28-29, Paul said that the Lord's supper is a time for "proving" (examination) and "discerning" (discrimination).
4. All that is done around the Lord's table (song, comments, prayers, Scripture reading, serving) must be done in such a way as to assist the brethren in remembering Jesus and their own self-inspection. The Lord's supper is no time for "fun and games".

#### II. THREE LORD'S TABLE MISTAKES.

##### A. Speaking Too Soft.

##### B. Saying Too Little.

##### C. Serving Too Fast.

#### III. BETTER SERVICE AROUND THE LORD'S TABLE.

##### A. Be Heard (see Supplement 1).

##### B. Be Dignified.

1. The Lord's supper is a solemn occasion to remember Jesus' sacrifice.
2. The Lord's supper is a time for quiet meditation: looking backward to Jesus' death; looking forward to Jesus' return; and, looking inward to our own spiritual needs (1 Cor. 11:20-34).
3. The Lord's supper is not to be rushed. Allow time for meditation at the end of serving and take care to handle the containers quietly for the bread and fruit of the vine. The serving is not a race. The men should begin and end serving each row of members about the same time.

**C. Be Focused.**

1. Focus your mind and the mind of the audience on the cross of Christ.
2. First, you can do this by making brief comments about the sacrifice of Jesus without preaching a full sermon. These comments inform the visitors and remind the brethren of the purpose of the supper. Avoid dull, stale, ritualistic, worn out comments around the Lord's table.
3. Second, you can do this by reading a selected portion of Scripture about the sacrifice of Jesus. A list of passages about the death of Christ from both the OT and NT can be posted for this purpose. Choose a different passage each time you serve. Avoid reading passages like Matthew 26:26-28 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 every time. Carry this list with you in your Bible. Choose a passage and read through it ahead of time.

**D. Be Prayerful.**

1. The unleavened bread and fruit of the vine are to be blessed with prayer and then passed out (Mt. 26:26-27; 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:23-25). The bread is served first, then the fruit of the vine.
2. Avoid dull, stale, ritualistic, worn out phrases such as: "and may those who partake do so in a manner well pleasing unto Thee;" "we continue our thanks for this fruit of the vine;" etc. Review Lesson 3 II. B.
3. Prayers around the Lord's table are not to tell God the purpose of communion. Don't instruct God. He already knows the purpose of the supper, but He does need to be thanked.
4. Be careful what you say in your remarks and in your prayers. Be scripturally accurate. For example, be careful not to say that our Lord's body was "broken" (1 Cor. 11:24 in KJV; Jn. 19:36; Psa. 34:20). Also, John 6:53-58 and 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 have no connection with the Lord's supper. And, the blood of Jesus, not the blood of God the Father, was shed for our sins.

**IV. CONCLUSION.**

- A. Let's Go Out Now and Excel in Service Around the Lord's Table.
- B. Class Motto: "I Will Try To Do Better!"