DISCUSSION GUIDE

BUILT DIFFERENT :

"A Disciple Honors in Worship"

SCRIPTURE | 1 Corinthians 11:2–34

MEMORY VERSE

"I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought" (1 Corinthians 1:10).

MAIN IDEA OF THE TEXT

Built different: disciples gather in worship to honor Christ as a unified community.

DISCIPLESHIP RHYTHM

Discipleship Distinctive: Lord's Supper

OBSERVATION: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Gather in groups of three to five people to discuss the Observation and Interpretation questions.

OBSERVATION EXERCISE 1: AUTHORITY IN THE GODHEAD

Read 1 Corinthians 11:2–16. Paul talked about practices in corporate worship. What did he root his understanding in?

Suggested Response: Paul commended the Corinthians for holding to the traditions he passed on to them. The tradition referred to is the theological understanding of authority and headship, which is rooted in the Godhead. God the Father is the head of God the Son, Jesus Christ. Both the Son and the Father are equally God and wholly divine, yet the Son submits to the Father (Philippians 2:6–8).

OBSERVATION EXERCISE 2: PROBLEMS AT THE GATHERING

Read 1 Corinthians 11:17–22. What problems did Paul identify when the Corinthian church gathered for the Lord's Supper?

Suggested Response: Paul said he had no praise for them because their meetings were doing more harm than good. He said there were divisions among them when they came together. He said when they ate, some went ahead with their own private suppers. As a result, one person remained hungry and another got drunk. Paul asked if they despised the church of God by humiliating those who had nothing.

OBSERVATION EXERCISE 3: THE MEANING OF THE SUPPER

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23–34. What is the bread connected to? What is the cup connected to?

Suggested Response: Paul said that on the night He was betrayed, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." After supper, Jesus took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." Paul said whenever believers eat the bread and drink the cup, they proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

INTERPRETATION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 1: HEAD COVERINGS AND HONOR

In 1 Corinthians 11:2–16, Paul was not concerned that men and women were participating in corporate worship. What was he actually concerned about?

Suggested Response: Paul was concerned about the way men and women were presenting themselves in public worship and what that communicated in their culture. The larger issue is honor. Worship is not a place for self-expression that disregards God's order, the gathered church, or the people around us. Paul wanted the church to gather in a way that reflects reverence, humility, and mutual honor before the Lord.

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 2: WHEN THE GATHERING CONTRADICTS THE GOSPEL

In 1 Corinthians 11:17–22, how could a church gathering do more harm than good?

Suggested Response: A church gathering can do more harm than good when the way people treat one another contradicts the gospel they claim to believe. The Corinthians were gathering in the name of Jesus, but their meal exposed division, selfishness, and disregard for believers of lower social classes. Some had plenty, while others were left hungry and humiliated. Paul was saying worship is not only about being in the same room or doing the right religious activity. If the gathering dishonors Christ's people, it dishonors Christ.

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 3: RIGHTLY RECEIVING THE LORD'S SUPPER

In 1 Corinthians 11:23–34, what does it mean to take the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner?

Suggested Response: Taking the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner does not mean coming to the table as a sinless person. It means coming in a way that fits the meaning of the meal. The bread and cup proclaim the death of Jesus, so disciples should come with remembrance, repentance, gratitude, and faith. Paul also told the Corinthians to examine themselves and discern the body. In context, that meant recognizing the seriousness of Christ's sacrifice and honoring the church as the body Christ died to make one. The Lord's Supper should not be received casually, selfishly, or with disregard for other believers. A disciple is built different because they gather in worship to honor Christ as a unified community.

APPLICATION: HOW DO I RESPOND?

QUESTION 1: How do we make worship services about our own preferences?

Suggested Response: We might make gathered worship about our preferences when we focus mainly on what we like or do not like: the music style, sermon length, service time, room setup, volume, lighting, or whether the gathering feels comfortable to us. Preferences are not always wrong, but they become unhealthy when they become the main lens we use to evaluate corporate worship. Paul reminded us that the church gathers to honor Christ, remember the gospel, and care for one another as a unified community. Furthermore, the way we engage in the corporate gathering or the way we present ourselves (not just our clothes) reflects what we think about God.

QUESTION 2: What does your posture in corporate worship communicate? Your posture is not about sitting or standing. It is about attitude, humility, attentiveness, participation, and consideration for others around you.

Suggested Response: I may need to ask whether I gather with reverence for Christ and concern for others or treat worship mainly as something meant to fit my preferences. I wonder if the way I engage in worship reflects God's plan for order and acknowledges His authority and due honor.

***NOTE** This question builds on the general evaluation from question 1 and narrows to personal evaluation. As your group responds, use follow-up questions to guide below surface-level responses. Encourage transparent responses.*

QUESTION 3: Paul said the Corinthians' gatherings were doing more harm than good. What kinds of attitudes or actions can damage unity when the church gathers?

Suggested Response: Unity can be damaged by pride, comparison, impatience, criticism, cliques, favoritism, selfishness, or ignoring people who feel unseen. The Corinthians gathered in the same place, but their behavior exposed division. Paul reminded us that worship should not fracture the church. It should help the church honor Christ together.

QUESTION 4: In 1 Corinthians 11:22, Paul said some believers were being humiliated. Who might be easy for you to overlook when the church gathers? What will you do differently now?

Suggested Response: I may overlook someone who is new, quiet, grieving, older, younger, single, struggling financially, socially awkward, or different from me. Paul's concern reminds me that worship is not only about what I receive. It is also about how I honor the people Christ has brought near.

QUESTION 5: Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me." What do you need to remember more intentionally when you take the Lord's Supper?

Suggested Response: I need to remember that Jesus gave His body and poured out His blood for sinners. Though He was fully God, He relinquished positional rights to give Himself as a sacrifice for me (Philippians 2:6–8). The Lord's Supper reminds me that grace was costly, starting with giving up position and status. Forgiveness is received, and my hope rests on Christ's finished work. It also reminds me that I am not alone at the table. I belong to a people Jesus died to make into a unified body.

QUESTION 6: Paul told believers to examine themselves before eating the bread and drinking the cup. What would healthy self-examination look like for you?

Suggested Response: Healthy self-examination is not pretending I am sinless or staying away because I feel unworthy. It means coming honestly before the Lord. I can confess sin, repent of pride, ask whether I am harboring bitterness or division, and receive the Lord's Supper with gratitude for the grace of Jesus.

QUESTION 7: How can our group help one another gather in worship to honor Christ as a unified community?

Suggested Response: Our group can help by encouraging one another to come to worship with humility, reverence, and love for others. We can notice people who may feel overlooked, refuse to make preferences ultimate, prepare our hearts for the Lord's Supper, and remind one another that the church gathers to remember Jesus, proclaim the gospel, and honor Christ together.