

## **A BETTER AGAPE FEAST**

The concept of the Agape Feast comes from the early church application of the new commandment teaching of Jesus Christ on agape love.

***“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)  
the agape commandment.

This agape commandment was applied by the Jerusalem church to the Agape Feast fellowship in Acts 2:42-47. ***“And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart.”*** (Acts 2:46)

Paul applied the Agape Feast fellowship doctrinal concept to the Gentile churches like the Corinthian church. ***“Now I praise you because you remember me in everything, and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you.”*** (1 Cor.11:2)

However, Paul’s praise turned to a warning regarding the neglect of the application of agape love at the Agape Feast fellowship and Eucharist. ***“But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better (to kreisson) but for the worst (to hesson).”*** (1 Cor.11:17)

**This lesson will study SIX aspects of A BETTER AGAPE FEAST.**

### **1. In 1 Cor.11:17-22, Paul outlined what constitutes a worst Agape Feast.**

We will study Paul’s outline by the following four homiletical points.

- Division (18)
- Differences (19)
- Depriving (20-21)
- Despising (22).

### **2. The modal for A BETTER AGAPE FEAST is outline by the Apostles in Acts 2 :42-47.**

We will study the Apostle’s outline by the following four homiletical points.

- Communion (42-43)
- Caring (44-45)
- Community (46)
- Conversions (47)

The Greek word for assembly (sunerchomai) is used four times in 1 Cor.11 (17, 18, 20, 33/ note that four are in reference to our subject).

The Corinthian church didn’t forsake assembling together (Heb.10:25) but they did it for the worst and not for the better - ***“But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worst.”*** (11:17)

**3. What we learn from the Apostle model is that for a local church to participate in A BETTER AGAPE FEAST it must remove prejudices barriers.**

Paul mentioned three prejudice barriers that needed to be removed from the Galatian church and tells them why.

“There is neither Jews nor Greeks, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for **you are all one in Christ Jesus**.” (Gal.3:28/ positional truth)

The church of Jesus Christ is composed of redeemed sinners called out of the world by and for the love of God (John 3:16; Rom.5:8).

Paul mentioned other prejudices that needed to be removed from the Corinthian church such as social and economical prejudices and doctrinal cliques (1 Cor.11:21-22, 33-34).

**4. Paul warned the Corinthian church of the Agape Feast problem of EXCLUSION resulting in divisions and factions and shame (11:17-22).**

Paul says this misapplication of agape love was a test – “for there must also be factions (hairesis/ doctrinal differences/ erroneous opinions/ creating doctrinal cliques) among you, in order that those who are approved (dokimos/ approved after testing of the word of God in application/ new commandment of love) may have become evident (phaneros/ visible; open to sight) among you.” (11:19)

**5. Carnality at the Agape Feast created a divine discipline problem later at the Eucharist (11:20-22, 30-34).**

“So then (*hoste*/ this same Greek word is used to open the discipline section 27-32), my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for another (courtesy in communal meal).” (11:33)

*Hoste* is used to introduce practical doctrinal advice regarding carnality at the Agape Feast.

Paul warns believers assembled to participate in the Eucharist that personal preparation must precede personal participation (11:28, 31; 1 John 1:9).

The Eucharist reminds believers that we are many parts but one body in Jesus Christ (1 Cor.12:12-14).

**6. Paul emphasized the importance of discernment between private and public behavior as member of the body of Christ.**

**Private** – “What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise (kataphroneo/ p.a.ind) the church of God, and shame (kataischuno/ p.a.ind) those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise you.” (11:22)

**Public** – “So then, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, so that you may not come together for judgment (krima/ divine discipline).” (11:33-34)

**“And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonged to him as his own; but all things were common property to them.” (Acts 4:32)**