

1 Corinthians 11:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.

Analysis

Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another—Paul concludes with practical instruction. Ὡστε, ἀδελφοί μου (wherefore, my brothers)—affectionate address after stern correction. Συνερχόμενοι φαγεῖν (coming together to eat)—the fifth use of synerchomai in this section (vv. 17, 18, 20, 33, 34), emphasizing corporate dimension.

Tarry one for another (ἀλλήλους ἐκδέχεσθε)—ekdechomai means to wait for, receive hospitably. The wealthy shouldn't start eating before the poor arrive. This simple command addresses the root problem: selfishness, class division, and contempt for poorer members. Waiting embodies the gospel: Christ waited for us (Romans 5:6-8, 'while we were still sinners'), so we wait for each other. The Table is communal, not individualistic. Mutual love must characterize the meal, or it's not the Lord's Supper (v. 20). This applies beyond the Table—all Christian community should be marked by patience, preference of others, and mutual love (Philippians 2:3-4).

Historical Context

Roman meals were rigidly timed and stratified. The elite dined early; lower classes ate later with inferior food. Paul demands countercultural practice: wait. This seemingly small act undermined Roman social hierarchy and embodied gospel equality. Early church agape feasts were meant to display radical generosity and unity across social classes (Acts 2:44-46, 4:32-35). Paul calls the Corinthians back

to this vision: the Table unites rich and poor, slave and free, Jew and Gentile (Galatians 3:28) in Christ's broken body.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does the simple act of 'waiting for one another' embody the gospel and challenge cultural norms?
2. What modern practices in churches subtly divide rich and poor, honored and marginalized—and how can they be corrected?
3. How can congregations cultivate patience, mutual honor, and genuine community around the Lord's Table and beyond?

Interlinear Text

ὥστε	ἀδελφοί	μου	συνερχόμενοι	εἰς	τὸ	φαγεῖν
Wherefore	brethren	my	when ye come together	to	G3588	eat
G5620	G80	G3450	G4905	G1519		G5315
ἀλλήλους	ἐκδέχεσθε					
one for another	tarry					
G240	G1551					

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