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## The Heart Of The Matter -MATC Devotion

JULY 14TH 2011 BY STAFF WRITER

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*Reprint Compliments of Men At The Cross By Joe White*


#### 1 Corinthians 11:23-34


*"23For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." 25In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 27Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. 28A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. 29For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. 31But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. 32When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world. 33So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for each other. 34If anyone is hungry, he should eat at home, so that when you meet together it may not result in judgment. And when I come I will give further directions."*

#### VIDEO OF THE DAY

Someone once said, "The fastest way to a man's heart is through his stomach." I'll do that one better. I believe that a man's stomach tells much about his heart.


If you look at one of our catalogues, especially the page where we feature our staff, you'll see that we hire some awesome athletes. In the old days, when the off-season demands on Division I football players weren't so continual, we'd fill the front row of the staff photo with some of the biggest men in the country-all smiling and flexing up a storm.

 Now these were men who were expected to show up for two-a-days with more than just a little meat on their bones. So as you might imagine, one of the most commonly asked questions during interviews in those days was, "Will I get enough to eat while I'm at Kamp?" Of course we answered, "yes", all the while wondering what those extra flapjacks were going to do to our food budget. As always, we rolled up our sleeves, fired the stoves, and got to cooking.

I'll never forget one man-I'll call him, Alex-who had the  biggest biceps I've ever seen. He played line for Texas Tech, and could eat more food than two men put together. Because he was a gentle giant, Alex was assigned to counsel cabin one, our little fellows. One day, when breakfast was just coming to an end and I happened to be passing by cabin one's table, I noticed Alex engaged in a classic contest with a boy the size of his thigh. They were spinning a spoon.

"If the handle points towards me, I get the last pancake," said Alex, licking his lips. "If it points toward you, you get it."

The boy nodded, hungrily.

 The spoon was spun, and Alex won. Just as he was about to take his first bite, he looked up and saw the boy crying. Slowly-perhaps reluctantly-Alex lifted the pancake and slid it over to the boy's plate. Later, when I was telling Alex's co-counselor how impressed I was by the incident, he told me something I didn't know. Just before I passed by the table, Alex had arrived late to breakfast from the infirmary, where he had been tending to one of his sick campers. "That last pancake was going to be his first," said the co-counselor.

At the end of the term, Alex left camp, and I never heard of him again. But that day in the Kanakuk dining hall, Alex became an All-American in my book.

The mark of an all-star Christian is not just unselfishness, but love. Paul's big beef with

the Corinthians in chapter eleven, verses 23-34, was that they were treating the Lord's Supper as if it were the last pancake-and everyone had his fork stuck in it.

"For in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and another goes hungry."

This supper, sometimes known as the "Eucharist" (which means, "thanksgiving"), had been combined with the church's communal meal, known as the "Agape." In short, more than just the traditional bread and wine were shared, though those two elements were held in highest esteem. Unfortunately, the very meal that was meant to commemorate the most selfless act of all times, the crucifixion, had become a "me-first-grab-fest." Some church members were wealthy enough to bring lavish picnics, while poor members had to sit by and watch their friends gorge themselves. The spirit of Christ-and Alex-was far from that place. And Paul was angry about it..

How about you? Are you the type who reaches for the last pancake? Or do you have the love of Christ in you that puts others first? A person's stomach tells a lot about his heart. What kind of heart do you have?

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. Our appetites reveal our hearts. Besides food, what other appetites reveal one's heart?
2. How are you handling your appetites?
3. In today's church, we keep our potluck suppers separate from our Communion services. However, it is still possible for people to abuse Communion. Name some ways.

## **LIFELINE:**

How much hunger would have to exist in your life before you would deny someone that last pancake? How hungry would someone else have to be before you shared the source of eternal life through Jesus Christ?

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