

## [1 Corinthians 11:27-31](#)

(27) Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. (28) But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. (29) For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. (30) For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. (31) For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

*King James Version*

What is a worthy manner? It is not about our works. While works are important ([Ephesians 2:10](#)), they fall far short of what [God](#) is looking for at this time: "So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do'" ([Luke 17:10](#)).

Two examples in Scripture looked to their works, and each proved to be unworthy:

The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, "God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess." And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, "God, be [merciful](#) to me a sinner!" I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. ([Luke 18:11-14](#))

The one found worthy was not the one who compared himself and his works to others around him but the one who compared himself to God and realized how completely unworthy he was.

The other example is that of the [Laodiceans](#):

Because you say, "I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing"—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. ([Revelation 3:17-18](#))

Like the Pharisees, the Laodiceans are blinded to the true state of their spiritual lives because they are making false comparisons. Thus, Christ judges both as unworthy. The paradox: As we increasingly realize our unworthiness, we move closer to developing a worthy manner.

In [I Corinthians 11:27-31](#), Paul provides the essential first steps to avoid appearing at [Passover](#) in an unworthy manner: "let a man examine himself" and "if we would judge ourselves." The tax collector examined himself and judged that he was sinful. Both the Pharisee and the Laodicean failed by not comparing themselves to God—in fact, they see themselves as not bad at all!

Paul identifies in [Romans 5:20](#) what will help us make the correct comparison and bring about the humble and worthy manner of the tax collector: "Moreover the law entered that the [offense](#) might abound. But where [sin](#) abounded, grace abounded much more." The apostle highlights the power of the law. When the law enters our lives, it manifests our sins by bringing to our attention how far off the mark we are. As we more deeply understand the law, where before we were unaware of our failures, we now see them everywhere in our lives. It seems our sins are growing exponentially, abounding, because, with the law illuminating our blind, darkened minds, we now see how grave our sin is. The law does not create sin but reveals with startling clarity what is already there yet previously hidden to the carnal mind.

No matter how bottomless our sin, as the last half of [Romans 5:20](#) adds, more than enough grace is available to cover and forgive those sins—grace abounds much more. What makes possible that abundance of forgiveness and grace? The sacrifice of [Jesus Christ](#). That is the cost to cover and forgive—the torture and death of our Creator.

Thus, a worthy manner begins with realizing the depth of our sin. However, our self-examination and self-judgment only prepare the mind for what should be our focus at Passover so that we can approach it worthily.

— Pat Higgins

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