

“Do This in Remembrance of Me.”

1 Corinthians 11:23-34

Reading: John 6:47-58

Bethany Baptist Church

October 18, 2020

November 25, 2012

September 11, 2011

...pray...

The **last time** we gathered for the **Lord's Supper** was **March 8** (7 months)!

Not long after, we stopped almost **all** of our ministry.

Public worship was reduced to a **45 minute video** of a "*skinnyed down*" service posted on FaceBook every Sunday morning.

But over the summer, we slowly began to **open up** the church.

We learned it was easier to **shut down** a ministry *all at once*...

Than it is to **open it up** *all at once*!

But we are **getting there**!

This morning we are gathered, **at last**, to *remember* and *celebrate* Jesus' death for us.

Turn w/ me to 1 Corinthians 11:23-33 (read).

This morning, in the *Lord's Supper*, we are again *reminded* that Jesus Christ *died in the place of sinners*.

1. What is the *meaning* of the Lord's Supper?
2. What are its *mechanics*?

The Lord's Supper *reminds* us that Jesus *died* for us.

1. In a few minutes, we *share* a memory. We will all become actors in the **NT church's** *great reminder* of our Lord's love for His Church.
2. What does this *table* and this *time* **mean** ("significance")...?

Beloved, you must never *come* to this table and *take* its elements w/o *reflecting* on its *meaning*!

 - a. *First*, let's think through **two** theology words often used to describe the Lord's Supper: *sacrament* and *memorial*.
 - i. A *memorial* helps you remember a person or action.
 - ii. A *sacrament* is a practice said to be used by God to give *special grace* as you perform it.
 - iii. The Lord's Supper is a *memorial*, **not** a *sacrament*!
 1. These two elements do **not** impart *saving* or *sanctifying (holiness)* grace.
 2. Some say the bread & cup communicate *saving grace*. **No** – that's nowhere in the **NT**.
 3. Some say God uses these elements to mysteriously provide *strengthening grace* (Presbyt). That's even gaining ground among *Baptists*.
 4. **No** – again, there just *isn't any text* for that.
 5. The Lord's Supper is **w/o** question, however, an occasion for great *encouragement & joy*.

- b. Let's list **6** actions (1 Cor 11) that help us understand the *significance* of the Lord's Supper, then *drill down* on **two** of them:
- i. ... *obeying* (24- *do this*), **remembering** (**memorial!** 24,25 – *in remembrance*), *proclaiming* (26) , *anticipating* (26 – *until He comes*), **examining** (28-32), *gathering* (33-*come together*).
 - ii. For this morning, we'll examine **remembering & examining**.
3. Do you **post** pictures on social media? How many pictures do you have stored on the **cloud**!?! There is *no denying* the power of *just the right picture*. *Pictures & symbols bring memories & messages back into our minds*.
- a. The NT is teaching us that this **bread** & this **cup** paints a powerful picture of His *death on the Cross* in the place of sinners!
 - b. This **bread** is a *picture*; it provokes our *memory*. Look at **vv. 23 & 24** w/me. (**Read**)
 - i. "*This is My **body***" ...**Christ's** body – *betrayed, beaten, scourged, spat on, crucified, bleeding, pierced, dying – forsaken, **dead**. Bearing our sins in His body on the Cross.*
 - ii. V. **24** - "*...which is for you; do this in **remembrance** of Me.*"
 - iii. Jesus' command – "*do this in **remembrance** of Me*" – suggests both **reflecting on** and even **celebrating** His death for us...as we take the **bread!**

- c. The **cup** we'll share is also a picture (**read v. 25**). Our Lord Jesus' **blood** – *poured out* → words that *sum up* His *willing death* for sinners (NT – “*blood of Jesus*,” shorthand, *death of Jesus*).
- i. Paul makes it plain for us in v. **26** – the *bread* & the *cup* are a picture of Jesus' **death**. “*Do this*” (**eat**)... “*do this*” (**drink**)...**for ...as often as you eat this bread & drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.**
 - ii. Here, *at this table*, is the Church's powerful reminder of the *sin-paying death* of our Redeemer.
4. Jesus calls us to **remember** (*celebrate*) & He also commands you to **examine yourself** before coming to the table. Follow as I **read vv. 27-32**.
- a. Jesus' *admonition* to **eat & drink mindfully** is followed by His *warning* to **eat & drink very carefully**. Let's capture the apostle's concern w/3 words: **warning, risk, remedy**
 - b. Paul sounds a **warning**. **Don't** put this *bread* in your mouth & press this *cup* to your lips, in a manner that is **unworthy** of Christ!
 - i. In the **context** of ch.11, the *wealthy* Corinthians used the Lord's Supper as an opportunity to **eat** in front of the poor, and **drink** until they were drunk!
 - ii. Their attitudes of *pride & selfishness & recklessness* help us understand that “**unworthy**” (27) suggests coming to this table w/ attitudes that are **careless & unloving & proud**.

- c. Paul speaks of the *risk* (29-30). This memorial is so important that *disdaining* the Lord's Supper invites *illness & death*.
 - i. Beloved, *be careful* this morning! This *bread & cup* are **not** for willful, unrepentant *sinner*s, whether they call themselves *Christians or not!* (pause)

- d. *So what do you do...?* Here is Paul's *remedy* in v. 28. *Examine* your *attitudes & motives* before you *eat & drink* the *bread & cup*.
 - i. And the right question is **not**: *am I perfect?* Rather: *am I here in reverence for Christ & at peace w/ my brother?*

 - ii. Not: *am I perfect?*, but *are you genuinely striving to live faithfully?*

5. Unpacking the *meaning* of the Lord's Supper has already yielded its *mechanics*. The moving parts are *simple*: **bread, cup, congregation**.

- a. The **bread**. A **symbol** of Jesus' *crucified body* (24). Jesus identified Himself (John 6) as the *Bread of Life*!
- b. The **cup**. A **symbol** of the *New Covenant* (25). The *New Covenant* is God's *binding promise* to make us *new people* through faith in Jesus. Christ's *blood* (death) **activated** that promise!
 - i. The **bread** & the **cup** picture our Savior's death for us. And they picture that **new life** is only possible when your faith is such that He becomes **life itself** to you (**John 6**)...
 - ii. *Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who **eats** My flesh & **drinks** My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For **My flesh** is true food & **My blood** is true drink. He who **eats** My flesh & **drinks** My blood abides in Me, & I in him."*
- c. **Church family! This table is for the gathered & celebrating & self-examined saints (2X)**. The *Lord's Supper* is intended for men & women who have *turned* to Christ & placed their *trust* in Him – *His followers*. **You... Me...**

Jesus said, "**Take, eat; this is My body. Drink from it, all of you."**

The **central message** of the Bible is a *love story*. A story of *God's love* for the *unworthy*. We call that story the *Gospel (Good News)*.

The Gospel is an **illustrated** *love story*; the *Lord's Table* pictures the love of Christ for sinners. I'd like to conclude by **reminding** you of that *Love Story*...

Who are you? Where do you come from? ... Do you **think** about that?

The *Bible* has the answer! *God created you!* (Gen 1:1)

There's so much we could say about *just that*, but let's focus on this: because God *created you*, He *owns you* ("accountability"; logical!).

How are you doing? Maybe you think you're doing *okay* (maybe *not*). The Bible says if you're **not** living *completely* the way God requires, you're in *rebellion*.

No-one lives in complete obedience; no one really *wants to!*
(Rom 3:10-12)

That's **bad** for you, because you're *accountable* to God.

What does a holy God do w/ sinners (rebels)? **Death & judgment.**
(Heb 9:27).

That is **bad news**, but it's not the **only** news!

For God so loved the World that He gave His only begotten Son. God sent His Son, *Jesus*, into the world, to *become the sinless man*, to *rescue* sinners.

Jesus lived a *completely perfect (sinless)* life. Then He willingly *died* a criminal's death. **Why?** *In the place of, and suffering punishment for, sinners (rebels).* "*In our place, for our sins!*"

Where is He now? What happens next? He's not in that grave!

God *raised* Jesus from the dead on the 3rd Day (NT → **Resurrection**).

The **Resurrection** *proves* that God *accepts* Jesus' payment for sins.
The resurrection *also* proves that Death has been *conquered*.

So Jesus is alive *right now!* He is *Lord* of His Church. He is the *Savior* who gives *eternal life* to His own. He has promised to *return* as *Rescuer & King & Judge*.

(small pause)

*The Gospel leaves every man & women with a **choice** to make.*

To continue in *rebellion* (**your** way instead of your King's).

Or...to turn to the Lord Jesus in *repentance & faith*:

Repentance (→ *turning/submission*). Turning from *your* way and turning to *Christ* & submitting to His *good & loving rule*.

Faith (→ **trust**). Trust that Jesus' *death on the Cross* is true & is enough. *All* that God requires in payment for *all* of your sins.

The result? God's gift of *forgiveness & new life* in Christ!

*Will you **believe** Him? ...**turn** to Him? ...**trust** Him? ...**follow** Him?*

You must!

Come to Christ, and *join* us at the table!

...pray...

The deacons will come & we will share in the Lord's Supper. We will *examine* & we will *remember*...