

Coming to Jesus

Loving God with all your Heart Part 11

Selected Passages 8-28-11

Summary: Have fellowship with Jesus by coming to Him (looking to Him for life), following Him (devotion and obedience), remaining in Him (continual interaction, listening to His Word), loving Him – especially by loving His brothers, the greatest source of joy; and remembering Him (communion) – accomplishing the purposes of the cross by activating faith through remembering.

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John 6:44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. 46 No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. 47 I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. 50 But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." 52 Then the Jews

began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" 53 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever."

Introduction

Draw near to God and he will draw near to you - James 4:8

Draw near to God. How is that done? And more specifically, how do you draw near to God the Son – the Lord Jesus Christ? We are in the midst of a study on how to have fellowship with each of the members of the Trinity. We found that we draw near to the Father by enjoying His love in a father/child kind of relationship, which involves delighting in His presence, trusting Him as a father, fearing Him as a father, and obeying Him with the preferring kind of obedience. Then last week we moved to fellowship with the God the Son. We draw near to Him by seeking grace. And we do that through faith, the spiritual gifts, bold, son-like prayer, and Scripture. That is how we interact with Jesus in His role as priest, or mediator.

But there is much more to how we interact with Jesus than that. I spent the week pouring through the gospels this week, looking for the various ways Jesus taught us to interact with Him. I am not going to talk about every one of them – we will just hit the ones Jesus emphasized the most. The most basic way is the one we saw last week – trust Him. In addition to that I would like to point out five more. The first one is “Come.”

Come to Him

John 6:37 whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

John 5:39 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, **40** yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

Can you obtain eternal life through the Holy Scriptures? Not unless you come to Jesus. You have to come to Him to receive eternal life to begin with, and then, once you have eternal life, you have to keep coming to Him.

Matthew 11:28 Come to me ... and I will give you rest.

John 7:37 Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.

We come to Him every day for rest, and for the all the basic needs of our soul.

A Christian is someone who has a need and looks to Jesus Christ. He is our source for every part of life. We look to Him for salvation, forgiveness of sins, rest, for strength, comfort, for guidance – every part of life. Every human being looks somewhere for life. When you are empty or dry or needy or lacking something, you look for something or someone to supply you with what you are lacking. It might be your spouse, your job, yourself, the government – everybody looks somewhere, and what Jesus said is, “Look to Me.” When you look to Jesus Christ for every need in life, that is what it means to come to Him.

Eat and Drink Him

This is what Jesus was getting at when He talked about eating and drinking Him.

John 6:53 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

Eating and drinking means looking to Jesus for nourishment, strength, satisfaction, enjoyment, renewal, and sustenance.

John 6:35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

John 4:14 whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

Every time you have a need or a longing or desire, and you look to Jesus Christ to supply it, that is an act of fellowship with Him. You are having communion with God the Son when you do that. And if, when you do that, you realize what is happening and you enjoy it for what it is, it will increase your love for God. You will enjoy those experiences, your soul will taste and see that they are good and start to crave more of them, and then when temptation hits and it is a choice between saying no to the pleasure of sin on the one hand, or forfeiting future fellowship with Jesus on the other hand, it will be far easier to prefer fellowship with Jesus over the pleasure of sin.

Follow Him

So you have fellowship with Jesus by trusting Him and by coming to Him (looking to Him for life and all that life entails). Next, Jesus said, "Follow Me."

John 12:26 Whoever serves me must follow me

I think that is a fascinating statement. One thing it shows us is that serving and following are two different things. Evidently there were people who were thinking they could serve Jesus without following Jesus. And Jesus says, "No, that's not an option. You have to follow in My steps."

Devotion

Following His steps is hard because of where those steps lead. When Jesus made this statement, He was responding to a group of Gentiles who were wanting to come see Him. Here is what Jesus said:

John 12:24 I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. 25 The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 27 Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me. 27 "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour.

He is talking about His death. He is saying, "If you want to serve Me you must follow Me, and oh, by the way, I'm on My way to be crucified." Following Jesus requires total devotion. There are people who are all excited about serving Jesus. They want to be a deacon in the church, sing on the worship team, help out in the nursery, teach a class, show up for work day – they are all about serving

Jesus. But when that cross shows up on the horizon, suddenly Jesus is walking by Himself. They are outta here. That's where they draw the line. "Where? Where do they draw the line?" Anywhere. It does not matter where you draw the line. If you draw it anywhere; if there is any point where you say, "This far I will follow and no farther – This much I will give up for Christ and no more, this much I will be willing to lose and no more" – if you say that at any point then you cannot be a Christian. Jesus said, "Follow Me all the way to the point of losing your life, or don't follow at all."

Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Jesus said that before He died on the cross – before the cross was a symbol of Christianity. So what did it mean to the people standing there when Jesus said that? The cross meant one thing – it was a means of horrific, torturous execution. People use the phrase, "We all have a cross to bear" to refer to the most trivial things – miscellaneous hardships in life. When Jesus said, "Take up your cross" He wasn't saying, "Put up with your mother-in-law" or "Cope with arthritis." He was saying, "If you want to follow Me, step up on the gallows and put the noose around your neck." Following Jesus means following Him right into the grave.

Luke 9:22 And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life." 23 Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

After Jesus rose from the dead He appeared to the disciples at the lake, and He restored Peter to a position of leadership in the church in John 21. And then Jesus told Peter that one day Peter would be crucified.

John 21:19 ... Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

And the response is classic Peter – "Well, what about John?"

22 Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You follow me."

Peter did end up being crucified, and John did not. Does that mean John didn't have to follow Jesus? No – John also followed Jesus. There is more than one way to lay down your life. For Peter it meant being crucified. For John it meant being banished to Patmos. For the rich young ruler it meant selling his stuff.

Matthew 19:21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

For the Disciples it meant giving up their jobs and businesses. For Paul it meant unending suffering all his life. When Jesus calls us to lay down our lives He is demanding a lot more than that we merely die for Him. The call to give up our lives applies every hour of your life. Every hour you have to decide, "Am I going to live for myself or for Him? Am I going to go my way or His way? Am I going to put my preferences first or His kingdom first?"

Luke 9:57 As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." 58 Jesus replied, "... the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

Are you sure? Because we might not always have a place to sleep.

59 He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." 60 Jesus said to him, "Follow me,¹ and let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God." 61 Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-bye to my family." 62 Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

When Jesus says, "Follow Me" it means follow Him no matter what the cost. No delays, no detours, no looking back. And you might be homeless, and you might miss out on your inheritance, and it might cost you all your most treasured relationships, and you might die. And Jesus wants you to understand that right up front before you even decide whether or not to follow Him.

Luke 14:25 Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: 26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple. 27 And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. 28 "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? ...33 In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

It almost seems like whenever the crowd following Jesus got too large He would think, "These people must not be understanding what I'm saying," and He would turn around and say something so extreme that it would drive most of them away. Make sure you understand what it will cost you before you make a decision to follow Jesus. It will cost you everything.

Matthew 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

Obedience

So following Jesus involves total devotion, even to the point of death. And it also involves unquestioning obedience.

Matthew 28:19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, ... 20 teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

Jesus commanded some things and all His followers are to be taught to obey what He commanded. Jesus did not just die on the cross to purchase our salvation; He died to purchase our obedience.

Titus 2:14 Jesus Christ gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

He died to obtain a people who are eager to do what is good. When I am not eager to do what is good – or when I am eager to do what is bad, Jesus is not getting what He paid for. When my heart starts to go the wrong direction I look at the price Jesus paid for a holy people, eager to do what is good, then I look at my own non-eager heart and say, "This is what Jesus gets? Jesus paid that massive price for *this*?" Whenever I allow my heart to cool off in my fight against sin I rob Him of that for which He paid an infinite price.

When people say, "Oh, for the first ten years after I became a Christian I didn't really follow

¹ Mt.8:22

Him, didn't really obey Him, didn't regard Him as the Lord of my life – I just kind of went my own way” – those people are confused about who Jesus is. Jesus is not someone you can associate yourself with while refusing to obey Him. If you are not willing to obey Him; you are not saved – period. If you are willing to obey Him but you stumble a lot, but when you do disobey you repent and turn back to Him – that is the normal Christian life. The heart of Jesus' message was one word: “Repent” – that is what He preached everywhere He went. But if you are not even willing to obey in some area; you are a non-Christian.

So how do we respond to that in a way that draws us near to the presence of Christ? We cooperate with his work of purifying us for the purpose of being more beautiful to Him.

Ephesians 5:25 Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her in the washing of water by the word. ²⁷ He did this to present the church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and blameless.

Why the imagery of a bride? If it is a picture of washing and cleansing, isn't there some other analogy that would fit a little better? No – the bride analogy is perfect because the point is that He is cleansing and purifying His bride to make her beautiful to Him.

Sometimes men struggle with the idea that Christ is our Husband. They think, “How in the world am I supposed to relate to Jesus as my Husband?” Simple – strive to be beautiful and pleasing to Him. And what is pleasing to Him is holiness. That's no threat to anyone's masculinity – to strive for holiness in order to be pleasing to Him. You can be 6'8”, 280 pounds, ride a Harley, be a Navy Seal, and still strive to be pure and holy and a delight to the Lord Jesus Christ. We draw near to the Lord Jesus Christ when we willingly, eagerly, gladly obey Him.

Remain in Him

So how do you have fellowship with the second member of the Trinity? You trust Him, you come to Him, and you follow Him with devotion, obedience, and a listening, teachable heart. And here's another one – remain in Him.

John 15:4 Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ... 9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

To remain means to lodge or stay with someone or keep someone company. You remain in Christ when you live with Him and He lives with you all day long, you are in each other's company, and there is a continual, ongoing interaction between you and Him.

How do you do that? Through His Word.

1 John 2:24 See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If what you have heard from the beginning remains in you, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father.

The Word remains, or lives in you when there is a continual, ongoing interaction between you and the Word of God. The person who has the Word of God living in him is constantly hearing from the Word, and constantly responding. If your involvement with Scripture is a Sunday-only affair, the Word of God does not live in you, and you are not remaining in Christ.

Listen

At the very beginning of His ministry when Jesus was baptized, heaven cracked open, and...

Luke 9:35 A voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him."

John 10:3 The watchman opens the gate for [the true Shepherd], and the sheep listen to his voice.

If you know Jesus you don't ignore His words, you don't twist them to say what you want, you don't constantly question them or doubt them – you *listen*. You hang on His every word. The word *disciple* means *learner*.

Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me ... and you will find rest for your souls.

You strive to make the things He said front and center in your belief system, so that your life operates with the assumption that they are true without even thinking about it (just like you operate every day on the belief that gravity is real even though you don't actually think about gravity). There are some things that you read and say, "That's in the Bible so I believe it's true." But it does not find its way deep enough into your grid of thinking so that it governs your feelings and attitudes and involuntary reactions. You believe it at some intellectual level, but unless you are reminded of it, it does not shape your outlook. Listening to Jesus means letting His words sink down deep and become part of you. In Luke 9:44 He said, "Let these words sink down into your ears." That is how you listen to Jesus' words.² And that can only happen when you believe it.

John 5:38 You don't have His word remaining in you, because you don't believe

But when we do believe – we love what Scripture says, we strive to understand it and when we do understand it, it is a delight to us, and all day long it speaks to us and we obey and conform ourselves to it, then His Word is remaining in us and we are remaining in Him.

Love Him

Trust Him, come to Him, follow Him, remain in Him, and next – love Him.

John 8:42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me."

John 14:21 He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.

John 16:27 the Father himself loves you because you have loved me

After the horrible, sickening, devastating public failure of Peter when he repeatedly and vehemently denied Christ, when it came time to restore Peter, Jesus only had one question for him. He didn't ask him about his prayer life, his Bible reading, his service, his obedience. He didn't ask Peter what steps he was taking to get himself turned around. He didn't say, "How can I know you won't fall again?" He just asked one thing. And He asked that same question three times in a row: "Peter, do you love Me?" (Jn.21:15-17) Jesus only asked one question because there is only one thing that matters.

Ephesians 6:24 Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.

² Note: Jesus' words are not just the red letters. They are the entire New Testament, because all the writers of the New Testament were doing was putting Jesus' words down on paper.

1 Corinthians 16:22 If anyone does not love the Lord--a curse be on him.

We are to love Him – and not only love Him, but love Him more than we love anything or anyone else.

Matthew 10:37 "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me"

Loving His brothers

So we love Christ above all, and the greatest expression of that love is to love His people – just like we saw with the Father. We love fellow Christians because they are the *children* of the Father, and we also love them because they are the *brothers and sisters* of Jesus. If you ever struggle to love a fellow believer just remind yourself of *that!*

Matthew 12:49 Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."

And on Judgment Day it all comes down to whether you loved the brothers and sisters of Jesus.

Matthew 25:40 "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me'."

It would have been amazing enough if the Lord had said, “whatever you do for the least of these *servants* of Mine you did for Me.” But He did not say “servants”; He said, “brothers.” Spend ten minutes thinking about that, and see if that doesn’t spark love in your heart for the Christians that you find so hard to love.

The Greatest Joy

Throughout this study I have been telling you that the source of joy in life is fellowship with God. Joy is a byproduct of experiencing the presence of God. But of all the ways you can have fellowship with God, which is the greatest of all? Which kind of fellowship with God has the greatest potential to fill up your life with joy? Is it singing praises? Reading the Bible? Contemplation of God’s nature? Service? Enjoyment of the creation? What is it that fills the soul with joy more than any other kind of fellowship with God? The answer is in John.15.

John 15:11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

There it is. When your joy is made complete – that is the greatest possible joy. So what is it that Jesus had just said? “I have told you this so that ... your joy may be complete” – told us what?

10 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love

What is His command?

12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

So the way to have the joy of Christ in us so that our joy is made complete is by loving one another like He loves us.

That is one of the most counter-intuitive truths in all the Word of God. Nobody naturally thinks that way. We naturally think the exact opposite – that joy comes mainly from being loved. That is why

people who are married are so concerned about getting their spouse to treat them better – they think that is the key to being happy. But Jesus said, “No, the greatest joy comes not from being loved, but from loving.” If there is some food on my plate, my happiness is not going to come from how that food feels about me – I will be happy if I love that food. And it is the same with people. You will have real joy when you look at your spouse, your kids, or whoever - and it brings delight into your soul. If one person has ten million dollars but does not love anybody, and another man has no money but his life is full of people he loves, that first man will be miserable and the second man will be full of joy. Think about it - when are you the most unhappy in life? Isn't it when your attention drifts away from loving others and turns inward on a self-focus? Isn't that usually when you are the most depressed and irritable and unhappy? And then you move back toward love and your attention turns outward towards others, and your life fills up with meaning and fullness and joy – especially when the reason for your love is the fact that the Lord Jesus loves that person and delights in you loving that person.

Remember Him

Trust Him, come to Him, follow Him, remain in Him, love Him, and finally – remember Him.

Luke 22:19 he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

Receiving the benefits of the cross through remembering

Draw near to Jesus and enjoy fellowship with Him through taking communion. For hundreds of years denominations have debated about what happens when we take communion. Does the act of taking communion actually give us grace? Do we receive the benefits of the cross in greater measure by taking communion? Or do we receive the benefits of the cross by faith alone – not through rituals or ceremonies? Both. We receive the benefits of the cross only through faith, but an essential component of faith is *remembering*. We receive certain benefits of what Jesus purchased for us on the cross not simply by eating and drinking some ceremonial elements, but by remembering what Jesus did, and in our remembering, activating faith.

1. Jesus died to make us eager to do good

One reason Jesus died, according to Titus 2:14, was to make me holy and eager to do what is good. When I call that to mind in my memory, I am suddenly more eager to do what is good.

2. Jesus died to defeat selfishness

2 Corinthians 5:15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them

One way that is accomplished is by us remembering it. When I am reminded that Jesus died so that I would no longer live for myself, that motivates me and gives me the grace to fight selfishness in my heart.

3. Jesus died to bear God's wrath and give us access

Jesus died to absorb the wrath of the Father in my place (Ro.3:25) so instead of being estranged from the Father, I can draw near to Him in worship. That is the benefit Jesus died to bring about, and when I am reminded of it, it motivates me to go ahead and draw near to the Father in worship. So I get that benefit from the cross in greater measure when I am reminded of it.

4. Jesus died to enable us to receive God's love

We saw last time that Jesus died to make it possible for us to receive the Father's love. When we are reminded of that, we become more receptive to God's love.

5. Jesus died to purify our consciences

Jesus died to release us from the crushing weight of our guilt (Heb.9:14). And it is when we are reminded of the cross that we are freed from self-condemnation (1 John 3:19-20).

6. Jesus died to guarantee God will give us all good things

Romans 8:32 promises that God will give us all things. All things that are good for us, the Father will give us when we believe. But how can we activate that faith? What can we remember that will enable us to really believe that God will be so generous?

Romans 8:32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

It is when we remember that God gave us the infinite gift of His Son that it becomes obvious that God is not going to be stingy about lesser things. And everything is lesser than His Son.

7. Jesus died to free us from bondage

We were enslaved to sin, and He died to free us from that. But so many times we re-enslave ourselves and decide to serve a defeated foe. That happened to the people in Galatians 4:9. So what is the solution to our voluntary re-enslavement to sin? Remembering that Jesus died to free us from sin.

8. Jesus died to open our eyes

Jesus died to free us from the blinding influence of Satan.

2 Corinthians 4:4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel

6 God ... made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Jesus died so that our eyes could be opened, and one of the things that helps open them wider and wider is remembering that Jesus died to open our eyes.

9. Jesus died to make us bold in prayer

Hebrews 10:19 ... we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus

He died to give us that confidence and boldness. So how do we get that confidence? By remembering that Jesus died so that we could approach God boldly as sons.

10. Jesus died to become the Temple

John 2:19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." ...

21 But the temple he had spoken of was his body.

The Temple was the dwelling place of God. Jesus died and rose again in order to become the place where we can go to worship God. Instead of having to travel to a certain building in a particular city, anyone, anywhere in the world, can worship God through Jesus Christ. Jesus died so that we could worship God and enjoy His presence seven thousand miles away from Jerusalem, right here in Denver. So how do we realize that benefit? We remember that Jesus died for that purpose, and that moves us to worship the Father through Christ.

11. Jesus died to give us confidence of His sympathy

Jesus suffered and died so that we could enjoy a sympathetic High Priest, who has actually experienced the suffering and pain and temptation and weakness that we go through (Heb.4:15-16). Why? Because He couldn't understand it before? No, He did it so we could take comfort in knowing how He has felt what we feel. And how do we get that comfort? By remembering His suffering.

12. Jesus died to give our lives meaning

Jesus died to free us from the emptiness and meaninglessness of life in this world (1 Pe.1:18-19). When we remember that, we realize the profound meaning and importance of life in His kingdom and we are motivated to devote ourselves to eternal things rather than temporal things.

13. Jesus died so we might die to sins

1 Peter 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins

Dying to sins means making a decisive break with them. Remembering the cross helps us do that.

14. Jesus died to enable us to persevere

Jesus died to enable us to avoid growing weary and lose heart. And that happens when we remember.

Hebrews 12:1 let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. 2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus ... who ... endured the cross, ... 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

15. Jesus died to free us from the fear of death (Heb.2:14-15)

16. Jesus died to show the power and wisdom of God in the gospel (1 Cor.1:18-25)

17. Jesus died to create unity in the Church (Eph.2:14-16)

18. Jesus died to become exalted and worshipped

The Father gave His Son to die in order that His Son might be superexalted to the highest place, with countless knees bowing and tongues confessing that Jesus is Lord to the glory and praise of God (Php.2:9-11).

Every one of these things is accomplished in greater measure when we remember them. You got all that? Can you remember all eighteen of those things (plus all the other ones I didn't mention)? Is it easy for you to keep all that in your head? No, it's not easy at all. That is why we need a continual reminder. I think from now on each time we take communion we should remind ourselves of one of the dozens of reasons Christ died so that those purposes might be realized in us by the act of taking communion. There is nothing magical about putting a piece of bread and a sip of juice in your mouth.

If no remembering takes place then it accomplishes nothing. In fact, if no remembering takes place it is an evil, detestable sin that God will harshly punish. He has put people to death for that before.

But if we use it to turn our attention to Christ and what He accomplished for us on the cross, it can become one of the most profound experiences of the presence of God possible in this life. Draw near to Jesus in fellowship by coming to Him, following Him, remaining in Him, loving Him, and remembering Him.

Benediction: 2 Timothy 2:8 Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. ... 11 Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with him. If we disown him, he will also disown us; 13 if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself.