

Lighthouse Bible Church

June 1st, 2014

2nd Corinthians 5: 1 – 9 *Scripture Reading: 1st Thessalonians 4: 13 - 18*

Remembering our Hope at the Lord's Table

Today, as we do every first Sunday of the month, we are celebrating the Lord's table, communion time, where we partake of the bread and the juice as a reminder of what Christ has done for us in the symbol of the bread and the cup.

The bread represents His body given for us and the cup represents His blood shed for us. That is what He said according to Paul in **1st Corinthians 11: 24 – 25** when Jesus said **of the bread 'this is My body given for you and this is the new covenant in My blood.** And after both of those statements he says this: **do this in remembrance of Me.**

We are called to remember, through the symbol of the elements of the bread and the cup, the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ for our sins. But when it says to **remember**, it is more than just recalling something in our mind that happened some time ago and is no longer a present reality.

It is drawing our minds back to that specific significant event, the death of Jesus Christ, that changes the way we live today and will live in the future. That is why we are to proclaim His death, what He did in the past, and do so until He comes at some point in the future that affects the way we live today.

If you remember in **Exodus 12** when the Passover was instituted, the people were called from that time forward, from generation to generation, to remember that specific event of their delivery from bondage by the nation Egypt through the participation in the Passover meal.

Every time they partook of that meal they remembered all that took place to bring freedom to the nation of Israel. They remembered the 400 years of bondage, they remembered the taskmasters and the torture they endured, they remembered building all the buildings and sometimes having to make bricks after gleaning their own straw as **Exodus 5: 6 – 8** said.

They remember the prophet Moses going before Pharaoh time and time again telling him to let the people of Israel go and each time he would do that he would perform another miracle to show the mighty hand of God and how Pharaoh's heart was hardened.

They would remember plague after plague that affected only the nation of Egypt and not the nation of Israel. They would remember the final plague where the first born of all people and animals of Egypt would die and the people of Israel would be spared because they would put the blood on their door post and the death angel would pass over them.

And so when they would eat their Passover meal generations later, they would be drawn to those specific events and how they directly applied to their own lives then.

It wasn't a passive calling to mind of some significant event, it was an active participation, through that meal, as they remembered that significant event that still had such a profound effect on them.

That is what we are called to do when we remember the most significant event in all of human history, the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ for our sins, that effects us still today, as we take the bread and drink the cup.

It should so move us to remember His grace and mercy in our lives when we, who were previously in the bondage to sin and were freed from that bondage by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Our hearts should be drawn back in remembrance to that moment in time when He who knew no sin became sin for us, when He willingly gave Himself over to be mocked, beaten, tortured, crucified and killed as the atoning sacrifice for our sins and then rising on the 3rd day for our justification.

In remembering and proclaiming the Lord's death we are also proclaiming our own victory over death. Approaching the Lord's table is a reminder to us of the hope that we have at the end of our life as a born again believer and that is a hope of eternal life, a hope of victory over sin and death and the grave.

You see, Jesus made the way of eternal life possible for us, because He conquered sin and death, He was victorious over the grave. That passage in **1st Corinthians 15: 54 – 57** says **that death is swallowed up in victory and it was through Jesus Christ our Lord.** In **Hebrews 2: 14** it says **Jesus Himself took on flesh and blood that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil.**

That is why **John 3: 16** says **for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish but has everlasting life.** **2nd Timothy 1: 10** says **Jesus Christ has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.**

Because Jesus conquered sin and death and the grave, we can come to this table, as a born again believer, in full remembrance and assurance that we have an everlasting hope when we die.

The apostle Paul, who knew that his life was about to end, said in 2nd Timothy 4: 6 – 8 for I am already being poured out as a drink offering and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will give to me on that Day and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

We have the hope and promise 1st Thessalonians 4: 15 - 17 that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God and the dead IN Christ will rise first then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and thus we shall always be with the Lord. So whether we live or die we have the hope of being in the presence of Christ forever, because He is alive.

Jesus Himself said to Martha in John 11: 23 – 26 after the death of her brother Lazarus that he would rise again and Martha said I know that he will rise again in the resurrection of the last day and then Jesus said I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me though he may die, yet shall he live and whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.

Paul said in Philippians 1: 21 – 23 for me to live is Christ and to die is GAIN ... for I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better...

He said in 2nd Corinthians 5: 6 – 8 so we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord, for we walk by faith and not by sight, we are confident yes well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

You see, we have a hope in this life, no matter how difficult this life may be, that there will be something better on the other side. And that is only possible because Jesus made the way possible. In **Romans 8: 18** it says **for I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.**

There is nothing in this life, no matter how tragic or difficult or painful or hurtful or devastating, that can take away the hope and promise of the glory of heaven that awaits every born again believer who has been redeemed by the blood of Jesus. Job knew that; in **Job 19: 25 – 26** he said **for I know that my Redeemer lives and He shall stand at last on the earth and after my skin is destroyed, by cancer or fire or disease leading to death, this I know; listen to this; that in my flesh I shall see God.**

Listen, death for the believer is a doorway, not a dead end and it is a doorway that opens to heaven.

We don't need to fear death because Jesus conquered death for us and He would never ask us to go anywhere, including death, that He has not been, right. And because He lives, **John 14: 19** says **you shall live also.**

So when we come to this table and partake of the bread and the cup symbolizing His body and shed blood, we do so REMEMBERING what He did for us and how that affects the way we should live today. We live in hope and confidence and assurance no matter what happens in this life as a direct result of what Christ did for us 2000 years ago and we have the privilege to celebrate that.

So as we remember what happened in the past, it should motivate us for how we live today and assure us of a hope we have in the future.

‘As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you: Remember the Lord’s sacrificial atoning death, you Proclaim the Lord’s sacrificial atoning death for your sin and you have Hope in that sacrifice till He comes.

You see, He was killed as the Lamb of God that could take away the sin of the world and He conquered death by raising from the dead and opening the way for us as well. How about you?

Approaching the Lord’s table

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Exodus 12

Exodus 5: 6 – 8

Remembering what Jesus did for us

1st Corinthians 15: 54 – 57

Hebrews 2: 14

John 3: 16

2nd Timothy 1: 10

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2nd Timothy 4: 6 – 8

John 11: 23 – 26

1st Thessalonians 4: 15 – 17

Philippians 1: 21 – 23

2nd Corinthians 5: 6 – 8

Romans 8: 18

Job 19: 25 – 26

John 14: 19

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