

The Lord's Table - radio

The text of our sermon today is in 1 Cor. 11. The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians to explain the Lord's supper. All four Gospel writers: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, recorded this event. Paul was the twelfth apostle. He took Judas' place. Because he was an apostle, the Lord Jesus gave the same words to Paul that He gave to the eleven. Paul was faithful to Christ. He faithfully delivered to the Church what Christ delivered to him. That is what a faithful servant of Christ does. Paul said,

“23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: 24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. 25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. 26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. 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” (1 Cor. 11:23-29).

I have entitled this message, “**The Lord's Table.**”

Outline

I will use 1 Cor. 11:23-29 as the outline for my sermon:

1. First, Christ gave this supper **the same night He was betrayed**
2. Second, after the Passover **He took bread** to give to His disciples.
3. Third, in the same manner, **He also took the cup.**
4. Fourth, our Lord then answered this question: **Why do we eat and drink from the Lord's Table?**

5. Fifth, the apostle tells us **Who should eat from the Lord's Table?**
6. Sixth, Finally, **a summary of what the Lord's Table means.**

The same night He was betrayed

Consider first, then, that Christ gave this supper the same night He was betrayed. Christ chose Judas to be one of His twelve disciples even though Jesus knew Judas would betray Him. Judas treacherously delivered Jesus over to His enemies. Christ knew Judas would sell Him to wicked men for thirty pieces of silver. And He knew Judas would lead His enemies to take and kill Him. Scripture foretold this.

Question: Why did God arrange for this cruel deed to occur on this very night?! It was a most intimate supper. Christ revealed His love for His disciples that night in a special way. He began the supper with these words. "*With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer*" (Luke 22:15). It was the last supper before His death and the last time the Passover was to be kept. For the first time in history, He gave them the bread to eat and wine to drink and explained what those things meant. Jesus also took the place of a servant that night, and washed their feet. John leaned on Jesus' breast. But in the midst of this intimate communication with His disciples, and close fellowship, with the revelation of His love in washing their feet, when He gave them bread that signified His broken body and wine that signified His shed blood, on that very night, Judas betrayed the Lord of life and love! Why now?!

These are the reasons given from scripture.

- First, because it was God's will that Christ **suffer by the betrayal of His friend** (Ps. 55:12-13). It was foretold in scripture. Scripture is the scroll, the volume of the book, which, from top to bottom, reveals the will of God. Jesus came to do that will (Ps. 40:6-8; Heb. 10:5-7). Throughout scripture, it was written that Christ should suffer (1 Pet. 1:10-11; John 5:39; Luke 24:25-27, 44-47). He is the great covenant Head who stood as Substitute in the place of His people (Isa. 42:6; 49:8; Rom. 5:12-21; Heb. 13:20; Matt. 26:28; Isa. 55:3; 2 Sam. 23:5). God chose Him to do this. God appointed

Him to stand for them. It was God's will that He offer Himself to God in sacrifice for the sins of His people, to save them from their sins! And part of God's will was that He suffer betrayal by His trusted friend!

- The Spirit of Christ (1 Pet. 1:11) spoke of this by the mouth of David. He said, *“For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance”* (Ps. 55:12-13).
- During His ministry, Jesus called Judas to be His disciple. He treated Judas just as the other eleven disciples. And He trusted Judas as a friend. Because he was a friend, his betrayal brought greater grief to Christ. Think of it! Christ, who knows all things, in order that He might fulfill the will of God, trusted Judas as a friend, knowing full well that Judas would betray Him!
- Remember how God chastised David when David sinned against Him? God brought David's enemies against him. By God's chastisement of David for his sin, God allowed David's trusted friend and his own son to rise up against him! But unlike David, Christ was never unfaithful! Why, then, would God design this betrayal of Judas to come against His Son in whom He was well pleased?! And especially on this night?!
- **Here is the reason. Christ suffered as an unfaithful friend, because He suffered what I deserved!** I was unfaithful to God! I betrayed my God! Therefore, Christ suffered my chastisement, for me, one who has been unfaithful to God (Isa. 53:5; 1 Pet. 2:24)!
- All that King David experienced was prophetic of Christ and of Him crucified, risen and reigning (Acts 2:23-31).
- David sinned against God by committing adultery with Uriah's wife, and then murdering Uriah.
- Though God put away David's sin, He brought chastising consequences on David for that sin.
- God chastised David in anticipation of the sufferings of Christ, who would suffer, not for His own sins, because He had none of His own,

but for the sins of His people! The sins of His people were made His to bear (2 Cor. 5:21)!

- David felt the pain of betrayal by his trusted counsellor, Ahithophel. Ps. 55 uses Ahithophel's betrayal of David to anticipate Judas' betrayal of Christ.
- And David felt the pain of open cursing from Shimei, a man of king Saul's family (2 Sam. 16). Shimei's cursing of David anticipated the Jews cursing of Christ. God sent Shimei to curse David (2 Sam. 16:11). God cursed His Son by the mouths of His enemies, and betrayed Him by the hand of treacherous Judas, His friend!
- And David felt the pain of betrayal from his own son Absalom (2 Sam. 12:11)! He also the pain of sorrow at his own son's death! Upon hearing the news of Absalom's death, scripture says, "*The king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son*" (2 Sam. 18:33)! In a much greater way, if we can understand it, Christ felt the pain of Judas' betrayal as one near to Him!
- If David felt these things as a guilty man, how much more, in fulfillment, did our Lord, who did no sin, who was only faithful to His friends, feel the pain of Judas' betrayal?! This pain added to His suffering and the trouble of His soul (Matt. 26:22; 2 Sam. 15:31; 16:12; 18:33; 19:4)!?
- The lesson is this: All that Christ suffered, He suffered at the hand of God in the place of His people, because of their sins! He suffered what we can never comprehend that He might honor God and have us forever!
- Oh! What love is this, O my soul! See Christ, who was always faithful suffer so treacherous betrayal because of my unfaithfulness!
- Christ considered no personal cost too high to have His elect people! He gave all, because He gave Himself! "*You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He*

became poor, that ye through His poverty might be made rich” (2 Cor. 8:9).

- The second lesson we learn from Judas’ betrayal on this night, is that **Though Christ was betrayed by a friend, He was faithful to His friends.** We see Christ’s faithfulness to His friends against the black night of Judas’ treachery! Christ loved His people from eternity (Jer. 31:3). He never changes (Heb. 13:8). *“Having loved His own, which were in the world, He loved them to the end”* (John 13:1). Though we were and are unfaithful to Him, yet Christ was faithful to His God, and faithful to His people, the Church of God, who were given to Him by His Father from eternity, and whose names were written in the Lamb’s Book of Life before the foundation of the world. He was faithful to them when He gave Himself for them, in body and soul (Eph. 5:25; Rev. 21:27)!
- And third, in Judas we learn **the evil from which Christ has saved us!** We must realize that we would do exactly what Judas did, but for the grace of God! When we see Judas, we should tremble at the goodness of God because, *“There but for Jesus would go you and I”* (Hosea 3:5; Eph. 2:4)
- Finally, in Judas, we see how **God turns the evil intent and evil works of evil men into a blessing for His people** (Gen. 45:3-5; 50:20; Acts 2:23; Prov. 16:4; Ps. 76:10). The evil of the enemies of God’s elect will fulfill the eternal will of God for them. *“36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us”* (Rom. 8:36-37). Do you see the sovereign mercy of our God in Judas?! When Shimei cursed David, Abishai wanted to kill Shimei. But David said, *“Let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him. It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day”* (2 Sam. 16:12). God turned the evil of my sin to my good. *“Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord”* (Rom. 5:20). This is the grace of our sovereign God and Savior (Rom. 8:28)! This grace does not cause us to

presume on His mercy! It causes us to praise Him for His grace by which He triumphed over our sin!

He took the bread

Next, the apostle Paul said, “*The same night He was betrayed, He took bread, And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me*” (1 Cor. 11:23-24). We must see in this how great the grace of Christ is! He was betrayed to fulfill the sufferings foretold by scripture. Though He was treated worse than an unfaithful friend, He draws the disciples’ attention to the bread. He takes it. He gives thanks for it. He blesses it. He breaks it. He gives it. And then He said to them, “*Take. Eat. This is my body broken for you!*” He draws their eyes to Himself, because it is of Him and in Him they live! This is what the bread means. “*This is my body which is broken for you.*”

What do we learn from this?

- We learn that Christ substituted Himself for His people! He said, “*This is my body which is broken for you!*” Bearing the chastisement of God, broken in your place. Broken on your behalf who in nature and practice are sinners. Broken for you who were enemies toward God and brought wrath from God upon yourselves. Broken to reconcile God, in justice and truth, to you. Broken to justify you God’s sight!
- What does it mean “broken for you?” Scripture tells us. It means the Lord Jesus Christ suffered the chastisement of God for the sins of His people. “*He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed*” (Isa. 53:5). The sins of God’s elect were laid on Christ (Isa. 53:6). God chastised Him for the offence those sins caused God. He plunged the sword of His justice into His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (Zech. 13:7). And the Lord Jesus felt the guilt and shame of those sins made His in His own body and soul. In His sufferings, our Savior prayed, “*I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart*” (Ps. 38:8). He was wounded for our transgressions. He was beaten for our iniquities. He

endured the punishment of God for our sins. His stripes are our healing. He obtained our salvation by what He accomplished in His death (Gal. 1:4; Titus 2:14; Heb. 9:12).

Listen carefully to what the Spirit of God, by the mouth of the apostle Peter, said about the sufferings of Christ: *“Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes you were healed”* (1 Pet. 2:24). Christ suffered in His own body. But His sufferings were not limited to His body. They went to His very soul. *“It pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin...he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors”* (Isa. 53:10-12).

- Now, this is significant for many reasons. First, because if God wounded Christ for our transgressions, if He chastised Him under the beatings that my sins deserved, then God laid my sins on Him, and He bore them, and the punishment for them. He **fully paid all God required to reconcile us to God, to redeem us, to justify us, to save us from our sins** (Rom. 5:9-10; 8:34). God raised Him from the dead, declaring that Christ satisfied justice and established everlasting righteousness by His death (Rom. 4:25; 2 Cor. 5:21). God cannot twice demand justice for the same sins. If Christ gave His body to be broken for me, then my sins were lifted from me and laid upon Him. God poured out the punishment I deserved on Him! And Christ obtained the peace of reconciliation God intended by His death (Rom. 5:10). I am therefore healed by His stripes! I know God to be gracious to me in Christ crucified!
- Second, if He did this for me, it was in love to my soul (Isa. 38:17). *“The Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me”* (Gal. 2:20)! *“This is my body (our Lord said), which is broken for you!”* Such love compels me at the deepest level!

In the same manner, He also took the cup

Paul goes on. He said, In the same manner, after the bread, our Lord Jesus Christ “*also took the cup, when he had supped, saying,*” (1 Cor. 11:25) “*this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins*” (Matt. 26:28).

To understand why Christ shed His blood, we must understand what sin is to God. At its most basic level, sin is refusing God’s right to be God. It is rejecting and denying His truth and His right to rule by rebellion against His holy, just and good law (Ps. 119:142; Rom. 7:12; 1 John 3:4). Sin has an effect. Scripture says that our sins have separated us from God (Isa. 59:2). Our sin towards God has brought His just wrath upon us (Eph. 2:3; 5:3-6; Col. 3:5-6).

If we wrong someone and wish to be reconciled to them, we have to make up for the wrong by meeting their expectations for reconciliation. Jesus said if we wrong our brother, we must be reconciled to him before we can worship God (Matt. 5:23-24). To be reconciled to our brother, we have to make up for the offense our wrong did to him to his satisfaction. If I dented his car, I have to pay to restore his car to its original condition. To be reconciled to God, therefore, we have to do what God requires for reconciliation. What is that? We have to honor His law and satisfy His justice. But we cannot satisfy God’s justice for our sins! We cannot fulfill God’s law by anything we do! Furthermore, our sin proves that we have no interest in reconciliation. Now, when we had wronged God, when we were enemies against God, God, in His incomprehensible grace, took it upon Himself to make up for the wrong our offence caused Him, caused His truth and justice! What did God require to make up for our sin? The death of His own Son in our nature! He required the shedding of His blood. “*When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son*” (Rom. 5:10; Heb. 10:5-18)!

The reason Christ offered Himself for our sins in blood sacrifice was to satisfy God. Christ did not offer Himself to man. He did not offer Himself to satisfy men

or to produce a reaction in men. He died to appease God for the offence our sins had against His law, to take away the offence our sins caused God, to create peace between God in all of His holiness and His people who had sinned! Sin is against God (Ps. 51:4). Therefore, a sacrifice suitable to remove the offence that sin caused in God had to be made for God to be at peace with His people according to the rule of His law and justice. That sacrifice was Christ, the Son of God, in our nature. It is Christ that died! He shed His life's blood! God required His life¹ to compensate His law, to honor His holy, just and good law, to make satisfaction to His justice for sins. Do you see in this how evil your sin must be that it would require the death of God's own Son in our nature to make satisfaction for it?! Do you immediately see how holy God is that He would not spare His own Son when sin was found on Him, but deliver Him up to judgment and the curse of His law?! Do you see the love of God, in that He who was offended by our sin is the One who took the initiative to repaired the damage that our sin caused His truth and justice?! In light of this, the Spirit of God rejoices over the shed blood of Christ, saying, *"Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin. Selah. Thou hast taken away all thy wrath: thou hast turned thyself from the fierceness of thine anger"* (Ps. 85:2-3). *"Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other"* (Ps. 85:10)! That is reconciliation God made in the death of His Son!! God has taken away His wrath against His people which His justice required. He did so by the death of His Son. Now, when we see, by God-given faith, that God reconciled us to Himself in Christ, we put aside our hostility against God! Learning that He is at peace with us, puts us at peace with Him. We worship Him for His truth and grace. We trust Him because He found a way, in righteousness, to forgive our sins for Christ's sake! Given this grace, we will trust and love God for His goodness to us in Christ! By His blood, Christ fulfilled all conditions of God's everlasting covenant. All blessings promised in that covenant were obtained and are now put into force for all for whom Christ died! Christ's blood obtained their eternal redemption (Heb. 9:12), obtained the remission of their sins (Heb. 10:17-18), established their everlasting

¹ The law requires continuous, complete and perfect obedience. To render this, Christ must give His life in obedience, even give it in death on the cross of cursing (Php. 2:6-8; Heb. 10:5-7; Rom. 5:17-19).

righteousness so that they are justified by His blood (Rom. 5:9), made them holy before God (Heb. 10:10; 13:12) and He obtained their eternal glory (Heb. 9:15).

Why do we eat and drink from the Lord's Table?

The fourth thing we should now consider is why we eat and drink the Lord's Table? There are at least five reasons given in scripture:

1. Because Christ said, "Do this in remembrance of me." We do it because He commanded it.
2. To remember Him. Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me." We remember Him who gave His body to be broken, who poured out His life's blood to make atonement to God for our sins. "Remember me," says our Lord. And so, by this we remember Him who died for us to bring us to God (1 Pet. 3:18).
3. To show forth His death till He comes. When we gather with believers to worship Christ, we eat the bread and drink the wine together. "Believers are one bread in Christ." Because we are one with Christ, because God looks upon us as one with Him in His death and resurrection, so that by Him we are dead to sins, that we are righteous before God by His obedience, that we are justified, that we are alive to God from the dead, then we, as sinners, believing Him, do this together because we are one body in Christ.
4. When we eat the bread, representing Christ's body broken for us, and drink the wine, representing Christ's blood shed for us, we are showing on the outside what we believe in our heart, that Christ is all of our salvation. Christ crucified is our justification and eternal life before God. We believe Him to be so. Eating and drinking with our physical mouth is what we do by faith in our heart and souls.
5. Jesus said, "*He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in Him*" (John 6:56). Therefore, eating the bread and drinking the wine is what we do on the outside to show what we do when we believe Christ on the inside. We believe that Christ, crucified in sacrifice to God for our sins, obtained our eternal salvation! And the evidence that we are in Christ and that He is in us is that we believe Him.

Who should eat and drink the Lord's Table?

Finally, who should eat and drink from the Lord's Table? Everyone who believes Christ. Paul said, "*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. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body*" (1 Cor. 11:27-29).

We do not make ourselves worthy to eat and drink from the Lord's Table. The Lord's Table is for sinners who have been made worthy by the broken body and shed blood of Christ. "*Having been justified by His blood*" (Rom. 5:9). We are worthy by His worthiness. **If we believe that Christ alone, by His one offering to God, took away our sins, justified us before God, then we are worthy to eat and drink from this table. If we do not believe Christ is all of our salvation, we are not worthy, and we must not eat and drink here.** But if we believe Christ, we are commanded to eat and drink and remember Him to declare by doing this that Christ is all to God and therefore all of our salvation. By eating and drinking from the Lord's Table, we declare this truth with all who believe Him: All that we did by sinning became His debt of sin to bear and to pay. All He did by dying became our satisfaction and righteousness before God². God accepts us for what He thinks of His Son. He does not see us by ourselves, apart from Christ, but one with Him, in Him by eternal covenant union. Christ alone makes us worthy. Believing Him is the evidence we are in Him and that He is in us (John 6:56).

Summary of what it means

In closing, let me summarize what the Lord's Table means. It declares a Savior given (Heb. 10:7; Rom. 8:32; 1 John 4:9-10); and a Savior who gave (Eph. 5:25; Gal. 1:4; Titus 2:14). It shows His body broken, His blood the price paid (Acts

² And we declare that we have no life but the life we have in Him by virtue of His sin-atonement death and justifying righteousness (Rom. 7:10; Gal. 3:21)

20:28; Heb. 2:13-14; 10:17-18). To make atonement to God. To save this sinner (Rom. 5:6-10)! God has taken away His wrath! *“Mercy and truth have are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other”* (Ps. 85:10). The work is complete. He now says, Take and Eat. The effect of saving grace from God towards me, is saving faith in me towards Christ. O great Savior! Did you shed your blood for me?! Then I am yours and you are mine! I have been saved by your blood with an eternal salvation (Heb. 9:12; Eph. 1:3-4)!