

Communion & Baptism Service March 14, 2021

THE FIRST COMMUNION - I will never forget the first time that I was able to take communion. For years, I had sat back and took far too much heart and thought into those who took communion **“unworthily.”**

- I can remember the passing of the broken piece of cracker and the grape juice that accompanied it. It was often met as a tradition with a yuck!!!
- There were other times that I have taken Communion that really spoke greatly to me. **Simply Spiritual Growth on my part!!!!**

Communion was created for us to remember and honor our Soldier, Our Savior which paid the ultimate price for our freedom!

- That is what I hope happens here every time that we take Communion.

It is my desire for it to be a time of **commitment, anointing, and spiritual refreshment** for you and for this church.

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23- ²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,

- It is important to understand that when ***Paul wrote these words*** that he was under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.
- I am certain that the higher voice of the Spirit was beckoning Paul to **illustrate a principle to a New Testament Church.**

The Principle:

Communion with God is a very important issue and invariably where there is communion there will also be betrayal.

Paul **could have** written to us, **“in the same night in which he. . .”**

- Washed the feet of ***His disciples.***
- Spent the Passover meal with ***those closest to Him.***

- He prayed in *the Garden*.
- He gave *the Disciples* a lasting message.
- *He simply was present with His disciples*.

But now *Paul writes: 1 Corinthians 11:23* - For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, *on the night he was betrayed*, took bread,

- He is not making a point in history
- Rather he is setting a precedent for those who were *in Corinth*
- And those many that have followed throughout history.

The Communion Principle: Bread But Also Betrayal –

One of the Communion Principles: You will enjoy Bread. . . but you will encounter an enemy.

- *It is always going to be like this* until death or the Rapture.
- Communion has price tags.....

Yet Paul is displaying to us a power that says, “Betrayal is not the point - The glory of Communion rises higher than does the dilemmas of life.”

Paul puts the lamp in the feast.

- The background is dark with betrayal.
- But the foreground shows the patience, compassion, and steadfastness of the Lord in the midst of the greatest trial of His life.

“Those long and heavy hours of the night in which Judas sat by Christ’s side make the darkest background against which any character was ever set.”

- See the maliciousness in his eyes.
- Grasp the madness of his mind.
- Feel the turmoil of emotions **darkening Judas’ heart**.
- Watch the racing of the heart as he *contemplates the next move*.

Paul shows Jesus spreading a table of forgiveness and cleansing in the very hour when malice and greed and hatred are raising their wicked heads.

-The betrayal ***was not a single act.***

It just came to a head at the kiss in the Garden.

-It was ***a series of*** thoughts, decisions, resolves and every single one of these were known to Jesus.

-The Lord had watched like a physician watches a disease destroy a patient's body.

Now on this last night, he watches the final stage coming together.

- The fever rises to a burning flame.
- He sensed the meaning of betrayal in Judas' words.
- He saw the shiftiness in his eyes as he could not meet His gaze.
- He sensed the anger that was in Judas' heart.
- All that was hideous and repulsive, **the Lord saw it.**

-The disciples could not see this. . . But **the Lord saw it all.** . . .

What did Jesus do?

- He could have avoided Judas
- He could have opened up with a withering rebuke to him.
- *But, He did not.*

He served him.

Look to **the element of character** that the Lord displayed.

- He still was **trying to reach** the troubled soul of the man.
- Paul gives us a Lord who is **quenching sin with grace.**

He gives us a principle that says:

The **highest form of communion** will be the one in which **the bread rises far above the betrayal.**

It is always in the dark night of betrayal that **grace will find its widest opportunity.**

Greatness is always summoned from misery.

- For the bread to really rise to the occasion,
- Somewhere there will be the ***lurking monster of betrayal***.
- For there to be redemption, there must be a Cross.

This is the way that the gifts of the Spirit flow.

- In the hour of ***duress and difficulty***,
- ***You shall take bread***.
- ***Pain is always the forerunner of revelation***.

*******Communion*******

The Lord's Supper celebrates deliverance from sin by Christ's death!!!!

The Lord's Supper Is A Time To Examine Our Lives!!!

The Apostle Paul writes:

"A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup." (1 Corinthians 11:28)

- The Lord's Supper is not just fulfilling a ritual of the church.
- This time today is set aside for ***reflection and self-examination***.

Before we take communion we will spend some time in prayer.

Why do we do this?

Before Paul declared that a man ought to examine himself he said,

"Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord." (1 Corinthians 11:27)

We must understand that in reality ***NONE of us*** are truly worthy to participate in the Lord's Supper.

When Paul speaks of taking it in **an unworthy manner** –

He is talking about people **who rush in and participate without thinking** of the real meaning of what is happening.

This is why we are going to take some time to **examine our motives** before moving ahead.

- Paul basically is saying that if we eat the bread and drink from the cup
- **Without taking time to reflect** on **the seriousness of the Cross**
- **we are** entering into **the guilt of those who crucified Him** in the first place!

Let me Sum It All Up.

The Lord's Supper is a process of:

Looking Back - We look back to the cross and the sacrifice made by Jesus on our behalf.

Looking Within – We examine our life, actions, motives and spiritual condition and ***seek God in repentance***.

Looking Outward - Participating in communion helps us to put into perspective our need for the body of Christ. No man is an island – **we need each other** – and we need to look out to a lost world ***in need of the saving*** blood and body of our Lord.

Looking Ahead - Participating in communion helps us to look ahead too ***the return of Jesus Christ*** when we will have true communion with the risen Christ.

1Corinthians 11:26

²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Invitation for salvation: - Romans 10:9-10

⁹ If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

- **Pray for God to forgive and make us worthy...**

Servers – Come forward please...

Prayer for the Bread: 1 Corinthians 11:23-24

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you:

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,

²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said,

“This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

Prayer for the Cup: 1 Corinthians 11:25

²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Baby/Child Dedication Service

We are going to ***dedicate Several Children*** to the Lord this morning. This is a great day for Children and their families.

This is such a precious time, not only for the family, but also for the Lord. ***God loves these little children*** more than anything in the world.

Abraham is called the father of the faithful because he was the one through which the nation of Israel would be born.

- There was a problem early on though... Abraham’s wife Sara could not conceive.
- Would the promise come through Ishmael, Abraham's only son with Hagar?
- ***God said no...*** the covenant would be fulfilled through Sara.

Let's read the account...**Genesis 17:15-17 – NKJV**

¹⁵ Then God said to Abraham, “As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah *shall be* her name.

¹⁶ And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be *a mother of nations*; kings of peoples shall be from her.”

¹⁷ Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Shall *a child* be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear *a child*?”

God fulfilled His promise and gave them a son...

Genesis 21:6-7 - NKJV

⁶And Sarah said, ***“God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me.”***

⁷She also said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? For I have borne *him* a son in his old age.”

When I was reading this part recently...***it dawned on me that God literally gave Isaac to Abraham and Sarah...***

there was **no way** they could ever have children...she was barren...on top of that they were simply too old...***it wasn't*** medically possible.

- So when ***Sarah birthed Isaac*** she literally began to laugh with joy and caused everyone around her to laugh with her.
- She makes a statement that kind sums it all up, ***“Who would have ever said that Sarah would one day nurse a child.”***
- There was **no way** it was going to happen...but it did! ***God gave them a child!***

Let me say this...**I believe that is how they viewed Isaac, this was God's child, given to them for a time and a purpose!**

- ***Given to them to keep.***
- Given to them ***to train up.***
- Given to them ***to teach.***
- Given to them ***to love.***
- Given to them ***to prepare.***

Fast forward now about ten or fifteen years. **God speaks** some of **the hardest words** you will read in the entire bible...

Genesis 22:2 - NKJV

²Then He said, “Take now your son, ***your only son Isaac***, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.”

Most of us remember the story....

- **Abraham takes Isaac** with him on a sixty-mile hike to Mt. Moriah.
- They climb the Mt. together and **build an altar of sacrifice**.
- When they get there he **asks Isaac to gather the wood** for the fire.
- **Isaac asks the question....**where is the sacrifice.
- **Abraham simply replies...God will provide it.**
- **Then he places his boy on the altar**, binds him, and prepares to slay him.
- **The angel of the Lord stops him.**
- They find a ram **caught up in the bushes** to offer instead.

...you know what was happening here...**God wasn't ever going to allow Isaac to be sacrificed...**this **wasn't** about a crazy fanatical father who didn't love his son. I believe that **Abraham had faith that God would provide** a sacrifice.

This is what was happening... God simply wanted to know if Abraham would give back the boy that God had given him years earlier.

Our children are a precious gift from God...it is a miracle of God that any of us have children this morning.

- You know what this story was really about...dedication to God.
- This was the first dedication service in the History of the Bible!

As we begin our Baby dedication this morning we would ask that the families that are to dedicate their children today come to the front of the church.

The word dedicate in the original Hebrew means to keep and to prepare...

- **God was saying** to Abraham...
- I want you to keep this boy
- I want you to prepare him to be a partaker of this covenant of promise.

God went on to tell Abraham that **He was going to provide a way** for the covenant to be fulfilled through his only son Isaac.

- **God would provide the plan - the means - the way.**

Abraham simply had to dedicate his son and his life to God!

Abraham went on to offer the ram as a sacrifice to God. ***Listen to what Abraham called this place...this is really awesome...***

Genesis 22:14 – NKJV - ¹⁴ And Abraham called the name of the place, **Jehovah-jireh: The-LORD-Will-Provide**; as it is said to this day, “In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided.” - ***...which means, Lord our provider.***

When I think of this story now, it is so powerful...***our children our precious gifts from God.***

Our children really do belong to the Lord, God can take them at any time...

Yet when we bring our children back to God for dedication –

- God sees that good intention of our heart and says, **no**
- I want you **to keep them**
- I want you **to prepare them**
- One day soon **I will provide them with My Spirit**
- This is **everything they will ever need** to accomplish **My will in their life!**

- **Had Abraham refused to give Isaac back to God, he would have forfeited all God’s promises and plans for Isaac.**
- ***Isaac would have lived and died in obscurity—a nomad, and a nobody.***
- **Had Abraham refused to give Isaac back to God...Israel would never have become a nation...there wouldn't be Christianity today.**

Parent’s, what you are doing today with your children is you are simply giving them back to God.

You are making a powerful statement to the Lord...and this is what you are saying...

- **Lord we dedicate our child to you today, will you allow us to keep them and prepare them for Your purpose in your Kingdom!**

I charge you this day, to keep them, prepare them, teach them, and lead them by your example as loving and Godly parents from this day forward.

Baby Dedication Parent Covenant - (Covenant) -

God loves these little children more than anything in the world.

Minister: Do you now present your child before God, in solemn dedication?

Parents: *We do*

Minister: Do you consecrate yourselves as parents to bring up your child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

Parents: *We do.*

Minister: Do you promise to instruct him or her in the teachings of Jesus Christ, and in the practice of prayer, and to guide him or her in the development of Christ-like character?

Parents: *We do.*

Minister: Do you promise to try to the best of your ability so to shape the home life of your child, both by family devotion and by your words and your example, that he or she will at the proper age most naturally come to an open confession of Christ, and into the fellowship and service of the church?

Parents: *We do.*

Minister: *In the name of the Lord Jesus I dedicate this child, to God and His holy service.*

I also charge this church family, our teachers, our leaders, and every saint of God, *to treat this child as one of God's own*, and to **do your part** in leading them closer to God!

- By one loud Amen, will you accept that charge????
- Let's pray for this Child and this family!

******Pastor returns - intro for Baptism**

Baptism In The Name Of Jesus

Acts 4:12 - CEV

¹² Only Jesus has the power to save! His name is the only one in all the world that can save anyone.

Matthew 1:21 – CEV - ²¹Then after her baby is born, name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

******All Folks being baptized come up!!!!**

Question: "What is the proper mode of baptism?"

Answer: The simplest answer to this question is found in the meaning of the word “baptize.”

- It comes from a **Greek word** which means ***“to submerge in water.”***

Therefore, ***baptism*** by sprinkling or by pouring is an oxymoron, something that is ***self-contradictory.***

- **Baptism**, by its inherent definition, must be **an act of immersion in water.**

Baptism illustrates a believer’s identification with Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection.

Romans 6:3-4 - CEV

³Don’t you know that all who share in Christ Jesus by being baptized also share in his death?

⁴When we were baptized, we died and were buried with Christ. ***We were baptized, so that we would live a new life,*** as Christ was raised to life by the glory of God the Father.

- The action of being immersed in the water pictures ***dying and being buried with Christ.***
- The action of coming out of the water ***illustrates Christ’s resurrection.***

As a result, baptism by immersion is **the only method** of baptism which illustrates being buried with Christ and being raised with Him.

Baptism by immersion, while it is **the most biblical mode** of identifying with Christ, it ***is not*** a prerequisite **for salvation.**

It is rather **an act of obedience**, a **public proclamation of faith in Christ** and **identification with Him.**

Baptism is a picture of our *leaving our old life* and *becoming a new creation*.
2 Corinthians 5:17 - CEV

¹⁷ Anyone who belongs to Christ is a **new person**. The past is forgotten, and *everything is new*.

Baptism by immersion is the only mode that *fully illustrates this radical change*.

*******All** – profess their faith in Christ...

*******Pastor Closes in prayer.**