

Communion & Baptism Service – 3/3/24

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 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.”

*******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 - ²¹ Then 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

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

⁴ When 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 give a brief testimony** – profess their faith in Christ...

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