

Communion/Baby Dedication/Baptism

A Principle of Communion – Bread & Betrayal

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 on 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!!!!**

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

This very Scripture marks a passage in time.

- **It is important to understand that when Paul wrote these words 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** marking a point in history but rather he is setting a precedent for those who were at Corinth and those many that have followed throughout history.

The Communion Principle: Bread But Also Betrayal

One 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 a price tag.

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 during 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.

We have some contrasts here:

- **Grace** with Sin.
- **Faithfulness** with Treachery.
- **Love** with Hate.
- **Gentleness** with the Calloused.

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.

We could almost take it in a better manner *if the villain had been a wild crazy man, but he wasn't*.

His face and his words were fair and light **but there was a malice that was inspired by hell**.

You may ask **how** I come up with such a surmising - I would simply direct you to look at the reactions of the disciples.

They all wanted some insight to whom the traitor was.

Therefore, it would appear that there was nothing that Judas did or said that would have given them an inkling as to what he was up to.

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 with a withering rebuke to him, but He did not.
- He served him!!!!

He did His best to fellowship with the villain.

(a character whose evil actions or motives are important to the plot..)

Look at 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 that:

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.

- It was on the first night of betrayal when man had been false to God and **ate the bitter fruit of failure.**
- It was in the night of great sin **that Noah built his Ark** that saved his family.
- It was in the night of the great unrighteousness of Sodom that Lot was rescued from.
- We could wander through all of Scripture to **see this particular pattern over and over again.**

A LOAF OF BREAD AND A FLAGON OF WINE

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 Servers – Come forward please...

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

The Proper way to participate in The Lord's Supper.

1 Corinthians 11:26-29 - For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 27 So then, 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. 28 Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. 29 For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.

Invitation for salvation: - Romans 10:9-10

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....

Prayer for the Bread:

1 Corinthians 11:23-24 - 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 - 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."

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Child Dedication Service

We are going to ***dedicate 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's call of God on his life, and the covenant that God made with him.

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 - And Sarah said, “***God has made me laugh, and all who hear will laugh with me.***”⁷ She also said, “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? For I have borne *him* a son in his old age.”

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.

- 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!

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

- ***Given them to keep - to train up - to teach - to love*** – and **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 - 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.

We 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.

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!

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.***
- God would provide the means.
- God would provide 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 awesome...***

Genesis 22:14 - 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...

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.***

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.

Parent's, what you are doing today with you 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 Children to you today, will you allow us to keep them and prepare them for Your purpose in your Kingdom!

Parent's,

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

Do you accept that charge this morning?

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!

Baptism - If Anyone Is in Christ 8.1.25

Baptism is a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection.

Our entrance into the water during baptism identifies us with Christ's death on the cross, His burial in the tomb and His resurrection from the dead.

A brand-new life: It is a symbol of your new life as a Christ Follower.

Baptism is a powerful visual representation of our faith.

It's a picture of dying to sin and rising to new life in Christ. As we watch those being baptized, we are reminded of our own call to identify with Jesus' death and resurrection.

Let's explore how this symbolic act of obedience connects to our walk w/God.

New Beginnings: 2 Corinthians 5:17 - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

When we become a Christ follower through faith in Jesus Christ, we experience a profound spiritual transformation, becoming a new person in God's eyes.

The Emphasis on Transformation is conditional, we must be "In Christ?"

- This means having a relationship with Jesus through faith!
- This transformation involves a shift from a life characterized by sin,
- And separation from God to a life aligned with Christ.
- *Marked by new desires, perspectives, and a changed relationship with God.*

The fundamental change that occurs: A NEW creation, It's not just about superficial change, but a complete spiritual rebirth!

- The Old is gone, the NEW HAS come!
- A new way of living characterized by righteousness and fellowship with God.

This verse emphasizes complete transformation of the believer's life. The Old self is replaced with the new self. *Empowered by the Holy Spirit to live for God's will!*

Death to sin: Romans 6:6-7 - For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

Paul writes in this verse that one who has died in this way, being spiritually crucified with Christ, has been set free from sin.

- *The body of sin might be destroyed.*
- *We should NO longer be slaves to sin.*
- *Freedom from sin's dominion.*

Public declaration: Matthew 10:32 - “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven.

- Jesus will publicly acknowledge and affirm those who acknowledge Him.
- Conversely, He will deny those who deny Him or refuse him publicly.
- We can't have it both ways!!!

Baptism Does Not save you: Ephesians 2:8-9 - For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.

- Baptism is a symbolic act of obedience with Christ's death and resurrection.
- It IS NOT the means by which a person is saved.

Biblical Basis for Baptism - John the Baptist message, the coming Messiah...

Mark 1: 7-11 And this was his message: *“After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. 8 I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”*

The Baptism of Jesus - 9 *At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. 11 And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”*

Jesus, God's beloved Son - This passage highlights John's humility, Jesus's divine identity, and the beginning of Jesus's public ministry.

- **Jesus' baptism by John** is a significant event.
- His baptism, although sinless, **symbolized His identification w/humanity** and his willingness to embrace the mission of salvation.

The Great Commission, Jesus commands believers to be baptized.

Matthew 28:18-20 - 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit**, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Jesus instructs the corporate body to make disciples of non-believers, baptize them, and teach them God's ways.

Three aspects of making Disciples:

Going - reaching out to those who are Pre-Christians (lost). Sharing the gospel.

Baptizing – Formal invitation to PC's – Symbolizing their commitment to Jesus.

Teaching – Instructing new believers in the teachings of Jesus.

- It's an ongoing process of spiritual growth and development.

These are not separate commands, but rather three ways to fulfill the one command to "Make Disciples".

Identification w/Christ, Baptism today signifies a believer's union with Christ!

Galatians 2:20 - I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

This signifies a death to the old self and a living out of a new life empowered by faith in Jesus!!!

Living a new life: Matthew 22:37-39 - 37 Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’

After believers are baptized, they are called to live out their new identity in Christ through a life of obedience, love, and service.

- 1. Obedience** – Respond to the Holy Spirit’s guidance, **this empowers us to understand and obey God’s Word.**
- 2. Love** – Demonstrating Love for God, **Obedience to the Will of God.**
 - **Complete and wholehearted devotion to God!**

John 14:15 - Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit - “If you love me, keep my commands.

- 3. Service** – We are encouraged to serve others using our God given abilities.
 - Loving one’s neighbor – **extending compassion and care** to those in need.
 - It’s about **empathy and compassion** in ***our relationships with others.***

As we Baptize our brother’s and Sister’s in Christ they are making this public proclamation to you the witnesses and congregation of My Church.

- This baptism is reflective of their new life in Christ!
- New beginnings, out with the old, in with the new!!!!
- Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, they are a new creation, all things have become new!

A NEW CREATION, It’s NOT just about superficial change, but a complete spiritual rebirth!

This signifies death to the old self and living out of a new life empowered by faith in Jesus!!!