

The Message in the Meal¹

Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC

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Text: Leviticus 17:11, Matthew 26:26-30

Purpose: We find a message from Christ to His disciples within the words of institution of the Lord's Supper in the Upper Room. We find the provision of a priceless substitute and a precious sacrifice. We also see the promise of Christ's resurrection, return, and a reunion. We also see praise on the lips of the followers of Jesus. After worshipping with Jesus, they were able to praise Him in song as well as service.

Two 90-year-old men, Moe and Joe, have been friends all of their lives. When it's clear that Joe is dying, Moe visits him every day. One day Moe says, "Joe, we both loved baseball all our lives, and we played minor league ball together for so many years. Please do me one favor: when you get to Heaven, somehow you must let me know if there's baseball there."



Joe looks up at Moe from his deathbed, "Moe, you've been my best friend for many years. If it's at all possible, I'll do this favor for you." Shortly after that, Joe passes on.

At midnight a couple of nights later, Moe is awakened from a sound sleep by a blinding flash of white light and a voice calling out to him, "Moe, Moe."

Notes:

¹ Sermon outline from Sermon Notebook – Matthew 26:26-30

² Mikey's Funnies, March 29, 2011 – A Baseball Funny

"Who is it?" asks Moe, sitting up suddenly. "Who is it?"

"Moe -- it's me, Joe."

"You're not Joe. Joe just died."

"I'm telling you, it's me, Joe," insists the voice.

"Joe! Where are you?"

"In Heaven," replies Joe. "I have some really good news and a little bad news."

"Tell me the good news first," says Moe.



"The good news," Joe says, "is that there IS baseball in Heaven. Better yet, all of our old buddies who died before us are here, too. Better than that, we're all young again. Better still, it's always springtime, and it never rains or snows. And best of all, we can play baseball all we want, and we never get tired."

"That's fantastic," says Moe. "It's beyond my wildest dreams! So what's the bad news?"

"You're pitching Tuesday."²

We never know when it will be our turn.

About 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ gathered with His disciples in an upper room in Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish Passover. Jesus knew He was approaching His death within the next 24 hours



and wanted to leave a message with His disciples. The message He had for them was in the meal. That night, they sat down to the traditional meal that celebrated Israel's deliverance from the bondage of slavery in Egypt. In the midst of that meal, Jesus instituted a service of remembrance that we know as the Lord's Supper.

This morning, we have the privilege of remembering that event in this church. At the close of this service, we will participate in the Lord's Supper. Before we do, I want to remind you of what it is all about. I think that, too often, we come to the Lord's Table and take communion without a clue as to what it means for us as believers.

So, today, I want to take us back to that upper room as Jesus Himself inaugurates the Lord's Supper. I would like for us to understand what it means for each of us so that we can take it with a pure heart and with clear understanding. Let us talk for a few minutes about **The Message in The Meal**.



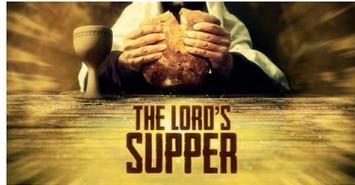
As we think on this, we will see that there are three great statements given in this passage. They are precious truths that we must never allow ourselves to forget as we come to the Lord's Table. There was a word of provision, a word of promise, and a word of a reunion.

I. A WORD OF PROVISION (v. 26-28)

As the Passover meal was progressing, Jesus took the bread and the wine and attached new meaning to them. He was, in effect, replacing the Passover observance with a new meal. In doing so, Jesus teaches us about His death on the cross for sinners. He teaches us His death provides a provided for us.

A Priceless Substitute (v. 26)

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it, and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.”



Jesus tells the Disciples that the bread represents His body that was given for them. Jesus is speaking of His upcoming death on the cross where He would take the place of every sinner. When Jesus died on the cross, He was dying in the place of sinful man. 2 Corinthians 5:21 describes it this way: *“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”* Just as the Passover lambs died to save Israel all those thousands of years ago, Jesus died to take the place of all who would believe in Him by faith.

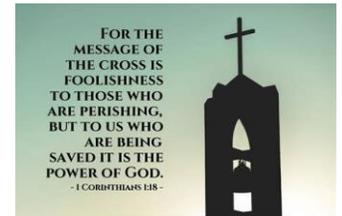


Many people do not quite understand or comprehend the reality or the brutality of the death Jesus experienced on their behalf. Isaiah did his best to

describe it in Isaiah 53:1-3. *“Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a*

root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised and we did not esteem Him.”

The rest of this Isaiah chapter describes the brutality of the cross, hundreds of years before Jesus' crucifixion! Try as we might, we cannot fully grasp the horrible death that Jesus died for us, to set us free from our sins! Some may look at the death of Jesus and say, “What a waste!” I Corinthians 1:18 says, *“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.”* Those who have trusted Him are saved by grace. We look to Calvary and we can praise Him for His love and for His grace on our behalf.



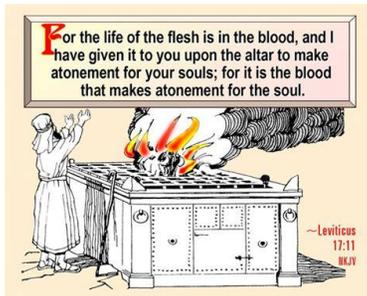
Why did Jesus go to the cross? There is just one answer: He loves you. *“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrated His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”* (Romans 5:6-8)

A Precious Sacrifice (v. 27-28)

“Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you.” For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”



After speaking of the bread, Jesus next took the cup and told them that the wine in it symbolized His blood that would be shed for them. Just as Israel was spared from the death angel by the applied blood of the Passover lamb over the doorpost of their houses, so will the blood of Jesus do the same for every sinner who trusted Him by faith. Regardless of what our sanitized religious world thinks of it, salvation comes only through the blood of Jesus!



When Jesus went to the cross, He literally poured out His life so that we might be saved. *“For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that*

makes atonement for the soul.” (Leviticus 17:11) Men can try any method they please of obtaining salvation, but nothing can or will ever save man’s soul but the precious blood of Jesus. *“Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”* (I Peter 1:18-19) John in the Book of Revelation says *“To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.”* (Revelation 1:5b)

In verse 27 of Matthew chapter five are, **four key ideas** which jump out at me.

1. Covenant

The first word is **“Covenant.”** In other translations it uses the word “testament.” This is Jesus’ last



Will and Testament.” It becomes a “binding covenant.” In other words, whatever the blood of Jesus does for us is a permanent thing. Jesus says that He is making a “covenant” with us. This is not a contract! A contract can be broken by one or more of the parties involved. A covenant, on the other hand, is a binding agreement that cannot be broken. Whatever the blood of Jesus does for us is permanent!

2. New

The second word that jumps off the page to me is the word “New.”

That is why the last twenty-seven books of the Bible are called the New Testament – New Covenant. Jesus is telling us that this new covenant replaces something old. The disciples were used to seeing the blood of the sacrificed animals shed at the Temple. They, like all other believers in the Old Testament, believed that their sins were remitted, or atoned for, by the death of an innocent, animal substitute. Jesus is telling them that His blood is something brand new. Jesus’ blood can do what the blood of the old covenant could never have done. That blood of animals had to be shed repeatedly. Jesus Christ died once – for all.



We need to realize the offering of Jesus on the cross was a one-time event for everyone for all of eternity. Hebrews says, *“Not that He (Jesus) should offer Himself*

often, as the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood of another – He then would have had to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now, once at the end of ages, He has appeared to put away sin by the

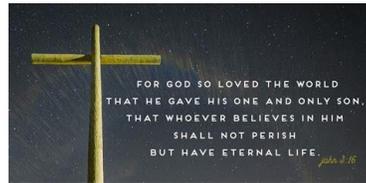


sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.” (Hebrews 9:25-28)

Verse 12 in chapter ten goes on to say, *“But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.”* (Hebrews 10:12-13)

3. For Many

The third phrase I see in this passage is **“For Many.”** The death of Jesus on the cross was not for a limited few. The five-point Calvinists would want us to believe that Jesus only died for particular people, only certain, pre-determined individuals. I believe Jesus died so that “whosoever will” might come and be saved by the grace of God. *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.”* (John 3:16)



4. For the Remission of Sins

The fourth phrase in Matthew’s passage tells us that Jesus shed His blood **“For the Remission of Sins.”** This phrase tells us that the blood of Jesus has the power to wash away our sins. When John the Baptist saw Jesus walking by the Jordan River, John said, *“Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”* (John 1:29) This is literally what the blood of Jesus



does for us: it washes away every sin and makes us perfectly clean in the sight of God the Father.

Every time I baptize someone, I ask them to taste some salt and then I hand them a candle. I do this to remind that person as well as the rest of the congregation that we are to be the “salt and light” to a world in darkness. We are to take on the active role of preserving our family and community with the love of God in us. We are to take on the responsibility of reflecting the light of Christ to others. I John 1:7 says, *“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”*



Before we move on to verses 29 and 30, let me point out a few things first. I don’t want you to miss this.

The **first** thing I want you to see is the Lord’s Supper was instituted prior to Jesus going to the cross. Jesus was willing to die for our sins. He was not slain against His will, but He went to the cross and laid down His life with His eyes wide open. He came for that reason.



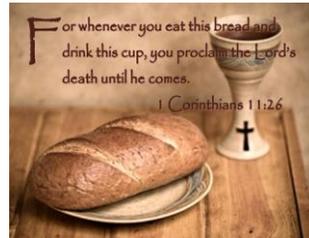
When Jesus stood before Pilate, Jesus said, *“You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice.”* (John 18:37) He willingly gave Himself in our place. *“As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay*

down my life for the sheep.” (John 10:15) “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father. (John 10:17-18). What love Jesus demonstrated for us!

A **second** idea that comes to my mind as we come to the Lord’s Table is found in the phrase, **“Take, eat” and “Drink.”** This reminds us that Jesus must be received into a person’s life. It is not enough for us to know Who He is. It is not enough to know a lot about the Bible. We must receive Him to be saved. Paul said to keeper of the prison, *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.”* (Acts 16:31) We must receive it – take it – eat it – drink it.



A **third** idea centers around the phrase, **“drink ye all of it.”** This phrase is found in the KJV. The NKJV says *“drink from it, all of you.”* I believe I like the KJV better. It says, *drink ye all of it.* This lets us know that Jesus is not like a buffet. With a buffet, you have a lot to pick and choose from. You can eat some of everything, or only choose a few items. With Jesus – we must take it all. We must take Him as He is: it’s all or nothing. We cannot pick and choose the parts we like. He is Lord. He is God. He is Savior. We must take the bloody Christ, as well as Christ the teacher of the Sermon on the Mount.



As we come to the Lord’s Table to remember what Jesus did for us, we are remembering the sacrifice of our Lord on the cross for our soul’s salvation.

I. A Word of Provision

II. A WORD OF PROMISE (v. 29)

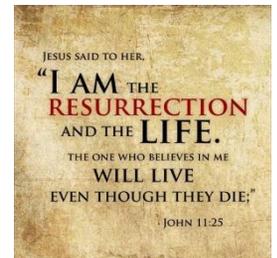
We have seen the provision offered by Christ; now let us hear of the promise.

“But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.”

When you first read this verse, you may not catch how significant the words Jesus were saying to His closest disciples. The fact that Jesus tells His disciples that He will share the cup with them in a future kingdom is evidence of at least three promises contained in this one verse.

The Promise of a Resurrection

First, we see the promise of a **resurrection**. Jesus has just told them that He is going to die. This verse lets us know He is going to live again. If Jesus had remained in the grave, there would be nothing for me to preach about. But we serve a Savior who died on the cross to save us from our sins, but three days later, rose from the dead and is seated at the right hand of God now. The resurrection is at the very heart of the Gospel, and when we celebrate the Lord’s supper, we are remembering the fact that Jesus is alive.



The Promise of a Return

We also see in this verse, a promise of His **return**. Jesus tells these men that He will meet them in a future kingdom. The Jews understood the Kingdom of God to be a literal kingdom that would be established on the earth. Therefore, this promise of Jesus is a promise to come again. This promise is yet to be fulfilled.



We believe Jesus will return to this world as expounded by Paul in his letters. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; and in 1 Corinthians 15:51-52). Jesus will come first at what we call the Rapture to receive His people unto Himself. The dead in Christ will rise first and those that remain shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye and join the Lord in the air. At His second coming, He will come and establish His kingdom in the world. When we take the Lord's Supper, we are celebrating the return of the Lord Jesus to this world.

A Promise of a Reunion

Lastly, in verse 29, Jesus is promising us a **reunion**. He tells them that He will be with them once again. For those that love the Lord, this is a precious promise. We will be able to see Jesus in the New Jerusalem. He is the one that took our place at Calvary and purchased our redemption. The Bible is clear when it tells us that one day, we will be with Him and that we will see Him face to face. (John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:17; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 22:4.) We will see Him one day and that is a promise we all celebrate when we participate in of the Lord's Supper service.



I. A Word of Provision

II. A Word of Promise

III. A WORD OF PRAISE

(v. 30)

In these verses, we have heard the word of provision, we have heard the word of promise, and the closing verse tells us about a word of praise.

“And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.”

The Bible tells us that the disciples finished their meal by singing a hymn. This probably refers to the fact that they sang a Psalm of praise. They most likely sang the Hallel Psalms. Psalm 113 and 114 were sang before the Passover Meal while Psalm 115-118 were sung after as praise to the Lord God. This simply reminds us that the Lord's Supper is a time of praise and worship before the Lord. Let us remember that when we come to the Lord's Table, we are to do so with a heart that is filled with praise for what He did for us on the cross!

Praise through Song

The longer I serve the Lord, the more He puts His word in my heart though song. Psalm 40:3 says, *“He has put a new song in my mouth – Praise to our God; Many will see it and fear, and will trust in the Lord.”*

Some of the closest times I have felt with the Lord was when the choir or a soloist was singing a song of praise. Nothing honors the Lord more than when His people lift up

Psalms 113

King James Version

Praise ye the LORD. Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD. Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the LORD's name is to be praised. The LORD is high above all nations, and his glory ab...



their voices in praise to Him. We all can making a joyful noise unto the Lord. (Psalm 95:1) After the great sacrifice Jesus made for us at Calvary, the least we can do is offer to Him our sacrifices of praise and worship. Hebrews 13:15 reminds us to *“continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”*

We can make our time at the Lord’s table a joyous time. Let us worship Him for His unspeakable gift to you and me!

Praise through Service

Not only does this verse let us know Jesus’ disciples not only worshipped with Jesus, they also walked with Him. They left the Upper Room, and they walked with Him. They left the place of worship, comfort, security and followed wherever He went. A dedicated, consecrated life is the surest way to prove you love Jesus. (John 14:15) Nothing says “I love you” to Jesus more openly than a life of simple obedience to His Word and His will.

When we come to the Lord’s Table, it is an opportunity for us to search our hearts and see where we stand with the Lord. Paul warned the early church about coming to the Lord’s Table with dirty hearts. (1 Corinthians 11:27-31) So, before we take of the Lord’s Supper, we need to look into our own hearts and make sure we are right with the Lord. If there are any unconfessed sins, we need to get them taken care of. Be sure the heart is clean. Just as the Lord Supper is a time to remember, it is also a time to repent!



We should use this time to praise the Lord by offering our bodies as a living sacrifice to His eternal glory. (Romans 12:1-2.)

Conclusion

As the disciples heard the words of Jesus that night, they didn’t understand everything they heard Him say. You and I have an advantage over them. We have a Bible that tells us the whole story of how Jesus was born, how He lived and how He died and rose again to deliver us from sin.

There may be those here today who are saved, but you need to come before the Lord this morning and renew your commitment to Him.

You know you have walked away from the vows you once made to the Lord and you need to repent. Now is the time! If you will come, you will find just what the Prodigal Son found. You will find a Father Who loves you and One that is ready to forgives you fully. (1 John 1:9)

Others need to come to the Lord and simply use this time to say “Thank you Lord for saving my soul.” You need to come and praise Him for His blessings and His grace in your life.

Still others need to come to Jesus today for salvation. You are lost and now you know that Jesus died to save your soul from an eternity in Hell. You need to receive Jesus as your personal Savior right now.

Wherever this message finds you, you need to do as the Spirit of God is leading you right now. Will you come as the Lord calls you?

LET US PRAY

