>>>>>>> *Matthew – Lesson 51* <<<<<<<

Matthew 26:26–29(ESV)

Institution of the Lord's Supper

26 Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." **27** And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, **28** for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. **29** I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

1) Matthew is brief and to the point here again.
   a) As I read this once more, I wondered if the disciples really were surprised at Jesus' words.
   b) Establishing a new covenant with emblems of body as food and blood as the fulfillment of His new covenant and forgiveness of the sins of many.
      i) The original covenant with Abraham had lasted 2000 years.
2) There are three main views of the emblems instituted here:
   a) The bread and wine actually become Christ's body and blood;
   b) The bread and wine remain unchanged, but Christ is spiritually present by faith in and through them; and finally …
   c) The bread and wine, remain unchanged, but are lasting memorials of Christ's sacrifice.

Point of curiosity and you don't have to share but, which view of the emblems do you personally consider when you take communion?

   a) No matter which view we favor, all Christians agree that the Lord's Supper commemorates Christ's death on the cross in our place, paying the penalty for our sins (propitiation), and it points to the coming of his kingdom in glory.
   b) I personally think that regardless of which one we pick, we should pick a view.
      i) The idea being that it helps us focus even more on the purpose of the event each week.
   c) In 1 Cor 11, Paul tells us clearly what our thoughts regarding the purpose of communion should be …

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (ESV)

23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when 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.**" **25** In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, **in remembrance of me.**" **26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you **proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

   d) When we partake of it, we show our deep gratitude for Christ's work on our behalf, and our faith is strengthened.

3) In recent months, Micah and Aaron made a significant change to what our communion presenters were doing.

a) There were many cases prior to this change where our presenters though well-meaning were so far off the topic that the cup and bread were not even mentioned.

b) We are now reminded and our minds are brought to the reason we are doing what we are doing by a simple opening phrase; "Welcome to the table of the Lord."

   i) And, the comments that follow are more on point than some have been earlier in the year.

c) I personally applaud what they have done.

1) Next, we have a case of well-intentioned and hasty words salted with perhaps a dash of arrogance …

Matthew 26:30–35(ESV)

Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial

30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. 31 Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' 32 But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." 33 Peter answered him, "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away." 34 Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." 35 Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!" And all the disciples said the same.

2) Peter hears "you will fall away" and probably took it as an affront to his faith in Jesus so he responds to that.

What should Peter have heard instead of "fall away?"

a) First, that the falling away will fulfill prophesy.

b) Second and perhaps more importantly, Jesus would be raised up and that He would go before them to Galilee.

c) In other words, Peter should have accepted the bad but heard the more important things Jesus was saying;

   i) Jesus will rise from the dead and meet them as their risen Lord in Galilee.

   ii) And It will fulfill prophesy.

d) Jesus has told them before of His resurrection but this time it is more defined because there is an after action associated with it – meeting them in Galilee – that statement has not been there before.

Do we ever have a problem listening to the whole (or reading the whole) before we react?

e) Sometimes I have yell at myself – "read the email more carefully!!!"

3) This is a second time Peter has stood directly in opposition to a proclamation of Jesus.

a) The other time I am thinking of is when Peter rebukes the Lord for telling them what was going to happen to Him.

b) This was just after Jesus had given Simon (Peter) his new name Peter (Rock).

i) This is the same incident where Jesus says to Peter – "Get behind me Satan."

4) In this case, Peter begins with the claim that he would never fall away even if all the others did.

a) Jesus then explains to Peter that he would fall away and it would include denial – not just once but three times.

b) To which, Peter responds; "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!"

c) Then, not to be out done by Peter, all the others say the same thing.

At this point, do you think the disciples are starting to get it that Jesus is really going to die or are their comments simply another form of denial?

a) Perhaps a little of both.

b) Truth is, none of them evidently heard the most important part of what Jesus said!

c) As we will see in verse 56, Jesus is right – they do all fall away – they literally desert him at that point.

d) And, as we know, none of them decides to stand next to him in front of the chief priests and elders and be condemned to death.

1) Continuing, we read Jesus' final pleas to the Father for the cup to pass from Him.

a) The Garden of Gethsemane is on the west slope of the Mount of Olives, probably not very far from where they entered the Mount of Olives to begin with.

Matthew 26:36–46(ESV)

Jesus Prays in Gethsemane

36 Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his
disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray." 37 And taking with him Peter
and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. 38 Then he said
to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with
me." 39 And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father,
if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you
will." 40 And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter,
"So, could you not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray that you may not
enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." 42 Again,
for the second time, he went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless
I drink it, your will be done." 43 And again he came and found them sleeping, for
their eyes were heavy. 44 So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the
third time, saying the same words again. 45 Then he came to the disciples and said to
them, "Sleep and take your rest later on. See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man
is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at
hand."

2) At this point, we see Jesus in a state of pure agony and anguish.

a) When Jesus fell on His face before God, it was in spiritual anguish.

b) He is trying in a last-ditch effort to avoid the "cup" that He knew was His to drink.

When Jesus is praying for the cup to pass from Him, what is the cup?

a) There are many facets to the cup Jesus speaks of here.

b) Cup here refers not only to the suffering, humiliation, and death He must endure; it also refers to the expression "cup" that is drawn from the Old Testament prophets e.g.:

Jeremiah 25:15 (ESV)
The Cup of the LORD's Wrath
15 Thus the LORD, the God of Israel, said to me: "Take from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink it.

c) This represents one of two facets of the passion that we must see.

i) Jesus will have to feel the wrath of the Father because of sin (our sins) that will be placed upon Him.

ii) Second, Jesus will feel the abandonment of the Father at His death.

(1) God cannot be in the presence of sin so when all the sins of all mankind past, present, and future were placed on Christ, God could not be in His presence.

iii) This I think leads to the separation Jesus exclaims in chapter 27:46 …

Matthew 27:46 (ESV)
46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

d) Jesus and the Father had always been one – His entire earthly existence had been a continuous effort on Jesus' part to be obedient and keep that relationship intact.

e) Now it was to be destroyed by the sin that He must carry to His death.

f) This is one of those things that I have wondered about for as long as I can remember – this was in truth what the sacrifice of His Son was really all about in God's eyes.

i) Considering the entire time, with the perspective of "eternity" it is a very short time over which this all takes place.

ii) It just shows again how we are created in His image but we cannot ever understand what causes Him pain, and how much it affects Him.

iii) It had to be massively significant in the eternal scheme of things but, we just cannot really as humans understand it.

3) Two final questions on this passage:

First, why do you think Jesus took Peter, James, and John along the short distance to where He was going to pray?

The second is related and may be part of the answer to the first question – what did Jesus expect Peter, James, and John to do while He was praying?

4) There is a facet of this entire situation we must not miss – we must understand that Jesus is asking for something He knew in His heart could not and would not be granted.

a) This was a desperate cry of the Son to His Father that the cup could pass from Him.

b) God accepted the prayer without granting the request.

c) This was a Son's loving request and a Father's loving wisdom coming together.

d) We must let this be a model for our own prayerful exchanges with the Father in certain situations.

e) Stuart Weber puts it this way:

But Jesus' model is a comfort to us. We need to pour out our hearts honestly to God, even if we know our deepest "want" is not what he will grant. God desires us to be able to come to him feeling the safety of total honesty. He is competent to handle the cries of our souls.[51]

[51] Stuart K. Weber, *Matthew*, vol. 1, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 441–42.