

## SERMON LUKE 22 IN REMEMBRANCE

November 3, 2019

The Lord's Supper is one of the two sacraments celebrated by the United Methodist Church; the other one being baptism. Communion is not only a sign of the love that God has for us as Christians and the love we should have for each other, but it also reminds us that because of Jesus Christ our sins are forgiven. Remember Jesus came to take away the sins of the world and this was accomplished on the cross at Calvary. This morning let's look at one of the primary scripture references for the Lord's Supper which is found in the twenty-second chapter of the Gospel of Luke, verses 7 through 20.

Read Luke 22:7-20

Following the Passover meal, Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper, a sacred memorial for His followers that has been passed down through the centuries to us today. First Jesus took the bread as a symbol of His body which would shortly be given for the disciples and for us. Then He took and blessed the cup which represents His precious blood that would be shed on the cross at Calvary for our sins. Jesus stated that by this act He was establishing a new covenant which was not only available to the disciples of old but to all of us here today. Now a covenant is a relationship between God and us, a relationship of grace and mercy.

This morning I would like for us to focus on verse 19 of our scripture text which states: "Do this in remembrance of me." Do you remember the liturgy that I will later read from Page 14 of our hymn books as we prepare to receive Holy Communion? See if this sounds familiar?

"On the night in which He gave Himself up for us He took bread, gave thanks to You, broke the bread, and gave it to His disciples, and said: "Take, eat, this is my body which was given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. When the supper was over, He took the cup, gave thanks to You, gave it to His disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. And so, in remembrance of these Your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice..."

Have you ever given any serious thought as to what this means? When Jesus sat down with His disciples for the last time before the crucifixion, He knew how easily the human mind forgets; and those of us with some age and grey hair can testify to that. Jesus knew that in the rush and demands of daily life we will forget unless there is some act of remembrance; some reminder of what He has done and is doing for us.

As we grow older, we know how easy it is to forget things, even what we had for breakfast this morning. I found these quotes on memory:

1. To err is human; to forget is routine.
2. The nice thing about a bad memory is that you enjoy reruns.
3. Some women have a terrible memory; they remember everything.
4. A woman always remembers where and when she got married; a man sometimes forgets why.
5. My brain is like the Bermuda Triangle; information goes in and then it's never found again.
6. Three things indicate that we are getting old. First, the loss of memory, and I can't remember the other two.
7. As we prepare for an election this week remember that a politician has a good memory, but hopes the voters don't!
8. Finally, as John Newton said "although my memory is fading, I remember two things clearly: I am a great sinner and Jesus Christ is a great Savior."

Legendary baseball broadcaster Jon Miller, who provided the play-by-play for the Baltimore Orioles for many years, was considered one of the best sports announcers in the nation. His sense of drama and his voice of authority could make even an 8-1 blowout sound exciting. In broadcasting a game, Miller never forgot the most important thing. He always kept an egg-timer to remind him to give the score every three minutes. The Lord's Supper is a reminder to us of God's love for us. Amid all the activities, problems and disappointments of life, it reminds us on a regular basis of the most important thing in our life – Jesus Christ.

Now in a way, Jesus did not introduce a new concept. You see God wanted the nation of Israel to remember their great deliverance from slavery in Egypt. So in the text that Jana/Chuck read to us earlier from Exodus 12:14, God instructed the Israelites through Moses that they were to set aside one day each year to celebrate what He had done for them. Of course, this day of remembrance is the Passover. The observance of the Passover Feast was intended to remind the Jewish people of God's divine love for them. And obedient generations of the Jewish people have celebrated the Passover ever since to the present day.

Just as the Passover is a constant reminder and proclamation of God's deliverance of the Israelites from bondage and slavery in Egypt, so is our participation in Holy Communion an act of remembering and proclaiming the deliverance of all believers from the bondage of sin through Jesus Christ's atoning act on the cross. As the Feast of Passover is a celebration of what God has done for the Jewish people, so the Lord's Supper is a celebration of what Jesus Christ has done for us.

In addition to remembering what He has done for us, as we come to the Lord's Table, we should also remember how and when we accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Now some of you may have had a life-changing experience like the Apostle Paul on the road to

Damascus. However, some of us can't recall the exact moment or place when we accepted Jesus into our hearts since we have been involved in the church and known the Lord most of our life. But I do remember the night that I came forward and joined the church announcing my acceptance of Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior to the whole world; if you consider a small, I mean small country town the world.

It was during one of those old-time revivals; you know the ones with hell-fire preaching, gospel singing, wasps flying all over the sanctuary on a hot southern night, and people using those old funeral fans to cool themselves and swat the wasps. I was the oldest of the confirmation class, so I was to lead the others forward during the invitation hymn. Well, my mother started playing the first verse on the piano, but my hands were glued to the back of the wooden pew in front of us. The others looked at me, but I was frozen in fear. Finally, near the end of the second verse, I led them forward. You know I have never regretted that decision and will always cherish that moment. Remember how Jesus came into your heart and life.

We should also remember the holy places in our lives; those places and times when we most felt the presence of the Lord and were closest to Him. There are several in my life, as most likely in yours as well. I remember when we were on a mission trip to Seward, Alaska. One night about 10 o'clock, one of our youth came to me and said that she wanted to be baptized and join the church. So we went down to the bay and baptized her; this was also special because the bay is named Resurrection Bay; it had been discovered on Easter morning.

Communion is a time of remembrance; of when we came to know the Lord, and where we have been closest to Him. But the most important thing is that we remember and thank Jesus for all that He has done and is doing for us. We must never let the communion service become a mere formality, but always a tender and touching experience. Every time we eat the bread we are remembering the body of Christ nailed to the cross for us, and every time we drink the juice we are remembering the blood that was shed on the cross to wash away our sins.

A little girl, seeing a cross on the communion table, asked: "Mama, what is that plus sign doing on the table?" The cross is God's great plus sign in history; He added forgiveness and hope to a world in much need of it. We must never forget that when we come forward for communion that the bread and the cup point back to Jesus' completed work on our behalf and forward to our salvation. And He did all of this out of love for each one of us. This morning, as we take the bread and the cup we do so in remembrance of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

On this All Saints Sunday, we also come to remember those individuals who lived out the teachings of Jesus Christ to the best of their ability, and who are the reason we are here this morning – pastors, Sunday School teachers, parents, relatives, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Each of us can name "saints" who have shaped and influenced our lives. For the most

part they have been people who were not extraordinary by the world's standards. Instead, they remained faithful in the midst of the ordinary events and demands of life. We must never forget those who helped us to know and grow in Jesus Christ.

Likewise, we who remain here on earth must recognize the awesome responsibility and privilege that we have to witness to others and to help them grow spiritually. As Christ invites us to His table this morning, so are we to invite others to join us. In every age, Christianity is always one generation away from extinction. We can prevent this by setting an example for those who follow us as our loved ones have set the example for us.

We come this morning to remember those who have gone on before us; those who lived their lives in such a way that it has strengthened our walk with the Lord; those who were faithful witnesses for Jesus Christ. We come to share in the communion of saints as stated in the Apostles' Creed. Now the Communion of Saints is understood as the belief of all Christians – Catholic, Orthodox and Protestants – that all of God's people here on earth and in heaven are connected in a communion, a fellowship. It refers to the spiritual union of the members of the Christian Church, both living and dead, those on earth and those in heaven. May we each live worthy of the legacy that they have left to us and may we remain faithful as we prepare to join them some day.

Over the past year, we have said good-bye to many friends, neighbors and loved ones. We have committed them to the care of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; the One who wipes away all the tears from our eyes. As we remember those who have died in the Lord, we do so, not in great sorrow and hopelessness, but in the sure hope of the resurrection. We remember them and believe that as we gather for communion in a few minutes, we also gather with the hosts of heaven, and look forward to the day that we will all feast at the heavenly banquet.

All Saints Day is not a day of separation, but a day of reunion; a day when we thank God for the wonderful gift of salvation that allows us all to be gathered with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who died that we might live; who suffered for our sins that we might have forgiveness; who defeated death so that we, the saints who remain here on earth, might know the resurrection.

At this time \_\_\_\_\_ will come forward and read the names of those in our church family who have gone home to be with the Lord over the past year while \_\_\_\_\_ will light a candle in each of their memory.