

RUINED BY SIN, MADE NEW BY GRACE
Romans 5:12; 3:21-26; 2 Corinthians 5:17

Intro: We have come together tonight to remember our Lord.
That ought to be our purpose in every meeting of the church, but it is especially why we are here tonight.

But what are we to remember?

We are to remember His death. The Apostle Paul brought that out in his words to the Corinthian church in 1 Cor. 11:26 where he wrote,

For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup,
ye do shew the Lord's death till He come.

But what specifically are we to remember about His death?

This question is also answered in Scripture. In 1 Cor. 11:24 we are told that when the Lord took the bread, He gave thanks, then He broke it and gave it to His disciples saying to them, "This is my body, which is broken **for you.**" And in Luke 22:20 we are told that when the Lord passed the cup to the disciples, He said to them,

This cup is the new testament in my blood,
which is shed **for you.**"

And so we are not remembering the death of our Lord simply as a tragic event in history, but we are to think of His death in a very personal way. All of us as believers need to pay attention to those words, "**for you.**" We are the reason for his death. And so we are to remember the death of our Lord Jesus Christ as it relates to us.

Paul, in the book of Romans, made it very clear as to why it was necessary for Christ to die for us! I am thinking about what the Apostle said in Romans 5:6, "Christ died for the ungodly." And then in Romans 5:8 Paul wrote, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." In Romans 5:9 Paul spoke of our being "saved from wrath through him," i.e., through Christ. And then in Romans 5:10 Paul said that "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son."

And so it was because we were ungodly, we were sinners, we were enemies of God in need of being reconciled to Him -- these were the reasons that Christ died for us. He died for all who believe on Him now -- today! He died for all who believed on Him before He came. And He died for all who will ever believe on Him from this moment on. When we all get to heaven, we will all be able to say, "Christ died for me." If He had not died for us, we all spend eternity in hell, not in heaven. We need to remember this every day that we live, but

to keep us reminded of this glorious fact, the Lord ordained that periodically (the frequency is left up to us) we should remember that Christ died for us by observing the Lord's Supper.

But this all leads to another question: Why are we sinners? Why are we and every person from Adam on down, ungodly? Why are we by nature at enmity with God?

The answer is given to us in Romans 5:12 where we read,
Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world,
and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men,
for that all have sinned.

That last phrase, "for that all have sinned, could be more accurately translated if we were to read it, "because all sinned."

The Apostle Paul was speaking of Adam. And he was teaching us that when Adam sinned, he brought the curse of sin upon the whole human race. He disobeyed God by eating the fruit which God told him not to eat, and as a result, not only did he become a sinner, but his sons were born in sin, and every person from that day to this has been born into the world a sinner. We are born with the capacity to sin, with the inclination to sin, and everything that we do is marred because we are sinners. Even though Eve sinned first, it seems that she also fell under divine judgment because of Adam's sin.

This is the way Paul stated it in his first letter to the Corinthian church: "In Adam all die" (1 Cor. 15:22, NASB).

Therefore, as we come to the Lord's Table tonight to remember the Lord, let us remember that He died for us because:

I. WE HAVE BEEN RUINED BY SIN.

Now I want to focus your attention on three ways in which we have been ruined by Adam's sin, and we have ruined ourselves further by our own sin.

How have we been ruined?

Let me mention three ways:

- 1) Our relationship with God has been ruined.
- 2) Our nature has been ruined.
- 3) Our thinking has been ruined.

A. Our relationship to God has been ruined.

Adam's fellowship with God was ruined when he sinned. Before

he sinned, his fellowship with God was perfect. After he sinned, he hid himself from God, and he fell under the judgment of God. He was under divine condemnation. He was lost. He was alienated from God. Spiritually he was dead in his trespasses and his sins. And this is the condition under which every person comes into this world. Man is totally without hope. By nature we are the children of wrath; we are "condemned already."

Most of you will recognize that the statements I have been making about our ruined relationship with God have been taken from various passages of Scripture.

B. Our nature has been ruined.

We are born with sinful natures. We cannot please God. And because we are sinners by nature, we are sinners by choice. King David expressed what has happened to us as a result of Adam's sin when he wrote in Psa. 51:5,

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity;
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Why did God destroy all of the people on the earth at the time of the flood -- except for Noah and his family? Genesis 6:5 gives us our answer:

And God saw that the wickedness of man
was great in the earth, **and that every imagination
of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.**

David said in Psa. 58:3,

The wicked are estranged from the womb:
they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

This is why we can say truthfully of mankind that he is **TOTALLY DEPRAVED**. There is not one part of man's being that has not been ruined by sin. Jeremiah the prophet gave us these words:

The heart is deceitful above all things,
and desperately wicked: who can know it?

In fact, we are so sinful in God's sight that even the good things that we do are completely unacceptable to Him, even abominable to Him. Listen to these words from Isaiah 64:6:

But we are all as an unclean thing,
and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;
and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities,
like the wind, have taken us away.

We are sinners by nature, and there is nothing that we can do about it.

C. Our thinking has been ruined.

You can see this illustrated every day in human behavior. People persist in doing evil, paying the price for it now, and yet they continue on in it. We have practically eliminated the word sin from our vocabulary, and many in every generation spend their lives trying to convince themselves that there is no God. The Bible clearly tells us that our thoughts and God's thoughts are as different as it is possible for two things to be, as different as the heavens are high above the earth. Man by his reasoning never comes to God. Paul told the Corinthians that the wisdom of this world comes to nothing. People die by the millions in every generation on to find out when it is too late that their thinking has been wrong all of their lives. In fact, when you try to change people's thinking by the Word of God, they will tell you that they are wrong and that they are right.

When our Lord was dying on the Cross, He said, "Father, forgive them; for they ~~know not~~ what they do" (Luke 23:34). And Paul said of the princes of this world who put our Lord to death that "had they ~~known~~ it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:8).

And what verse makes it clearer that man's thinking is all wrong than that verse, given twice in the book of Proverbs, which says this:

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man,
but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Cf. Prov. 14:12; 16:25.

The Apostle Paul said in Eph. 4:17, 18 of people in the world that they

...walk, in the vanity of their mind,
Having the understanding darkened,
being alienated from the life of God
through the ignorance that is in them,
because of the blindness of their heart.

And so that we will see the hopelessness of man's condition we have these words from the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 2:14:

But the natural man receiveth not
the things of the Spirit of God:
for they are foolishness unto him:
neither can he know them,
because they are spiritually discerned.

This is why people don't want to hear about God. This is why they will not believe that the Bible is the Word of God.

This is why they won't listen when we talk about sin. Their thinking has been ruined as a result of sin.

We see it in government. We see it in business. We see it

in sports. We see it everywhere in daily life.

LET US ALL REMEMBER THIS AS WE COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE.
WHAT I HAVE BEEN SAYING ABOUT PEOPLE GENERALLY APPLIED ALSO
TO US. WE WERE SEPARATED FROM GOD. WE ARE SINNERS BY NATURE.
OUR THINKING WAS CORRUPTED, TOO.

AND THEN LET US REMEMBER THIS ALSO: THAT GOD DID NOT HAVE TO
DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT. HE COULD HAVE LET US ALL GO ON TO
HELL. BUT BECAUSE HE SET HIS LOVE UPON US IN ETERNITY PAST,
AND BECAUSE HE IS A GOD OF GRACE, HE NOT ONLY WAS DETERMINED
TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, BUT HE WAS DETERMINED TO DO EVERY-
THING!

And so my second point is that we are:

II. WE HAVE BEEN MADE NEW BY GOD'S GRACE.

Let me take it point by point, but quickly because the time
is slipping by.

A. Through Christ we have been justified, and reconciled to God.

Let me give you two verses which say it all, and both are
found in Romans. First, Rom. 3:24:

Being justified freely by his grace
through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Through Christ we have been declared righteous before God.
We are no longer alienated from Him, but are in full fellowship
with Him.

Second, Rom. 5:10:

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God
through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled,
we shall be saved by his life.

Remember as we come to the Lord's Table tonight, we would
still be under divine condemnation and at enmity with God if
Christ had not died for us.

B. Through the death of Christ we have been made new creatures in Christ -- new creations.

Listen to 2 Cor. 5:17:

Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:
old things are passed away;
behold, all things are become new.

Oh, we can still sin, but we no longer have to sin. And we
don't want to sin any longer because we have been born again;
we have life from above, the very life of God in us.

What about our thinking?

C. God has revealed the truth to us by His Holy Spirit.

Once we were blind; now we see. It used to be that we did not know God, but now we know Him and love Him. It used to be that we didn't want to read the Word of God, nor hear it. In fact, we didn't believe it was His Word. Now we know it is, and we love it. More than that, we want to be what the Lord wants us to be, and we want to do what He wants us to do.

Cf. 1 Cor. 2:9, 10.

We can still sin, but we don't want to sin. And we know that the day is coming when we will no longer be able to sin. And how we look forward to that day!

Concl: But let us remember tonight that if Christ has not died for us, we would still be alienated from God; we would still be in bondage to our sin natures; we would still be ignorant of God and His truth.

But God loved us, and so Christ died for us, and the Holy Spirit has convicted us of our sin and pointed us to Christ as our Savior. And so as we take the bread and drink from the cup, let us ~~remember~~ that all that we have in Christ we have because He died for us, and He died for us because God in His grace sent Him to be our Savior.