

“IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME”

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Intro: Since our beginning as a church a little over thirty years ago, there is no passage of Scripture that has been read more frequently than my text for this evening. We have read it twice a month in serving the Lord's Supper, and then also when we have observed the Lord's Supper on Day's of Prayer and other occasions such as New Year's Eve. Besides those who are reading the Bible through each year, read it then. And there may be other times when we have read it, or heard it read. I even spoke on this passage back in '03 and '09, and probably several times before these two years. So we are well acquainted with them.

This is all very wonderful, when you stop to think about it, because there is no message that is more important than the Gospel. The Gospel has many different facets which touch every part of the Word of God, and most, if not all, of the major doctrines of Scripture.

Now we have the historical record of the event which the Apostle Paul was referring to as he wrote 1 Corinthians in three of the four Gospels. If you have marginal references in your Bible, they are probably given to you in connection with these verses. But just in case you do not have them readily available, let me tell you that they are found in Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; and Luke 22:19-20. All three records are very brief – three verses each in Matthew and Mark, and just two verses in Luke.

Now of the three records that are given to us in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Luke is the only one who records the words which I want us to focus on tonight. He said that when the Lord served His disciples the bread, He said, “This do in remembrance of Me” (Luke 22:19). So we know from Luke's record that the Lord said these words, “This do in remembrance of Me.” The Apostle Paul's record indicates that the Lord said these words when He served both the bread and the cup!

Now the Spirit of God led each of these men to record that wonderful event in different ways for different reasons, and I don't know that we can always say *why*. But since we have it twice in 1 Corinthians I am going to venture to say that it was because this was a part of the Lord's Supper that the Corinthians were overlooking. Of course, they knew that the Supper spoke of the Person and Work of our Savior, but it may have been that

they had lost their focus on the Savior Himself. We all know from our reading and study of 1 Corinthians that the church in Corinth as a church full of problems. And this had affected the way they were observing the Lord's Supper. And Paul told them, if you go on to read the rest of chapter 11 that their failure to observe the Lord's Supper in the proper way, that as Paul wrote, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and some sleep" (1 Cor. 11:30).

Now we all can be thankful that the Lord does not deal with us in such a severe way every time our observance of the Lord's Supper is not what the Lord intends for it to be, but we need to take the warning that the Apostle Paul was giving to the Corinthian church.

Let us ask ourselves, What do we think about as we observe the Lord's Supper? Do we think about what the men are doing as they serve us? Do we think about what we are going to do after the service is over, or what need to do during the following week? I could never ask enough questions to cover everything that we might be thinking. Maybe it is some problem that you are facing?

But the big question is, "Am I thinking of the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ?" Let me read to you a couple of verses from Isaiah which most of you know which have to do with remembering the Lord. I have used them recently in our study of the Beatitudes. Here they are from Isaiah 26:3-4:

3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

4 Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:

Everybody needs peace, especially "perfect peace." Have you come to the service tonight weighted down with something that is worrying you? You have come to the right place because the Lord Jesus said that the purpose of the Lord's Supper is that we should remember Him.

Or are you troubled about some sin which you have committed. You just can't forget it. Have you remembered what the Lord did at the Cross by the sacrifice of Himself? Do you remember that the Apostle John has told us that "the blood of Jesus Christ, (God's) Son, cleanseth us from all sin"? That is what we are doing tonight: we are remembering our wonderful Lord Who "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people [a people of His

own], zealous of good works” (Titus 2:14). How long has it been since we have thought of Galatians 2:20 which tell us that the Lord “loved us, and gave Himself for us”?

And how long has it been since you read Galatians 1:4 which tells us that our Lord Jesus “gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world” [or age]?

You see, the way we remember the Lord is not by trying to form some kind of a mental picture of what He was like, but it is to take our Bibles and read what the Bible tells us about our Lord. So as we wait for the men to serve us, and while we are waiting for everyone to be served, let us remember the Lord by thinking of verses which tell us specifically about Him. And no one is going to object if while you are waiting you open you Bible to look at verses that you know which speak of Him.

Oh, it is so easy for all of us to let our minds go from one thing to another while we are waiting to eat the bread, and to drink from the cup, when we should be thinking about the Lord.

But it is not just while we are attending a communion service that we need to do this, but we need to be doing it all of the time. How long is it when you get up in the morning before you are thinking about the Lord, and talking to Him. You know, when you love someone very much, no one needs to tell you to think about him or her. You just do it. And when we love the Lord , no one is going to have to tell us to remember Him. You will just do it.

And you know that the Father and the Holy Spirit were both involved in the sacrifice of Christ, so what I have said tonight about remembering the Lord, applies equally to remembering God and the Holy Spirit.

Now let us always remember that what the Lord wills for us to do, He enables us to do. So if we are going to remember the Lord we need to seek this blessing constantly from Him in prayer. Long ago King David prayed, “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer” (Psa. 19:14). He was so conscious of the Lord’s presence that he knew that the Lord heard every word that he said, and knew the thoughts that were in his heart. What a difference it would make for all of us if we were conscious of the Lord’s presence with us every moment of every day.

Almost every night Lucille and I read one of the Puritan prayers which have been printed in a book called, *The Valley of Vision*. They prayed differently from the way most of us pray today. They were very conscious of their unworthiness of the Lord's love and faithfulness. They confessed their great need of the Lord's blessing. They lived when it seems that life moved at a slower pace than it does today. Yet I am also sure that they struggled to do, as David did, and as we need to do, as he expressed it in Psalm 16:8-9:

8 I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.

What did he mean that he had set the Lord always before me? He meant that He always remembered that the Lord was with him.

Now it is God's purpose that the Lord's Supper should be one of those very important and precious times in our lives when the Lord ministers to us, causing us to think in very special ways of Him. This is in addition to those times each day that we spend time reading and meditating on the Word. Coming to church to hear the Word is another great help for us in remembering our Lord. What are we to see when we eat the bread and drink from the cup in our service tonight?

In the Lord's Supper we are to focus attention on the Person of Christ, we have this in the bread, and we are to think of the Work of Christ, which we see in the cup. The value of the work of Christ is dependent upon Who the Lord Jesus was, and is. Others might die for us, but no one could accomplish for us what the Lord Jesus did by His death because He is, and always has been, and always will be, the Son of God. That is why it is so important for us to believe in the Deity of Christ. He was not under the penalty of death until our sins were charged against Him. "He was wounded for our transgressions . . ." (Isa. 53:5-6). The Lord Jesus came to earth to die for our salvation, not because we deserved such a gift, but because of God's love for us. See John 3:16. It is "by grace that ye are saved . . ." (Eph.2:8-9). Paul also said in 2 Corinthians 5:21, "For He (God) hath made Him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." When the Lord Jesus died, we were crucified with Him, and so all of the benefits of His death have now been imputed to us

But we also need to remember that salvation, while give us forgiveness of

our sins, has had a positive effect in our lives. We have not only been saved from an eternal hell, but we have been made new creatures with eternal life. This is expressed many places in Scripture, but it could not be clearer than it is in Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ . . ."

But why did the Apostle Paul say in our text, "till He come"? What is going to happen when the Lord Jesus comes? We are not only going to be taken to heaven, but "we shall be changed." We are being changed now, but that is when the change will be made complete when we are like the Lord, and we will be with Him forever. Christ is our only hope. His death covers our past, secures our present, and assures our future.

Do you see what it is so important for us to observe the Lord's Supper tonight "in remembrance of Him"? All of our hope is in Christ Jesus who died to save us from our sins, Who by our salvation has made us new creatures in Christ enabling us to live for God's glory, and looking forward to His coming when "we shall be like Him" and be with Him forever. Sin will no longer be possible, Temptation will be a thing of the past. The Devil will no longer be able to touch us, and we know that even now he is doomed, having been defeated by our Lord at the Cross.

This is what the Bible is all about. It is incredible that we should ever forget the Lord, even for a moment. But we can. Therefore, the Lord has ordained that we should observe the His Supper to keep us reminded of all that He has done for us, all that He is presently doing for us, and all He will eventually do for us when His work of salvation is completed in us. It is secured now by His death, but it is to be enjoyed continually now in anticipation of His coming.

We remember His death tonight, but according to 2 Timothy 2:8 we are also to

8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:

9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory (2 Tim 2:8-10).

So we come tonight to remember our Lord, to get our eyes back on Him, just in case we have temporarily been distracted from remembering Him.

1 Cor. 11:23-26 (6)

Always as we come to the communion table let us remember His own words, “this do in remembrance of Me.” And, as we leave, let us pray that the Lord will cause us always to remember Him. That is our chiefest joy.

If time permits, comment on “as often as ye eat this bread . . .” The Lord did not set the frequency with which we observe the Supper, but it is a part of the joy that we bring to Him when we set aside the time to remember Him.