

WELCOME TO THE GATE HD

May 14, 2023

MOTHER'S DAY PRESENTATION

"Everything Mom"

*How did you find the energy, Mom, to do all the things you did,
To be teacher, nurse and counselor to me, when I was a kid.*

*How did you do it all, Mom, be a chauffeur, cook and friend,
Yet find time to be a playmate, I just can't comprehend.*

*I see now it was love, Mom, that made you come whenever I'd call,
Your inexhaustible love, Mom, and I thank you for it all.*

PRAYER OVER THE MOTHER'S

WELCOME OUR GUESTS

WEEKLY CATECHISM

Q. What are the decrees of God?

A. The decrees of God are, his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

Q. How doth God execute his decrees?

A. God executes his decrees in the works of creation and providence.

Q. What is the work of creation?

A. The work of creation is, God making all things out of nothing by the word of His power and all very good.

Q. How did God create man?

A. God created man male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with dominion over the creatures.

FIVE SMOOTH STONES: A CULTURALLY ENGAGED AND INFLUENTIAL CHURCH

“Communion and the New Creation Reality”

(Acts 2:42-47; I Corinthians 11:23-34)

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

A Devotion to the Word of God (the Apostle’s Teaching);

A Dedication to the Church Gathering (the Fellowship); and

A Discipline to Practice Communion and Prayer (the Breaking of Bread and Prayers).

Now, there are a variety of ways that the church, the body of Christ, receives the grace of God. For example ...

- There is prayer both individually and corporately;
- There is the ministry of the Word of God into everyday life;
- There is the privilege of operating in the gifts of the Spirit humbly praying for and hopeful to see signs and wonders;
- There is also the call to release righteousness, justice and holiness into the world around us by the way we live;
- AND, of course, the sacraments of the church are given to us as a means of grace.

The Westminster Confession of Faith: *"Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God, to represent Christ and his benefits; and to confirm our interest in him"* (27.1).

"[Abraham] received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised." (Romans 4:11)

Communion is more than an ordinance. It is a sacrament.

"Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is true worship." (Romans 12:1)

❖ WHY COMMUNION?

It is a REMEMBRANCE but also a RENEWAL! It is both a death or dying to self and a resurrection, renewing our faith in the risen Lord!

Communion is where earth reflects heaven, where the invisible realm becomes visible.

Communion and baptism are outward signs of the invisible and internal work of salvation that required a sacrifice and therefore qualify as sacramental.

"They are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith." (Romans 3:22b-25a)

❖ WHAT IS COMMUNION?

- A Narrative

It is a narrative like baptism. It is a story. It's God's story, it's the world's story, it's Israel's story, it's Jesus' story—and it's our story.

- A Portrait of Unity

When we come to the table of the Lord with the same heart and mind, we literally experience the unity of heaven and earth.

- A Place of Grace

The table of the Lord is a place where grace is ministered but not through the elements. Grace is received through faith not through elements.

Grace received through communion renews our faith. Faith begets faith! As John Wesley said, *"through the sacraments we encounter the grace of God and this grace moves us on toward perfection"*.

❖ BAPTISM AND COMMUNION AS GOSPEL, WORSHIP AND MISSION

So what I am aiming to establish THE SACRAMENT of Communion not as a sign and symbol only, but as ...

- A Sacred Act Given to the Church

They were given as a means of ...

- ▶ Encountering the Real and Powerful Presence of Christ
- ▶ Receiving the Grace of God and the Fullness of the Holy Spirit
- ▶ Embodying the Gospel by Entering into the Death, Burial and Resurrection of Christ
- ▶ Expressing Our Covenantal Commitment to the Body of Christ in Community

- The Sacred Act of Communion

- ▶ Communion isn't Only a Remembrance but a Reaffirmation of Faith in Christ
- ▶ Communion isn't Only About your Individual Faith and Life in Christ but Your Part in the Corporate Body of Christ
- ▶ Communion isn't About Feeling Something or Simply Having an Experience, It's About being Faithfully Present in Communion - in the Moment with Christ

(Call Elders Forward)

It is God's desire that we come together at the Table of the Lord with clear hearts and clean hands. Paul writes these words in I Corinthians 11:23-32.

"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.

²⁷ Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰ That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. ³¹ But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world."

(I Corinthians 11:23-32)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.