

A Sermon You Can See

7.26.26

1 Corinthians 11:23–32

Sunday AM

*For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 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.” In the same way, after supper He took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.** So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For those who eat and drink w/out discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. This is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we were more discerning w/ regard to ourselves, we wouldn’t come under such judgment. Nevertheless – when we’re judged in this way by the Lord, we’re being disciplined so we will not be finally condemned w/ the world. 1 Corinthians 11:23-32*

W/out question – much could be said about the LS and its importance to our lives and the role it plays in the life of the believe and the church – and how it is essential for helping us to abide in Christ.

Today though – I want to focus on (1) in this text that I think is especially relevant to our witness.

For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes. v. 26

A wedding ring is a relatively small object, but it makes a significant statement. As you know, the ring doesn’t create the marriage – nor does wearing it make someone a faithful husband/wife. What it does is visibly proclaim that a covenant has been made – and w/out saying a word says – “I’m taken! I belong to someone else – and I’ve made a promise to them.

In a similar way, the bread/cup in communion don’t ¹save us, ²earn forgiveness, or ³create a relationship w/ God. But when a follower of Jesus receives them, the elements make a visible declaration that we know Jesus and we’ve made a commitment to follow Him.

This makes the LS a witness you can see. *It’s a sermon w/out a pulpit and a testimony w/out a microphone.*

This is b/c the bread/cup tell the story of a life that has believed/received that Jesus’ body was broken and His blood spilled out for us to rescue us from eternal separation/condemnation into a relationship w/ God.

Thus – one of the primary reasons we partake is to declare to the world that we are a follower of Jesus – that we know Him as Savior and follow Him as Lord.

The word **proclaim** means to announce publicly, to bear witness to declare and make known.

This means that whenever we come to the table, we’re making a declaration about Jesus, salvation, eternity, and the mission to which we’ve been called.

WTM – Today, I want to share what the LS shares about our lives:

I The LS Proclaims What We **BELIEVE**

When we receive the bread/cup, we’re declaring that Jesus is more than a teacher, prophet, or religious leader. We’re confessing that He’s the Son of God and Savior who died for our sins and rose from the grave.

Think of it this way – the LS places us in the witness stand. The bread/cup are placed before us, and thru our participation we testify to what we believe.

- I believe in the person of Jesus
- I trust in His sacrifice
- I depend upon His grace
- I belong to His family
- I'm awaiting His return

So, the LS is a public confession that our hope isn't in our *morality, religion, good intentions, or good works* – our hope is in Jesus who died to atone for our sins.

Thus, the bread doesn't celebrate our goodness. It reminds us of His goodness. The cup doesn't announce what we've accomplished for God – it announces what God has accomplished for us.

Imagine a person standing in a courtroom accused of a crime. The evidence has been presented, guilt has been established, and the verdict is certain. But then someone steps forward and says – I'll accept the penalty in this person's place. This is what Jesus did for us at the cross. We were **guilty**, but He took our place. We were **condemned**, but He carried our judgment. We were **separated** from God, but He alone opened the way for us to be reconciled.

So, when we receive the bread/cup, we're confessing: My confidence isn't in what I've done for Jesus. My confidence is in what Jesus has done for me.

II We Proclaims the **MESSAGE** of Salvation

Paul doesn't simply say that we proclaim the Lord. He says that we proclaim **the Lord's death**. This might initially seem unusual. Why would Christianity center its message on an execution? Why would the church constantly return to a cross?

It's b/c the cross stands at the heart of the gospel. After all, w/out the cross – there's no forgiveness of sin. There's no reconciliation w/ God. There's no salvation apart from His gracious sacrifice.

Meaning – Jesus isn't one possible solution to the problem of sin. He's God's only solution to the problem of sin – *There is no other name under heaven by which a man can be saved.*

We see this in the bread and the cup. The bread proclaims that His body was given for us – *This is My body, which is given for you*. Only it wasn't just given. Isaiah wrote it was *pierced, beaten, and crushed* for the forgiveness of our sins.

So, the bread reminds us that salvation came at a cost. Meaning grace might be free to us, but it wasn't cheap – it cost Jesus His life in a brutal death.

But that's not all. The cup proclaims that His blood was poured out as a satisfying sacrifice to meet the requirements of God's justice – *for w/out the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness of sin.*

Together, the bread/cup proclaim that salvation has been purchased – and **it is finished**. It means the debt has been paid in full. There's no remaining balance due – the debt has been fully satisfied. This is the message we proclaim when we partake.

III We Proclaim the **HOPE** of His Return

*For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death **until He comes**.*

Paul says: we're to proclaim the Lord's death *until He comes*. These final (3) words change the focus.

This means the LS not only looks backward to the cross, but it also looks forward to His return. Meaning – the Savior who died is the Lord who rose. And the Lord who rose is the King who is coming again.

The LS is a meal b/w (2) two comings – His 1st coming was in humility to seek and save the lost – while the 2nd coming will be in glory to rule and reign. At His 1st coming, He was wrapped in swaddling clothes. At His 2nd coming, He'll be clothed in majesty. At His 1st coming, He wore a crown of thorns. At His 2nd coming, He will be revealed as King of kings/Lord of lords.

So, every time we come to the table, we're being reminded that history is moving toward His promised return – where evil will be defeated, creation will be restored, and God's people will dwell w/ Him forever.

IV We Proclaims Our **LOYALTY** to His Mission

The table isn't only a place where we remember what Jesus has done for us. It's a place where we renew our commitment to what Jesus has called us to do.

SEE – if Jesus gave His life to rescue people from sin, then those who've been rescued should be compelled to help others know the Rescuer.

For Christ's love compels us, b/c we're convinced One died for all, and therefore all died. And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again... We're then, Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal thru us. We beg you on Christ's behalf – be reconciled to God. B/c God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 20-21

The LS table reminds us that people all around us, all over the world, are stepping into eternity by the second. Some know Christ, but many do not. So, we must never become so consumed w/ our schedules, comfort, preferences, and problems that we lose our sense of urgency for those who need the gospel.

So, when we receive the bread/cup, we're not only declaring what Jesus has done for us. We're renewing our commitment to share/show His love to others.

WTM – Let me invite you to partake in the LS today w/ me and w/ one another. If you know Christ as Savior – you are invited to participate.