

The First Passover: A Bloody, Holy, Permanent Shadow

Exodus 12:1-18

The story of the Exodus is one of the grandest and most glorious ones in all of history where God receives all the glory and His power is displayed time and time again. Repeatedly God triumphs over powerful false gods humiliating them and their worshippers. And in the book of Exodus the Lord also shows His people that His awesome redemptive work and His amazing provision must (and will be) remembered throughout all generations and ultimately points us to Jesus Christ. Join us as we pick up our sermon series through the book of Exodus and encounter the God of heaven and earth. He is the Lord who has power of nature, over life and death, over traditions and over all gods and peoples and nations.

May Christ be praised as we work through this awesome book that exalts our Lord and Savior and tells of His awesome redemptive work! Soli Deo Gloria!

Call to Worship – Psalm 12

Well, good morning, Church. It is a joy and a pleasure to be here with you this morning as we begin our worship service. We will begin with our call to worship, and our text for this morning will be Psalm 12. So if you please rise as you are able for the reading of God's Word.

Psalm 12. Hear now the word of the Lord.

For the choir director; upon an eight-stringed lyre. A Psalm of David.

*Help, Lord, for the godly man ceases to be,
for the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.
They speak falsehood to one another;
with flattering lips and with a double heart they speak.
May the Lord cut off all flattering lips,
the tongue that speaks great things,
who have said, "With our tongue we will prevail;
our lips are our own; who is lord over us?"*

*"Because of the devastation of the afflicted,
because of the groaning of the needy,
now I will arise," says the Lord;
"I will set him in the safety for which he longs."*

*The words of the Lord are pure words;
as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.
You, O Lord, will keep them;
You will preserve him from this generation forever.
The wicked strut about on every side
when vileness is exalted among the sons of men.*

This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Pastoral Prayer

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Good morning.

Would you please join me now as we come before our Lord God Almighty in our pastoral prayer, right before the sermon this morning. Please join me as we bow before our living and mighty God in heaven.

Our eternal, life-giving God and Father, and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as we sang earlier: “You who boast of tomorrow’s gain, tell me, what is your life? A mist that vanishes at dawn. All glory be to Christ.”

God, in Your Word, James warned those who boasted and made plans and told themselves, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city.” He said we do not know what our life will be like tomorrow. We are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.

God, how easy it is for us to boast of tomorrow’s gain. How easy it is for us to slip into self-lordship, to think we have it within our power to control our future. How easy it is for us to become arrogant and to think our lives are not fragile clay vessels ready to be shattered by cancer or unexpected accidents or natural disasters or old age—unless You graciously carry us through. How easy it is for us to become worldly-minded and to think this life is all there is, when it is just a mist that vanishes at dawn.

God, our lives here are withering grass underneath the noonday sun, and the suddenness and permanence of death are always near to us. And God, no matter the medicine and the health and the security, the years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble, and they are soon gone, and they fly away.

God, forgive us for our arrogance and for our worldliness and for our lack of wisdom in numbering our days, for our failure of gospel urgency, for our foolishness in prioritizing earthly riches more than storing up treasures in heaven, for believing this world is our resting place when we just sang, “We’re almost home.” And how many pilgrim saints have gone before us—no stopping now, we’re almost home. God, we are pilgrims here on earth, so forgive us for not maintaining an eternal perspective in our lives.

And Father, although death stalks in the night and we live on the edge of a precipice, although we see loved ones taken away suddenly or slowly or painfully, although we know our lives, Lord God, are brief, and we will be forgotten, and our children who will remember us will also be forgotten—God, even though all this is true, we look again this morning to Jesus Christ, who rose from the dead, who conquered the grave, who passed from death to life as our forerunner into heaven, who intercedes for us, and more than that, who told us that He goes to prepare a place for us in heaven. And one day, after all the years of talking to Him in prayer, telling others about Him, and reading about Him in His Word, and loving Him because He died for our sins and carries us every day—God, one day when we die, we will finally see Him face to face in glory, welcomed into His presence, when He will wipe away every tear from our eyes and when death will be no more.

God, our life is a mist, and it vanishes at dawn, but all glory be to Christ, for He is the resurrection and the life. So Father, make us a people that live for eternity, and make us a people that make sacrifices, that expend our strength for His glory, that hurl away our lives for our love of Christ, that are not running the same rat race of this world that every other person is running, but a people that truly believe that we are almost home, and that this life is us passing through to glory. God, press into our hearts those great words: “Only one life, ’twill soon be past; only what’s done for Christ will last.” God, make us live for Christ and His glory.

And we pray the same, God, for other churches in the Chicagoland area. We pray especially for those churches in Chicago: for Addison Street Community Church, for Edgewater Baptist Church, for Emmanuel Baptist Church. God, we ask that You make these churches shine bright with the light of eternity and give them such courage and self-sacrifice in this dying world that they would happily take up their crosses and follow Him no matter the cost.

We also pray for our government officials, and we lift up to You the governor of Illinois, J.B. Pritzker. Father, we lament what he said a few months ago. He said, "If you are seeking refuge from another state where they have outlawed abortion, we will do everything we can to make available to you the services you need." Father, we despise and hate his wickedness. We mourn the negligence of so many churches that remain silent on abortion. And we ask that You replace Pritzker's heart of stone with a heart of flesh that cherishes the life-giving God who knits babies in the womb. And we pray, Father, that You would even replace him in office with a man of God who fears You and loves justice and truly cares for and protects women rather than killing them. God, we lift up to You Senate Bill 3572, the Abolish Abortion Illinois Act, and we pray that this bill would cause a ripple effect that begins the legal end of abortion in our state.

We pray also for the nations, and we ask that You do almighty work in Nepal, with over 1,350 people that have been confirmed dead because of the recent flood. God, we are reminded that life is a mist that vanishes in a second. Lord God, we pray that You would saturate Nepal with foreign missionaries, with local pastors, with gospel preachers, who point those who are dead in their sins to the resurrected and living Christ in the great hope of the new heavens and the new earth.

And Father, finally we pray for us here once more and ask that You bless the preaching of Your Word with Holy Spirit power; that You would renew joy and gladness in our marriages; that You would help fathers lead their families in the Word and in godliness; that You would help mothers love and nourish their children well; that You would teach children to cheerfully obey their parents in the Lord; that You would grant patience, contentment, and purity to those seeking to be married; and that You would be near to the brokenhearted and save the crushed in spirit. God, we ask that You give us strength again to run this race with endurance, looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. We pray this all in His name. Amen.

Worship in the Word

Grace and peace from God our Father through Jesus Christ, our risen, ruling, one-day-soon-returning Lord and the only Savior. Brothers and sisters in Christ and friends, it is good to be with you on this Lord's Day as we turn our attention now to the preaching of the Word of God. Today will be a little bit unusual in the sense that I am going to introduce where we are at in Exodus chapter 12, and then after about five or eight minutes or so, I will have you stand and we will read the text for today—that is, Exodus chapter 12, verses 1 through 28.

If you don't own a copy of God's Word, you can find one out there for you. That's a gift for you to take if you want one, out there in the lobby. And we urge you to have a copy of the God-breathed Scriptures and to read them and to love them and encounter the risen and ruling Lord Jesus Christ through them.

For those of us who are of Christ the King Reformed Baptist Church, you will remember we have been pressing through. We started the book of Exodus back in January, put a pause on that in May, and then went through our Summer in the Psalms series. For those of you who are friends of Cornerstone, we're so glad that you are here. And also those of you who are guests—we're glad that you are here as well.

Exodus themes:

1. Knowing the Lord through His mighty acts
2. Trusting God to keep His covenant
3. Seeing God's total power over false gods

I want to set us up for where we've been with just a few introductory remarks. This is obviously the second book of the Bible—Genesis and then Exodus. I'll say more about that momentarily. But there are many wonderful themes in the book of Exodus. A few of those are knowing the Lord through His mighty acts and, supremely, the redemption that He accomplished for them, rescuing them from slavery. Another is trusting God to keep His covenant. And so you see this faithfulness that God expressed in the Old Testament in Genesis, and it carries through in Exodus. You also see God's total power over false gods. There were nine previous plagues that the Lord struck Egypt with, and all of those plagues corresponded in one way or another to a false god, a deity, a demon-god that was worshipped by the Egyptians. And so the Lord is saying, "Your gods are impotent; they are weak; and I am powerful."

But Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, and besides, I will not let Israel go." (Exodus 5:2)

We see this in a few texts from the book of Exodus. Exodus 5:1, after Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Let My people go, that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness.'" Here's the response of one who was worshipped as a god, namely the king of Egypt, Pharaoh himself, who said this: "But Pharaoh said, 'Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the Lord, and besides, I will not let Israel go.'" Pharaoh was an arrogant, even a satanic king. He viewed himself as God, allowed others of Egypt to worship him as God, and he never once paid true worship and service to the living God—though he said he would let them go and then took it back time and time again.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for under compulsion he shall let them go, and under compulsion he shall drive them out of his land." (Exodus 6:1)

Later on in Exodus we read this in Exodus 6:1: “Then the Lord said to Moses, ‘Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for under compulsion he shall let them go, and under compulsion he shall drive them out of his land.’”

God spoke further to Moses and said to him, “I am the LORD; (Exodus 6:2)

...and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name, LORD, I did not make Myself known to them. (Exodus 6:3)

God spoke further to Moses and said to him, “I am the Lord” (Exodus 6:2). And He said this: “I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty, but by My name, Lord, I did not make Myself known to them.” In other words, something unique is happening in redemptive history in the book of Exodus. The Lord is doing something. He is revealing something about Himself, particularly through His mighty acts, particularly through His sovereignty in delivering and rescuing His people out of slavery.

“Furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, because the Egyptians are holding them in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant. (Exodus 6:5)

We read a little bit further down in Exodus 6:5: “Furthermore I have heard the groaning of the sons of Israel, because the Egyptians are holding them in bondage, and I have remembered My covenant.” And so these themes of knowing the Lord, of God keeping His covenant, of God showing His sovereignty over false gods are major themes. We also see many other themes in there—the long-suffering of God, the personal compassion of God, and so on. Lord willing, in future weeks we will look at some of those and unpack them in future sermons.

But a few more comments on Exodus just to set us up for what we’ll read momentarily, God willing. This is God’s revelation that cannot be understood without understanding the prior revelation of the book of Genesis. Let me urge you at the outset of this sermon series to take time to read through the book of Exodus over the next few weeks and months. It takes the average reader about three hours to read straight through the book of Exodus. I would urge you to do that on your own personally, with your spouse, with a roommate, at home in family worship with your kids. Just read a few minutes of the book of Exodus and march through that. You can easily get through that between now and the end of the year.

But the book of Exodus builds upon the prior revelation of Genesis. In other words, you will not understand Exodus as fully as you can and should without understanding Genesis. After God created all things, including Adam and Eve, He gave them commands which they disobeyed, believing the crafty serpent and tragically introducing death into the world because of their disobedience and rebellion. Then curses were introduced right before God cast Adam and Eve out of the garden. And amongst those curses was enmity—hatred now in the world. But there was also a glimmer of hope amidst this hurt, amidst these curses, amidst this awful, chaotic situation where death was introduced into the world. The first gospel, as some theologians call it, in Genesis 3:15, was introduced where we read: **“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.”**

What’s going on with this? Well, the Lord is saying to the serpent there will be an enmity, a hostility that exists between you and those who follow in your demonic, worldly, murderous ways, and the seed of the woman. Ultimately, we know from the rest of Scripture unfolding, that Seed is Jesus Christ and those who follow in the spiritual descendancy and trust in Christ alone.

Listen to the way one Old Testament scholar, Dr. John Currid, wrote it in his Evangelical Press Study Commentary series—an excellent book. Listen to this long and very helpful quote concerning the book of Exodus and its relation to Genesis:

“We must understand the new order announced in Genesis 3 includes extreme hatred, animosity, the desire for murder, conflict between two spiritual seeds—the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. It is a raging war that finds its climax at the cross where Messiah lands a mortal blow to the serpent. Contained in the curse on the serpent is the prophecy that God will send a Redeemer to crush the enemy. Jesus is the Seed who descended from Eve and went to do battle against Satan. And the remainder of Scripture is the unfolding of the prophecy of Genesis 3:15. Redemption is promised in this one verse, Genesis 3:15, and the Bible traces the development of that redemptive theme. The place of the book of Exodus in the seed conflict is crucial. No longer is the enmity, hostility, limited to two people—Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, and so on. Now it is enlarged to include two peoples or nations: the covenant people of Israel in opposition to the people of Egypt who are outside of the covenant. And in the book of Exodus,” Currid says, “we see the clash between the covenant people and those outside of the covenant reaching phenomenal proportions.”

- John Currid, OT professor, *Evangelical Study Commentary*

So in Exodus we are not surprised to see some of the themes of Genesis 3 itself introduced. We see death. We see division. We see hostility. We read of the forgetfulness—or perhaps just a lost connection—between a new king that arises in Egypt, a new Pharaoh who does not know Joseph, despite the fact that in Genesis Joseph basically saved that nation. We see also a threat: the Pharaoh, king of Egypt, thought the people of Israel were a threat to the Egyptians, and so what does he do? Well, he subjects them to bitter affliction, a harsh slavery, but also a state-sponsored genocide where he says the sons are to be thrown into the Nile—they are to be murdered and put to death. It’s a horrific situation. And it’s in this context where we read of the two God-fearing Hebrew midwives—these absolute, we might call them, legends of the faith in the best sense of the word—who rejected Pharaoh’s command and feared God and did not do as the Pharaoh said.

Now of course it was in this context that one Hebrew mother gave birth to Moses, who would be God’s chosen deliverer, the one whom the Lord would use. And Moses had this dual identity in his own life. Moses was born into a Hebrew family in a time when there was this murder happening all around. Some of his neighbors, no doubt those who were his peers, were discarded and thrown away and put to death right away. But Moses’ mother protected him and put him into a basket in the Nile. And in the providence of God Almighty, who found Moses in the basket but none other than Pharaoh’s daughter, the princess of Egypt, who took him as her own. And in the providence of God, Moses grows up safe and protected with this dual identity of both one who is a Hebrew, but then who is educated in Egypt and taken in as almost the adopted son of the princess of Egypt.

Well, Moses grows up, tries to take matters into his own hands, actually kills an Egyptian who is beating one of his fellow Hebrews, has to flee to Midian for forty years. And then the Lord appears to him in the burning bush and says, “I’m going to send you back to Egypt. You’re going to go back and be My deliverer,

My means by which My people will be called out and rescued.” And Moses steps out in faith. The Pharaoh is dead who was the previous king, and a new Pharaoh is now in office, as it were. And so Moses goes back to Pharaoh, stands before him, and says, “Let My people go.” And time and time again what happens? Pharaoh says, “No, I do not know the Lord.” He hardens his heart. Nine plagues that came before that again correspond to these false Egyptian gods—these deities who are not real deities, but who are bestowed with all sorts of superstition and power. They are put to shame. They are humiliated before God Almighty.

And so what do we see there? Well, we see very clearly that the Lord says there will be one more plague—one more plague that will come—and this one, this one will be the one that leads to the release of the people of God, My people. And this text that we are in today is actually almost a deep breath before the last plague falls, when the firstborn son of Egypt is struck down. But one of the things we’ll note is that all throughout the previous nine plagues the Lord had distinguished between the Hebrews in Goshen and the Egyptians, and the Egyptians suffered all these plagues whereas the people of God, the Hebrew people, did not experience those plagues. But here, here in this last plague is a unique situation where something has to be done because the Hebrew people too are threatened by this last plague. It’s a very important point for us.

So now with that context in mind, friends, let us all find Exodus 12 in our Bibles, verse 1, and if you are able, please stand for the reading of God’s Word as I read through this longer portion, but very important portion, of the Word of the living God. Hear now the word of the Creator, the Lord of heaven and earth, from Exodus 12:1–28.

Now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, “This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a lamb for each household. Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight. Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roast it with fire, both its head and its legs along with its entrails. And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire. Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the Lord’s Passover. For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

‘Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. On the first day you shall have a holy assembly, and another holy assembly on the seventh day; no work at all shall be done on them, except what must be eaten by every person, that alone may be prepared by you. You shall also observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall observe this day throughout your

generations as a permanent ordinance. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. Seven days there shall be no leaven found in your houses; for whoever eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is an alien or a native of the land. You shall not eat anything leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.”

Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover lamb. You shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts; and none of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you. And you shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children forever. When you enter the land which the Lord will give you, as He has promised, you shall observe this rite. And when your children say to you, ‘What does this rite mean to you?’ you shall say, ‘It is a Passover sacrifice to the Lord who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but spared our homes.’” And the people bowed low and worshiped. Then the sons of Israel went and did so; just as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

You may be seated.

Almighty God and merciful Father, we entrust this time to You now and pray that over these next few weeks and months You would strengthen us to be in a fresh way reoriented around Your lordship, around Your sovereignty, around who You are as a covenant-making, covenant-keeping God of heaven and earth—the Lord of glory who will triumph over all Your foes. We pray that today we would meditate on and dwell on the sacrificial Lamb, Jesus Christ, who was for sinners slain. We would understand, God, Your Word; that Your Spirit would strengthen us and help us. God, so be glorified in our thoughts and minds, we pray. Strengthen our faith and our hope and our expectation, God, when that glorious day comes and our faith shall become sight. We pray this in Jesus’ name. And all God’s people said, Amen.

Friends, today in the remainder of our time, with God’s great help, Lord willing, we’re going to walk briskly through Exodus 12 in three different parts. First, I want us to look at:

- The Passover and Israel,
- The Passover and Jesus, and
- The Passover and you.

The Passover in Israel, the Passover in Jesus, the Passover in you.

1. The Passover and Israel

First, recall in the Exodus story: this is a true story. It occurred exactly as the Bible records it did. It’s real history, happened in time and space. And in this Exodus story, the people of Israel are still enslaved. The Pharaoh, king of Egypt, has time and time again hardened his heart and said, “No, I will not let your people go.” The Lord says this last one is the last straw. This is the one that will lead you to let My people go. We’re right between this. Nine plagues have come before, and the story is in this place of suspense. A feast is introduced. In a place where everyone’s expecting the tenth plague, a feast is introduced. And why? What’s the purpose? Well, it actually sets up that last plague, but also forever in Israel’s history establishes

for them this primary place of a festival—a feast day that would be so significant in their lives. And there's three features of this relationship of the Passover to Israel I want us to focus on.

1: Passover marks the start of Israel's new year.

Look in your Bible at verses 1 and 2: "Now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 'This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is the first month of the year to you.'" Abib is referred to as meaning "newly ripened grain." Hebrew scholars and historians will tell you that this is March and April—corresponds to March and April of our Western calendar year. So the spring, the springtime. And it was to form their identity. Ancient Israel was to be formed and shaped and reoriented around the fact that in this year, this was the birth of them as the redeemed, chosen people of God, as the children of God. Whereas the Egyptians' firstborn sons would die, God's firstborn son, Israel, would be born and would mark on their calendars: this is the time I was redeemed from death and slavery and oppression that I had suffered under for so long. And this is the time when the Lord did this to the praise of His glory. It is to be marked and established in ancient Israel forevermore.

One pastor in the United Kingdom, Puyan Mersha, he says this: *"The priority of God and His redemption is to be reflected in the very order of Israel's calendar. The Lord is saying, 'You work by My timetable, not yours.' God is doing something great here. God and His redeeming work is to be reflected in the very cycle of the year in Israel so they can never, ever forget this glorious deliverance which He accomplished for them."*

So that's the first thing we note from this: **Passover marks the start of Israel's new year.**

But that's not all.

2: Passover precise instructions were heard by all of Israel

We also see for Israel: Passover's precise instructions were heard not just by a few elders, not just by Moses, but by all Israel.

Verse 3 in your Bible says this: "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying..." These words Moses and Aaron... And what do we learn from what follows? We learn much. Big picture: we read and see of the sacrificial blood atonement for cleansing, for purification. The tenth of the month an unblemished, perfect male without defect—sheep or goat—is to be chosen according to their fathers' household. And for four days you have this goat or this lamb, and then on the fourteenth day the whole assembly at the same time at twilight is to kill that lamb or that goat.

Notice, though, that there is special instruction as to what they are to do. They are to eat this in a certain way. They are to pair it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, thus symbolizing, many have observed and conjectured, the bitter and harsh time they were enslaved in Egypt. It was to be a reminder for them. But also, notice it was to be eaten and celebrated with families, even with neighbors potentially. But there are also precise commands connected to this. Some blood from the lamb or goat is to be put on the two doorposts—those vertical beams—and on the lintel, the horizontal beam on the top of the home in which that lamb or that goat was eaten.

Now, this is important. Why? Because these precise instructions were not something given to merely a certain group of people—some warriors, some priests. No, there are actually no priests established in Israel's history at this time. And so you look in your Bibles at Exodus 12, and in particular verse 21: ***“Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, ‘Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover lamb.’”*** So while there were instructions given to particular heads of household—elders in Israel—all the congregation was to hear this. All the congregation was to hear this. And why? To what purpose should they hear the instructions about this communal, familial meal that they were to partake of? Well, there's many reasons for this, but one: because of the seriousness with which the Lord is taking His Word. Notice in verses 14 and 15 it says “you'll be cut off if you violate these instructions.” It's a very serious thing to go against the Word of God that He has revealed. It's not just a matter of “do it as you see fit.” God takes His Word very seriously, and He's saying to all the assembly, to all the congregation of Israel: My Word matters. My law is given to you.

Several scholars have pointed out that this is before Sinai. So there's actually a law given before Sinai. You can't just say Mount Sinai—that's when Israel first had a law. Many other places in Israel's history (circumcision in Genesis) there were laws given, commands that the people of God had to follow and walk in.

2: Passover perpetually reminded Israel of their own need for the Lord's protective provision from His destructive judgment.

But this brings us to the third feature of the Passover in Israel, and it's simply this: Passover perpetually reminded the Israelite people of God's protective provision from His own destructive judgment. Understand this. Up till that point, the nine plagues had differentiated between the Hebrew people over in Goshen, where they were safe and not afflicted, and the people of Egypt, who were afflicted by all the plagues that God struck them with. Here for the first time the Hebrew people were to understand something about God's character and about themselves. They were to understand that there is a God of heaven and earth to whom they are accountable, yes, but before whom they stand—and even those Hebrew people of God had sin in their lives and required blood sacrifice to protect them. Those people, the Hebrew people of God, had to understand this. They had to understand they were sinners. In fact, if you look back in your Bible earlier in the book of Exodus, you see an arrogance, particularly amongst the foremen of the Hebrew people, who essentially cursed Moses, God's chosen instrument, God's mediator, and say, “God judge you, Moses, because our affliction is more bitter now because of what you said to the Egyptians, what you said to Pharaoh.”

The Lord God Almighty wants the Israelite people to understand forever. Notice multiple times it says this—verse 14, verse 18, verses 24 and 25. Look in your Bible at verses 24 and 25: ***“You shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children forever. When you enter the land which the Lord will give you, as He has promised, you shall observe this rite.”*** So just because you go into the promised land, just because things are better now, does not mean you're supposed to drop this ritual, drop this festival, this feast. Not at all. You are to practice this forever. It is to be a perpetual remembrance of the Lord's provision for His people—a protective provision, and a protective provision from His own destruction.

Did you notice in the text of Exodus chapter 12 that the Lord is referred to directly as the One who will strike down the firstborn? This runs right into what many people think of when they think of God. Many people think, “God could never do that. That's not my God.” My friends, I would just challenge you to say:

then your God is not the God of the Bible. Understand with the seriousness with which we approach this text that God wants His people to understand: No. You will know Me, and this is what I'm like. I'm the Lord who is not like you—even My chosen people. I am so unlike you. I'm the God who is the Lord of life and death. And I want you to remember that with a seriousness, with a sober-mindedness, throughout all your generations. So serious would this be, as mentioned, that the individuals—whether native or foreign-born—would be cut off from Israel if they neglected this.

I should say something too about these two feasts: the Passover feast and also the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Several have connected these. They're clearly linked together. They're clearly linked together in the sense that they follow one another. Some have even gone so far as to say the Feast of Unleavened Bread is the Passover. And so those two things are inseparable, and it's important to realize that even if someone makes a distinction between the two, for our purposes today they're inseparable. They're together; they're linked together. So don't get hung up on "is it that, is it that, or are they two separate things?" They're linked together; they're practiced together; and that's how they would practice in Israel's history as well.

But this Passover meal was not only this perpetual reminder etched in their minds and hearts as to the fact that God had rescued them. Notice as well how particular the instructions are related to how they should be ready for this. Notice that they were not to just eat this, celebrate this in any way they want to. They were to burn the lamb or burn the goat—not to just eat it in boiling water, not to eat it raw. Why? Many Hebrew scholars have pointed out that's probably to draw a distinction between pagan practices, Canaanite practices, where they would do that to their gods. The Lord is saying something new is being established here. This is not the same thing that the Canaanite pagan gods do.

But also notice how interesting this is. In verse 11, look in your Bibles: they had to be ready to go. So this perpetual reminder in the people's minds and hearts of their rescue from judgment was something they were holding a staff—the text of the Bible says in Exodus 12:11. Their loins were girded and they had sandals on their feet. They were not casually lounging and enjoying a meal. They were holding a staff, their shoes were on, they were ready to run, they were ready to flee. And that's how they were to practice this throughout the generations to follow: a perpetual reminder that they, the Lord's people, were rescued from the Lord the Destroyer coming to strike down the firstborn. Their own home was protected by that blood, and they were ready to flee, ready to leave.

That's Israel and the Passover.

2. The Passover in Jesus

And that brings us to the Passover and Jesus. The second section of today's sermon is the Passover and Jesus. What does the Passover have to do with Jesus? Much in every way, as is a famous Bible line. The Passover in Jesus has multiple things to do with us as well, which we'll talk about in the third section. But for our purposes today, look there in your Bible at Exodus chapter 12, in particular verse 14. Verse 14 says this: ***"Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance."***

1. Jesus ordained the Lord's Supper while at a Passover feast

The Lord Jesus Christ comes, and as a faithful Jew many hundreds of years later, the Lord Jesus Christ comes and He participates in Passover, in the Feast of Unleavened Bread. And actually Jesus ordained the Lord's Supper while at a Passover feast, as the gospel accounts tell us. And so we read in Luke's gospel of this. We also read very clearly in the Scriptures that Jesus was not offended by this. Jesus was not trying to tweak the character of God. This actually runs against, again, a modern conception of God. Why? Many people will try to pit the Old Testament God of wrath—God who is angry, God who is terrifying—with Jesus, as if they are different gods. This is an ancient heresy all the way back to the second century. Marcion was his name. He tried to omit the Old Testament and he tried to say Jesus is a new and a better God. The Old Testament has nothing to do with Jesus who comes and preaches love and peace and all these things. However, we should realize that heresy—that ancient heresy—persists today. Many people think the Old Testament: God's so wrathful, and Jesus comes and He's kumbaya and loving and kind and peaceful and would never offend anyone. But this text totally goes against that notion. Why? Because Jesus participated in the Passover feast gladly. The Passover feast details for us that God is holy, that His people need His protection, that blood sacrifice was required—and Jesus was not ashamed of that. Jesus was not embarrassed by that. Jesus was not trying to tweak that. In fact, Jesus comes and recasts His own sacrificial death on the cross in light of that—in light of the character of God who is holy, who is righteous, who is a God who judges, and a God who judges all humanity: Hebrews, Egyptians, rich, poor, male, female, young, old—He judges them all. Jesus comes and gladly partakes of the Passover meal that reminds people that God is a God who executed judgments, who is the Lord, whose Word matters. And He ordains the Lord's Supper at that Passover feast.

2. Jesus' Apostles reliably refer to Him as the sacrificial lamb

But second, the Passover in Jesus shows us that something very important in the New Testament especially: Jesus' apostles reliably referred to Jesus as the sacrificial Lamb. And this is very important for us because it's not as if we're imposing this on the Bible. The called and chosen apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom God appointed, they reliably refer to Jesus as the sacrificial Lamb. So John the Baptist is reported by the apostle John in John 1:29 as saying this: ***"Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."*** We also read in 1 Corinthians 5:7 the apostle Paul says this: ***Jesus is our Paschal—or our Passover—Lamb.*** And the apostle Peter says ***it was not with perishable things such as silver and gold that we were redeemed from the empty way of life which we formerly walked in, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or spot.*** (1 Peter 1:19) We've seen that before all the way back in Exodus chapter 12: without blemish, without defect—something perfect to represent perfection, a perfect sacrifice required. **And the apostles reliably refer to Jesus as this sacrificial Lamb.**

What's vital for us to understand is that we should not expect something of the sacrificial system to continue—something of blood sacrifice to be made or another atonement—because of what Jesus Christ has come to do. And this is important for us for multiple reasons. One, because you actually have people today—millions, even tens of millions—who are still sacrificing animals. You need to understand that. It still happens around the world today. Blood atonement is real. Sometimes blood atonement even has to do with vengeance—people pursuing vengeance and going out to take another human's life thinking that they will appease their gods. That is real. That happens today when fallen men and women in rebellion

against the living Creator God follow their own passions, follow their own false gods and demon-gods, and they worship and serve those gods by sacrificing for their gods and providing blood atonement. This is very different than what Jesus Christ did and willingly laid down His life on the cross. Very, very different.

3. Jesus' bloody death was, is and forever will be God's greatest redemption for sinners

But here's what we should know: Jesus' bloody death was, is, and forever will be God's greatest redemption for sinners. It is the greatest redemption. It is the greater redemption that this redemption was a microcosm of and pointed to. So in Exodus what you have is actually in many ways a shadow—you have a shadow of what is going to come in the sacrificial death of Jesus, who is the perfect Lamb for sinners slain—not something that had to be repeated every year. This happened in Israel's history where they would have to repeat this year after year after year at started the calendar. Jesus Christ now has come as the once-for-all Lamb who was for sinners slain. And we as Christians have to hold this and love this: that Jesus' bloody death was, is, and forever will be God's greatest redemption for all sinners. It does not matter your background. It does not matter who you are or who you claim to be. You could say, "I'm Jewish. I'm Muslim." Anything. Describe yourself. You need some blood atonement. You need sacrifice. You need provision.

3. The Passover and You

And this actually brings us to the third part of our sermon today, and it's the Passover and you. So we've seen the Passover in Israel. We've seen the Passover in Jesus. What about the Passover in you? What does the Passover have to do with you and with me?

Well, first, this is deeply personal. I have three questions that I'll ask you throughout this section.

1: Personal - Am I in Christ? Am I protected under His shed blood?

I want you to ask yourself that question. Am I in Christ? Am I protected under His shed blood? My friend, what do you believe? Do you understand the times? Do you understand where we are at in human history? Do you understand this is not just some interesting account in Exodus—some interesting, primitive account that seems neat or has some cool features you nod your head at? This is the revelation of God Almighty concerning Himself. This is the truth.

For you, it is a mercy today that you are exactly here, sitting exactly where you are today, hearing of the mercy of God—the God who reveals Himself in the book of Exodus. It is a gracious gift that God details: "This is what I'm like. I'm powerful. I'm over all gods. No one can save you, redeem you but Me." Exodus is a merciful blessing from heaven to tell us what the Almighty has done, and how He deals with His enemies, how He deals with hard-hearted, unrepentant sinners, but also how He deals with those who would claim to be His people, all the while dishonoring and disobeying His Word.

Understand that if a single Israelite family did not follow what the Lord said and trust His Word and put the blood of that lamb or that goat over the lintel and on the side of the doorposts—understand, friends, that that one too would have been struck dead: the firstborn in that home. The Lord shows in Exodus this is deeply personal. It's something not irrelevant to your life but deeply relevant and personal. What do you believe? Do you have living faith, active faith, open faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?

Matthew Henry, the commentator from a previous generation, wonderfully said this: *"It was to be sprinkled upon the doorposts, denoting the open profession we are to make of faith in Christ and obedience to Him, as those who are not ashamed to own our dependence upon Him."*

My friends, have you owned your dependence upon Jesus? Do you understand that you are a sinner? That God is holy, that He is righteous and good? He sees all things. He knows all things. He knows exactly who you are. He knows exactly what you believe. And you will stand before Him one day and give an account of your life. Are you in Christ? Are you under the shed blood of Jesus?

If you die today, what would give you confidence? That classic Evangelism Explosion question D. James Kennedy down in Florida came up with years ago: What would give you confidence to stand before God, the holy God of heaven and earth, if you died today? If the answer is anything but the shed blood of Jesus—if the answer is anything but Christ and Christ alone—my friends, I fear for your soul. It must be Jesus, the sacrificial Lamb who was for sinners slain.

Today, my friends, is the day of salvation. Today is the day, and I pray that not a single one of you—boy, girl, man, woman, however old, however young—leaves this sanctuary, leaves this building today without being confronted by this reality: that the holy God of heaven and earth is your God, is my God, is the Lord we will stand before, is the God who has revealed Himself, and is the God who said, "I have provided what you need in Jesus. Trust in Him, and trust in Him alone." Have you done that? Not your parents for you. Not your brother, not your sister for you. Not a friend, not even a best friend. Not a child for you if you are a parent here and your child dragged you here. Praise God you are here, but your child's faith will not save you. It is a personal faith, a living faith. You will encounter the living Lord of heaven and earth, and what will you say? Will you say, "Yes and amen, I stand under the blood of the Lamb, Jesus"? If that's your confidence, praise be to God. Praise be to God. If it is not, my dear friends, I plead with you today to turn and trust in Jesus. Cast off your trust in your works and your false gods and your false systems of "I'm going to earn it." You're not. You need Jesus. You need what He has provided and He has given so graciously in the cross of Christ. Today is the day of salvation, friends.

If there's a non-Christian Jewish friend who invites you to a Seder meal—I know some of you probably have participated in those. We have many Jewish friends around the Chicagoland area, many people we love who are neighbors and friends, co-workers, colleagues. If they ever invite you to a Seder meal, my friends, understand something: that I hope and pray you direct them to the Savior Jesus and you say, "My friend, thank you for this invitation. Let me tell you about the Lamb who was for sinners slain—the sacrificial One who came once for all and died on the cross and rose again and is the only hope of salvation for you and me and everyone. Turn to Him and trust in Him." Please evangelize your Christ-rejecting Jewish friends. Please do that, friends. Do not presume on the mercies of God, on prior revelation from God. The Lord has progressively revealed: Jesus is that substance. He is not the shadow like the Passover. The Passover is a shadow that points to Jesus. Practicing the Seder will not save you, will not rescue you. It has to go somewhere. It has to go to Jesus. It always will go to Jesus. This is profoundly personal—profoundly personal.

2. Church -Do we honor God's Word precisely and consistently?

Do we honor God's Word precisely and consistently? This chapter in Exodus 12 gives specific details—detail after detail after detail from God's Word that God's people were expected to obey. And a warning that if you don't do this, you'll be cut off. Is this your God—the God who speaks precisely? Is this your God—the God who triumphs over false gods? Look in your Bible at Exodus 12:12: ***"For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the Lord."***

When an atheist or someone else says, "Your God would strike down a firstborn son—and not just one but dozens, hundreds, maybe even thousands—I could never worship and serve that God," someone might say, "That's your God." My friends, this is our God. This is our God. He is the Lord of life and death. He is the only One who is righteous and holy, and we all of us stand condemned as sinners. We are those who have rejected His lordship, we have rejected His Word, we have disobeyed His commands. He's the God who has only been good to us and blessed us, and we have time and time again rejected His lordship, said He is not good, defied Him, tried to dethrone Him. Understand that it's not the nature of the offense; it is the nature of the One you offend that makes sin so wicked and awful. You've offended the living God of heaven and earth. So He comes and He executes judgments on the gods of Egypt who have been arrogant and prideful.

Is this your God who executes judgments on false gods? And do you say that to people you encounter? Do you say that there is one God—the living God of heaven and earth—and your gods will be smashed by this God? Too often we embrace an evangelical Christianity that is too nice for its own good, that gets distorted and perverted and betrays biblical truth. And I'm not saying simply leave people with the fact that God struck down the firstborn. I'm saying believe that, proclaim that, and direct them to Jesus the sacrificial Lamb who was for sinners slain. I want you to understand: this is our God. He's against all gods who oppose Him. He was against the gods of Egypt. He executed judgments against them. He will execute judgments against your gods as well—against all the gods who oppose Him.

Church, do we honor God's Word precisely and consistently? When we come across a text of the Word of God that makes us uncomfortable and squeamish—"Oh, that couldn't possibly be real"—because it doesn't feel right, because it's out of step with our culture, with our tradition, with what we know—are we prepared to honor the Lord's Word and submit ourselves to His Word precisely, or go our own way arrogantly and walk in unbelief? Church, do we honor God's Word precisely and consistently? Do we proclaim that Jesus and Jesus alone is the way to be saved and rescued and redeemed? The exclusivity of Christianity—the exclusivity of Christ, as it were—is something many evangelical Christians are embarrassed about. They're ashamed of. "You have your way; I have my way." Reject that. Embrace what is biblical. Embrace what is true. Church, we must be Christians who honor God's Word precisely and consistently.

Third and finally: Passover and you related to your family.

3. Family – At home is Jesus named, exalted and central?

We've seen in Exodus 12 this was something to be done in the home. Here's the question I have for you: At home, is Jesus named, exalted, and central? We're quick to say yes. We're quick to say yes. But are you prepared, fathers and mothers, when your children ask you about what is happening at church to give an answer? Or are you annoyed at them? My friends, seize that opportunity with gladness. When your kids

say, “Why do we partake of the Lord’s Supper? What does baptism mean? Why do we sit under the preaching of the Word? Why do we sing those songs? Why do we go week after week after week?” See: the Lord Jesus Christ came. He died and He rose again on the third day. And Sunday—His resurrection day—has become the time when our calendar, as it were, is reworked. And so now we gather week after week and our calendar has been reworked and our lives have been reoriented around this: the resurrection of Jesus, the crucified and risen Lord. When your children ask you, “Why do we gather every Sunday?” do you have a good answer? What do you say to them?

You thought, my friend, that 1 Peter 3:15 was just about a time when you’re doing apologetics in the world out there. 1 Peter 3:15 says: **“Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being prepared to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.”** Everyone—that includes your sons and your daughters. And that is actually the audience you have before you that is most eager to receive what you will share. It starts in the home. Is Jesus named, exalted, and central? Do you praise Him and worship Him? Do you explain what He did? Do you point your children to repenting of their sins and trusting in Christ alone and finding Jesus as the only Savior—the sacrificial Lamb who was for sinners slain? Do you do that? Do you direct them to the grace of Almighty God in Christ’s sacrificial death? Or is it more just rules here and there? It’s not enough to just have rules here and there, friends. It must be Jesus Christ named, exalted, central in your home.

Praise God the redeeming Lord provides all that He requires of us sinners in Jesus Christ! Amen.

Let us each personally trust in Him more faithfully, and together as brothers and sisters in Christ of the true church of Christ, let us honor God precisely, consistently, with no shame and embarrassment at who our God is. And let us exalt Jesus in our homes with more zeal, more of a desire that Jesus Christ will be lifted high both in the hearts and homes of everyone present—from the youngest to the oldest.

Let us pray.

Almighty God and merciful Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we thank You, God, that You are the redeeming Lord who has provided all that You’ve required of Your people. Thank You, God, for the Passover that directs us to Jesus—that shadow that was so permanent in ancient Israel’s heart and mind, but ultimately directs us to Jesus, the sacrificial Lamb who died in that once-for-all death. God, we entrust to You the participation of the Lord’s Supper now. How fitting it is in Your providence we partake of the Lord’s Supper. Thank You, God, that we can remember what Jesus has done, that we can encounter You and that You meet with us, God, as we by faith receive the bread and the cup. Use this, God, mightily. We entrust this to You and ask for Your blessing upon the bread and the cup. We ask, God, that it would be something that renews us and refreshes us, that helps us, God, to be more reoriented around Your coming kingdom in anticipation of when faith becomes sight and we behold the Lamb who was for sinners slain. Thank You, Lord, for this opportunity, for this privilege. We pray this all in Jesus’ name. And all God’s people said, Amen.

The Lord's Supper

Well, in the kindness of the Lord, it was not planned this way. It was a kind providence of the Lord. It is our great joy to partake of the Lord's Supper together. This was ordained, as mentioned earlier, by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and faithfully recorded in the inerrant Word of God in the gospel accounts. It was implemented by our Savior at Passover, and He recast Himself in light of the One who was giving His body for His people, for His children.

Luke's gospel puts it this way: ***"This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."*** And in the same way, Luke records, He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, ***"This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood."***

Jesus Christ, as we heard earlier, is referred to frequently as the Lamb who was for sinners slain. And Christ is the substance of all the Old Testament sacrificial system that came before. Christ is the manifestation, the fullest point, the pinnacle of God's promise. And it's an amazing thing to gather under the blood of Jesus, in Christ Jesus, by God's grace, to partake of the Lord's Supper and remember the death of Christ until He returns.

We partake with fear and reverence. God is holy and worthy; we are not. We partake with humility and seriousness. We are great sinners, called not to partake in an unworthy manner. We also partake with great thanksgiving and gladness, for our Lord has saved us and reconciled us to Himself through the shed blood of Jesus.

In the apostle Paul's time in Corinth, there was a very serious division happening where the wealthy people would go first and eat and partake of the Lord's Supper, and then the poor people would come in from the fields and there'd be nothing left for them. And it was wicked and wrong. It was not done together. It was not done corporately as one. But this is a meal for believers. And so who is the Lord's Supper for? It is for believers. If you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord's Supper is for you. The Lord's Supper is for you. You are welcome to the table and you should understand that.

But at the same time, it's not open for just anyone. And even if you call yourself a believer, I want you to hear some warnings here. First, if you are not a Christian again, please let the elements pass. We hope and pray you trust in Jesus—that today is the day of salvation for you, my friend. But if you are one who calls yourself a Christian, please understand what that means. It has specific meaning in the Bible. The Scriptures speak of those who honor the Lord's Word, trusting in God's grace, have repented of their sins, and are taking God's Word seriously.

In the book of 1 Corinthians, the church in Corinth had been baptized. They had all been baptized. And so if you've not been baptized as a believer, we'd urge you to let the elements pass and be baptized as a believer first. Additionally, along with this, if you have some hostility or enmity between you and a brother or sister in Christ that you've not reconciled, we urge you to go and make that right with that friend, with that brother, that sister—and then partake next month when there's peace. This is meant to display and renew us as one in Christ Jesus. God does not want divisions amongst the body of Christ, friends. So please withhold rather, if that describes you, and partake next time, God willing.

Additionally, you should understand that if you have rejected and cast off any connection to Christ's local church—you spurn belonging to a local church, you reject any kind of idea of church membership—we would urge you to seriously consider what it means to partake of the Lord's Supper. It doesn't mean you need to be a member of Christ the King Reformed Baptist Church or Cornerstone Church, but it's an important thing to be pursuing membership in a faithful local church or to be a member, a covenant member of a local church as well before you partake. Why? You need to be one with the body of Christ. This is just something to urge you to consider. Only the Lord knows your life, your conscience, but we'd urge you to consider these things because the Scriptures tell us not to partake in an unworthy manner. It tells us to discern the body. And so friends, we urge you towards that—knowing that God is gracious, God is forgiving, and God has given us Jesus, the sacrificial Lamb who shed His blood.

And what do we do during this time? We reflect, we remember. We confess our sins. We say, "Lord, thank You that though I am unworthy, You are the gracious God who has reconciled me in Christ. And You've given me a forever family in Your church, in Your people." And we praise God for that—that this is the time when our faith can be strengthened, we can encounter the Lord, He can meet us here. We will partake together after everyone has been served, friends, momentarily. During this time, confess your sins, delight in and thank God who has sent Jesus into the world to shed His blood and to save sinners like us.

****[Distribution of the elements]****

Thank you, brother.

In the Word of God, we read through the words of the apostle Paul: ***"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which 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 He took the cup also after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.'"***

Father in heaven, we thank You and praise You in the name of Jesus, the sacrificial Lamb through whom we can approach You boldly, who shed His blood, whose blood we are under. And we thank You, Lord, for the joy it is to partake with freedom and gladness and thanksgiving. God, You have reconciled us to You. You have saved us by Your grace. You have gone, Lord Jesus, to prepare a place for us, and we marvel, God, that we are able to proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ's death until He comes again as we gather. So thank You, Lord, for the sacrificial Lamb of Jesus. Thank You, God, for the powerful cross-work of Christ. May we always proclaim it with gladness, unashamed at who You are and the power and the mercy displayed for sinners like us and for all sinners who would trust in Christ alone for the forgiveness of sins. Be glorified, God, in us, we pray, both now and forevermore. In Jesus' name. And all God's people said, Amen.

Benediction

What a joy it is to sing praises as those redeemed by the blood of Christ. Amen.

Go with this word from 1 Thessalonians 5:9–11:

“For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him. Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”

Amen.