

The Cross of Christ

Lesson 11: Remembering at His Table -- 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Some things are too important to be left to memory alone. That is why we build monuments, keep anniversaries, and set certain days apart on the calendar. We know how easily the human heart forgets, how the most significant events can fade into the background of busy lives, and so we create rhythms of remembrance to keep them near. On the night before he died, knowing how prone his people would be to forget, Jesus did exactly this. He took bread and a cup, ordinary things from an ordinary meal, and he turned them into a memorial that his church would keep until the end of the age. Do this, he said, in remembrance of me.

Paul hands this on to the Corinthians as something he received directly from the Lord. The Lord Jesus on the night when 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 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. Every word is weighted. The broken bread speaks of his body given for us. The cup speaks of his blood, the blood of the new covenant, the very blood we have been studying through this whole series, poured out for the forgiveness of sins.

Notice that the Lord's Supper gathers up everything the cross accomplished and sets it before us in a form we can see, touch, and taste. All the great truths of this study, the love of God, the bearing of our sin, the redemption, the propitiation, the reconciliation, the new covenant in his blood, are present at this table. The Supper is the cross made tangible, a sermon we eat and drink. And it is not a private devotion but a corporate act of worship. The first Christians gathered on the first day of every week to break bread, and the church has gathered at this table ever since, each Lord's Day, to remember and to proclaim.

For that is the other thing the Supper does. Paul says that as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. The table looks back to the cross and forward to his return. It is memory and proclamation and hope all at once. So read these verses as an invitation to the most precious weekly appointment the church keeps. After eleven lessons gazing at the cross, we come now to the table where the Lord himself invites us to remember his death, to renew our covenant with him, and to announce to the world and to one another that he died, that he is coming again, and that until he does, we will not forget.

Group Discussion: Jesus knew his people would be tempted to forget the most important event in history, so he gave us a regular, tangible way to remember it. Why do you think we need physical, repeated reminders like the bread and the cup, and what tends to happen to our hearts when remembrance of the cross grows faint?

Personal Reflection: Be honest about how you usually approach the Lord's Supper. Has it become routine, something you do without much thought? What would change if you came to

the table each week truly remembering that the body was broken and the blood was poured out for you?

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23–26

Study Questions

1. Paul says he “received from the Lord” what he passed on about the Supper, and that Jesus said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me” (vv. 23–24). What does it tell us that the Lord himself instituted this memorial, and why is remembrance so central to what we do at the table?
2. Jesus said the bread represents his body “which is for you.” When you hold the bread, how does it deepen the meaning to hear those two words, for you, spoken personally to you, and where do you most need to receive that this week?
3. Jesus said, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood” (v. 25). What is the new covenant, and how does the cup connect the Lord’s Supper to the blood of Christ and to all the truths about the cross we have studied in this series?
4. A covenant is a binding relationship with promises and commitments on both sides. As you drink the cup of the new covenant, what does it mean for you to renew your own commitment to the Lord who gave his blood to establish it?
5. Paul says, “As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” (v. 26). How is the Lord’s Supper not only a private remembrance but a public proclamation, and to whom are we proclaiming his death when we gather at the table?

6. The Supper proclaims the Lord's death "until he comes," holding together the cross behind us and his return ahead of us. How does coming to the table each week as an act of hope, not only memory, shape the way you live in between?
7. The early church gathered on the first day of every week to break bread (Acts 20:7), making the Lord's Supper a regular act of worship rather than a rare event. Why does the weekly rhythm of remembrance matter, and how does keeping this appointment guard the heart against forgetting the cross?
8. Where in your life are you most prone to live as though the cross were a distant fact rather than the center of everything? How might faithfully keeping this weekly memorial reorder your priorities and affections?
9. Bringing the passage together, the Lord's Supper is the weekly memorial and proclamation of Christ's death until he comes, in which the church remembers his body broken and his blood poured out, renews the new covenant, and announces his death and his return. Explain how the Supper gathers up everything the cross accomplished, sacrifice, the new covenant in his blood, forgiveness, and hope, into a single act of worship, and why this calls for both reverent self-examination and grateful celebration rather than empty routine.
10. Look back across 1 Corinthians 11:23–26 as a whole, this table where memory, covenant, proclamation, and hope meet. Name one specific way this passage is changing how you will come to the Lord's table, and one concrete way you will let the remembrance of the cross shape your week.

Now or Later

Reflect on these passages: Luke 22:19–20, this is my body given for you, this cup is the new covenant in my blood; Acts 20:7, on the first day of the week they gathered to break bread; Matthew 26:26–29, Jesus instituting the Supper and looking ahead to the Father's kingdom; Jeremiah 31:31–34, the promise of a new covenant with sins remembered no more; 1 Corinthians 10:16–17, the cup and bread as a sharing in the blood and body of Christ.