

"Do this remembering me"

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- [0 : 0 0] Our reading this morning is taken from Psalm 77. Will the Lord reject forever?! Will he never show his favor again?
- ! Has his unfailing love vanished forever?! Has his promise failed for all time? Has God forgotten to be merciful? Has he in anger withheld his compassion?
- Then I thought, to this I will appeal. The years when the Most High stretched out his hand. I will remember the deeds of the Lord.
- Yes, I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will consider all your works and meditate on all your mighty deeds. Your ways, O God, are holy.
- What God is as great as our God? You are the God who performs miracles. You display your power among the peoples.
- [1 : 0 9] With your mighty arm, you redeem your people. The descendants of Jacob and Joseph. The waters saw you, God.
- The waters saw you and rised. The very depths were convulsed. The clouds poured down water. The heavens resounded with thunder.
- Your arrows flashed back and forth. Your thunder was heard in the whirlwind. Your lightning lit up the world. The earth trembled and quaked.
- Your path led through the sea. Your way through the mighty waters. Though your footprints were not seen. Amen.
- Pray with me a moment. Lord, as we come to this idea of memory and remembering, help us to remember.
- [2 : 0 8] To remember you. In all your glory. In all your power. In all your majesty. And in all your strength.
- Thank you, Lord. Amen. Amen. On Friday evening, we spent some time remembering Jesus. And I'm wanting to pick up on that and look a little bit closer at it now.
- And see how communion and remembering are inextricably linked. But first, I'm going to offer a bit of a challenge.
- You see, I'm a bit of a foodie. I love tasting new foods. Finding out what these taste like after you've smelt them.
- But there's also something very comforting, isn't there, about familiar food. The smell of a cup of coffee. Fish and chips. The Sunday roast.
- [3 : 1 3] We could have put those on our lists of things that help us remember, couldn't we? And in fact, Marcel Proust's *In Search of Time Lost* picks up on that when he talks about the Madeleine cakes.
- And the smell that comes from them. The taste of them as they're dunked in the cup of tea. As he tastes it, his memories of childhood come back.
- As we partake of the Lord's Supper, he's given us this meal to evoke our memories of what he's done for us.

On the eve of his death, he transformed that traditional Passover meal into something new.

Something for his church. A gift to us. And he said, keep on observing this. Keep on doing it. Whenever you do this, whenever you eat together like this, do this remembering me.

[4 : 23] So as we take the bread and drink the wine, let that evoke a memory for you.

What did Jesus mean, though, when he said, do this in remembrance of me? Is it that we've just got to dredge our memories for what we can remember of the story of Christ's death?

Yeah, it's good and it's positive and it's affirming to go over those events. And we do, as we take communion, remember those events.

But Jesus didn't simply say, have this meal to be reminded of me. He says, to do it in remembrance of me.

That's the significance of the remembering. It's about him. It's what we're remembering. He didn't say it to say, think about it.

[5 : 43] Think about this in remembrance of me. So, if we're wanting to be saved by our emotions, we can think about it.

If we're wanting to be saved by our intellect, we can say, understand this in remembrance of me. But rather, Jesus said, do this.

A physical act. Something that we can do. When we read things, we take in so much. When we hear things, we take in a lot less. But when we do things, we take in a whole lot more.

That's why Jesus says to do this. Not just talk about it. Not just think about it. But to actually do it. It's an activity that reminds us of the price of our salvation.

And it's not something we do on our own. It's something that we do together. And so, that partaking is something that binds us not only closer to Jesus, but closer to one another.

[6 : 59] We are actively engaged in this meal. We are participating in an activity. And that helps us remember all the layers, all the nuances associated with it.

I think it's good to remember who sat with Jesus around that first table. It wasn't just his favorites.

It wasn't just his closest friends. The ones who had got it. The ones who understood who he was. It was the whole lot of them. It was Peter, Andrew, James, and John who had consistently managed to miss the point of Jesus' ministry.

It was Judas who would betray him. It was the others who were perplexed, bewildered, unsure, even doubting.

But they were all there at that meal. And Jesus said to them all, do this in remembrance of me.

[8 : 15] Perhaps what Jesus meant was that we should be remembering his miracles. His demonstrations of power that revealed who he was. Perhaps we should remember his teaching.

Or the example he set. The acts of service and kindness that he summed up in the command to love one another.

Perhaps we should remember the other events of the upper room. The foot washing. As well as the breaking of bread and the blessing of the wine.

Maybe we should be remembering the events of Calvary. How he was betrayed. How he suffered agony. And died.

Maybe we should be remembering the joy of Easter morning. Of resurrection. And hope restored.

[9 : 19] But I think above all, we need to be remembering Jesus himself. Jesus who brought the entire world a stunning revelation.

that acceptance and grace and love of God extended to the whole world. It wasn't just for that small community in Israel.

It's for the whole world. God wants to show his love to everybody. Not just a small community.

But the whole world. He wants everyone to know who he is and that Jesus has died for them. Those who were previously outcast and marginalized.

Those who had been despised as unworthy. Jesus now declares to be worthy. To be included in the family of God.

[10 : 30] God and yes, we are called to remember his life, his teaching and his example. Because he is God in the flesh and we are to look to him but so is everybody else.

So is the whole world. God as we remember those events let's remember how they have impacted our lives.

How our understanding, how our experience of God has shaped us and made us the people that we are now. and as we remember what he's done for us that should inspire us to action.

It should inspire us to take on board the things that Jesus has said. The prayer that we've just prayed forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

we need to be forgiving as Christ has forgiven us. We need to acknowledge that through communion here we have a connection.

[11 : 51] We have a connection with Christ who is present. He's here. He's present here to bless us. We have a connection also with each other.

that's why the Bible talks about one body and one bread. We are one in Christ. But we also take communion as an anticipation of Jesus' return.

It's something that gives us a future hope. It prepares us for that future. A future in the presence of the living God.

This is the central link the place of connection between past and present and future. They all come together in communion.

It's like communion is our doorway into eternity. And as we do so we remembered on Friday those who've gone before us the communion of saints who are already in the presence of God.

[13 : 08] They're worshipping and we are worshipping alongside them. It's in communion that the church on earth is together with the church triumphant those in heaven in our worship.

communion and we have so communion is more than just remembering. Remembrance is an act of bringing the past into the present and allowing Christ's death and resurrection to shape how we live now.

Communion allows us that moment of reflection so that we can learn from the past and go on into the future.

It's not just a mental activity it's an action. It's an action that shapes and defines who we are. And as we dwell on it and as we think about it it cancels out our self-centeredness and places us in God's kingdom.

maybe we could look at it like this it's a training exercise in living out our new identities as God's children and we can be so thankful and so grateful Jesus has done this for us.

[14 : 42] And I'll just remind you as you take the bread taste it remember that although it is real bread it's also that link to God the Son becoming man for us and giving up his body for us so that we might have eternal life.

And as you taste the sweetness of the wine remember just how sweet it is to know that your sins are forgiven because Jesus poured out his blood for you.

Amen.