

Communion

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Preacher: Pastor Kenoyer

[0 : 00] I would like you to turn your Bibles this morning to 1 Corinthians chapter 11.!

Today, we celebrate the Word's table.! You're trying to tell me that it's not on.!

It's not on. Did I do it or did it? Yeah. First time for everything. Thank you, Pastor David.

Let's begin with prayer. Probably a safer start. Our gracious Father, we are so very blessed to be your children.

To take the Word that you have given to us, settled in the heavens, depend upon the Holy Spirit to give to us understanding, and to cause our hearts to delight in the Lord Jesus, and look forward to the day that we will see Him face to face.

[1 : 20] To revel in the reminder of our salvation. And Lord, as I pray these things for those of us who are here today who by grace have come to know Jesus as our Savior, Lord Jesus as Lord and Savior of mankind.

And I would pray that as the hearts of believers are encouraged today, that those who are here that do not know Christ would be drawn to the cross. That by your gracious Spirit, they would first of all sense the deep and dark burden of their sin and be drawn to believe in the finished work of Christ. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Amen. We're here this morning to celebrate the Lord's table. And I want you to follow with me briefly as we look at chapter 11 beginning there in verse 17.

And allow me to read it to you to frame the portion that we're going to be looking at. You follow along in your own copy if you would. But in the following instructions, I do not commend you because when you come together, it's not for the better but for the worse.

[2 : 53] For in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and I believe it in part. For there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized.

When you come together, it's not the Lord's Supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk.

What? Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you?

Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not. 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.

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.

[3 : 57] Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

I begin by drawing attention to what we find there in chapter 11, verse 17, where the apostle draws attention at the start to a problem that the church had, and he was writing to correct the difficulty. You'll notice there as you kind of work your way through the first portion that he gives recurring signals that there's something that bothers him. He'd heard about a difficulty in the church at Corinth.

And any of you that are familiar with the book of 1 Corinthians know that the church at Corinth was one that had numerous difficulties. One in particular that stood out was that they were a very divisive group of people.

Strange thing, isn't it? You know, we gather together because of the Lord Jesus, and we all love each other, and we're on one family, and yet, guess what? People end up with their little attitudes and divisions and difficulties.

[5 : 03] And from the beginning, early on in the book, we find this recurring concern that the apostle had regarding the divisiveness of that congregation. And this played out not only in their general conversations and disputes that they had in the rest of the fellowship, but particularly when they came together to celebrate the Lord's table.

Instead of gathering together with this sense of unity and oneness that is to be the truth in our relationship, because we are bound together by the Lord Jesus and what he's done for us, they were often their little pockets and attitudes.

And he says, listen, I've got to tell you something. The following instructions that I have for you, I don't commend you. I'm not real happy with you. Then in verse 20, he says, It is not the Lord's Supper, the Lord's table, the supper, that you eat.

If you had asked anybody in the church at Corinth as they were leaving the service, So what did you guys do today? They would have said, well, we celebrated the Lord's table.

And the apostle says, no, you didn't. Well, what you were involved in had nothing to do with what you thought you were doing. Then again, in verse 22, he says, Shall I commend you in this?

[6 : 20] No, I will not. Pretty strong, sharp words from the apostle. It's interesting that he goes on, he says something there in verse 19 that I think we should not miss.

Put your finger on it, if you would, just to kind of track. For there must be factions among you. That's pretty interesting, isn't it?

You'll remember that over in Ephesians chapter 4, the apostle, when he was writing to the church at Ephesus, he says, listen, that we're to endeavor to maintain the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace.

One faith, one Lord, one baptism. There are things that because of our common salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are to be knit together.

We are to be part of one body. And yet here, the apostle says, you know, don't be surprised that there is this divisiveness on occasion in the fellowship, and there's a reason.

[7 : 22] It has to be. Now, when you find in the scripture, it says it must be, I think a rational question would be, why is that necessary? Thankfully, when you have a Bible question asked, a safe thing to do is find a Bible answer.

Wouldn't you agree to that? And one of the rules is this, is that the answer is in the scriptures itself. And you'll notice there in verse 19, he goes on and says, in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized.

Nobody likes division. Nobody really likes to be in an environment where there's tension and animosity and an ill spirit. And, you know, you walk up into a conversation in the lobby and you get the drift that something's amiss and somebody's not happy and there's that tension.

By the way, when dad and mom are fighting, that never happens in any family. But, you know, where do the kids go? They head for safer places, right? And sadly, sometimes tension in a body of believers will cause those who are less mature to find the exit and to leave the environment rather than to work through the challenges.

Here's what Paul says. He says, these things are going to happen. They must happen. Why? So that those who are approved may be identified.

[8 : 49] You don't really know who peacemakers are until there is a need for it. Let me use a simple illustration of it. I am not a mechanic.

I'm very thankful for YouTube, but I would not go so far as to say that YouTube has made me a mechanic. And when my car begins making strange sounds, probably the best thing I can do is lift the hood and hope that Jesus sends along a helper.

You know, it's like, and I have no idea who a mechanic is until somebody sees my plight and comes along and says, what's the problem?

Well, you know, I'm turning the key and it just goes click, click, click. Oh. You figure out who a mechanic is when there's a mechanical problem. Am I right? And the text tells us that the reason that some of these difficulties happen in a church is so that those who have a heart that is right before the Lord end up being revealed and displayed.

I think about a companion passage over in 1 Timothy where it says, lay hands on no man suddenly. Don't be precipitous in calling a person into spiritual responsibility because some men's issues are pretty evident and you see them pretty quickly.

[10:11] Other men's issues don't come to the surface at the outset and you only see things over time. And here in this passage, Paul is writing to the church and he said, let me tell you, I've heard about the difficulties that you're having and I think you need to understand that some of these things happen and God uses them to bring out those individuals whose hearts are right.

If the church at Corinth had those kind of difficulties, it's fair and it's appropriate for us to understand that the church at Corinth serves as an example and instruction to us as believers today.

Isn't that right? We read in the scriptures, it says, these things are written for your example. We're given these things so that when we bump into these kind of situations, we can say, oh, you know what?

The Bible has some counsel on that. So how should I, when I run into a divisive spirit or an ill-spirited individual and I know they're struggling, what should I do?

Well, what I shouldn't do is share it with a brother for a prayer request. Okay? I want you to pray for John Kroll. So you know who I'm talking about. He's really young.

[11:29] You know, that's not it. We know, you're well informed as the Bible believers that in scripture it says that you're to go to that person alone. And you're to appeal with a gentle, winsome spirit.

By the way, we'd like to think that everybody knows why we're upset with them. Did you hear what I just said? And here's the deal.

Scripture really is pretty pointed in that if I think you have a problem with me, I should go to you. If you have a problem with me, you should come to me.

There is no way to escape the responsibility of being biblical problem solvers in the body of Christ. Amen? Amen? And Paul says, these things are going to happen.

And when they do, it's an opportunity for those whose hearts are right to go ahead and be problem solvers rather than complainers and ill-spirited and lead to the divisive destruction of the bride of Christ.

[12:38] In relationship to that, I want you to think with me of another little passage in touch with this. In Matthew chapter 18, verse 7, just going to recite it to you so you can follow with me.

Jesus says this, woe to the world for temptations to sin. It's not a good thing to have sin happen. For it is necessary that temptations come.

They are going to happen. You are going to have temptation. You're going to have problems. Now listen to the next part. But woe to the one by whom the temptation comes.

Do you know what it's saying? There are going to be problems in the church. Just be sure you're not the one that causes them. We got that, didn't we? Kind of tucked that away. That's just a...

What does that have to do with the Lord's table? Evidently, the Holy Spirit put it here for the sake of the church at Corinth. And it's safe for us to think that on occasion, we may need to be reminded as well that we need to be individuals who, because of our communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, are problem solvers, not problem communicators and causers.

[13:52] Let's look at the second thing. After having admonished the church there in chapter 11, verse 17 on to 23, he then gets into the substance.

He says, The thing that we find in the second piece that we're looking at this morning is a reminder of the fact that Jesus died in our place.

The Bible makes it very clear that the penalty for sin is death. It says in the book of Romans, For the wages of sin is death.

Right? And we know that the consequence of sin is something that has not only an impact in the present, but it also has an impact in the eternity of life.

And that those who do not come to grips with the reality of their sin and believe in the finished work of Christ will face the judgment of God for all eternity. That's a Bible fact.

[15:05] And we like to make light of sin, at least, listen carefully, we like to make light of the sins that we do, but not the sins that are done against us.

Am I right? We're better at spotting the sins that other people do to us than we are at spotting the sins we do ourselves. However, all sin creates a supreme offense against a holy and absolutely infinite God.

And there is no remedy for sin apart from some form of payment. Illustration. I may, in carelessness, back into your car out in the parking lot.

And I find out that it's your car and I walk in and say, Oh, Andy, I am really sorry I hit your car. And Andy says, Oh, no, pastor, it's fine. The subtext is, is he wants to know what my insurance is. Why? Right? It's reasonable to accept some, to understand there's a remedy for the problem. You made a mess, you caused the problem, you damaged something. Now we need to fix it.
[16:19] The wages of sin are death. The Bible makes it clear. And the truth of the matter is, is that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Isn't that right? Every one of us, every one of us have sinned and fallen short. And there is no satisfaction. There's no remedy for the burden of sin apart from the consequences the scripture declare, which is death.

One of the things that I've enjoyed over the years is having the opportunity of talking to people about the Lord Jesus. And one of the questions that I've always found appropriate is to say, So if you were to die tonight and God were to say, Why should I let you into heaven?

What would you say? You know what the standard answer is? Surprise. I'm a pretty good person. I've met the nicest people in the world.

Every one of them, pretty good person. And another one that I really like is, Well, I'm keeping the Ten Commandments. Can you name them? Well, no, but I am keeping them.

[17:22] Okay? The thing is, is that the idea in most people's minds is that the trying's okay. And I may not even have to try all the time.

Just try every now and then. The truth of the matter is, is that that is not satisfactory to God. And the idea that we can solve our own sin problem by our effort is so contrary to the reality of what sin really is.

It's supremely offensive to the absolute holiness of God. And there is no remedy apart from death. And what God did was this.

He sent his son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to take my place and die for my sins. That just overwhelms me when I stop and think about it.

Here's the truth. Yesterday afternoon, I'm studying and praying for today. And I'm sitting there thinking, Why am I preaching? Well, pastor asked me.

[18:37] But I don't want to preach. And I was just kind of overwhelmed by my frailty. And I kept on praying.

And I started reading the scriptures. And the next thing I know, I'm crying. My wife walks out and she says, What's your problem? I said, Well, I tell you what, it's just so amazing.

Tomorrow I get to talk about Jesus who saved me. Right? I think about the song. What can wash away my sin?

What? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. And Paul writes to the church and he says, Listen, at the heart of what we're going to celebrate this morning is a reminder that Jesus died in my place.

He took the wrath of God that bore down upon me, justly deserved, and he stepped in and took it for me.

[19:45] I am forever indebted to Jesus. And I revel in that fact. There is now, therefore, no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.

Isn't that right? And if I were to ask you, I would hope that if I were to just pause, and I'm not going to do it, but if I were to just pause and say, All right, give me a couple Bible verses that just stick with this portion of scripture.

I would hope that you would just rattle them out. Agreed? Agreed? Agreed? You're not used to me. I understand that. But it's like, I'd like to have a little bit of response back. It was like, yes. In Acts chapter 17, you know, Paul is preaching and people without their phone are cross-referencing what he's saying.

Am I right? Isn't that what's going on? Yes. That's what, thank you. Aaron, you're at extra points with Jesus for that one. Okay. Thank you. Okay. Here's my point. As a pastor is preaching, you ought to be cross-referencing it with passages that support it.

[21:03] Christ Jesus died in my place. And the heart of the believer should just well up inside with references that support and affirm and encourage and nurture that kind of thinking.

Am I right? Ah, that's what it should be. You ought to walk out of here this morning thinking, man, Jesus died for me. And I no longer face the wrath of God because God poured it all out on him. Every sin. Every sin. Every offense satisfied for all eternity by the blood of Christ.

I grew up in India. Parents are missionaries. I lived across the street from Muslims. I had Hindus around me.

There were Buddhists in the area. And if you were to ask any of them, how do you get to heaven? They would say, well, you've got to try really hard and you've got to work at it. And you have the advantage that if you don't get it right the first time, there's reincarnation.

[22 : 22] Try trying again, right? Keep on doing. Climb your ladder. That doesn't work. It's appointed unto man once to die and after that the judgment. And if you're sitting here this morning and you have never come to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will face an eternity under the wrath of God in judgment against your sin.

And when we hold that cup this morning, we who know Jesus are saying, He died in my place. Let's go to another part.

We see the bread is a reminder of the cross. And then he says something else. In the same way, also, he took the cup after supper saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

I'm curious. Now, don't raise your hand. And don't go ahead and shout out all the parts of the new covenant. But I'm curious, how many of you this morning could tell me what is the new covenant? I mean, it's reasonable, right? Every time we celebrate the Lord's table, we read this passage, and it's reasonable that you... I know what the new covenant is.

[23 : 47] A couple weeks ago, I went to a wedding. I love weddings. I do like funerals, too, when I get to preach the gospel at them. But one of the things I really like about weddings is when the bride and the groom trade their promises, right?

My wife and I are at the point where when we think about our wedding, we think about... We said something like this, you know, in sickness and in health. When we were 20-something, we never thought what that really meant.

But we're learning. But as I listen to those promises, I'll bet you those of you who are here that are married, you remember what you promised.

Do you remember? Better or worse, sickness and in health. Richer or poorer, right? You said those things. Till death doeth part. I got to tell you, the new covenant is more significant than any wedding promise.

Do you know why? Why? Because what the new covenant involves lasts for all eternity and brings us back to remind us of communion and relationship with the God of this universe and the creator who is also our savior.

[25 : 04] If you walk out of here and you do not know the new covenant and you are a believer, I wouldn't say shame on you, but, you know, I hope you take a test and have the ability to pass it next week, okay?

So that you get it locked into your mind. What is the new covenant? Jeremiah chapter 30. Jeremiah chapter 32.

Hang on just a second. I'll give you the false information here. Jeremiah chapter 31, verse 31 through 34. If you'll make a note of that. And then in Ezekiel chapter 36, verse 26 and 27.

And in those two passages, God speaks to the nation of Israel through his prophets and he says, let me tell you something. I'm going to make another covenant with you.

It's not going to be like the earlier one. Talking about the Mosaic covenant that was made on Mount Sinai. And incidentally, the Mosaic covenant was one in which there were two parties that agreed to do certain things.

[26 : 15] A little bit like when you decide you're going to buy a car and you don't have cash for your car. You go to the bank and you say, can we make a deal? They say, sure, sure, sure. You make your monthly payments and you can keep driving the car until it's paid off.

What happens if you don't make your car payments? I lived in Westgate and I remember seeing a truck with a hook on the back pull up to my neighbor's garage and he pulled up the garage door and he started taking the car out of the garage.

I said, what are you doing? He said, well, I'm repossessing the car. Okay. That is a contractual relationship in which two parties agree to what they're going to do, right?

You make your payment, you get to keep the car. The new covenant that Jeremiah was speaking about and Ezekiel was speaking about was a different kind of covenant.

It was a covenant that God made that was not going to depend in any way on mankind keeping a part of it. You see, we can't completely keep the covenant.

[27 : 27] We break it. And here's what the promise of the new covenant involved. For one, in the Jeremiah passage, verse 34, it says there's complete forgiveness for sin.

There's complete forgiveness for sin. My sin is remembered no more. What a blessing to be able to recite what it says in Romans chapter 8.

There is now therefore what? No condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. It has been wiped away. It is not there. And then again in verse 33, it says, and I will give you a new heart.

You're going to be a different person. You're not the same as who you were. Why? Because he who is the covenant maker has made these promises and he is doing it.

And then again in the passage in Ezekiel, it says, and I will put my spirit within you. And also, I will be your God and you will be my people. I'll never forget sharing the gospel with a young Muslim who was trying to sell me a TV.

[28 : 33] And that was in the days before you bought them on the internet. And he was doing his best to sell me a TV and I was doing my best to share the gospel with him.

You can understand that, right? I mean, after all. And somehow or another, I don't know how it happened, but we got close to talking about what it was to be saved. And I was asking him about his religion.

And, you know, by the way, you know, Islam is all about submission, right? And he said, tell me about your religion. I said, well, you know, I tell you, the sweetest thing is I've received forgiveness for all of my sin.

And his eyes rolled back. And I said, not only that, but I have a personal relationship with the Father in heaven. And he laughed in my face. You're kidding me.

No. No. He has granted to me the privilege of being his own.

[29 : 32] And when in the Old Testament and you work your way throughout the entire scriptures, it says, I will be your God and you will be my people. So as we take the bread in the cup this morning, the heart of what we're doing is reminding ourselves of what we enjoy in our salvation.

And one of the things it says there in verse 26, as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

The word proclaim that is used there is a word that is actually talking about giving public testimony.

There is a sense in which later on when the men come and pass the elements and you take the bread and you take the cup, what you are doing is bearing testimony.

I know Jesus as my personal Savior. That is the richest, most precious blessing to enjoy.

It's something that should cause your heart this morning to just kind of well up with thanksgiving.

Right? Your heart should find satisfaction, pleasure, sweetness in the communion that you have with the Lord Jesus.

[31 : 04] I think about a couple different passages in relationship to that this morning. Psalm 16:11 says, In thy presence is the fullness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures evermore.

When you think about Jesus, I would hope that your heart is satisfied. I think about the passage in 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 8 that stands as such a poignant text to me.

Here is what the apostle said, Whom having not seen you love. Can you love somebody you have never seen? It is hard, right?

But the way in which we come to love Jesus is the scriptures reveal him to us, and we come to know him personally. And then the apostle writes, Whom having not seen you love, though now you see him not yet, believing you are filled with joy inexpressible and full of glory.

So here's my practical question. Do you know Jesus as your personal Savior? Have you come to the place where by his grace you have first of all been convicted of the dark misery of your soul and have come to understand that you cannot solve your sin problem by yourself?

[32 : 30] And there will be a day of reckoning. And Christ Jesus came into the world to pay the penalty for your sin and to grant salvation to whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord.

And so we're here today in one of two conditions. There are those of you who are here today that know Jesus as your Savior, and when you take that bread and when you take that cup, one of the desires of my heart is that your spirit would be lifted up to say, Man, Jesus is my Savior, and I can't wait till when I see him, right?

Or you're here having never come to faith yet, carrying around the cloud and the darkness and the misery of unrepentant sin and knowing there's no remedy for the darkness of your heart, and yet you hear this morning, Jesus died for me.

The day is coming when you will give an account. I've got to tell you something. It's better to have never heard the gospel than to hear it and to reject it. Does that make sense? And this morning the gospel says this, Whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

So what I appeal to you this morning is that you who know Christ come to this table and come with humility and tenderness, pleading with the Spirit of God to quicken your affections for Jesus and long for the day that you're going to see him.

[34 : 16] And you who do not know Christ, now is the hour of repentance and pleading with Jesus to save you.

Have the men come as we come to the table. Let's put it in. Thank you.