

Our 'Remembering' in the Lord's Supper

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Preacher: Rev James Maciver

[0 : 0 0] Now we're going to consider as we wait on the Lord these words we find that we've read in chapter 22 of the Gospel of Luke, but particularly as we read in regard there to the Passover when the Lord had taken the bread and the cup and had given it to the disciples.

And in fact our focus this evening is very much on the remembrance theme that we've been following for a number of weeks, where you find here the way in which the Lord said when he had taken the bread and given thanks and broken it and given it to them, he said, this is my body which is given for you, do this in remembrance of me.

And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, this cup is the poured out for you, is the new covenant in my blood, and so on. But I want to actually look also at a verse just slightly before that.

Where you find in verse 15, I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. So our theme really tonight is looking at a remembrance of Jesus in the way in which we do so in the Lord's Supper, but paying particular attention to remembering how he desired to have this Passover eaten with the disciples, as he says himself, before I suffer.

So it's a matter of remembering not just the Lord, but the Lord particularly with regard to his desire. We often remember him in terms of his death and certain aspects of his death, which of course is very much what the remembrance of the Lord's Supper is about, do this in remembrance of me as we take the bread and take the cup.

[1 : 5 0] But tonight we're taking this reference that he made to his earnest desire to eat this Passover with the disciples before he suffered. Because that earnest desire is such an important aspect of the Lord's own approach to his death.

Because he very well knew that the Passover represented himself in the Passover lamb that was killed, and how that represented him as well as the bread here and the cup, which was the new covenant in his blood.

In other words, through his death, or located particularly in his death. Now if you take this word suffer in verse 15, it's the only place in the New Testament, we're told, where this word or this verb suffer is used without a direct object.

In other words, elsewhere in the New Testament you find the word used, but it's always attached to something in regard to the suffering. Suffering pain, suffering distress, suffering hunger, suffering different things that are attached to the word suffer itself.

But here is the only place in the New Testament where it just simply says, I desire to eat this Passover before I suffer. It doesn't say suffer something.

[3 : 1 2] It just simply says, before I suffer. And the fact that that's how it's put, and the fact that it's the only place in the whole New Testament where you find the verb used without a direct object like that, tells us something very precious about the Lord's own understanding and the Lord's own sufferings that he understood here in anticipation.

And first of all, that means that the fact of his sufferings were to him sufferings which were complete. In other words, the Lord is teaching us, even by reading this here, the use of this verb without a direct object, it's simply saying, before I suffered, which really gives us the picture that the Lord's sufferings were entire.

Every aspect of suffering that belongs to human experience are in the Lord's sufferings. It's not suffering something of what we, as human beings, suffer throughout our lives.

It's not suffering something of the effects of our sin in the death that he died. It's suffering the entirety of all our sufferings and the suffering indeed that we deserve for our sins.

Every single aspect of that, every strand of that, every ounce of that, every single detail of that is in the Lord's sufferings, which is why he says, I have earnestly desired to eat this with you before I suffer.

[4 : 43] It doesn't matter what kind of suffering you or I have right now, tonight, or in your life, or will yet have in the course of your life, but you will look in vain at the sufferings of Christ to find the absence of that type of suffering that you're going through in his sufferings.

It's all there. He knows exactly and in detail and in its entirety every single type of suffering, every single degree of suffering that you and I go through.

How precious is that? How incredibly valuable that is when you and I come to God to express as we can our sufferings to Him.

And when we come to express express how we cannot even understand something of the suffering that we may have to go through, something of the traumas of this life, well, you're coming to one as you express your concerns and your pain and your lack of understanding and your perplexity concerning these things.

You're coming to one who has gone through it all and whose own sufferings have packed in every single element of suffering that we will ever have to endure.

[6 : 05] The second thing it reminds us of in terms of the way that this word is used without a direct object is that the Lord's suffering, you see, it's speaking here almost as if He hadn't suffered anything at all up to now.

Let's just read it again. He said, I have earnestly desire to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. But He has suffered already and He suffered much already.

He suffered the pain of temptations. He suffered so much before now that you find described in the Gospels as He went through from day to day of His life. He was, as Hebrews put it, daily, constantly, enduring the contradiction of sinners against Himself.

He, as no one else could, knew what it was to suffer as a perfectly holy being in a world stuffed with sin. The very entire opposite of Himself.

And yet here, it's almost as if He hasn't suffered at all. Why is that? Because He had such a view of His death on the cross.

[7 : 11] I really saw that as the very apex of all His sufferings. And it's really one way that the Gospel writers tell us of how significant the cross is not only in the experience of the Lord's people and how central the cross is to the Gospel and to the forgiveness of our sins and all of these things attached to that.

The centrality and the basic nature of the cross, the foundational aspect of the cross is there. But so it was with the Lord because He saw that the cross is above all the other sufferings, these sufferings that He needed to endure in order to pay the price of sin.

So the suffering that He has particularly in mind here is the suffering of His death of the cross itself. I have earnestly desire to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, before I go through to experience what I know I must endure, the suffering of the death I must die.

So our remembering in the Lord's Supper is remembering of the Lord's desire and of the Lord's desire towards the cross as it's set out in this very word, suffer, as it's used here in verse 15 of this chapter.

Now two things we want to try and expand on a little tonight. Remembering of the Lord's earnest desire and what that really includes as we try and do that in the Lord's Supper.

[8 : 57] We're anticipating, of course, God willing, the supper next Lord's Day. And in a preparatory kind of way, we are setting ourselves, as it were, in that context and seeking to remember the earnest desire of the Lord amongst the other things too, which we have to remember as we remember Christ in his death.

We're remembering the Lord's earnest desire. What does that actually include? Well, first of all, his own sense of fulfillment. You see, he had this earnest desire to go through with his sufferings, with the work that he had to complete.

He had that earnest desire because he well knew that this is, in fact, the time of fulfillment. That's what he's saying. I will not eat of it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

His heart is set upon this fulfillment. He knows himself as he finds the New Testament scriptures to be full of himself, that these New Testament scriptures in prophecies, in Psalms, in the words of Moses, all of these words that anticipate his coming are all anticipatory of the climax of his sufferings in his death on the cross.

And that's what his heart is set upon. That's what he really, at this moment, is so focused upon, his own sense of fulfillment, of being the fulfillment of all of these things that prophesied of his coming and of his work and of his death.

[10 : 27] this is the moment. What he's saying here, the suffering of the cross, that's what the Lord himself had been looking forward to since he came into the world.

This sense of destiny, this point at which he was going to lay down his life as a ransom for his people, and now that it's approaching and now that the shadow of that cross is coming to lie very firmly across his face, as it were, now that he knows the nearness of that moment, the nearness of that point of fulfillment, it's all the more remarkable that the nearer it gets, you get the impression the Lord is even more concerned to follow through with this fulfillment and his desire is set upon it.

And you remember that when you come to the Lord's table, don't you? You remember how amazing it is that Jesus approached the death that he had to die with his mind firmly set upon his people, upon his being the fulfillment of all that the Old Testament anticipated and looked towards and sought to set out by way of prophecy.

So as you take the bread and as you take the cup, or even as you're looking on, if you're going to be looking on to the Lord's Supper and not actually partaking of it, as you remember his sense of fulfillment and his desire to fulfill things in himself, try to take with you what he says here and think of the sense of momentousness of this moment.

As you take the cup and as you take the bread and as you partake of the Lord's Supper, think about the momentousness to Jesus of this moment, how he himself had the desire, the earnest desire to really reach the actual fulfillment, the point of death, and how that was indeed an earnest desire on his part.

[12 : 46] Secondly, our remembering of the Lord's earnest desire includes not just his sense of fulfillment, but his commitment to the work.

His commitment to the work. With desire, I have earnestly desire to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. Ever since he had begun his public ministry, and even, we think, before that too, but certainly from the moment you find him where his parents had lost sight of him, where Mary and Joseph had lost sight of him, as he was then found in the temple disputing with the doctors of the law and the experts in the law, you remember he turned around to them after him being somewhat rebuked by them.

Do you not know? Do you not understand that I must be about my father's business? You see, there he is, the young 12-year-old Savior, and there he is saying to Mary and to Joseph, how is it that you don't yet see and understand this?

It's really something that's behind his statement to them there. Do you not yet know? Do you not know that I must be about my father's business? That I must be committed to what my father gave me to do in this world?

That's why I came into the world? That's what I'm committed to? On another occasion, he said to the disciples when they were a bit concerned that he hadn't eaten for some time, I have food to eat that you do not know of.

[14 : 25] What an amazing statement that is, that he regarded the ministry that he had come to accomplish, the work that he had come to do, the mission that he was on as sent by the Father into the world to die on the cross, that he regarded that as food, something actually that he himself saw, if you like, in a way as nourishing to his soul, that he was doing the will of the Father, that he was pleasing the Father.

There was not only a sense of fulfillment, but also his own utter commitment to the work. Sometimes we lapse in our commitment to serve him, and we confess that there are times when our commitment is on the wane or needs to be picked up again, or sometimes maybe stops altogether for a time.

Isn't it a remarkable thought that there wasn't a single moment of the Lord's life on earth when he wasn't fully committed to the work that he was doing for his people to bear their sin, to die this death on the cross with desire?

I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. He's saying, I am really so committed to this work that my desire here and now is to see it through and to actually put this before you in the Passover as those things which represent me and my death.

I'm desiring it. I'm earnestly desiring it. I'm so committed to it that my heart is full of desire. desire. And that's why we sang Psalm 40 earlier on and how it says in that Psalm as it's used elsewhere in the New Testament as a prophecy of the Lord's coming and putting the words into the Lord's own mouth as it does.

[16 : 24] Sacrifice and offering you did not desire. In other words, he's looking at the way these things come to an end in their fulfillment in Jesus himself. They've run their course as it were.

And then I said, Lo, I come in the scroll that is written of me. Or take Psalm 69 and at verse 9 which is picked up again in John chapter 2 where the Lord set out to cleanse the temple as it's usually called in John chapter 2.

That incident where he made a whip of cords and drove out of the temple those who were misusing it overturned their tables and so on. He says, Take those things away.

Do not make my father's house a house of trade or merchandise. His disciples remembered that it was written zeal for your house will consume me. From Psalm 69 and verse 9.

The zeal of your house has devoured me, has eaten me up. What a statement that is and put it here alongside of what he's saying with desire. I earnestly desire to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.

[17 : 33] The Lord was consumed with zeal. He was absolutely filled with zeal to finish this work, to do what the Father had given him to do.

Isn't it something that you feel ashamed about as I do? How far short we come in zeal for him who showed such complete zeal for us?

How zealous are we tonight to serve the Lord? I know you will say and as I will say and I will say probably more than you will say. My zeal, Lord, sometimes I can hardly detect it compared to what it should be.

And when I put it beside what the Lord is saying, I earnestly desire this before I suffer, with a view to my suffering, a head off the cross.

I sometimes feel ashamed at how little zeal I have for the glory of God, for the work of his kingdom, for the service of his name compared to his own zeal on our behalf.

[18 : 51] we remember the Lord's commitment as we take the Lord's supper and partake of it. Our remembering of his desire is a desire in which there's a sense of fulfillment in relation to everything that anticipated him, in which there's also secondly a commitment to the work that the Lord, the Father, had given him to do, and thirdly in which his interest in his people is very evident.

notice carefully how he said this, I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.

His concern is to eat this Passover with them, to be with them, to be in companionship with them, to be there as they partake of the Passover.

He isn't saying, I have to do this and then leave you to take this Passover, but I'm going somewhere else, I've got more to do, I've got some things pressing on my mind, so I need to go now and see to that, but I leave you to do this Passover, to keep this Passover, and to have that and to share it together.

I earnestly desire to eat this Passover with you. And there are no more precious words in the text than that, with you.

[20 : 16] The Lord with his people, the Lord identifying with his people, because after all, the Passover was a community meal, a community of believers, a community of the Lord's covenant people.

They were not allowed to eat the Passover on their own. No individual in Israel was allowed to eat the Passover on his or her own. And the Lord was very precise about giving them instructions about how they would need to eat the Passover and how none of the Passover lamb was to be left over so that they would come together.

If the families were very small, they'd have to come together to make a larger group. They were to actually have it as a community meal, a meal that they shared together.

Just like in the Lord's Supper, we come together to the Lord's table to take communion. And the most interesting thing and important thing about that in a sense is not how they shared together in the Passover, but how they shared the Passover with the Lord.

When we come to think of the Lord's Supper and our fellowship together in the Lord's Supper, it's all the more remarkable to think of the Lord's desire for fellowship with us and not just our desire to have fellowship one with another in the meal.

[21 : 46] The fellowship in which he holds communion with us and we hold communion with him and how that extends then into our communion one with the other.

Because for him this was an important moment. For him it was important that he shared this with the disciples. And when you think ahead to God willing next Lord's day as the Lord's Supper is administered and partaken of here in this building.

We're not just to think of how precious it is, though it is precious that we come together and share together in this meal that represents the Lord's body. We are to think of not only our desire to be together and our desire indeed to be with the Lord through his spirit.

we are to think of the Lord's desire to be with us. And the fact that the Lord is no longer physically present with his people in this world as he was here with the disciples has not altered this in principle in any way.

The Lord's desire as the glorified Lord is to be with you. It's to share in the interaction of the Lord's supper between yourself and him.

[23 : 11] It's not a one-way street from the Lord's table upwards to where Jesus is. It's two-way traffic. It's two-way communication.

It's two-way fellowship and communion. He with us and we with him. Our desire for his companionship, for his blessing, for his presence, his desire, remarkable as it sounds, for our companionship, for our fellowship, for our communion, and his communion with us.

I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. So these are three things. You could take a lot more out of it, but we'll leave it at that for the moment.

Our remembering the Lord's earnest desire. Let's try and anticipate the Lord's Supper next Lord's Day. And as we remember the Lord in taking the elements of the bread and of the cup, remember his sense of fulfillment and his desire that he indeed finish the work that was given him to do.

Remember his commitment to that work, the zeal with which he actually approached and followed through every aspect of his work and his interest in his people, his desire to be with them, his desire for communion with them as they would have a desire for him.

[24 : 43] So first thing, remembering the Lord's earnest desire and just secondly, more briefly, how we have to reflect the Lord's desire in our own souls.

And again, three things, but very much more briefly. First of all, in response to or in correspondence with his sense of fulfillment as he came towards his death, as we've tried to explain, the first thing for us in reflecting the Lord's desire and our own desire is that we be fully satisfied with him or in him.

You see, he, as he saw himself as the fulfillment of these great passages of the Old Testament about salvation and the accomplishment of redemption, now we come in our response to that, to reflect the Lord's desire in our own desire.

And what is our own desire? Well, it includes this, that we are fully satisfied in him. Look at the number of times that the Apostle Paul, for example, in his writings, in the letters you have in the New Testament, how many times he had to face this problem in the churches that he wrote to.

A desire to or a thinking on the part of these people that somehow or other they had to add something to the death of Christ in order to make things complete for themselves.

[26 : 07] They had to add circumcision, they had to add something of their own work to it in order to be justified and appear to be accepted with God. And so many times the Apostle would say and insist, the death of Christ is God's ransom for sin.

You can't add to it, you don't need to, you can't take away from it, you mustn't. It's there, it's complete, it's all that God requires. And as Paul said to the Colossians, you are complete in him.

You have Jesus tonight as your Savior, you're complete in him. You don't have to look outside of him to have anything else tacked onto him, added onto him to make you complete in the presence of God.

You are complete in him. We insist on that, the Bible insists on that. And so much heresy has developed around the sense of incompleteness which mistakenly wants to add something to Jesus and his death on the cross.

As if somehow or other, God requires something else of me in order that I be accepted and that my sins be paid for. I have come, he said, the Son of Man has come, to give his life a ransom for many.

[27 : 34] Prince McLeod in our days in college, many, many times very rightly insisted, it's not a case of Christ plus.

It's not Christ plus. It is Christ, because in Christ, everything there is there already as God has provided him to be our Savior. He's the complete Savior.

He's complete in every aspect of his work and of his death as well. And that's all that God requires for our sins to be paid.

They are already paid in the death of Christ. And when you extend by faith your arms out to receive Christ as he's offered in the gospel, that faith itself, although it's the means by which you receive Christ, is not a contribution on your part to the atonement.

It's not a contribution on your part to the ground of your acceptance with God. God already has that. It's the means by which you receive what is already complete.

[28 : 47] And you see, that's where so many of us actually at times find some perplexity in our thoughts. My faith is not what it should be.

my faith is weak compared to what it should be. My faith fluctuates from day to day. My faith lacks assurance, or I lack assurance along with it, however I want to put it.

Of course. Of course that's how it is. You're never going to be perfect in this life. The great thing is, you're seen as perfect in Christ.

Christ is the one in whom we are complete. And so we respond to his sense of fulfillment without being fulfilled and satisfied in him and in his completeness.

Secondly, as we've thought about his commitment to the work, so our reflecting of the Lord's earnest desire is in our commitment to serving him.

[29 : 51] With desire, I've desired earnestly to eat this Passover, and surely we respond to that by coming with desire to take this meal of the Lord's Supper in a way that says, Lord, I want to correspond to your zeal, to your commitment, by committing myself to serve you.

Now, you know by now that I believe in making quite a bit of baptism, and how baptism itself is what brings us into membership of the visible church, and how that has implications.

And in the larger catechism, and question 167, what is baptism? This is how it answers. Baptism is a sacrament, and then there are a number of other things, but I want to focus on what it says at the end of it, a sacrament wherein those who are baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church, and enter into an open and professed engagement to be holy and only the Lord's.

Enter into an expressed engagement to be holy and only the Lord's. In other words, by our baptism, we have something which to our way of thinking ought to make us conclude, I am committing myself to the Lord to be holy his.

It doesn't happen just when you come to the Lord's table, to the Lord's supper. It's not from that point onwards that you have to see yourself as committed to the Lord and committed to serving him and being engaged to be the Lord's completely and entirely.

[31 : 33] From the moment you're baptism, God is calling you and saying, you are actually marked as mine, and it's incumbent upon you to serve me as your privilege is to do so.

in other words, there should not be a huge gap between what you think of in terms of your baptism and what you think of in terms of the Lord's supper.

We should not have it in our mind the idea that says, well, I am baptized, but I really need to wait 20 years or 30 years or something before I'm qualified to go to the Lord's table.

Yes, there are some things that need to be set in your life in order to take communion, of course, a recognition of what the Lord's table is about, what the Lord's supper is as setting out the Lord in his death and a discernment of that as meaningful to yourself.

But let's think of this, that from the moment of our baptism, we should see ourselves as being committed to the Lord. And therefore, from that time onwards, when it come to years, if we baptize this as infants, as most of us are, as we come up to grow up in years, as we're taught by parents or by the church, whatever it is, we should be taught and we should say to ourselves, well, what is my baptism?

[32 : 59] It's something that engages me to be the Lord's. Surely none of us is going to say, well, I don't really want that. I don't like the idea of that.

Though it was done before I had a sense of these things, it's still a good thing, surely. And I want to build on that. And I want to come to partake of the Lord's Supper in due time, but not to leave it as if 20 or 30 or whatever years needs to elapse before I see myself as then going to take communion.

My baptism commits me to be engaged to the Lord, to be His, to be holy His. And it's a natural progression from that to take communion, to come to the Lord's table, to be committed to serving Him completely, including our coming to take communion.

Now, by doing that, we're not belittling the Lord's table, we're not making it less important than Scripture makes it out to be, we're not elevating baptism above what it should be, we're simply saying, these are the things that God has given to the church, to the visible church, for us as fallen sinners in need of redemption, to use as means of grace to our souls, so that we come to be committed to serving Christ, and His commitment constrains ours.

That's the second thing, to be satisfied in Him, and then to be committed to serving, and finally, to value the fellowship that the church is. We've thought about His desire to be with His people, to have communion with them, to be in fellowship with them, what we're saying now is we have to value the fellowship the church is, but you notice the wording, I've worded that quite deliberately, and I've not said to value fellowship in the church, we tend to think of fellowship as something that's in the church between various groups, or between us all in different times, services, formally or informally, what I'm saying is we value the fellowship that the church is, because that's what the church is, among other things, it is the fellowship, because fellowship in the New Testament, the word means a sharing together in things.

[35 : 32] We are co-sharers, we are co-workers, we are co-servants, and so we have to value the fellowship that the church is.

From the moment of our baptism, we belong to that fellowship, we comprise in our own contribution, part of that fellowship, we contribute to it and it's working.

We value that fellowship and express it through coming to take communion in remembrance of Jesus. Do this in remembrance of me, and in remembering him we'll remember his own earnest desire for all things to be fulfilled that he came to do, his commitment to the work and his zeal, his interest in his people.

And for all of us tonight, let's go home and think about our satisfaction in him and with him, our commitment to serving him, our valuing the fellowship that his church is, that we do belong to, the visible church of Christ, to this body that's seen of people whose God is this God, whose Lord is this Lord, whose privilege it is to remember him.

Let's pray. Gracious Lord, we give thanks for your remembering of us and for the way in which you remembered your people, even in your approach to the cross.

[37 : 21] Lord, help us, we pray, to dwell our mind upon these things. Help us to absorb them into our own thoughts and follow them through in our actions. Help us, we pray, as we anticipate once again the Lord's table being administered here.

Help us to come truly dwelling our mind upon the Lord's earnest desire to eat the Passover with his disciples. And be pleased, we pray, O Lord, to grace our gathering with your presence, to show to us your own commitment to your own cause, to the salvation of your people, and enable us, we pray, to know of that beauty and warmth and power of being in communion with you and of your communion with us.

Encourage any, we pray, who may be hesitant, whether they have been already at your table or not. We pray, O Lord, that you would give them the encouragement to, as they know themselves to be yours and know you to be theirs.

Encourage them, we pray, to come to remember you in the way in which you require. Hear us now, we pray, for Jesus' sake. Amen. Our final psalm this evening is Psalm 118.

Psalm 118 on page 399. singing from verse 24.

[38 : 59] This is the day God made. In it will joy triumphantly. Save now. I pray thee, Lord, I pray. Send now prosperity. And of course the day that is meant here is not particularly the Lord's day, the Sabbath day, or any day in an ordinary sense.

It talks here about the redemption of God and the one who has come to save us. So it's the day of salvation, the day which Jesus himself is central to.

And we'll sing these verses then from 24 through to the end of the psalm. This is the day God made. the day of salvation. It will heaven it is.

shine. H ■■■■An■ou, let's sing. Mesmer! Say my grace me, horse come diant■■ göstere Big Fuß Farrah Sounds problem sejahtera God's prairie is he.

Blessed is he in God's great name. But come hath lost to sin.

[40 : 22] We from the house switch to the Lord. Her chains to rest it down.

God is the Lord who art to us. And make life through our eyes.

Find thee unto the altar's horns. With God's sacrifice.

I mark my God and the exalt. My God I will embrace.

Give thanks to God for he is good. His mercy has always.

[41 : 34] If you allow me to get to the main door please after the benediction. Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always.

Amen. Amen.