

Communion: Proclaim His Death

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[0 : 00] All right, church. Today is a very special service. We do this once a quarter, and you could call it communion or the Lord's Supper, the Lord's Table.

But we find a couple of instances of it mentioned throughout the scriptures. This was the last supper that Jesus had with his disciples, and then he commanded us to observe that going forward as often as we plan to do it.

And so in this church, typically we have done it about once a quarter, and that's what this Sunday is. So you'll notice the deacons wearing suit jackets, and I'm wearing a suit jacket.

And if you don't feel like you're comfortable wearing a suit jacket, that's okay. There's no judgment on you. We typically only do this around Lord's Supper time, so that's all right. Don't feel bad. But we want to dive into a study of this today, and I hope that we can take something away from the scriptures that would be impactful to us, as that's certainly what the Lord intends.

So today we're looking at the Lord's Supper. Do this in remembrance of me. Now, before we dive into our passage today, and if you'd like to get ahead, you can go ahead and turn to 1 Corinthians chapter 11.

[1 : 18] 1 Corinthians chapter 11 is where we will be. Can you go ahead and jump into these sermon slides for me? I think the first one says Passover.

Then I can advance them with this. 1 Corinthians chapter 11. What this is, is Jesus had this, thank you, Jesus had this supper that we read about and has lasted on for all this time because of the Feast of Passover.

And without taking the majority of our time this morning and diving into all that the Passover meant, back in Egypt, when God was sending plagues on the Egyptians because his people, the Israelites, were being held hostage, the death angel was sent from heaven to pass over all these homes across Egypt.

And the firstborn son would be killed that night supernaturally because of God's judgment on these evil people who would not let Israel go free and kept them in captivity against their will.

So this was called the Passover, when the death angel would pass over. And the only way to escape this terrible judgment on a household would be, according to God's command to his people, to make an animal sacrifice and take the blood from that sacrifice and paint it on the doorposts, the top, the sides.

[2 : 45] And when the angel would pass over that house in the night, he would see the blood and he would not judge that household and strike the firstborn dead. So what a terrible judgment, but God ultimately used it to set his people free.

And of course, his people, those that obeyed his command, were not included in that judgment. The angel would pass over their house. So from then on, every year, the Hebrew people would have a Passover feast, remembering that night, remembering God's deliverance from them.

And so it was around the time of this Passover that Jesus had this meal with his disciples that was called the Last Supper. And so he said that he would be the one who would be the final sacrifice.

There would be no more need for animal sacrifices. He would be the one, the final sacrifice for sins. And so the final Passover became the first communion.

And he said, this is my body. This is my blood. And he used these symbols as pictures of the sacrifice that he would make.

[4 : 01] It was an incredibly meaningful moment. And even though his disciples, his followers gathered with him in that room, having the Passover feast that night, probably didn't know exactly what was coming.

It may have had an idea through hints and clues that he had given them leading up to the time of his death. But they gathered that there was something significant. Of course, the Roman soldiers and the religious leaders were closing in.

And they knew at any moment he could be arrested for trumped up charges, supposed crimes. So this moment was a special shared moment between friends, between followers and their rabbi, between the Son of God and his first disciples on this earth.

So let's look now at 1 Corinthians chapter 11. 1 Corinthians chapter 11, we'll begin reading down in verse 23.

1 Corinthians 11 and verse 23. The Apostle Paul is writing this letter to the church in Corinth. 1 Corinthians 11 and verse 23.

[5 : 42] 1 Corinthians 12 and verse 23.

the story of Jesus and his time on this earth, his 30 plus years walking around this earth, showing us, telling us that he was the son of God. He was God himself and he came to seek us and to save us. And you get to see the actual words of Jesus written down through recorded history for our benefit today. So if you're reading through the gospels, you see all of these pictures that Jesus painted in a couple of weeks, we'll get back to the series that we started last Sunday. We started a brand new series last Sunday, all about the parables of Jesus. Anybody know what a parable is? If you raised your hand, you got to say now the story. Yeah, it's a story, right? A story meant to tell a bigger picture, a story meant to give a moral, a story meant to change us, to tell us something in a very illustrative way. So we dived into this series last Sunday. We talked about the wheat and the weeds or the tares, the difference there. But Jesus was always using something to illustrate his point. So he's using this bread and he's sitting here with his disciples saying, this is my body. You see, as we break it, as we typically do at the Passover feast, my body is going to be broken like this for you. I'm not saying it to get sympathy from you or make you feel bad for me. He said, I'm doing this of my own will for you. And then we pick it up back in verse 25. So he says, this is my body. It's for you. Do this in remembrance of me. And then in verse 25, in the same way also he took the cup after supper. And this, he said, this cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Can y'all focus on that last sentence there? Usually when we read this passage, we're getting ready to observe the Lord's supper, drink the cup, eat the bread as just as they did so many years ago, centuries ago.

But I'd love for us to highlight the last thing he said there. When you do this, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. So that's what we're talking about this morning. We're going to highlight that part of this famous account of the communion, the last supper that Paul wrote down. Let's ask God's blessing over his word this morning. God, we pray right now that as we have read this passage, Paul wrote it so many years ago to this church in Corinth, and it's been passed down from church to church, from generation to generation. It's still alive and helpful for us today. Looking back at that fateful night when you would be arrested, you would be killed. But it was all part of your sacrificial plan for our redemption, our salvation, for our good, for your glory. Help us to glorify you this morning by proclaiming your name, proclaiming your death and resurrection, not only through our observance of the Lord's supper, but through our lives. It's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. So we read here in 1 Corinthians 11, 23 through 26, this account of the Lord's supper, and he wraps it up by saying, when you do this, kind of giving us the bigger picture of what this is all about. And you might be sitting out here, and maybe you've taken the Lord's supper many times in a church setting, or maybe you've never done it before, and you're here and you're like, what are we doing? This is a weird thing. Why are those silver plates down there? And you don't know what's happening. That's okay. Let me give you the bigger picture.

Paul gives it for us as he says, when you do this, you are proclaiming God's death. We're bringing the minds back to Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. This was the central point of human history. If you don't believe that Jesus' death and resurrection were the central point of all of human history, let me explain to you how it is actually seen that way. Because BC and AD, the way we date our calendars, centered around the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Before Christ, BC, and then AD is the Latin Anno Domini, which means the year of our Lord. So, truly, this is the pivotal point of human history. So, when we do this, we observe this, we bring our minds back to him, to his death and sacrifice, and we proclaim. It's interesting that that word proclaim is used. We proclaim his death and resurrection. So, what does that proclaim mean?

This is the Greek word. Of course, the Bible wasn't originally written down in English. I'm sorry. It was written down in Greek. It was kind of the trade language of the day. English has kind of supplanted that now as the trade language of the world. But back then, it was written in Greek. And so, we look at this original Greek word, *keruso*. When I studied to be a pastor, went to Bible college and seminary, I had to study biblical Greek because I had to go back and, you know, look at the original manuscripts and all that. So, I learned how to say that. Don't come up to me afterwards with your Greek question because I don't know it that well, just enough to get by, all right? But they have all these tools now. And it says *keruso* is that word, and it's announce and proclaim. So, our job as followers of Jesus is to *keruso* or proclaim. Can we say *keruso* together? Get your mind around some Greek today. It might be too early for all that, but let's try. Okay, ready? One, two, three. *Keruso*.

[12:22] Man, you guys are, it's all Greek to me. All right. It was there. It was low-hanging fruit. I just took it. So, first of all, there is a singular truth here that I hope we can understand. God calls proclaimers.

We studied a while back. If you've been coming here for a little while, then maybe you heard the series that we did talking about, we talked, it was that Who's Your One series. We mentioned this Who's Your One earlier in the service. And we talked about Jesus calling his followers, Jesus calling his disciples. He didn't take the typical rabbi approach, right? He didn't go for the best students, the guys who made straight A pluses across the board in seminary school, in rabbi training school. He didn't do that. He went for the guys who kind of dropped out.

He went for the guys who didn't make the cut. The guys who had to go be fishermen, who had to go do whatever their family business was because they didn't make that high-paying, high-success, high-notoriety job of rabbi in training. So he went and found the others. And even though he was the greatest rabbi who ever lived and had all the authority or that crazy Hebrew word, shmiha, remember that? Shmiha. Jesus had it in spades, man. But even though he had way more shmiha than any other rabbi, he didn't take the elite group to be his followers. Boy, sometimes we get the wrong idea about Christianity, don't we? We feel like it's for the elites. We feel like it's for the best of the best. And I have no problem wearing a coat or something up here, but I just hope nobody gets the idea that you got to dress up to come worship Jesus. That he only will listen to your praise if you look the part, if you meet the expectations of society. That could not be further from who Jesus was and who Jesus is. But what he did do was he called proclaimers. He called guys that didn't even know yet how bold they could be. And every generation since then, God has called more and more proclaimers. And listen to me, if he called you, he called a proclaimer. So what do you mean?

I'm not getting up there and preaching like you do. I'm not saying you've got to proclaim on a stage in front of 200 people, but I am saying that God called you to proclaim him to someone.

There is someone in your life, maybe multiple people, maybe family members, maybe coworkers, maybe neighbors. There are people within your circle of life that God called you to proclaim him, his love, his compassion, his grace, his mercy, his salvation for their lost condition.

[15 : 22] God calls proclaimers. I read this quote and I wanted to share it with you. It's from Francis Chan, a pastor and prolific author who kind of tells it how it is sometimes, you know, and sometimes even reading through his books can be uncomfortable for me because he gets me under conviction. Like, wow, I'm not really living dedicated to Jesus, but I wanted to share this quote. He says, proclaiming the gospel to a lost world cannot just be another activity to add to the church's crowded agenda. Y'all know we have a pretty crowded agenda here, right? Most churches do. We have a lot going on. We were looking at the church calendar, seeing about when we can do certain programs and different things that we need to do. And it's like, man, April's full, man, May's full, man, June's full. When are we going to do this? You know, it just gets further and further along because we have such a crowded agenda. We're no different than you or the school or your workplace. Everybody's busy. Everybody has a lot going on. And Francis is making this point, proclaiming the gospel to a lost world can't just be one of the things that we do here. Can't just be another activity. Instead, it must be central to who we are because it actually forms our identity. Jesus put it this way. He said, if you follow me,

I'm going to make you fishers of people. Why did he call them fishers? Well, because in that moment, he was calling fishermen. He was calling guys who were literally out there fishing as their vocation.

Remember, they'd flunked out of rabbi school. And so they're out there fishing, running the family business. And he says, Hey guys, come follow me. And they're looking at him, this great rabbi with all this shmecha. And he's calling us to leave what we're doing and now come be his disciples.

What in the world? He said, yeah, if you follow me, you're not going to fish for fish anymore. Now you're going to be fishing for people. You're going to be proclaimers. And I'm going to give you a message to proclaim. So God calls proclaimers, but what do we proclaim?

What's that message? Number two, we proclaim his death. We proclaim his death. Get your fingers ready. We're going to start turning to a couple of scriptures in just a moment. Start with John chapter 12, would you? John 12 and verse 24. While you turn there, I want to share this kind of longer quote. And you're not going to be able to probably read most of it unless you're sitting right up front here, but I'll read it to you. And if you'd like me to send it to you, I will. Erwin McManus is a pastor out in Los Angeles, uh, through his ministry, countless people have been brought to Jesus Christ.

[18 : 11] And he said this kind of a diagnosis of Christianity and churches today. I want to share it with you.

We created a religion using the name of Jesus Christ and convinced ourselves that God's optimal desire for our lives was to insulate us in a spiritual bubble where we risk nothing, sacrifice nothing, lose nothing, worry about nothing. But Jesus's death was not to free us from dying, but it was to free us from the fear of death. You realize that you're still going to die.

You just don't have to be afraid of it anymore. He took the sting out of death. He took the fear out of death. He said, Jesus came to liberate us so we can die up front and then live. What's he talking about? I have preached a message here before about dying to ourselves, picking up our cross, carrying it and following Jesus in the example that he gave. You understand what you, what I'm talking about? Dying to your priorities, dying to your agenda, dying to your comfort zone, dying to your path that you had set out for your life and saying, instead, Jesus called me to be a proclaimer for him.

I'm going to follow him. So he said he came to liberate us so we could die up front and then he can teach us how to live. Jesus Christ wants to take us to places, watch this, where only dead men and women can go. I'm not talking physically dead. I'm talking recognizing that you were spiritually dead until Jesus came and breathed life into your spirit, rescued you, redeemed you, brought you to spiritual life, awareness, awakening, understanding, and now he has given you a purpose for this new life. So you died to the old one that you had.

You can't have both. You can't have not your cake and eat it too. You can't have that rotten, nasty, old, moldy piece of cake and eat that. And you're following Jesus at the same time.

[20 : 42] It doesn't work like that. Jesus wants to take you where only dead people can go. Spiritually dead people can go because he's going to breathe new life into you and give you a new purpose, a new way, a new walk, a new message to proclaim. Are you in John 12 and verse 24?

Jesus replied to them, the hour has come for the son of man to be glorified. Truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains by itself. But if it dies, it produces much fruit. Jesus wants to do something with you. We kind of touched on this a little bit last week, but Jesus wants to do something with you that will produce much fruit. And you'll know if you're following him by the fruit that your life is producing. If you are proclaiming his message, listen to me, God's going to bring fruit to you.

If you are being a proclaimer for Jesus, then you're going to see results. Not every time. There's no guarantee of a percentage of amount of people. If you tell enough people about Jesus, then half of them will turn to faith in Christ. That's not promised. But what is promised is that if we go out and tell, remember that go and tell, it's what Jesus has called us to do.

Then he will bring in fruit. Second Timothy chapter two. Second Timothy chapter two and verse eight.

Remember Jesus Christ. Easter's coming y'all. This is what we're doing. Remembering Jesus Christ risen from the dead. I love it around Easter time. We said it last Sunday, the whole world stops and thinks about, well, at least America, but probably a lot of other places too. Uh, they all stop and think about bunny rabbits and carrots and eggs and Jesus rising from the dead. So the clash there is weird, but that's all right. It's all fun. As long as we remember that the main focus there is Jesus rising from the dead. So we remember Jesus risen from the dead, but let's go on to verse 11.

[23 : 03] This saying is trustworthy. If we died with him, we will also live with him. You understand that if you proclaim his death, you have to proclaim his resurrection.

You can't have one without the other because that is what makes Jesus God. He didn't just die. He didn't just perform magic tricks, walking around this world, gather a following, get crucified on a cross and buried in a tomb. And that was the end of an amazing life. That's not the story. If it was, then let's close the doors and go home and find something else to do with our Sundays.

Some of you are nodding your head like, yeah, that's a good idea. No guys, because Jesus rose from the dead because he's God, because he's different than us, because he's real.

He proved it. Thousands saw him alive. He went back and did more miracles after he had risen from the dead. He revealed himself in his risen glorified state to hundreds and even thousands.

He's been written down for all of us in recorded history. Jesus was crucified, buried, and then came back to life. So you can't just proclaim his death without also proclaiming his resurrection.

[24 : 41] That's what we proclaim. Whether we're taking the Lord's Supper, whether we're singing that choir song that was magnificent, whether we're lifting our voices together, singing how great thou art, whether we're stepping out in faith and identifying ourselves as a follower of Jesus by being baptized up there, just like Jesus did, hanging on the cross, buried in the ground, and we put him under the water and then coming back to life.

We get to raise him back up. If you've gotten baptized here, you've heard me tell this little joke. You should be very glad that Jesus came back to life because if he didn't, we'd have to leave you under that water.

We couldn't bring you back out. I don't think we'd have a whole lot of baptism candidates after that. But he did. He came back up. And so, we can know that we can have life too.

No matter how bad it gets, Jesus has resurrection power. So that's why he said, until he comes again, we proclaim his death.

We have a singular message. When we mix the message, it gets confusing for everybody. When we combine that message that Jesus gave us to proclaim, and we add it to all the priorities that we have and the things that we'd like to talk about, whether it's politics, whether it's our own moral standards that we have for our life and expect everybody else to have too, our expectations that we place on others.

[26 : 25] The Pharisees that Jesus constantly dealt with, those religious leaders, back then, they were experts in all this. They added so many extra requirements to following God.

Jesus had to sort through all that stuff. He was constantly bumping into them. They're saying, well, you're not keeping all these laws. And they're looking at Old Testament stuff that was meant for a certain time.

And they're saying, they're giving it the requirement of being able to be a child and follower of God only if you can meet all these requirements, tick all these boxes, check off all this list.

And Jesus said, no, that's not it. Time and time again, he's bumping up against them. So we have to be so careful that the message we proclaim does not become muddled.

It doesn't become murky like those Pharisees did, like those religious leaders did. And oftentimes the church still does. Christians still do.

[27 : 27] Even outside of church. We give off this idea by the way we treat other people, by the way we talk to other people, that you're not good enough to be a Christian.

You don't look, talk, smell, act, or think like a Christian. And so you're probably not one of us. That was not what Jesus proclaimed.

That wasn't his message. So we have to be careful that the message we are proclaiming is his death and resurrection. If you talk about Jesus' death and resurrection, then you tell the gospel, the good news of Jesus.

Why did he have to die? Because of our sin. Because we have all broken his laws and commandments time and time again. Even the best of us. Even those who think that we're better than everybody else.

We are just as guilty. We put Jesus on the cross just like everybody else did. So if you talk about his death, then you talk about the reason for his death.

[28 : 29] Which is our sin. Yours and mine. And then you can't leave it there. Because his death leads into that triumphant moment that proved he was God.

And gave him the ability to forgive us all. To cleanse us all. And that was his resurrection. If the story had ended there. Then ours would also end. But our story doesn't have to end.

Because Jesus didn't end. He came back to life. So if we died with him. Remember he died on the cross.

And he's saying he's got a life for us that only dead people qualify for. So if you die to your old self. Then you also get to live with him.

Then you also get the new life that he has for you. And that life. Based on his resurrection power. Leads straight to heaven. And along the way.

[29 : 26] You get to encounter his blessings. You get to encounter his goodness. His grace. His protection. All the care that he wants to provide for you as his child.

You get to encounter that. But you got to die first. So he can give you a life with a new purpose. What is that purpose? It's proclaiming his death.

His resurrection. Until he comes. We'll end with this. This is what Paul ended with when he wrote this letter. He said until he comes. Jesus said as long as you do this.

As long as you proclaim me. My death. My resurrection. Until I come back. Keep doing it. Until I come again.

Because his death conquered death. He is coming back again. He's still alive. He came once. But there will be a second coming. Of Jesus Christ.

[30 : 22] And when that second coming happens. We'll be caught up. If we're still alive. And we're walking around this earth. Then we'll be caught up together with him. The Bible says in 1 Thessalonians.

In the clouds. To meet the Lord in the air. And we will be forever be with the Lord. If we've already died. And our time has passed. Then we'll just go straight to heaven.

It says to be absent from this body. Means we're going to be present. With the Lord. In heaven. So regardless. We get to be with Jesus. But until his second coming.

Until he comes again. He has given us this task. This purpose. This value. Of proclaiming. His death. And resurrection.

So our takeaway this morning is this. Do you proclaim his death and resurrection. Or. Do you only benefit from it? Would you honestly.

[31 : 24] Truthfully. Look inside your own heart right now. And ask yourself the question on the screen. Do I benefit. From Jesus' death and resurrection.

Or am I also. A proclaimer of it. Because that's what he called. That's the purpose.

It was the greatest gift you'll ever receive. He wants you to benefit from it. But that's only half. The other side is. He's called you to proclaim it.

So have you done that? Are you doing that? Will you by God's grace. And with his help. Become a proclaimer. Of his death and resurrection.

Not just from the Lord's supper. That we're going to take in just a moment. We're going to eat the little bread. And we're going to drink the juice together. But when we're outside these walls. Do we still proclaim it?

[32 : 29] When we're in those moments. And we feel God moving. Somebody came up to me on Wednesday night. And talked about. How they've always been shy. And always been nervous. And never confident about going out.

And sharing Jesus with others. And I challenged them on Wednesday night. And here on worship Wednesdays. We sit over here. Well actually they're doing play practice in here. So for a little bit. We're back in the fellowship hall.

On Wednesday night. After we finish with music in here. But we're doing practical training. On how to share our faith. How do we do that? That's a hard thing to do. How do we actually go and proclaim him?

You want to learn? Come on Wednesday night. We're talking about it. Okay. But somebody shared that testimony. That man God gave them two chances. In the last week. To go share their faith.

And he gave them the boldness. And the courage to do it. So if you want to proclaim God's name. Proclaim his death and resurrection. And ask him for help.

[33 : 25] Would you do that right now with me? Would you bow your heads? Friends. Maybe you heard him proclaimed right now. Maybe you heard him proclaimed. And you need to respond.

We have seen people respond time and time again. To God calling them to be his child. God drawing them and saying. I want you. Would you respond to me?

Not because of how you look. How you act. How great you are. None of that. But God just out of his love and kindness.

Pricks your heart. Pricks your mind. And says. I want you to be my child. If that's happening for you this morning. It's happened for Coulter. It's happened for Kennedy.

It's happened for a couple more. They're going to be baptized in the coming weeks. So many. In our church. I'm looking out. So many. Just since I've been here. But so many. Even before that. So many of you.

[34 : 25] You felt God's call. And you said. Yes. I place my faith in you. If that's happening for you. This morning. Right now. Would you slip your hand up. And I'll pray for you. Just slip your hand up right now.

And say. God. Might be calling me right now. To respond to him. Become his child. Thank you. How many of you would say. God might be.

Calling me right now. To be his proclaimer. To tell somebody. I don't want to just benefit. From his death and resurrection. I want to tell somebody else. And proclaim him. To others.

Would you slip your hand up. And say. I'm praying about that right now. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. You can put your hands down. Thank you. Thank you. Listen. Right now.

Would you start asking God. To give you somebody. To proclaim it to. Maybe that's your one. Maybe there's another face. Maybe there's somebody.

[35 : 22] That says. I need. Your help. To proclaim. Jesus Christ. To somebody else. His death.

His resurrection. God. You heard our prayer. You know our hearts. We've heard your word. Speak to us. Move us. Change us. Make us more like you. The real you. We'll give you the glory for it.

In Jesus name we pray. Amen. Would you keep your seats. Just for a moment. We're going to. Give you a time. Just to respond. And pray quietly. Would you just go ahead. And bow your heads. Enter into a.

Spirit of prayer. In this moment. Maybe you're praying for yourself. Maybe somebody else. In just a moment. Our deacons. Are going to come forward. And we're going to. Partake of the Lord's Supper. We're going to do it.

A little bit differently. This time. But right here. In this moment. Let's have a time of prayer. And ask God. Speak to us. About being a proclaimer for him.