

Till He Come

by Gareth Evans

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the communion table as a reminder of Jesus' words and actions, and it highlights the significance of the second coming of Jesus as a paramount doctrine of the scriptures.

Duration: 38:07

Scripture: 2 Peter 3:1

Topics: "Second Coming"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of believing in the near return of Jesus Christ. He quotes various evangelists and prophets who have expressed their conviction in the imminent appearance of the Lord. The preacher challenges the audience to consider how their lives would change if they knew Jesus was coming tomorrow. He urges them to be a people who are awake, active, and focused on Jesus, rather than being apathetic or distracted by worldly pursuits. The sermon concludes with the reminder that the greatest hope for Christians is the second coming of Christ and the assurance of forgiveness and salvation through Him.

Transcript

Every month, we gather together and we have communion table. Each month when I see this table, I am challenged to remember words such as the words of Jesus. He says, when we do this, we do it in remembrance of him.

I think that is more than simply bringing to our mind the fact of a man who lived upon earth 2,000 years ago, his miracles and his teaching, his death upon a cross and his resurrection. I think it's more than that. I think it also means we are to take note very much of what he said at that upper room when he celebrated his first communion with his disciples the night before he died.

I spent much time over recent weeks with you, emphasizing and re-emphasizing our response to the communion table in that Jesus asked of us, as he asked of his disciples, three things. That we serve one another, and he demonstrated that by washing our feet. A commandment that we love one another where there is no option.

And the third thing that we, if we are his disciples, we do what he tells us, we obey his word. But there are other aspects to this table because not only does he ask of us these three things, which is the covenant commitment we make to him every time we take this bread and wine, but he made some wonderful

promises to us. Promises of peace that the world cannot give or take away.

Promises of a joy that our joy may be full. These are promises from the last night before he died, knowing he was about to die. His last will and testament, if you like, that he declared to us that night and signed with his own blood upon a cross the next day.

One of the words that I want to take this morning from the communion table is to do this till he come. The second coming of Jesus Christ is a paramount doctrine of the scriptures. It is mentioned once in every 25 verses.

Just give you a little statistics. There are two, there are three, there are 200, sorry, there are 318, I'll repeat that, 318 passages in the Bible concerned with the second coming. It's a very important doctrine.

It's found both in the New Testament and it's the most presented doctrine of the Old Testament also. And yet it's sad, it seems to me, that except for the many books that you can buy in the Christian bookshops about the second coming, which present one position usually, we very seldom hear preaching about the second coming from our pulpit. I'm not going to teach this morning.

I'm just going to talk a little bit very simply about the second coming of Jesus. Peter in his second letter in chapter 3 starts off by saying these words, I'm writing to you today things that you know already, but I need to bring them to your memory, to remind you of them. That's how Peter writes.

And then he goes on to speak about the second coming of Jesus. And so that's what I want to do today. I'm not going to preach or teach, but I want to bring to your remembrance the reality of fact that Jesus said he would come again.

I want to turn with you to the first book of Thessalonians, chapter 1. Paul rejoices in the people of Thessalonica. He gives thanks to God for them always, verse 2, chapter 1. He makes mention of them in his prayers. He prays for them constantly.

He constantly bears in mind three things about them. Chapter 1, first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians, verse 3. I constantly bear in mind as I pray for you and I think of you and I thank God for you, I bear in mind your work of faith. And secondly, your labor of love.

And thirdly, your steadfastness of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank God for you and I pray for you because you have faith, love, and hope. I've said to you before, we know the verse in 1 Corinthians where Paul speaks, now abide these three faiths, hope and love.

The greatest of these is love. But he actually links those three together at least seven times, I have found in the Scripture. And this is one of them.

I thank God for your work of faith, your labor of love, your steadfastness of hope. So what is the work of faith? What is the labor of love? Well, Paul himself answers that question just a few verses later in verse 9. For they report to us, people report to us what kind of reception we had with you, how you have turned to God from worshipping idols. That's the work of faith.

The greatest work of faith any man can do is not to believe for the healing of a sickness, not to believe for great miracles. The greatest work of faith you and I can ever do is to respond to the prompting of God's Spirit by knowing Jesus Christ as our Savior. By grace you are saved through faith.

And that thought of yourselves is a gift from God, not of works as any man should boast. When we respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and give our lives to Christ and receive the new life that comes only from His Spirit, a gift from God, we're doing the greatest work of faith that you and I can ever do. Taking us from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, from death to life, the work of faith.

And the Thessalonians, Paul thanks God for them because that is evident in their lives that they've done that. Secondly, he says that you come to serve a living and true God. This is the labor of love.

We're called to be people of love. We're called to be a people who serve the Lord. We're called to be servants.

The greatest work of service you and I can do is to serve Him, the living, the true God. Jesus said, Jesus, blessed is he with a pure heart, for he shall see God. A pure heart is a heart that is unalloyed with division in his love.

Is it wrong to love your children? Not at all, of course not. Is it wrong to love your family? Of course it is right to love your family. But an unalloyed heart is a heart that is loving your family because you love God.

God is the primary cause, the primary source, the primary goal of your love. And these Thessalonian believers, Paul commends them. He thanks God for them.

He prays for them because the labor of love in that they are serving the living and true God. And thirdly, he says to them concerning their steadfastness of hope, there in verse 10, and you are waiting for his son from heaven. These are the people whose hope is fixed upon a promise that Jesus made that he's going to return.

And they are waiting for his son from heaven. Now, you can wait patiently like sitting at a bus stop for a bus to come along. You can not bite your fingernails and you can declare I'm very patient.

Or you can be waiting for something to happen at home and so you go on your computer and play solitaire. That can be called waiting. But when Jesus speaks about waiting in the scriptures, we're not talking about idleness.

We're talking about a passionate lifestyle that is based upon the reality that we're constantly looking for a promise. That is our hope. The greatest hope you and I have, steadfastness of hope, the greatest hope you and I have is in the reality of the resurrection of Jesus and his sure return.

For he promised that. If Jesus does not fulfill that promise, then he is not worthy of our worship. He is a liar and a deceiver.

For he promised he would come again. The other night when I had to leave, I had a very busy week. I was speaking at the university in Victoria on Friday night.

So I had to leave here Friday afternoon. I drove down and so I was home just for a while. And when I got in that night late, my wife was watching a film on television.

And I didn't stay up to watch it. I was already exhausted. And the little bit I did see of it as I was preparing to leave and go to bed was that this man who was separated from his wife was promising his little girl that he would come back for her.

And of course you know the reality. He never did come back for her. And he saw the sorrow, the pain that the little girl went through.

I want to assure you the greatest hope that you and I as Christians have, and this table speaks of it, is that he is coming again. So what do we do about it? Do we pass it from our minds because his coming has been delayed? After all, I've been a Christian 40 years and he hasn't come. What about those over the two centuries and 2,000 years, the 20 centuries, who have waited for his coming? Do we deny that he's coming now? Or are we still called to be people of a patient, steadfast, walk in a line, walk in a lifestyle because we believe he's coming? If I said to you this morning, indicate to me, I'm not going to do this, I don't want to embarrass you, indicate to me how many of you believe that Jesus is coming again, I expect most of you would put your hands up.

If I then ask you what difference is made in your life, the reality of your hope, I wonder how many of you honestly could put your hands up. Jesus said he would come again. It is very difficult to wait patiently in a world that is frenetic, a world that is so busy, a world that is so active.

I've told you before there are the seven churches in Revelation that Jesus dictates a letter to, to John. Two of them only receive his commendation. They are the church of Smyrna, which is the persecuted church, and the Philadelphia church, the brotherly love church, the church noted for its love.

And to that church he commends them because they have kept his patience. In other words, they walk their whole life with their eyes fixed upon a promise yet to be fulfilled. Let me lay down quickly some groundwork, scriptures you will know concerning the second coming of Jesus.

Why I believe, I'm convinced, utterly convinced, and I live my life on this assurance that he is coming again. This is not man's doctrines or wishful thinking to be delivered out of a perceived sick world. It is not pie-in-the-sky theology.

It is not a panacea for all of ills. It's not, as the communists say, a balm for the sick soul, something for us just to have because we are sick people. This is a reality and a hope that we should cling on to.

Paul was willing to stake his life on this hope. As have many down through the centuries been willing to stake their life on it. It's coming, he's sure, because he declared it.

He said, I will come again. The prophets declared it. They said that he would come, the Messiah would come.

He'd establish his kingdom upon earth. He would reign for a thousand years. The angels or glorified men declared it because at the tomb when they came and saw that the body had been removed, the two men there at the tomb declared to Mary that he would come again and to John and Peter that he would surely come again in like manner.

The apostles declared it. And here, of course, Paul has declared it and the Thessalonians and as I said to you earlier, it is recorded 318 times, passages in the scriptures, that he will come again. It's coming, he's sure.

The Bible tells me it's coming as sudden. Expressions like this are used. As quickly as he went, said the angels at the tomb.

He will still come as a thief in the night. Unexpected. He shall come in a moment in the twinkling of an eye.

He shall come as a shout. He shall come as a lightning flash. These are the metaphors used to describe the coming of Jesus.

So his coming is sudden. His coming is sure. And I believe his coming is soon.

The Bible has used the word imminent down through the years to speak of the coming of Christ. That means he may come at any moment. That is what the word imminent means.

There's one thing I'm sure of today that we're two thousand years nearer that day than they were when the scriptures were written. I believe his coming is soon. The Bible speaks of many, many signs.

And I'm not going to go into the signs. It would take several weeks of teaching if you wanted to. I did tell you a couple of weeks ago that while I was in Australia, I heard of a young man who was actually an American.

I thought he was a Jew, but he was not a Jewish man it turned out. Though he did wear a kippah as he spoke to us. He came from America and he presented in the church an evening presentation on the day of Jacob's trouble.

He wanted to speak to us on the second coming of Christ from the Jewish perspective. He spoke for about two hours. He was a very scholarly, a very learned young man.

And I want you to know I was thrilled as I listened to this man. Not just because of his scholarship, but because of his passion. And because of the scriptures he was bringing together, he was showing how they fitted together so well.

And I was amazed at verses he quoted and showed us the context that I had never even seen before. But when he saw it from the Jewish perspective, of course he used the Old Testament, and showed again and again clearly the second coming of Jesus Christ to this world. It was a thrilling thing to listen to.

I've said to you before concerning many doctrines on the second coming, and I'm sure they're held in this congregation, there is the pre-tribulation that we will be raptured from this world, and then there will be seven years of tribulation. There are people who are old to a mid-tribulation position, that we will go through a partial tribulation for three and a half years, and then we will be raptured from this world, and then there will be great tribulation upon the world for three and a half years, before Jesus comes with us and brings an end to the reign of Satan. There are many in the evangelical church who hold a position of a post-tribulation rapture, that we will go through a tribulation, at the end of that time we will be taken out by the Lord, he will gather us with him, and then he will come back to this earth, almost immediately, a very short time.

There are some who don't believe in a tribulation rapture at all. There are some who believe that we must create the millennium on earth, before that will happen. And all of these are within the evangelical framework of the church.

Now I know some of you are sitting there saying, well that's wrong, that's wrong, that's wrong, and all it tells me is what books you're reading. Because for every one of you who comes to me, I can show you very clearly from other writers, and other people who are totally evangelical, solid Christians, who hold a

different view to you and me. We need to acknowledge that.

But all will acknowledge that Jesus Christ is coming. And almost all of them will acknowledge it's going to be soon. Why do I believe it's going to be soon? Well among these signs the Bible speaks about, there's an increase in lawlessness.

There's always been lawlessness in the world. But in the Christian West, have you ever realized this, that most of the so-called civilized nations in the world, became civilized because they had a Christian foundation, down through the years, the history. Sadly when that Christian civilization becomes civilized, and I put that in quote signs, and Christendom becomes the norm, instead of Christianity, you'll find the decadence that comes into those societies.

But there has been, even in my lifetime, a great increase in lawlessness. There's a television program on now, I don't know if any of you have turned into it, it's a reality show about some children who attend in a British private school, a grammar school, going back to the 50s, and they're being treated as I was, when I was in grammar school in the 50s. Believe me, it wasn't quite as bad as some of the things.

I didn't have a matron shoving cod liver oil down my mouth. My mother did that for me. Have any of you watched that show? Reality show? Oh, just one? Claire, do you want your daughters to go through that type of experience? Would you want your daughters to go through that experience? The old grammar school of the 50s? It was good school, I tell you, good days.

I went through a boy's grammar school. But discipline was very much more evident then. We never thought of answering our teachers back, or our seniors back.

Never even thought of it. And lawlessness in our community, our community was a very safe place to walk. How many safe communities are there today where you can walk? There is, even in my lifetime, a major increase in lawlessness.

I find it even in the church. In the seven letters to Revelation, again, I mentioned earlier, the last one of those letters is the letter to Laodicea, the lukewarm church. The word Laodicea means ruled by the people.

In other words, there is no king in Israel. There is no government we are accountable to. We do our own thing.

I find that in the churches, with people who run around from church to church because they can't get their own way in the church they go to. Lawlessness. The second evidence, I'm not going to spend a lot of time on this, but the second evidence is the fact that the Jews are back in Jerusalem.

To you and I, that is normal. Some of us will remember the time when the nation of Israel was established after the Second World War. Most of us, many of us, do not.

But at the beginning of the last century, of course, they were not in Israel. There was a small remnant of them there, but the Jewish people did not have a nation in Israel. Since they have been back there, they have been persecuted.

They've been attacked by all the nations around them. The greatest miracle, surely, in history is the existence of the Jews. When you look down through 2,000 years of pogroms and wars and attitudes, how

the Jews have been persecuted, it amazes me that there are still a Jewish people in the world.

I should correct that. It doesn't amaze me because I believe in God. But if it weren't for God, it would be truly the greatest miracle of all history.

The Jews are established in Israel. They are a very powerful nation, yet a very, very small nation. That to me is another evidence of the soon return of Jesus because we were told that would happen in the last days.

In the last days, I hear the gospel will be proclaimed throughout the world. The last known nation that was totally atheistic where you were not allowed to preach the gospel was the nation of Albania. In the beginning of the 90s, it was totally forbidden.

Albania and next to Nepal, a country next to Nepal starts with a B. Bhutan, the two countries. We are absolutely, thank you, we're forbidden to be Christians. The king of Bhutan sent out one of his top men to America to research some computer material he wanted to install in his country for the national computer system of his country for governments.

The man came to America for three months to investigate this, to study this. He's been taught to take back to his country and lo and behold what happened, he became a believer. He goes back to Bhutan in 19, let me get this correct, towards the end, 1998, something like that.

He goes back to Bhutan, he is in a dilemma. Does he inform the king of what happened to him? In which case, he'll be expelled from the country which means the king does not have the only man in the country in order to operate his telecommunications and computer system. So the man declares his faith in Jesus Christ.

The king allows him to stay and within one year, he's let 50 people in the palace, that's the government, to Christ. In a nation that was closed to the gospel. Albania.

I've worked with two young women who went to Albania and left Bibles in secret places, they'd leave them publicly. They were both taken and they were sentenced to death. Now somebody might remind me of the name of the book that was written.

Do you remember it, Anne? Tomorrow you die, tomorrow you die. Written by a young woman who went to Albania. She and a friend were taken out to a forest, blindfolded, and I'm only talking about 1993, 94.

They expected to be shot and they stood there in great fear, crying. Crying to God. There was no noise and after a while, they realized they were alone.

They managed to get their masks off, discovered they were totally alone. They walked for days and they came across the border, I think it is Switzerland, where they were delivered. Today, the gospel has access to many, many parts of Albania.

The gospel today is spread through the world. So the advent of the internet, though there are countries in the world, North Korea, for example, tries to stop its people using, hearing the gospel, they cannot because there are many going on the internet and hearing the gospel. We are told that would happen in the last days.

Within the last 10 years, that is now happening. It was never true before 10 years ago. And God has got the gospel throughout the world.

Many, many other evidences, the increase of earthquakes, the increase of fighting in the Middle East, many evidences that the fact that Jesus Christ, I believe, is coming soon. One of the great reasons that I delight in is the preparation of the bride. As you know, many of you, I travel, I speak in many countries, I teach.

I am excited, thrilled out of my socks at the many young people in this world who are becoming passionate about their love for Jesus Christ. When I became a young Christian, I had a pastor who lit a fire in me. I was a bit of a sore thumb in my church because I was so different that I wanted to do things.

I wanted to be on the streets witnessing. I wanted to be doing this. I wanted to be doing that.

So much so that one of my elders called me a spiritual tramp because I wanted a fellowship with the Methodists and get the gospel out in our little town. But our church was very happy doing what they were doing. That church, by the way, doesn't exist today.

It doesn't surprise me at all. If you don't do what Christ calls you to do, you will die. That applies to Departure Bay Church as much as any other church.

I went down to the university last night. I spoke to 100 young people Friday night. 100 young people.

Before the meeting where I spoke at half past seven, they had a prayer time. There were 20 of them in the prayer room. I've seldom been in such an enthusiastic, passionate, Holy Spirit presence of prayer.

That's in your local university. I'm not talking about in your local church. I'm talking in your local university, a secular university.

100 passionate about the relationship with God. That thrills me. When I see people crossing denominational borders and becoming Kingdom Christians, Kingdom Christians, delighting in the fellowship of people of different persuasions, different styles of worship, recognizing them, loving them, not agreeing with them.

We're not called to agree. We're not called to uniformity. We're called to unity.

Unity demands the unity of the Spirit of God making us one in Christ. When I see that happening around the world, I see the bride of Jesus Christ coming together. That's a sure sign that Jesus is coming soon.

The people of God come together in unity. Let me give you three quotes. D.L. Moody, that great, great evangelist.

How men of faith can study the Bible and see it constantly fulfilled before their eyes and still doubt the doctrine of the near return of Jesus Christ is a mystery to me. When you see these things happening, you say, Jesus, lift up your eyes for your redemption draws nigh. Evan Roberts, the young man greatly used of God in the Welsh Revival 100 years ago, said these words, the burden on my spirit day and night is the imminent appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven to translate his saints.

My driving force for the evangelism that I'm doing, my driving force of wanting to see 100,000 people come to Christ, as he did in a three-month period, is the fact that my Savior is coming from heaven. And then

Campbell Morgan, the great expositor of the Word. Not unbelievers only, but disciples as well have neglected the Scriptures.

They practically ceased to think of the second coming of Christ. Yet a truth so clearly a part of Scripture cannot be neglected without loss. That is why it's incumbent upon a pastor, I believe every pastor, regularly should speak about the second coming of Christ.

Even though we tarry, though we wait, a doctrine that holds the number one place in all the doctrines of the New Testament and Old Testament, we need constantly, as Peter declared, bring it to our memory, for this is till he comes. Let me close by quickly bringing you to that portion in Peter's letter, the second letter of Peter chapter three. I'm going to read a few verses to you.

I'll start at verse one. This is now, beloved, the second letter I'm writing to you in which I want to stir up your sincere minds by way of reminder that you should remember the words spoken before and by the prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles. What words? What commandment? What did they say? Well, it goes on.

Know this. First of all, that in the last day, mockers will come with their mocking, following after their lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the Father's fall asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation. Have you heard people say those things? Sure.

It says in the last days that will happen. Let me go down to verse eight. However, let this one fact not escape your notice, beloved.

With the Lord, one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any of you to perish, but for all to come to repentance. One of the reasons he delays is that men and women, maybe in this congregation, have opportunity to come to repentance and to know him and the life he offers.

But then the next verse says these words. Sorry, verse, not the next verse. Let me go down to verse 11.

Since all these things are to be destroyed in the way it says in verse 10, a question. What sort of people ought we to be? If you knew that Jesus was coming tomorrow, how would that change your life? If it would, then why wait if he comes tomorrow? What sort of person ought we to be? You see, the second coming of Jesus should be a shocking fact. It should be a prod that wakes us up.

It should be one that wakes us from our apathy, one that wakes us from our sleep. Keith Green, that young prophet who died in a tragic plane crash back in the 80s, used to sing a song about the world going to hell while the church is asleep in the pews. If we really believe in the second coming of Christ, that should be a prod to shock us to become the people of God we need to be.

It should be a shocking fact. It should be a stopping fact. It should stop us from the helter-skelter of the busyness of our lives, seeking after more and more of this world, seeking after more and more of his treasures and his pleasures, being aware of our casual walk and talk, getting our priorities right, and stopping us in the life that so many of us live, I'm talking to myself, and getting our eyes back focused on Jesus if we truly believe he's coming again.

It should be a shocking fact and a stopping fact, and praise God, it could be a saving fact. What a man of people ought we to be? We need to be a people who can boast in one thing only, that we know our sins

forgiven, that this same Jesus has died upon the cross without justification, is coming back to receive us to himself. What a wonderful truth.

It should be a saving fact. For the Lord is not willing, says the scriptures, that any should perish. In his letter, the book of Hebrews, the writer there says these words, for those who look for him, those who are waiting patiently for him, he is going to appear the second time unto the fulfillment of our salvation.

So not only should it be a shocking fact, a stopping fact, a saving fact, but to those who look for him it shall be a strengthened hope, for we read the crown of life is given to those who wait for him. It should be a sanctifying hope for those who have their hope, this hope in them, says the scriptures, purify themselves. Seek to be the men and women God wants them to be.

And finally, it should be a stimulating hope. Jesus said, let us work while it is day, for the night cometh and no man can work. While we wait for his coming, may we be a people strengthened by hope, sanctified, and a people who are stimulated to serve him, the Lord who has promised.

I believe in his promise. I want to live my life in the light of eternity. When the year 2000 came into being, the new millennium, Anne and I were in Australia.

Of all the nations of the world, the first nation that was publicly seen on all national televisions around the world, welcoming in the new year and the new century, and the new millennium, was of course the country of Australia. Broke the date line first. And you may remember, I certainly remember because I was there, the big celebrations that were in Sydney Harbour, one of the most beautiful harbours in the world.

At the end of that celebration, the fireworks went off from the harbour bridge at midnight, and all the hooters of the ships and the boats in the harbour hooted, and then suddenly across the entire span of that great, great bridge was written one word. The word was eternity. And fireworks.

And everybody was amazed at it, and people started to say, what does it mean? We're going into a new millennium, what does it mean? Eternity. Then the story came out. There was a down and out, a street man, who many years before had walked into a street Christian mission.

He was drunk, and while he was there, the preacher was preaching, and all he heard was one word. Eternity. As a result of that, he sobered up, started going back there, came to know Christ, and became a respected man in the city of Sydney, Australia.

He had one ministry, he was quite an old man when this happened, and all through the city, he would go with a piece of chalk, and he'd write on pavements and sideboards everywhere, one word. Eternity. And you could walk on many of the streets, almost all the streets of Sydney, and you would see chalk mark under the edge of a window ledge where people couldn't walk over it and rub out.

We need to be a people who write across the brow of our forehead the word eternity. A people who live in the light of eternity. For we are people destined to a great eternity with a saviour.

Do you believe that? Your saviour is coming soon. Look up, your redemption draws nigh. What kind of people ought we to be? Jesus said, take this till I come.

With a service, please come and join me. I've come for you. He invited them to partake of it.

And in partaking of it this morning, we identify ourselves with the body of Christ. Before you take it, I invite you to look around at the body of Christ. For you are the body of Christ.

Do so. Look around. See the body of Christ.

Not only within these four walls, but every man and woman born again in the spirit of God belongs to the body of Christ. When we take this bread, we're identifying ourselves. Thank God.

Thank God. Through the death of Jesus and the resurrection of Jesus, you and I have been born again, bought by the blood, redeemed, justified, whatever word you like. And we have become part of the body of Christ.

As we take this, we can celebrate this morning in that reality. Paul, please, for the bread before we take it. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for what you did for us by sending Jesus to die for each one of us.

That's what we have in common here. That's what knits us together is that Jesus died for each soul in this room, each person in this city, Lord, died for. And Father, it is our duty to be the salt of this earth and to impact eternity on your behalf, to bring these people into eternity.

Thank you, Lord, that we've become united. Thank you that we are your body. Lord, may we be a true body.

May we be a body in spirit and in truth. May our word be what it should be. A yes, a yes, and a no, a no.

May we not be like that church that you said you would spew them out because they were so lukewarm. May we be a church, Lord, that just wants to glorify you, and wants to see your body grow. Lord, help us to put away suffering.

Help us, Lord, to look at the prize and help us never to turn our eyes away from it. We thank you, Father, for what you did for us. We thank you for the broken body of Jesus Christ who hung on the cross for our sin.

Yes. Amen. Praise God for you.

The same manner also Jesus took the cup. This cup is the cup of the new covenant in my blood. He has made a covenant with us.

He calls us to take this cup in recognition of that covenant. He signed his name to the covenant upon the cross. He signed it in blood the following day.

His promises are sure, for he who died upon the cross proved his promises by rising from the dead. Hallelujah. He took the cup and he offered it to his disciples and he said, will you drink it too? So, Carl, I'm asking you, please will you pray for the cup before we take it? I am broken.

I thank you, Lord, for your forgiveness. Yes. For the blood that was shed.

I thank you, Lord. Wash us clean, Lord, that you would renew. I thank you, Lord, for each one, Lord, that we would be reconciled with each other.

I pray for your blessing, Lord, our church. Bring healing to us, Lord. Help us to surrender to you.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Father, I thank you that it is only the blood that can cleanse, that can reconcile, that can forgive.

I thank you for this table, Lord. You've called us to this table because this is the place of reconciliation. You've made promises to us.

You've asked of us things. We come, Lord, in our own unworthiness and our brokenness. And we celebrate your covenant with us.

We love you. We thank you. We submit to you, our King and our God.

So we pray as each one of us takes this cup, Lord, in our own weakness and our own frailty, that you will minister healing and wholeness and the assurance of your peace and your acceptance of us in Christ Jesus. We take this cup with thanksgiving. We take it in the light of eternity until he comes, looking for that day, Lord Jesus, when we with you shall sit around that table and shall celebrate at the great supper of the Lamb, the great marriage feast of the Lamb.

We, your bride, will purify ourselves, prepare ourselves for that most glorious day. And so we take this cup. Hold the cup and we'll take it together, please.

Let's drink together. As Rose comes to play for our last hymn, I'll just take a moment, a little pastoral moment. Today's a very important day in the church's history.

This afternoon, Indianapolis Colts will be playing Chicago Bears in the Super Bowl. I wish it was my team, Seattle, was playing Buffalo, but they're not. I want to charge you this afternoon, please.

Spend a little time just waiting on the Lord. We've gone through several weeks of talking, a little bit of politicking, a little bit of animosity, attitudes. But tonight you're going to make an important decision, not only for the history of this church and the future, but the history and future of a young man and his wife.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/15/SID15908.mp3>
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