

Communion Service

by Major Ian Thomas

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding and experiencing the resurrection of Jesus, leading to an ongoing relationship with him and unity with the international family of God.

Duration: 25:41

Scripture: Luke 24:16, Luke 24:30-31, John 1:29, John 14:19, Hebrews 10:12, Revelation 20:15

Topics: "Communion"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the love that God has shown us by calling us His children. He explains that although we do not fully understand what we will become, we know that when Jesus appears, we will see Him as He truly is and be transformed to be like Him. The preacher highlights the significance of the disciples' encounter with the risen Lord, where they recognized Him through the breaking of bread and seeing the marks of the nails on His hands. He emphasizes that this encounter with the living Christ should fill us with joy and lead us to live every moment in the power of who He is. The preacher encourages the congregation to remember and celebrate the Lord's presence through the breaking of bread and the taking of the cup, as a joyful anticipation of His return.

Transcript

You'll remember that the Lord Jesus encountered, after his resurrection, two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were sad, and they had no cause to be sad, except that they had not yet fully understood what had happened. All they knew was the death of Jesus, but they hadn't come to comprehend the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

And so they were on the way home. The show was over. The curtain had dropped.

Jesus was dead. And then he joins himself on their journey home and says, uh, what's your problem? Why so sad? And you know, there's no greater problem in the Christian life than those who know that Jesus died but haven't yet discovered that he rose again from the dead. That's a problem.

Because all you can seek to sustain your Christian life upon is melancholy memories of a beautiful life of somebody who lived and died, who's gone. When the whole Bible tells us that he's neither dead nor gone, but alive and well. Not only that, having suffered a death like ours, he did so that we might right now, on earth, on the way to heaven, enjoy a resurrection like his.

And say with the apostle Paul, if I'm alive at all, it's only because to me to live is Christ. For Jesus said, because I live, you will live also. So, when they encountered the Lord Jesus unexpectedly on the way home, it says in the verse 16 of that 24th chapter of Luke, their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

That's why they didn't recognize him because they didn't really know him. They were acquainted with the historical facts of his birth and life and death, but hadn't entered into the good of his resurrection whereby alone we can know him for who he is and not just the one for what he did. Well, he took the Bible and as he unfolded from the book of Genesis right the way through the scriptures and in all the prophets, the things concerning himself, it was getting late and they invited him to spend the night.

They had no idea who it was they were inviting to their table as their guest, but as their guest and at their table, he took over. And though he was their guest at their table, he played the role of host as though it was his table. As this indeed is, came to pass in the 30th verse of that 24th chapter of Luke, as he sat at meat with them, he took the bread, for he played the role of host.

He took the bread, he gave thanks, he broke it, and gave it to them. And something very wonderful happened. In that 16th verse, their eyes were beholden that they should not know him.

But in the 31st, their eyes were opened and they knew him. What a difference it made when they rediscovered the risen Lord and he vanished out of their sight. How did they rediscover Jesus? Because you see, when he broke the bread, two pairs of eyes watched one pair of hands, and they saw the print of the nails, and realized that the one who was crucified was alive again.

And they could hardly believe for joy. What a wonderful thing it is when we enter into the true reality of knowing him, when we see in the hands of a risen Lord, not the hallmarks purely of one who died then, but who's alive now. That's what the nail prints in his hands told them.

Not Jesus was dead, but Jesus is alive. That's why we meet in this way, not as a memorial service, in memory of a beautiful life who lived long, long ago, who's dead and gone, but who's alive and well. And here, right now, significance of the breaking of the bread.

Said the Lord Jesus in the sixth chapter of John's gospel, he that eateth my flesh and drinks my blood has entered into an entirely new relationship, that for which man was created. And this is what we're celebrating, because here we have that which symbolizes his body, the bread that was broken. Here we have that which symbolizes that blood which he shed, the very life of God.

And Jesus says, when you eat the bread and drink the blood, in faith, knowing that it is a relationship in the continuing present tense. You know what he said? If you'll eat my flesh and drink my blood, such a one dwells in me, and I in him. That's what we're celebrating.

We're celebrating that moment of time when, awakened by the Holy Spirit to our lost condition, as those who were born dead in trespasses and sins. We recognize the efficacy of his reconciling work upon the cross, said thank you, and instantly God sealed that transaction by giving us somebody to live within us, through whom we would share the life of Jesus, as for thirty-three years the Lord Jesus, in the sinlessness of his humanity, through the same Holy Spirit, shared the life of the Father. That's what happened when you believed, and you, he made alive, in the moment when you put your trust in Jesus.

And he could only make those who were born dead alive by restoring to them the life they lost in the day that Adam fell. That's what we're celebrating. Eat my flesh, drink my blood, and he who so does in faith, he may know that I live in him, and he lives in me.

What a marvelous relationship. He that eateth my flesh and drinks my blood dwells in me, and I in him. But it's an ongoing, glorious relationship.

It's a disposition that we maintain within our hearts, as we walk by faith. For as the living Father, said the Lord Jesus, hath sent me, and I live by the Father for every step I take, for every situation with which I am confronted, every decision that I need to make, every word that I speak, every act into which I'm led and engaged, I live by him. I draw, as a man on earth, upon the illimitable resources of my Father, as God in heaven, as the living Father hath sent me, and I live through him.

Listen, so he that eats me, even he shall live through me. Once you've entered into this unique relationship, which is the birthright of all who have been redeemed through the blood he shed, who've been regenerated by the Holy Spirit that he has given, the moment you've entered into that unique, ongoing relationship between the creature and the creator, you live through him, as he then lived through the Father. That's something to celebrate.

That's worthy of thanksgiving. And that's why we have met around this table. To thank the Lord Jesus for what he did then, and we enter into the good of the blood he shed, and the body that was broken, we share his life on earth, on the way to heaven, every moment of every day.

Not a memorial service, not melancholy thoughts of one who was, but no longer is, but of the one whose life we share. What a lovely thing to meet on this thanksgiving day, and affirm our faith in him for what he did, but to reward him for what he did by living every moment of every day in the power of who he is. So the apostle says, do this, break the bread, take the cup, in remembrance, in remembrance, joyful remembrance, celebrate, and recognize his presence, sit at his table and enjoy that unique fellowship as the creature with the creator that he then made possible.

Remember what he said, until I come, he's on his way. Terrific. So this is simply an anticipation of that momentous event in human history, when the one who came then, dead on schedule, who lived and died and rose again from the dead, dead on schedule.

We only do this till he comes again, dead on schedule. I wish he'd come today, that would be worthy of thanksgiving. Terrific.

Well, we represent a big, big family throughout the world, inter-denominational, international, inter-organizational, that knows no difference between man and man, no artificial barrier, because in the Lord Jesus there is banished every division that would divide man from man. We are one in Christ, because the one Christ is in us. Glorious.

And so, in giving thanks together for the bread that speaks of the body that he broke, never ever to be broken again, the wine that is only a symbol for, said the Lord Jesus, I will not, after having said, this is my blood, he said, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine again until I drink it new in my father's kingdom. Symbolic of the blood he shed. One sacrifice for sins forever.

The very life of God, laid down by the only man on earth since Adam fell, who was born alive. That's what happened on the cross. In those agonizing hours of darkness, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? As he

bore the guilt of a fallen world and was alienated from the Father and the Holy Spirit until the moment of triumph, when he could cry, finished.

Father, it's all over. The debt has been finally, eternally, and forever paid. Not the priest that comes again and again and again and again in the Levitical priesthood to shed the blood that could never take away sin, but triumphantly.

Twelfth verse, tenth chapter, epistle to the Hebrews. This man, this man, he brought one sacrifice for sins forever, never to be repeated. His body never again to be broken.

His blood never, ever, ever again to be shed. For he's now enthroned as the lamb at the right hand of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Marvelous.

But because we represent that international family, not just of torchbearers, for we're just peanuts, just a handful of those whose names have been recorded forever in the Lamb's book of life, because we've become recipients of the Lamb himself, in whom is that life which alone is eternal. We've chosen one or two folks to lead us in our thanksgiving. I'm going to ask Jürgen, who comes from Germany, I'm going to ask him to give thanks in his own language.

Can you remember German? He speaks English extremely well. But I think it would be lovely to identify ourselves in this way with our many, many wonderful friends and brethren in Christ in that country that many of us have come to love so dearly. And then I'm going to ask Jason.

No, I'm going to ask Peter. We'll stay on the continent. And Peter comes from Switzerland.

Now, I was going to ask him to give thanks in German, but in Switzerland, they speak a funny kind of German. It's spitzerdeutsch. And I think it would be fun for him to give thanks in English.

So, Jürgen is going to give thanks in German, which is a common language with Peter, but he's going to give thanks in English. So, you will understand what they're talking about. As we thank God for that bread, a symbol, a picture only of that which happened once and forever, 2,000 years ago when his body was broken, for you and for me.

Jürgen, Peter. Please remain. And I'm going to ask two others who are going to assist in... Are you the two? Would you come? And if you just face in my direction, that will... If you'll just assist me by removing... This is my body, broken for you.

Gladly. For he was the consummation on earth incarnate of God's incredible love, who so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believes on him might not perish, but have everlasting life. So, as the stewards here, students in the Bible school, wait upon you, please take and partake.

And in your heart, say, thank you, Lord Jesus, for what then you did for me. Thank you. When the Lord Jesus took the bread, he broke it.

This is my body, broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me. And unitedly in our hearts, we say, thank you, Lord Jesus, for what you did.

After the same manner also, the Lord Jesus took the cup, saying, this cup is the New Testament in my blood. This do as oft as you drink it in remembrance of me. And to lead us in our united gratitude to the Lord Jesus, I'm going to ask Israel.

He comes from Latvia, representing those who for so long were artificially detached from the other members of the body, but for which we can be thankful today have been reunited, physically, politically, but always identified by the presence of the one who lives in them, being the one who lives in us. But Israel is going to lead us in thanksgiving in his own Latvian native tongue. And then I'm going to ask Jason from Canada to lead us in English.

Let us give thanks. Just to simplify, as the tray is brought to you, please take a glass, drink, and replace the glass, and then serve your neighbor. And as the neighbor, take the glass, drink, and replace the glass.

And so we'll serve each other as we thank God for the one who came to serve us. Please replace the glass in the tray. Beloved, what men of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called his children.

We do not yet know what we will be, but this we do know. When he appears, we will see him as he is, and we will be like him, restored to image, and he will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. And God's purpose in creating the souls of men will not have been frustrated.

For in Christ, the whole fullness of deity, the Godhead, continues to dwell in bodily form, giving complete expression. And you are in him, made full. You've come to fullness of life in Christ, and you too are filled with the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

A body wholly filled and flooded with God himself. Incredible. And as we have drunk through faith, simply drawing upon those resources that are ours in Christ, his life, his blood, unitedly in our hearts we say, thank you, Lord Jesus, not only for what you did then, but who you are right now.

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