

Sacramental Principle

by Todd Atkinson

This sermon delves into the importance of understanding the sacramental nature of God's presence in our lives, emphasizing the need to move beyond a mystical approach to faith and embrace tangible ways through which God communicates His grace. It explores the significance of sacraments like baptism and the Lord's table as commanded by Jesus, highlighting how these physical acts help us connect with God in a deeper and more meaningful way. The sermon encourages listeners to approach the sacraments with a heart ready to receive from Jesus and to cultivate a spirit of thanksgiving as they partake in communion.

Scripture: Genesis 2:9, Genesis 14:18, Exodus 12:1, John 6:48, Exodus 25:30

Topics: "Sacraments", "Divine Presence"

Description

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Transcript

Good morning everybody. How's it hearty? Good morning. Maybe you could teach the 11 o'clock that.

Nice to see you and thank you Nico and team, wherever you disappear to. Just leading us so beautifully today and welcome our new members and your beautiful words. Last Sunday, we looked at something that, in my opinion, is an extraordinary truth from the Bible, one that has affected my own life in many ways.

And as we look at it again this morning, I have a distinct feeling that there's some people that are here today that this is an important truth or will be an important truth for, that there's certain parts of your relationship with Jesus that have been hard to figure out. And some of you, you've wondered, why does this not work for me? Why do other people just seem to be able to go into a room by themselves and turn on worship music and they're so close to God, and yet you feel like, it doesn't work for me, and what's wrong with me? And maybe there's nothing wrong with you. And maybe there's other ways of accessing God, other ways through which God gives Himself that will become important to you and make total sense and help some things fall into place for you.

And so I think that there's some of you that are here in God's plan today, and He's got some things for you. So the truth that we looked at last week, and we're going to start there and take it further this Sunday, is the truth that God, although we cannot see Him, has chosen to literally give Himself to us, to present Himself to us through means that we can see. And last week I provided some terminology to go with that truth, just so that when we use certain language that it becomes language that you're familiar with.

And so sometimes this has been referred to as the sacramental principle. And so I just want to put a quick slide up on, you may want to write this down or pop this into your phone or however you record data these days. So that when someone says to you, what is a sacrament? So this language has been used through almost the entire history of the church.

The Eastern church would use the word mystery. They mean much the same thing, but they use the word mystery. The Western churches tend to use the word sacrament.

And so what is a sacrament? Now when someone asks you, you'll be able to sound really clever by providing the answer. So a sacrament is an outward sign, so you can see and or touch it. And it's a sign, it's pointing to something.

An outward sign through which God communicates or conveys or gives or bestows His grace to us. An outward sign through which God communicates His grace to us. And you might want to add one more word.

God effectively communicates His grace. It's a theological term, but or efficaciously, meaning He actually, it actually works. So He does it in such a way that it hits the mark.

And this is the way God gives His grace to us. So I know for some that could be new, but I want you to understand what we're talking about, and it'll make more sense as we make our way through our series. For most of the time that I've been a Christian, I would say that I have had more of a mystical understanding of God than a sacramental one.

As a younger preacher, many years ago, people would often come up to me after I preached and said, you're very mystical. And I'm not altogether certain what they meant by that word. Maybe they meant a range of things, everywhere from otherworldly to dim-witted to full of BS, possibly.

I'm not exactly sure, but I'll leave it to your judgment what they meant by that. But I think one of the things they meant was that I had a way of relating to God that seemed almost divorced from the physical world, almost like the physical world didn't matter. And in some ways, that's probably what I did think, that when I went to prayer, which was my predominant way of coming into God's presence, when I went to prayer, my only point of contact with this world was my knees, and that's exactly how I wanted it.

And to be honest, even my knees bothered me sometimes. I would put pillows under my knees so that even the little bit of contact I had with this world, I could tune it out. And I think in some ways I had captured a truth, a good truth, that I could have spiritual experiences when I was alone with God in prayer.

That's a good truth. But in some ways it was at the expense of other truths, that there were other truths that I was blind to, and that is, I was limited to how much of God that I could experience in that way. And so it was a good thing, there was a truth I had, but in some ways, because I thought that was the only way, it was the proverbial carrot before the donkey.

There were certain things I pursued relentlessly for thirty years that just seemed to evade my grasp. It was not for lack of praying, it was not for lack of diligence, it was not for lack of faith, it was not for lack of desire. For example, I was in a quite severe dark night of the soul for twelve years where I could sense none of God's presence.

But in that time, I was aware that there were other members of the body of Christ, other members of the church both alive and deceased, who had experienced what I had experienced, and I knew full well that they could have something to offer me. But in twelve years, I never went and sought them out. Because I had this idea that Christianity was God and me in a room with my eyes closed, detached from the physical world.

That was the ideal. And so it would have done me so much good to have opened my eyes and realized a few other truths, like the church is a sacrament. It is one of the predominant signs, a physical sign through which God communicates His grace to us.

And I would have done well to have reached out and touched the hem of the garment of the church. To touch people. To go to people who had experienced what I had experienced and realized that God had something for me and it wasn't all going to happen in my prayer closet.

That it was going to happen through some people, some physical means. It was going to happen in a sacramental means. Twelve years.

I even knew full well and refused to reach out and get some help. And so I was on to some truths, some good truths. But often at the expense of other very fine truths.

Last week we looked at many stories, just a sample of the stories from across the Bible. And we can see from across Holy Scripture that God is deeply what I would call sacramental in nature. He works in a sacramental way.

We see this in a degree in creation. The psalmist says the heavens declare the glory of God and the sky proclaims his handiwork. So there in some ways creation acts as a sign through which God communicates.

We see this to a much higher degree in the miracle stories of Jesus, the laying on of hands, the anointing with oil, other stories where God comes and through those signs he communicates his grace and healing power to us. But we see this most perfectly in Jesus himself, the ultimate sacrament, sometimes called the sacrament of sacraments, where his body is the outward sign through which God communicates his grace to us. So the sacrament is an outward sign.

The greatest sacrament of all is the person of Jesus, where God who we could not see took on a human body. And it was the sign that told us what God is like. And so we could know God's thoughts by listening to Jesus' words.

We know God's power by watching Jesus in action. And we know God's nature by looking into the face of Jesus. He is the ultimate sacrament.

So many of these things would be nice to hang on for longer periods. But also it would be good for us to know that Jesus has instituted a number of practices that have also been rightly thought of as sacraments. Traditionally there has been a list of probably seven sacraments in the church, but among these two are

chief, they are higher than the rest, namely baptism in the Lord's table.

And this morning I want to talk about why these are chief. We've come back on these, we've touched upon them from time to time, but why are they chief? What gives them their elevated status in the church? If someone was to ask you why do baptism in the Lord's table hold such prominence to you as a Christian, the right answer is this, because Jesus commanded us to practice these things. So there's lots of things we get from the Bible, we get them even from Jesus, the holy apostles, other great heroes of the faith.

We watch their example, we watch, and they act as patterns for us. We do things because they did them. Good reason.

But when it comes to baptism, and when it comes to the Lord's table, Jesus expressly commanded us to do these things. So we're not just following his example, which is good and right, but we're actually obeying his commandments in these areas. So I'll put up a second slide.

So Jesus spoke to these two issues in no uncertain terms regarding baptism, he says these words, go therefore, it's a commandment, go, and make disciples of all nations. What does it look like to make disciples? Baptizing them. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

So this is some of Jesus' very last earthly words, where he gathers his holy apostles and conveys authority upon them and sends them into the world, and amongst that commandment is to go and baptize people in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. So from literally that moment on, baptism has been considered by Christians the rite of a Christian initiation. This is how you become a Christian.

It's how you become a, key word, a disciple, a follower of Jesus. And in the early church, you were not considered a disciple or a follower of Jesus until you were baptized. So I know that we, according to modern world, we have departed from that practice.

But if a church wants to take seriously the early pattern, wants to go back to the teaching of Jesus and the apostles, then this is one that they would take seriously. So baptism becomes the rite of Christian initiation. It's the moment where people say, I'm in.

I want to be a disciple of Jesus. Second thing we have on commandment is the Lord's Table, Communion, also known as the Eucharist. It says, and he took bread, this is the Last Supper, and when he had given thanks, so I look forward to unpacking this with you on another occasion, the giving of thanks takes place at Communion, the breaking of bread.

This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. So because of my own journey and relationship with Jesus, particularly my 12 year dark night of the soul, it led me to the spot where the cross has always been incredibly important to me.

I have sought in a number of ways to turn my attention there, to have it as my central focus and to remember what Jesus did on the cross. And you know what? After all of those years, I remembered the cross in a number of ways, but I completely missed the obvious. That Jesus said, here's the way that I want my death to be remembered.

So there's lots of ways you can remember it. But as long as we don't remember it at the expense of the one way that he said, do this in remembrance of me. So you can read a book on the cross, wonderful, I've

read many.

We do worship songs that have the cross as their central theme. That's a great way to remember the cross. You can wear a cross.

All these are good and valid ways, as long as we don't do them at the expense of the one thing Jesus asked for, do this. This is the way I want you to remember me. That was an eye-opener for him.

And so we have it on commandment. And therefore, everyone who calls Jesus Lord, everyone who takes his commandment seriously, that really ought to be enough for us to make baptism and the Lord's table central. And yet, at the same time, the more that we understand these practices, the more that we can appreciate them, the more that we understand them, the more that we can enter into them, the more that we can enjoy them, and the more that we can meet God in them.

And so I want to walk us through the Bible, and just to watch the gradual unfolding of the story of the Eucharist. I want to begin that in the Old Testament. The Old Testament is a record of God's words and of his works prior to the coming of Jesus.

In the Old Testament, God acted in ways that would help people one day understand Jesus. He did things that would foreshadow the coming of Jesus, that told people that the Messiah would come one day and what they should expect. In the Old Testament, God acted in ways that prepared us for the fact that Jesus would die on a cross, prophesied it hundreds of years in advance in great detail.

But also, in the Old Testament, God acted in ways that foreshadowed the sacraments and foreshadowed the Eucharist. He acted in such ways that we would be able to understand it one day and be able to enter into it in deep ways. So I want to just cover a sample of those from the Old Testament, things that may just help us understand the sacramental nature of God.

The first illustration is very early in the Bible, Genesis chapter 2, where the first human family live in a paradise, they live in a garden. Sin had not yet entered the human experience, so the first human family knew no death. But it's interesting, have you ever thought of how life was sustained? They knew no death, but how is it that they kept on living? Well, the Bible says that God put a tree in that garden, he called it the tree of life.

And so life was sustained through the eating of the fruit of this tree. Life. So, again, my older, kind of more mystical orientation would think, well, life would just be invisible, I guess it's just out there, I'd go and find a quiet spot and close my eyes and it would all happen, and here's an actual tree, like you can touch it, that bore actual fruit that you could eat.

And when they took and ate of that tree, it didn't do what it does for us, it didn't just nourish our bodies or give us satisfaction, it actually perpetuated life, it prevented them from dying. So we eat, in some ways it does a similar thing on a small scale, I guess it prevents us from getting hungry and therefore prevents us in some ways from starving, but there was something of a much greater magnitude. There was something of God's gift of eternal life that was given to them, but it still had to happen through this very physical exchange, through eating of the tree, the fruit of the tree of life.

Second example. Second example was found only a few chapters later in Genesis 14, where there's a really curious figure there called Melchizedek, who is wonderful and is mentioned at various times in scripture, and Abraham, the great father of the faith, was coming out of battle, and he's greeted by this guy

called Melchizedek, who was a king but he was also a priest. And he comes out to Abraham, and the Bible says, and Melchizedek brought out bread and wine.

He brought out bread and wine, and it says he was priest of most high God, meaning this bread and wine wasn't just kind of like pure hospitality, it wasn't, there's something more happening here than just the fact that, thank you, wow, that guy is sharp, I didn't even ask him to do that. So there's something more than just Abraham is weary on the other side of a battle, let's bring out some bread and wine to refresh him. Because the next phrase is, he was priest of God, meaning he's doing something priestly.

So here's Melchizedek, a priest of God, who is coming out to Abraham, and what he's doing is acknowledging the place that Abraham has in the scheme of things. A patriarch. But he's coming out to him as a priest, and there's something sacramental happening here.

He's giving him bread and wine because he's a priest, and he is blessing him. So there's something deeply spiritual happening here. And it acts almost like an antecedent to the Eucharist, where the great high priest, Jesus our Lord, presides over his table, and through bread and wine, brings us blessing.

Melchizedek, very interesting character. I give you these passages so that in your own time you can muse over them. What was happening there with Melchizedek? Something very priestly.

There is a blessing that is being transacted, but there is actually something you ate and drank in this. Third incident. Book of Exodus, you'll be pleased to know I will not do this through all 39 books of the Bible.

I'm just going to give you a few samples. Exodus chapter 12 is the story of the Passover, where God's people, the Hebrew people, are enslaved to an imperial power called Egypt, and God seeks to bring about their emancipation, their freedom. But how does he bring about their freedom? He comes to them through Moses, who gives them instructions, that on the night that they are going to be delivered out, they are to slay a lamb.

The blood of that lamb is placed on the doors of their house, so there is a lamb, and remember, God is doing these things in a way that foreshadows the gospel coming in the New Testament. Where Jesus is, the lamb of God slain for us from the foundation of the world, whose blood was shed for our freedom. Not only is there blood that was shed, but they are asked to eat a special bread on the night of their deliverance, and it is unleavened bread.

Lots of reasons for unleavened bread, more reasons than I can go on to explain, but interesting, as God is bringing about their deliverance, there is blood over their houses, they are eating this unleavened bread, and from that night on, and still carries on tonight, that is called the Jewish Passover. Because that's the night where because of that bread, and because of that blood, God passed over them in his judgment, did not visit their houses, it's called the Passover. And so as we follow that into the New Testament, we find out that the Last Supper, where Jesus He began what we call the Lord's Table, the Last Supper was one of the Jewish Passovers.

And so that's deep in our roots, that's kind of what the Lord's Table is originally established upon. It's why we use unleavened bread, in case you think, what are the groovy little wafers that taste like cardboard? We do not have them for their taste, I assure you. So, I'll probably get someone else to teach on it sometime, but just in short, why do we use rye, wine, why do we use unleavened bread? Because they were the exact elements that were used at the Last Supper.

The Last Supper has its roots in the Passover meal. Much to say about this in time to come, and so we eat unleavened bread. When you get time, consider manna.

How in the Old Testament, during the period known as the wilderness, God fed his people supernaturally with manna. Literally a supernatural bread came down from heaven to sustain them. The psalmist described it this way, he said, and God rained down upon them manna to eat.

He gave them grain from heaven. And in direct fulfillment to that story, Christ said these words, I am the bread of life. Remember, he's not just saying these words in a vacuum, he is saying, he's making deep connections with his teaching and things that have happened before his time, things that happened in the Old Testament.

He is showing that he is the fulfillment of things that have been spoken about centuries earlier. I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died.

But there is the bread that comes down from heaven, exactly, almost identical, quoting Psalm 78, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever because this bread is my flesh.

We'll take time, that's a very famous passage in scripture, John chapter 6, the bread of heaven passage. We're going to take some time to look at that through the course of this series, but keep it in mind now, that's why sometimes when someone is serving you, there's different languages used, but sometimes they give you the bread, and these are the very words that are quoted. Jesus said, I am the bread of life, that if a man eats of me, he shall not die, but shall live forever.

John chapter 6, it's a Eucharistic passage. And then lastly, last example. In the Old Testament, God's presence dwelt in the tabernacle.

It was a tent that was erected for the worship of God, there was various sections and instruments in it, furniture in it that was used for holy purposes. But of relevance here, that in the very center of it, there was a place called the Holy of Holies, and there was the Ark, the Ark of the Covenant, upon which the blood of the Lamb was placed. Then there was a thin veil separating it from other sections, and just on the other side of that veil, there was a table.

Guess what's put upon the table? Bread. Called the bread of his presence. Exodus 25 says, and you shall set the bread of the presence on the table before me regularly.

A bread that God called the bread of his presence. What a beautiful phrase. The bread of God's presence, this bread was taken, it was brought before Moses, and what did Moses do with the bread? He blessed it, just like Jesus does at the Last Supper.

He blesses this bread, and after it's blessed, it's considered in the ESV holy, in the RSV, another translation, it is called consecrated bread. So bread is brought, it is blessed, it is considered holy or consecrated after that, and it is put outside of a table. And so there's this picture of you have to walk by this table with bread on it, through a thin veil, in order to get to God's presence on the other side of the veil.

What's all that about? It's a picture of Jesus. It's a picture of the coming Messiah, who's fully human, but he's fully divine. But you only get to the divine through first going through the human.

You actually had to accept him as a man. You actually had to relate to him on that basis, and accept him as a man, in order before you could accept who he was on the inside. You could accept what he carried, and the divinity on the inside.

You had to accept his physical nature in order to receive his spiritual nature. And this was a problem for some people. Many people in the early times wanted a God, but not a God that was wrapped in flesh.

Not a God that would come in an incarnation. Not a God that would be born in a manger. Not a God that would embrace weakness.

So there was a mystical relationship with God, like I have, meaning a God as long as he doesn't do that. There was other false doctrines in the early church. One was called docetism, which was the idea that God could never attach himself to a human body, because it would contaminate him.

So they actually said it mustn't have been a real human body. It must have just had the appearance of a human body. It was like a phantom.

It just looked to our eyes to be like a human body. But it was an illusion. Because they struggled so much with this idea that God would come, and wrap himself, and inhabit an actual physical human body.

But it's true. And in order, you had to accept him first as human, as someone standing right in front of you, flesh and blood, speaking to you. You had to accept him first on that basis, to be able to then accept the gift of salvation that he offered.

You accepted his humanity, which then gave you a window to his divinity. Beautiful picture of what's even happening at the Lord's table, where God comes to us again in very physical form. Through a communion that's physical, we actually stand up out of our seats.

There's actual movement. There's an actual body. There's people doing stuff.

There's people praying for us. There's an actual bread that you actually feel in your hand. An actual chalice and wine.

And how through this very physical process, as we accept it, we accept the grace that Jesus wants to convey through it. As we accept it. So, how does that help you? Well, it helps me because as I come forward, I know that I'm coming forward as a step of faith.

Do I think that God's grace can be wrapped up all in a piece of tasteless bread? Not for a minute. But as I come forward, that's what I'm asking. Lord, I'm asking that your invisible grace that I can't see.

Your invisible presence, your invisible power, your invisible goodness. These are all the things I want. But I'm asking that they would be communicated or conveyed to me through things that I can see.

And you established a practice known as the Eucharist. You established the Lord's table. And so I know that your sanction is upon it.

That this is the way you have chosen to meet with me. So, as I come forward today and partake of this, I'm going to ask that what I can't see would be given to me through what I could see. That as I hold bread in my hands, what I'm asking is that I would feed on you.

Not just this. That I actually feed on the bread of heaven and be given his life in all of its wonderful forms. As someone prays for me, I'm going to ask that you would come and you would extend your hand and you would bless me as they bless me.

That you would lay your hands on me as they lay their hands on me. Remember, I used to just do it in my prayer calls. I think I didn't need the rest of you.

How wrong I was. Now I understand. I'm still asking God to bless me.

I just understand it's going to happen as you bless me. I'm asking that God would extend his hand toward me, but it's going to happen as you extend your hand toward me. I'm asking that God's love is going to love me, but I understand that it's going to happen as you love me.

That love is going to flow through people, through his body, and through the sacraments that he has ordained. Relevant to every one of us, but I know there's a handful of people here today that the mystical approach to our faith hasn't worked for you because you don't have a mystical bone in your body. And if I was to talk with you, you'd probably think, I'm like, I work with my hands.

I'm a practical person. And I think that through the sacraments, God is giving me a way, I can hear some of you say this one, God is giving me a way to relate to him and receive him and interact with him in a way that I would never be able to do in a room by myself. That works for me.

I still enjoy that. I was here by myself until one in the morning last night. There's very few things I like in all life than being by myself in prayer.

But I'd be fooling myself and think it's the only way, even though I think it's the better way, and I certainly don't think that everybody is going to do that and get as much satisfaction directly from it as I do. We're made a little different. And I think the way you're made is great.

So we're going to turn our attention to the Lord's table, a very physical act that seems to engage our faith in a very special way. Just a few words on this. If you're new to Christianity or maybe you haven't been here for a long time and you're just coming back and stuff, I just want to make a couple quick notes on this that Todd is teaching primarily for a lot of us Christians to help us understand the whole process.

But for you today, the big key to take out of this is that God is making himself tangibly available to you today. And part of what that communicates is that if he's going to be tangibly available for you in this, it means that the gospel and all of his blessings, all of his benefits are going to be available in your tangible everyday life. And so you don't have to understand the whole process.

All you need to understand is that you play a role in coming forward, crossing your arms and saying, I'm ready to tangibly receive from Jesus today. So don't get overwhelmed by all the process. Just know that when the usher comes and says, OK, it's your turn, you just come up, put your arms like this and we know what to do.

And your job is at a heart level to be ready to receive from Jesus today. OK. Thank you.

We know that there's two tracks right now in our church. There's people who have been Christians for a lot of years. And are advancing in their faith.

But we also know, and it's incredibly important to us. That God is sending the most precious people to us. Some of whom are new to church.

Some of whom are new to the Christian faith. And so we, with all our heart, want these things to be enjoyed and to be accessible. All who truly turn to Christ.

And repent of their sins. All who seek to be reconciled with your neighbors. And intend to lead the new life.

Following the commandments of God. And walking in His holy ways. Drawn near with faith.

And take this holy sacrament to strengthen. To comfort. And to nourish you.

And make your humble confession. To your heavenly Father. So before we come to the Lord's table, we first take some time.

So maybe you do that now. To listen. To turn to Him.

Turn away from your sin. The Lord is expressly reaching out to some of you today. Some of you today who have wondered why it doesn't seem to work for you.

I know there's a few people here today. He has you in His sights. He is reaching out to you.

Hear Him. He's saying, come, let's do this in a way that you can understand. A way that you're made to.

Come and relate to me. In a way that will be meaningful for you. So as you hear Him say that.

To leave your withdrawn position. That safe place that we've been in that just says it doesn't work or doesn't seem to work for me. And I feel like a failure.

Just leave that entrenched place. And offer your heart. Back to Him.

Confess our sins. If we did this weekly. We would just continually maintain a clean slate before the Lord.

Nothing would ever get so big as to overcome us. And the little things that get us down would be stopped before they become big things. So we lay down our anxiety.

We lay down our hurt. Our offenses. Our grievances.

Any way in which our relationship with another brother and sister has been impaired. We would never come to communion. Which is a table of unity.

Harboring any disunity in our hearts. So we forgive like we've been forgiven. Give Him your fears that are ruling you.

Your obsessions. Your preoccupations. The things that weigh you down.

Come to me. All ye that are weary and are heavy laden. And I will give you rest.

For your souls. You're doing well, beloved. Feel the sweetness of God's presence in the air.

As you take advantage of the grace that is our offer to you today. The prayer of general confession. Together we pray.

Merciful Father. We confess that we have sinned against you. In thought, word and deed.

By what we have done. And by what we have done. Forgive us where the cares of this world have become our cares.

Where we have succumbed to the love of things. Where we have used our minds and bodies and words in impure ways. Forgive us where we have given way to discouragement.

Despair. Self pity. Hurtful thoughts.

Harmful addictions. Selfishness. Forgive us where we have neglected your two great commands.

Where we have not loved you with our whole heart. And we have not loved our neighbor as ourselves. When we're truly sorry.

And we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus. Mercy on us and forgive us.

That we may delight in your will. And that we may walk in your ways. By the power of your Spirit.

And to the glory of your name. Almighty God our Heavenly Father. Who of his great mercy.

He has promised. He has promised. The forgiveness of sins.

To all those who with. Heartfelt repentance. And true faith.

Turn to him. Have mercy upon you. Pardon and deliver you from all your sins.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. We all respond with. Let's give him our thanks.

For Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is such an antidote. It's an antidote to self-pity.

An antidote to comparison. To feeling sorry for ourselves. And it's Thanksgiving that prepares the way.

For more things. And so we are cultivating. Thanksgiving as a spiritual discipline.

So just in the privacy of your own heart. Spend time in Thanksgiving. Thank him that before you ever chose him.

He chose you. Thank him for the cross. Thank him for the lengths.

That he is willing to go to. To say I love you. Thank him for the resurrection.

The new life that is yours. Because. Thank him for his gifts.

That the gospel just keeps getting better and better. And that the grace of God just keeps getting stronger and stronger. And he moves us from glory to glory.

Father thank you for your son Jesus. On the night that he was handed over to suffering and death. Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Took bread. And when he had given thanks to you. He broke it and he gave it to his disciples.

Saying take and eat. This is my body. Which is given for you.

This act. Do this. In remembrance of me.

After supper he took the cup. And when he had given thanks. He gave it to them saying.

Drink this all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant. Which is shed for you and for many.

For the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink this. Drink it in remembrance.

Of me. Holy Father we. Offer you.

This bread. And this cup. And we ask you to send your Holy Spirit.

Upon us and upon these gifts. That they may be the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ to us. That in eating of them that our oneness in Christ.

Would be strengthened. That we would be made a holy people by a holy God. That we would eat of the very bread of heaven.

That what Adam and Eve ate of in the garden. And their physical life was sustained. That we would eat of at this table.

And our spiritual life would be sustained. We worship you are the bread that has come down from heaven. You are our nourishment.

You are our food. Our satisfaction. Our very life.

Our source. So we go to you. We feed on you.

We feed on you in our hearts by faith. Thank you Lord for your body and your blood. Thank you for your real presence at this table.

I kneel before you. And ask you the great high priest. To preside over this table.

For there is only one mediator between God and man. The man Christ Jesus. Because of you all heaven would come to earth.

By my service.

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