

Remembering Jesus in the Breaking of Bread

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of remembering Jesus in the breaking of bread, and the need for repentance and a new way of living in the new covenant.

Duration: 16:00

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 11:23

Topics: "Lord's Supper", "Repentance"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the significance of the Lord's table, focusing on the betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot and the denial of Peter. It highlights the importance of genuine repentance, daily self-examination, and the difference between outward actions and true heart transformation. The message underscores the need for sincere reflection, humility, and a desire to be transformed into the likeness of Christ through repentance and remembrance of His sacrifice.

Transcript

When we come to the Lord's table, we think of these words of Jesus in 1 Corinthians 11, in verse 24. It says in verse 23, and this seems to be repeated many times, In the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread. Why doesn't it say, the night before he was crucified? I would think that is more appropriate.

But it says here, in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread. I believe every word in the Bible is inspired. There's a reason why mention is not made of his crucifixion next morning, but of his betrayal that night.

So in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread. And what it reminds me is, that at that first Lord's table, Lord's supper, somebody sat there, took part in it, and went out and betrayed the Lord. Warning us, it's possible today, somebody can sit and break bread, and go away and betray the Lord.

It happens again. But, there were 11 who did not betray him, who stood with him. And we pray, 1 out of 12 is only 8%.

92% stood with him. My prayer is, it will never be more than 8% in this church that betray the Lord. We can sit there and think, it's not me, I will not do it.

And that's the danger. Because you hear a message like this and say, oh, that can't refer to me. That's not how the early disciples were.

And the Lord said, somebody's going to betray me. You know what each of them said? Lord, is it I? They didn't all look around and say, yeah, we know who it is. We know it's that guy sitting over there.

So very often when we hear a message, we can have that attitude. Yeah, I know who this message is referring to. It's not me, I'm okay.

I'm one of the wholehearted ones, I'm alright. But it's this other guy who's sitting over there, I think it's referring to him. I want to say to you, the one who thinks like that, let him who thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall.

It's good to always say, Lord, is it I? That was the language of the wholehearted disciples. And you know, Judas Iscariot also hypocritically said, Lord, is it I? So don't be fooled by repeating the words. There were 11 who were sincere.

They were not perfect. One of them went and denied the Lord that night, Peter. But he didn't betray him.

And we know that it was different with Peter because he wept when he realized what he had done. I don't see that Judas wept. You know, tears indicate something.

We don't weep ordinarily. We weep when something serious has happened. A child is dying or died.

Otherwise, we don't weep. I'm not talking about this foolish weeping. Somebody treated me badly, I lost my job.

Not that type of rubbish. I'm talking about weeping because we have grieved the Lord. You know that song we sing, I stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene.

And one word is, he had no tears for his own griefs, but sweat drops of blood for my griefs. I remember years ago when I first learned that, I think long before I came to CFC, I learned that song. It was one of my favorites from 1968 or something.

And that word would come to me always like this. It still comes to me like that. You must have no tears for your own griefs.

Never, never, never. Even if you don't graduate to the place where you have tears for others, okay, that may take time, but at least make sure you don't have tears for your own griefs. And I decided it may take a long time for me to have tears for the griefs of others to become more like Jesus.

But I decided I will not have tears for my own griefs. I'll have tears for my own sins where I've dishonored the Lord or disobeyed the Lord or brought some dishonor upon him. I never read that Judas shed any tears.

If you cheat others and you pay back the money that you cheated, you know that Judas did it? Making restitution does not make you any different from Judas Iscariot. He returned the money to those priests and gave it back. It doesn't solve the problem.

He could have easily come to Jesus and said, Lord, forgive me. I did something wrong. He'd have been forgiven.

Why did Jesus say about him it was better for him that he was never born? Do you ever look at a child and say, I wish this child was never born, especially after he grows up to be a smart, clever guy like Judas was? I believe Judas was the smartest. He was the only postgraduate there, I think, in that crowd. But it was better he was never born.

Because to break bread and then to betray the Lord is more serious than just betraying the Lord. It says that he broke bread with me and then went out and betrayed me. So it's a very serious thing when we come together and break bread and we're born again.

And then we go and betray the Lord by something. 30 pieces of silver is a lot of money. There are people who will cheat for 500 rupees.

Is there any difference between that and Judas Iscariot? Judas Iscariot took 30 pieces of silver. These people are doing something unrighteous for a smaller amount of money. And giving that money back doesn't solve the problem.

Judas Iscariot did it. He's weeping. It says Peter wept bitterly.

And very often that is the mark of genuine sorrow for one's sin. And that's what Peter had. And that is why even though at that table there was sitting one man who was going to betray the Lord and one man who was going to deny the Lord three times.

Yet the one who denied the Lord was forgiven and became the leader of the apostles. And the one who betrayed the Lord went to hell that night. Can you break bread and go to hell the same night? It happened once.

It can happen again. Can you break bread and go and deny the Lord the same day? Sure. But if you repent, you can still be the leader of the apostles.

It's all a question of repentance. When the spirit of repentance has gone from our life, we are in great danger. Judas had heard John the Baptist preach repentance.

He had heard Jesus preach repentance. They themselves went out, we read in Matthew 10, Judas went out and preached repentance. Have you read that? Yeah.

You read Matthew 10. Jesus sent them out and they went out and preached that men should repent. But he did not do it himself.

I believe that, I mean I know for many years in my Christian life, I did not repent daily. Now I can say before God, I repent daily. Why? Because I see something which is still unlike Christ in my life everyday.

Believe it or not. Every single day. 365 days of the year.

I see something which is not perfectly like Jesus Christ. And that's the area I repent of. The wonderful thing is if you repent of it, you make a little progress in that area.

Along this pathway of becoming like Christ. Maybe it's only one inch. Okay fine, one inch is enough.

A little progress. But if you do not repent daily, it shows, I'll tell you what it shows. You must be imagining that you have already become like Jesus Christ completely.

Otherwise why don't you repent? You mean the whole day went by and you never did anything un-Christ like? You mean the whole day went by and you never thought anything un-Christ like? You mean the whole day went by and you never had an un-Christ like attitude even for a single second? Really? Have you become like Jesus Christ already? That is the testimony of a man who does not repent. A man who is passionate to become like Jesus will repent every day. Not to testify to others, but because he wants to be like Christ.

It says here, do this in remembrance of me, verse 24. He broke and said, this is my body broken for you. Do it in remembrance of me.

That means I've got to think of him when I break bread. I've got to think of him, why was he crucified? Because of my un-Christ like words or thoughts or attitudes or deeds or motives. Then I want to remember that.

And remembering him will bring repentance every day. That is the difference between Peter and Judas Iscariot. So, remember, both failed.

But one became the leader of the apostles and the other went to hell. Repentance makes a world of difference. It's the difference between heaven and hell.

Repentance, that's what made the difference between the two thieves on the cross. Only one thing. Repentance and an honest acknowledgement and a desire to be in God's kingdom.

Lord, remember me when you come in your kingdom. That man could break bread if he wanted. But he didn't have the opportunity, that thief.

Today we have the opportunity. When we drink the cup, Jesus says, this is not the old covenant blood. He says in verse 25, this is the new covenant blood.

In the old covenant blood of bulls and goats, you knew. You confessed your sin by putting your hand on that goat and the blood was shed. But you knew you'd go and sin again.

The same thing. What you did just now, you put your hand on the goat and said, okay, I'm sorry what I did. You know that you're going to do it tomorrow.

But in the new covenant, it's different. I remember Jesus. And I say, Lord, I never want to sin again.

I don't live in that old covenant where I have to keep on in this endless cycle of sin and sin and sin and sin. I tell you, the vast majority of Christians sitting in churches, going through what they call the Lord's table. They are in an endless cycle of the old covenant, just like that blood of bulls and goats.

What they're drinking is a cup that represents the blood of bulls and goats. Because they keep on sinning. And they're not bothered by it.

But we seek to be different. We are bothered when we sin. We don't want to.

We believe in the new covenant that sin shall not rule over you. Not live for 20, 30 years just breaking bread, breaking bread and defeated by the same old sins that we've been defeated by for 20, 30 years. That is not the will of God.

Then what you're drinking is representing the blood of bulls and goats. Jesus said, no, remember me. It's the blood of the new covenant that you're symbolically drinking off in that great juice.

So let's value the blood of Christ and His death on the cross as we break bread today. Let's bow our heads.

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