

Table Talk

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[0 : 0 0] Turn to Luke chapter 22, Luke chapter 22, Brian said that I got out of a solo, what he didn't tell you was they picked the lousiest part of the song to give to me, had an octave change, it was too high for me, it was, so I got disgusted and went home, but anyway, so he'll set you up like that.

I want to have a table talk, even though we don't have a table, COVID's changed some ways about how we do the Lord's Supper temporarily, but the Lord's Supper, as we know it, is not the way they did it in scripture, just to be honest, I'm not talking about the prepackaged cups, I'm talking about the whole process of how we do it, Christ established the Lord's Supper in the upper room, around a meal.

He gave thanks, he broke the bread, that was their version of passing the biscuits, and they had a meal together. And at the conclusion of that meal, then he took the cup in the same way.

And the way we do it today is an adaptation, but the way we've done it for years is an adaptation as well, and the first century church had the Lord's Supper and celebrated it around a meal.

They'd get together quite often in homes, and they'd meet together, and they'd have a meal, and around that meal, they would remember why they came. As they gave thanks for that meal, they broke the bread, and they thanked God for the body of Christ that he gave for us.

[1 : 5 0] At the end of that meal, they'd close that meal out by taking the cup and saying that they were thankful for the blood of Christ. It is these events that Christ, it was in those events that Christ, that they followed, was based upon what Christ did in the upper room.

In the upper room, before they were to go to the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus had a special meal in that upper room with those disciples and established the fact that until he comes back, we ought to remember what he does for us on the cross.

When he instituted that, we carry that out today in obedience to him. In Luke chapter 22, verse 14 through 20, it gives us the occasion of that.

It says, When the hour came, he reclined at table and the apostles with him. And he said to them, I earnestly desire to eat this Passover with you that I'll suffer.

For I tell you, I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, take this and divide it among yourselves.

[3 : 1 0] For I tell you that from now on, I will drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes. And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, This is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me. And likewise, the cup after they had eaten, saying, This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

It is a very significant event. He gives very significant instructions, not only for them, but it passes on to us as well.

Paul tells us that the New Testament church, tells the New Testament church how we are to respond to Christ's instructions when he said, Do this in remembrance of me.

He gives specific instructions in 1 Corinthians 11. And in the previous passages, he fusses at that church because they had been so selfish.

[4 : 14] That when they got together, they did not wait on each other. And there was division in the church. And so because there was division within the church, they didn't bother to watch out for each other.

They just did what they wanted to do. They didn't have a meal for fellowship. They ate because they were hungry. And they acted like they were hungry.

It reminds me kind of a family reunion. Haven't been to many. I don't have many cousins. And the ones I do have always lived far from me. But I've been to a few.

I married in and went to a few of those. But there always seems that family reunions always seem to be three groups. One is there's family. That's the people that you are dying to see and you can't wait to get back together.

And they organize the event and you watch those reunions. And when you see them, it is precious. It is tear-jerking. It is wonderful. They're family. Then there's the relatives.

[5 : 19] You don't really know who they are. And yeah, they're connected to somebody. But you really don't care. I mean, you don't tell them that. But those folks came to eat.

They don't care who you are. They don't wait on the prayer. They just dig in like a bunch of dogs and push their way through the line. And don't you worry.

Because they'll be back like a stampede to get seconds, you know. Wanting a refill. As you're fellowshiping with family, enjoying, the table once again is destroyed by the relatives that come through.

You don't even know if they're part of the family. They might have just come in off the street. You don't have a clue where they even belong. But yet, they are relatives. And then there's the tag-alongs.

They're not family. They married in. And all they want to do is be on their best behavior, get a good meal, and leave as soon as they possibly can. And you just want everybody happy and to be at home as soon as possible.

[6 : 23] But apparently, in the church in Corinth, there were a lot of those pushy dogs in the church fellowships.

As I began to prepare for our time together around the Lord's table and studying this passage and studying the context of the passage in 1 Corinthians 11, I thought it would be a great time for us to have a fellowship meal, you know, next week.

Just to see how everybody acts, you know. Just to watch and see who's family and who's relatives and who's just tagging along, you know. Don't elbow people in the mouth when you're at a church fellowship. Just don't build camaraderie.

Just don't do it. Listen to what Paul said to them in 1 Corinthians 11, verse 22 and following. He said, what? Do you not have houses to eat and drink in?

Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I commend you in this? No, I will not.

[7 : 24] And the point is, it was not to be just a meal. It was to be a fellowship. And that fellowship and that relationship was around what Christ did for all of us on the cross.

And it's still about that. And therefore, it needs to be done properly. It needs to be done often and it needs to be done right. And it needs to lead us to look into three responsibilities that we have when we take part in the Lord's Supper.

The first responsibility we have is to remember. Jesus was very clear about that. We need to remember the cross. It is easy for us to celebrate the salvation from the cross.

But we will not firmly grasp all of that until we get and get the whole message until we understand the scene of the cross. Because when Christ hung on the cross, the sky strangely turned black, although it was at noonday.

For three hours, the sky was dark as night in the middle of the day until about 3 p.m. when Jesus died. And the moment he died, the earth began to shake.

[8 : 37] The earthquake was so violent that rocks split. It was not a rumbling. It was more than a typical tremor. It was so violent that it tore the veil of the Holy of Holies in half.

It was 60 feet long. It was 30 feet wide. And it tore it in half. And ironically, it tore it from the top to the bottom. Which means it was not actually the earthquake that caused it.

It had to be done another way. Honestly, I believe the veil was rent by God. The earth was quaked by God. The darkness came by God. And in the midst of that, Jesus was taunted.

He was taunted by the crowd. He was taunted by the thieves that were on the crosses on each side of him until something happened. You remember that exchange of Barabbas?

That center cross was really Barabbas, the chief of the thieves. Probably the chief leader of that gang. And therefore, they were going to place him in the center.

[9 : 42] And when Pilate gave the people the choice, they chose Jesus instead. And he literally took Barabbas' place and hung between the thieves that had accompanied Barabbas along the way. They taunted Jesus on the cross.

Said he was not who he said he was or they wouldn't be hanging there. And then all of a sudden, one of those robbers suddenly changed his attitude and thought. When the other taunted, he corrected him.

In Luke chapter 23, verse 40 and 41, it says, That guy amazes me.

What changed him? What happened when he was on the cross as he was dying himself and looked over to Christ and all of a sudden something changed? Could have been what he saw.

Because I believe for the first time he saw the king hanging there. I believe for the first time it was sinking in that this God-man was real. I believe he also noticed the silence that Jesus did not spar back.

[11 : 04] He did not waggle his tongue back when folks would run their mouth to him. However, it was he saw Jesus for who Jesus is.

And he responded to him and asked for mercy. He said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. And Jesus replied to him, Today, you shall be with me in paradise.

And salvation came to that man that day. The whole time the centurion watched that. And when Jesus died, that centurion, an expert in crucifying people, watching over and making sure everything was done properly.

But he was changed that day. And he said, surely this man was innocent. He also said, surely this man was the son of God. He opened his eyes to see the Savior in the midst of guarding him.

And in the same way, our eyes ought to be open to the Lord and to his sacrifice when we come to the table. Don't be so quick.

[12 : 13] To take part without remembering. Where our hope is. Where our salvation lies.

Remember. Second thing we ought to do is get clean. Scripture's clear about this. In just a few moments, we'll have a time, meditation and invitation, to give you the opportunity to get matters right before the Lord, before you partake in the Lord's Supper.

If there's matters in your life that you don't want to get right with God, don't participate. You need to be clean before the Lord. Because you'll not only hinder your walk when you continue to go in your way pretending that, but you also hinder the body when we take those things lightly.

The Apostle Paul told church in Corinth, they need to be careful. In 1 Corinthians 11, 27, he says this, Whoever therefore eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord.

Let a person examine himself then and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

[13 : 43] Listen to what he says. That's why many of you are weak and ill and some have died. Hello, I think you need to be clean. When we pause in just a few moments, don't be reluctant to get matters right.

That might mean to come down to these stairs to the stage and make an altar in your life and lay some matters down before the Lord. It might be to do that where you are.

I just want you to be obedient. Be obedient to God and know that at the time you partake in the Lord's Supper, that you are clean before the Lord.

We remember what he's done for us. We respond to that by getting clean before the Lord. And the third thing is we serve. Paul shares in verse 33 and 34 that we need to watch out for others.

He says, So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, wait for one another. If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home so that when you come together, it will not be for judgment.

[14 : 57] Wait on one another. This is a very specific example to a problem that was very specific in that congregation. But looking out for number one can be a problem in any congregation.

If you don't know who number one is. If you think number one is yourself, it will cause a problem in the church of Jesus Christ. But when you think he's one and you place him first and let him be the one that sets the standard in your life, it makes a difference.

And one way to help us keep all of that in mind is to serve one another. I'll tell you the part that I miss about these prepackaged cups, although when I open that thing in front of everybody, I hope I don't spill it all over me so you can see it.

But the one thing that I hate so much is the service of the table of the Lord among the congregation. It's good for us to serve one another.

Deacons serve the church. It's what the word means. I get the opportunity to serve the deacons. They get the opportunity to serve me.

[16 : 14] Because in the church of Jesus Christ, everyone is a servant and everyone is served. The ground is level at Calvary.

And so I believe when we respond to this, as we leave this place today, one way we do that is to serve.

Not just when we're taking the Lord's Supper, but to put the body of Christ before ourselves. To misquote a former president, ask not what your church can do for you, ask what you can do for your church.

I'll tell you what you can do. You can remember the cross. Never get away from the cross. Get clean before God and stay that way.

And then serve. Work until Jesus comes. Serve others and not yourself. And if we'll all serve others, all the needs will be met.

[17 : 27] The church in Acts gives us that example. And God has prepared us properly, given us every resource that we need, as long as we are all told our load, do our responsibility before the Lord.

With every head bowed and every eye closed today, I want to be clear what this is about. It's a special time for the church of Jesus Christ to come to the Lord's table in remembrance and obedience of what he's asked us to do.

And as I've shared with you, you need to be clean before the Lord. You also need to be a professed Christian today, having let that be known publicly through baptism.

If you've not done that yet, I encourage you to do that very thing. And I'll receive you for those purposes today. But today is not a day for you to take the Lord's Supper.

Children, I want you to understand that if you've never made a decision for the Lord public, your parents will not allow you to partake in this. And I don't want you to question them in these next few moments.

[18 : 40] Give them the opportunity to worship. But I want to encourage you as you go home to ask about that. Have a conversation, families, around the table about what happened today at the Lord's table.

You can see lives change through the opportunities and illustrations that come forth from this. And then all of us, let's be clean before the Lord. Don't worry about what somebody else will think.

Let's worry about what God thinks. Let's make it right with the Lord and honor him in all we do. Lord Jesus, I love you and I thank you for what you did for me on Calvary.

For the opportunity and the message that you give us to share with everybody that you allow us to cross paths with, Father. And I pray that we'll be obedient in doing that.

But I pray for everyone here today, dear God, that you will help us to get our heart and life right before you. Not just to partake in this supper, but to live right before you, dear God.

[19 : 41] To honor you with all of our lives, in public and in private. Oh God, speak to us today and help us to be obedient to follow you. We love you and thank you for what you're going to do in these next few moments, Father.

In Jesus' precious name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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