

Remember

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[0 : 00] We are going to be in Luke chapter 22 and we'll be verses 14 through 20. Clifford is going to serve us today. He's going to be reading from the New King James Version.

So that's going to be on the screen. So if you want to follow along with your Bible or watch the screen, either way is good. When the hour had come, he sat down and the twelve apostles with him.

Then he said to them, With fervent desire, I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

Then he took the cup and gave thanks and said, Take this and divide it among yourselves. For I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.

And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it and gave it to them saying, This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. Likewise, he also took the cup after supper saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for you.

[1 : 17] Thank you. Lord, be with us this morning as we open your word and turn to this important passage where Jesus is teaching us about the Lord's Supper.

Lord, just humble my heart and calm any nerves that I have. And please just remove anything unhelpful from my mouth. Lord, we desire to make your name great, to glorify you, and to learn about you and praise your name.

In your name we pray. Amen. Amen. Human memory is a funny thing. Sometimes we remember things that have absolutely zero value, like lyrics to a song you haven't heard since you were a little kid, and the song pops on and you're singing right along, or the name of a paint color you used in a bedroom that you don't live in that house anymore, or your childhood best friend's phone number. People nowadays probably don't have that. Back in the day you had to remember phone numbers, but I assure you you can let those numbers go now.

We can just save them in our phones. So, you know, there's a lot of silly things that we remember, but then important things we seem to not remember, like you're sitting at the doctor's office with your child, and you certainly love your child.

[2 : 50] It's not that, but they ask you, what their birthday is, and that is the hardest question there's ever been, and I have no idea. So, I love you and kids, but you're on your own.

Remember your own birthdays. One particular kind of memory was the focus of a study after the September 11th terrorist attacks in 2001.

The study was to test a certain kind of memory known as a flashbulb memory, and that's a vivid memory as if your mind has snapped a picture of that particular time and the circumstances surrounding it.

So, specifically in this case, they asked people to recall the circumstances around when they heard what had happened. Where were you, and what were the circumstances?

How did you respond to it after you received the news of the attacks? And they were asked what they did and who they interacted with, and they studied about 3,000 people. And so, they were polled three times.

[3 : 54] They were polled a week after, 11 months after, and 35 months after. I don't know how you scientifically picked that. They must have just had some free time, and they were like, let's go back to that.

Maybe unsurprisingly, people's memories are pretty quick to change some of the facts that they vividly remember. But they also found that their confidence in their recall of the events was also very high.

So, not only did they find out that people's memories of the events have changed, but they were pretty solid thinking that they were right. And so, I suppose if we're going to be wrong, we may as well be confident about it.

So, one other author had referenced this study in a book I had listened to, and he said he could vividly remember eating breakfast with both of his sons at their table, in their house. And then when he reflected on it further and thought about it, he said, oh yeah, my oldest son had moved in and started college that fall. There's no way he could have possibly been home.

[4 : 59] So, there's that contrast there. But God knows that we're quick to forget. And because of God's perfect knowledge of how the human memory works, in his providence, the Lord's Supper was given to us as something we should do regularly when we come together.

Participating in the Lord's Supper helps us to remember some of Jesus' most important teachings so that we don't drift away from them. Our memories are helped by the repetition of celebrating it regularly.

Through physical participation, we actually do something. And by rehearsing the truth of the gospel with each other as a gathered church, we do it collectively as a group to help us remember.

Jesus was prepared to go to the cross to accomplish God's plan for salvation. But now Jesus is also preparing his closest followers so they know what him going to the cross will mean for them and by extension, the rest of God's people.

Just as Jesus patiently taught throughout his public ministry, even now, just prior to his rest, he continues to teach and serve the disciples. He's equipping them with what they will need to go and share the gospel message, to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

[6 : 19] So Luke 22 starts, it says, And when the hour came, he reclined at table and the apostles with him. And he said to them, I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.

He's using this time in the upper room to start a practice that has continued on uninterrupted for the last 2,000 years. And it will continue on until Jesus returns.

And it's a practice that will help the church remember, despite our sometimes glitchy memory.

Jesus said that he eagerly desired, earnestly desired to eat the Passover meal with his disciples before going to the cross.

And because Jesus started with the Passover, so should we. So it was, and it remains for our Jewish friends and neighbors, one of the most important holidays of the year.

It focused heavily on the elements of the meal, and it used each element to tell the story, to remember and teach the next generation how they were delivered from slavery in Egypt.

[7 : 24] But, because most of us probably haven't been to a Passover Seder. Has anybody here actually been part of a Passover Seder? Nice.

Most of us haven't. So we're going to read Exodus 12, 1 through 14, and it's going to remind us of what's going on with the Passover. So the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, This month shall be for you the beginning of months.

It shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their father's house, a lamb for a household. And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons, according to what each can eat, you shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male, a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

[8 : 31] They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire with unleavened bread, and bitter herbs they shall eat it.

Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and inner parts, and you shall let none of it remain until morning. Anything that remains until morning you shall burn. In this manner you shall eat it, with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover, for I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast.

And on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments. I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will

befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord. Throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.

[9 : 43] So the main elements of the Passover meal are the Passover lamb, whose life was shed, so the destroyer would pass over the houses and save the firstborn.

The bitter herb was to remind them of the bitterness of slavery, and the unleavened bread, to remember urgency in which they were to leave Egypt. Unleavened because they didn't have time to wait for the bread to rise.

The meal was to be eaten hastily, so they must be dressed in their traveling clothes and ready to leave at any moment. And even before God delivers his people, even before the Passover actually happens, God commands them to make this a feast day to be celebrated annually, and that's what they did.

For generations and generations, the family of Israel kept the Passover meal to remember the mighty works that God worked for them, bringing them up out of Israel. Every family member, every member of the family takes part in the Passover meal.

Even in Jesus' time, this meal remained very important. It was there to serve as a yearly reminder of who God is. Physical reminders, physical symbols to remind them of the themes of judgment, redemption, and sacrificial blood.

[11 : 02] And this meal would have been very familiar to the disciples until it wasn't. Jesus changed the liturgy. He changed the order and the purpose of the meal to teach about his coming death and resurrection.

It continues in Luke. It says, As he took a cup, and he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, Take this and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on I will not 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.

So Jesus changed the meal. It's not a lamb and bitter herb and unleavened bread. It's bread and wine are now the elements that constitute the meal. And Jesus says that these elements represent himself, his body, and blood.

The themes from the first Exodus, the judgment, redemption, and sacrificial blood will find their ultimate fulfillment in the breaking of his body and the pouring out of his blood.

[12 : 22] That's to say that his death on the cross will bring about a permanent and lasting Exodus, fully accomplishing God's redemptive plan for his people. And admittedly, Jesus doesn't give us a long, complete, exhaustive explanation of how we should understand these elements.

So we have to look carefully at the words that he gives us and he's pointing his disciples and by extension us.

He's pointing us back to the scriptures to understand and round out our idea of what he's trying to teach us. So when Jesus says, when Jesus takes the bread, he says, this is my body which is given for you.

He's almost certainly drawing our attention to the words from the prophet Isaiah. And it's a longer passage so we're going to skip some of it today but I'd invite you to go back and look chapter 52 starting in verse 13 and going all the way through 53.12 which doesn't sound like a lot but verses in Isaiah are pretty long.

So, so I'm going to read through it and I want you to pay attention to the idea that one person will take the guilt, sin, iniquities, and transgressions of many onto himself and that will bring about healing and peace for many.

[13 : 47] So one standing in the place for many. And secondly, I want you to pay attention to another dynamic that's going on here. We have this, a lot of people call this the suffering servant passage.

we have the servant willingly giving himself but we also have the dynamic that God is willingly giving this servant for his people.

So I want you to listen to for those things starting in verse 4. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows yet we esteemed him stricken smitten by God and afflicted but he was pierced for our transgressions he was crushed for our iniquities.

Upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray we have turned everyone to his own way and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed and he was afflicted yet he opened not his mouth like a lamb that is led to the slaughter and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent so he opened not his mouth by oppression and judgment he was taken away and as for his generation who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living stricken for the transgression of my people and they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death although he had done no violence and there was no deceit in his mouth yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him he has put him to grief when his soul makes an offering for guilt he shall see his offspring he shall prolong his days the will of the Lord shall prosper his hands out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied by his knowledge shall the righteous one my servant make many to be accounted righteous and he shall bear their iniquities therefore I will divide him a portion with the many and he shall divide the spoil with the strong because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors yet he bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors did you guys pick up some of those words and phrases in there so Isaiah 53 is the only place in the Old Testament where one person chosen by God pours out his life or willingly goes to his death for the many there's maybe one small tiny little asterisk there in Daniel chapter 9 but if you want to talk about that you probably have to explain

[16:35] Daniel 9 to me better it's a tough one so Jesus is claiming to be the fulfillment of this prophecy given to Isaiah he is the one who will bear the judgment for God's people by willingly going to the cross to bear the penalty of sin for all of God's people Jesus willingly even joyfully goes to the cross and endures the penalty of sin for you and I he does this because of his great love for you for all of God's people Jesus himself is the sacrificial lamb of the Passover you see it wasn't just that you had to have an unblemished lamb the lamb also had to die in the place of the firstborn of the household it wasn't enough that Jesus fulfilled God's law perfectly not enough that there was no sin found in him no he had to go to the cross he had to die in order to atone for our sins that's love that Jesus died for your sins

Jesus continues and likewise the cup after they had eaten saying this cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood so this is the first time that I'm aware of in Jesus' teachings that he talks about a new covenant so even though it's a new covenant it's not a new idea that Jesus is teaching about it's an old promise for a new covenant it's talked about and given as a future promise by the prophet Jeremiah it's about 600 years before where Jesus is sitting in the upper room Jeremiah 31:31 says behold the days are coming declares the Lord when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt my covenant that they broke though I was their husband declares the Lord for this is the covenant that I will make with the house after those days declares the Lord

I will put my law within them and I will write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people and no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother saying know the Lord for they all shall they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest declares the Lord for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more so God is promising to make a new covenant unlike the old covenant when he took them out of Egypt so now we're back to talking about Passover again sin God says my covenant that they broke so God is comparing the two covenants the old covenant that he gave to Moses Israel through Moses and the new covenant that Jesus is talking about and the noteworthy thing about the new covenant is that it's going to be an internal covenant God says I will put my law within them and I will write it on their hearts so where kids maybe this is a question you guys could answer where did God write the law when he gave it to Moses anybody know he wrote it on tablets stone he wrote it on stone that's right heavy lifeless external stone tablets so the old covenant is external the new covenant will be internal God says I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts I think in Ezekiel he says I will take away your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh so why does Jesus tell us that the cup represents the new covenant and furthermore why does it represent his blood so we're going to have to jump forward 50 days past Passover is another important feast for the family of Israel that's a day called Pentecost or sometimes the feast of weeks seven weeks plus one day if your math is correct and it's not a leap year it's 50 days we're past the leap day anyway so that's that's where the

Israelites after they crossed the Red Sea and they stopped at Sinai that's what they're celebrating it's when God gave them the covenant and made a covenant with them and that's the covenant that the house of Israel broke in that Jeremiah passage that we read so here's Exodus where it happens this is jumping ahead to Exodus 24 so God is talking he said then he said to Moses come up to the Lord you and Aaron

Nadab and Abihu and 70 of the elders of Israel and worship from afar Moses alone shall come near to the Lord but the others shall not come near and the people shall not come up with him Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the rules and all the people answered with one voice and said all the words that the Lord has spoken we will do famous last words and Moses wrote down the words of the Lord he rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel and he sent young men of the people of Israel who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord and Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins and half of the blood he threw against the altar he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of people of the people and they all said all that the Lord has spoken we will do and we will be obedient and Moses took the blood and threw it on the people and said behold the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words so the Israelites have entered into a covenant or a contract with God kids any of you guys ever get involved in any contracts yeah you

[23 : 10] I make contracts for my siblings sometimes oh yeah you don't want to maybe roll that one out here anybody ever trade something back in my day we would trade baseball cards that was a thing nobody trades things I suppose that's probably good keep it to yourself kids you ever swap chores if you have siblings you ever say I'll do your laundry if you vacuum my carpet anything like that no takers where's the Thompson family they're probably chattier get them up there how about a pinky promise anybody do that pinky promise yeah alright one more how about how about like a code of conduct anybody have to sign a code of conduct yeah theater right how about you guys school you guys ever have any code of conduct stuff that you have no did you have something else do you have any code of conduct or a lot of things that you sign up for whether it be online or in person you sign a code of conduct for like if you're just checking out a new game it doesn't matter too much if you're keeping it to yourself though sure sure so what makes these agreements binding you're probably like clicking a box saying you agree or your theater contract you had to sign it that's what made it binding before that it was just a piece of paper or an online form or a paper form or something pinky promise you got an action right there that would make it binding so what makes the covenant with God binding is the blood so the blood was the seal of the agreement it's like a signature at the bottom of a contract makes it a binding agreement between God and his people by applying the blood to each of the parties the altar represents God's presence and the Israelites both parties were essentially saying if I don't adhere to the terms of our agreement may it happen to me as it happened to the oxen and remember that's where they got the blood from it's a bad time to be an oxen so when Jesus says this cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood he's saying that his life his blood is poured out to seal or make binding this new agreement with God and his people so when we drink the cup we take into our body and we attest that this new covenant is an inward change it's spiritual rebirth or regeneration but instead of the blood of an oxen they're only to serve as a warning against the consequences of breaking the agreement this new covenant sealed by the blood of Jesus and so it comes with an additional promise we already read that in Isaiah he says he poured out his soul to death and it was numbered with the transgressors yet he bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors brothers and sisters we have all broken the terms of the contract we have with God we Christians call it sin we haven't held up our end of the agreement in many many ways and the additional promise of the new covenant is that Jesus promises to pay the penalty for our sin he promised to die in our place the blood that Jesus shed

on the cross is perfectly effective to cover over your sins so the covenant may continue if you're feeling any weight of sin don't let shame or guilt keep you separated from the love of God just repent and turn to him so how do Christians that's those of us who have lived after the ascension of Jesus approach the Lord's Supper so I'm going to try to organize it into a few categories so that when we move to the back of the room in a little bit and partake in the Lord's Supper we have some categories some key categories to think of and Josh introduced us to these categories maybe a month or two ago and they're very very helpful cues for us so I'm going to look at them and I'll

expand them just a little but they're just jumping off points so I'm sure if you think and meditate on these you're going to have different thoughts and you're going to be stirred in different directions as well so one of the ways we look is we look backwards we look backwards at the finished work of Jesus

Jesus takes the bread in verse 19 and says this is my body which is given for you do this in remembrance of me so we confess and acknowledge that Jesus is our Lord and Savior that his death is covered over our sins that he's taken our sins upon himself and placed his righteousness on us but he was pierced for our transgressions he was crushed for our iniquities upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace and with his wounds we are healed this is no work of our own this is holy a work of God and all of grace secondly we look forward Jesus said for I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God we anticipate Jesus' second coming and look forward to the marriage supper with the lamb the celebration when the whole church will celebrate the end of sin and evil and death all that is wrong will be made right revelation says blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the lamb if you are a follower of Jesus that means you you'll be there at the culmination of the new covenant we also look inward

Paul warns the church in Corinth he says let a person examine himself then and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup we look inward and assess ourselves do your thoughts and actions honor our Lord Jesus do they align with the example that Jesus set for us through his teachings and examples do you have any unresolved conflict where you're the one that's lingering to resolve it confess to your Lord Jesus repent of the ways your sin has put distance between you and him remember that the blood of Jesus is sufficient to cover your sins and restore your relationship with God just a note we say it every week that's worth saying right now also the elements the bread and the cup they do nothing to save you they're just pieces of bread and in our case it's grape juice they serve as a physical reminder of a spiritual reality the only way to salvation is by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone just a little disclaimer we also look outward

Paul writes for as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes when we celebrate the Lord's supper we're bearing witness to the gospel message it's a renewal and rehearsal of the promises of the new covenant it's a confession that it is only through the cross the death of Jesus and his glorious resurrection that we are reconciled to the father we look at each other seeing the unity and diversity of the body of believers brothers and sisters young and less young new believers and long time followers of Jesus different interests jobs hobbies backgrounds all united by the common bond of faith in Jesus we also look upward participating in the Lord's supper is an act of worship that is pleasing to the Lord God has invited you to the table we consider the steadfast love of

[32 : 08] God that through the regenerating work of the spirit by the finished work of Jesus we are justified or accounted righteous before God and that should stir us to praise God we are quick to forget but in the kindness of our Savior Jesus we have been given this ordinance to help us remember we're helped by the spaced repetition we celebrate it regularly through physical participation that's actively taking part in it and by rehearsing the truth of the gospel with each other as a gathered church we celebrate the Lord's Supper to remember Jesus until he comes again so typically at the end of our sermon as we transition our time I would pray and I'm going to do that today but today I'm going to use Psalm 51 as our prayer to help us transition so if you ever find yourself not knowing what to say to approach the

Lord's Supper Psalm 51 is a good help so I will pray that would you join me in that prayer have mercy on me oh God according to your steadfast love according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin for I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me against you you only have I sin and done what is evil in your sight so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment behold I was brought forth in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me behold you delight in the truth and the inward being and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean wash me and I shall be whiter than snow let me hear joy and gladness let the bones that you have broken rejoice hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities create in me a clean heart oh

God and renew a right spirit within me cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me restore me restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit