

## I. The Whole Counsel of God

We approach the Christian holidays a little differently than most churches do. I told you from day one when we started our church that my goal was to have a church that was as in line with the Bible as it could be. The model for the church, as we have talked about many times, is the church in Antioch in the book of Acts. We basically follow that line of teaching and what they did.

We understand that as time progressed down through history, a lot of things got added to the church and to Christianity. I am certainly not going to be the guy who is going to stand up and try to change all of that because, one, it does not need to be changed, and two, you could not change it if you tried. I have learned over the years in the ministry that you take the things that are there and you have to work with them and around them, especially the things that you cannot change.

I want to talk today about the Lord's Supper and communion because today is a day that all across this city, churches are commemorating the Lord's resurrection, and most of them probably are taking communion and the Lord's Supper. I wanted to take the time this morning to lay out this essential and absolutely vital Christian doctrine.

Paul said in Acts 20:27, when he was at the church at Ephesus and getting ready to go to Jerusalem:

*Acts 20:27*

*For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*

We know a little bit about the Bible, that this ends Paul's ministry. He was told three times not to go down to Jerusalem, but Paul was going to go anyhow and wound up in the \*huskotl\* down there, which in Greek is jail. He ends his ministry as far as starting churches is concerned. When he meets at the church at Ephesus, I think it is one of the most moving passages in the Bible, and he says something to them that I have always looked at and taken almost directly to heart as my responsibility.

As a pastor, when he is talking to the church at Ephesus, he is saying, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." I think that is one of the greatest telling statements, not only of Paul's ministry, but of any ministry. What Paul is saying there is what we are supposed to do. We as churches are not just supposed to teach all the deep things, all the exciting things. We are studying right now on Thursday night, having finished up the seven pillars and moving into the eleven dispensations, basically showing you how your whole Bible comes together. That is vitally important.

But just as important is understanding the very practical things. You are going to find that most pastors and most churches, to keep people's attention, to keep people coming, or keep them moving, are always looking for something new and exciting to give them. Of course, Paul said

no. He said, when it comes to the church and teaching the Bible, you have to be able to lay out and teach the whole counsel of God. Everything is important, every aspect of the Word of God.

What you want to accomplish in your life at some point is to have a balanced Christian life. Everything in life is a balance, and when things get out of balance, things are not very good in our lives. The only way to keep a perfect balance, or as perfect a balance as you can keep, is to take the principles of the Word of God, recognize what they do in your life, and then guide your life along that. We have been studying that on Sunday morning in the book of Proverbs. The book of Proverbs is the book that talks about the issues of life.

We are all going to have struggles. We are all going to have things we are going to have to face. I have people come in all the time, and they try to talk to me, and I try to help them. They tell me about where they have been and what they have struggled with and all the things that they have had to deal with. Bless their hearts, every one of them, and I understand it, every one of them, when they begin to lay out where they have come from, they all kind of get the idea that other people would look down on them if they knew what they are struggling with because they are the only ones who ever struggled with this.

That is just simply not true. Everybody in here has had our struggles in life. Everybody in here will continue to have struggles in life. The one thing that makes us all unanimously love each other around here is the fact that nobody is better than anybody else. We all have the same problems. We all have the same issues, and they are all the same. But the answer to those issues is simply getting back to a balance in our lives: a balance in our marriage, a balance in our family, a balance in our own personal life with the Lord Jesus Christ.

How you do that is simply by getting the whole counsel of God, learning every aspect of what it means in the Bible for everything in your life, because everything in the Bible flows the same direction. Everything in the Bible at some point will cross over some other teaching. In the end, it all goes back to the knowledge of God and the mind of God and the balance that we all need to have in our lives.

We now know from our studies on Thursday night, just to show you an example of that, the difference between the nation of Israel and the New Testament church. Before that time, many of you had no idea or even knew what they were. Now we have taken the time to detail that out. Most of you, from your time there, could probably pretty well explain what the nation of Israel means to God and what the church means to God. Now you understand the difference. You are going to see that learning things like that are going to help you with things like what we are going to talk about today: the Lord's Supper, Easter, the resurrection of the Lord, and all of those things that we talk about.

## II. Old Testament vs. New Testament Church

We now know in the Old Testament that Israel's relationship with God was built on physical things. They had a literal city, Jerusalem. They had a literal temple that was built in Jerusalem, and they went there to worship. That was the center of everything that they did. The nation of Israel in the Old Testament had all kinds of special events and holy days. They had holy days that

were set aside. They had feasts that they had to keep throughout the year that were feasts to the Lord.

They had to give sacrifices. The Bible is very clear that the sacrifices were set up on an economic scale: if somebody had a lot of money, they could bring a lamb, but if somebody did not have a lot of money, they could bring a turtledove or a pigeon or something that God would accept. This physical aspect of their belief in God being centered around everything that they did in their lives in a physical sense, as I talked about a couple of weeks ago, formed a complete culture for them. They grew up understanding everything about God. They did not grow up like we do today and have to go to church on Sunday to hear it. Everything in their life revolved around the things of God and what God was doing with them throughout the whole year.

Now we know in the New Testament that all changes. If you have your Bibles this morning, I want to invite you to turn to Colossians chapter 2. I want you to understand today why we are doing what we are doing. I guarantee you, across this city today, there are thousands of people who are going to churches, celebrating a resurrection, and partaking of the Lord's Supper. I guarantee you, in their hearts, ninety-five percent of them have no idea why they are doing what they are doing.

I am going to tell you, I may not have figured this out yet, but you look like a smart crowd here today. The bottom line is this: it does not do you any good to do anything with God or for God if you do not understand what you are doing it for. Christianity is not just going through the motions. Christianity is not just jumping through the spiritual hoops as God keeps holding them up higher and you keep getting through them. No, real relationship and Christianity with God is you understanding. That is why Paul was so adamant with the church at Ephesus there, because he was getting ready to leave now, and this church had taken over the work and was going to finish what Paul started. He was very, very clear on it that this church needed to follow his example and teach the whole counsel of God. That is what I really want to do today. I do not want you to take the Lord's Supper without understanding what it really is.

We have a lot of young, new Christians in our church and a lot of folks who have been saved for a while that have started coming to our church. They are good people and they love the Lord, but they have never had anybody sit down and explain things like this. If there is anything in your Christian life you need to understand, it is the concept of the Lord's Supper.

Colossians chapter 2 shows you the Old Testament nation of Israel. Now look what it says here in verse 10:

*Colossians 2:10-17*

*And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*

*In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:*

*Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.*

*And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;*

*Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;*

*And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

*Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:*

*Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.*

Verses 10, 11, 12, and 13 are simply telling you basically what happened the day you got saved. We are not going to focus on that this morning. I want you to look at verse 14. This is what happens. This is the difference between the church right now in the New Testament and what God had with the nation of Israel in the Old Testament.

Look at verse 14: "Blotting out the handwriting of the ordinances that was against us." That is the Old Testament law. He is basically saying that the main functional difference between the Old Testament nation of Israel and the New Testament church is that we are not under the law anymore. The law has been taken out of the way. Then he goes on to say that he nailed it to His cross. When Jesus was on the cross and He was crucified, you remember what He cried out? He cried out, "It is finished." What He meant by that is the fact that He had fulfilled the law. He had done everything that the law required for Him to do. Now His death on the cross finished the Old Testament law, and it was done. So Colossians 2 says He blots out the handwriting of the ordinances. He took them out of the way, nailing them to His cross.

Then verse 15 says, "Having spoiled principalities and powers," that is the devil and his crowd, "He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Because at the cross, Christ gets the keys of death and hell. He has the victory.

Now, because of that, look at verse 16. Here is the difference. Because Christ took the law out of our life, we are not under the law now; we are under grace. Because He took it out of the way, the Bible says, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat." Those are meat offerings like they had in the Old Testament, not whether you eat a hamburger or not. It is in relation to the meat offerings like they had in the Old Testament, "or to drink." That is not whether you drink a Coke or iced tea, one being more spiritual than the other. It is the drink offerings that they had in the Old Testament. "Or in respect to" here it comes, "an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."

All these things were given to Israel under the Old Testament law: the drink offerings, the meat offerings, the new moons, the holy days, all these Sabbath days they had to keep. But they are all taken out of the way at the cross of Christ. Now look at verse 17, it says, "Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." That is the church. That is us. We studied it a couple of nights ago.

### III. No Holy Days for the Church

What I want to say is simply this: for the church today, there are no holy days. Now, I am not saying it is wrong if a church wants to have a Sunday like Easter to celebrate the Lord's resurrection. I get it. We understand also that we set aside Christmas, and at Christmas, we want to recognize the birth of Christ. I understand. I get it. But here is the problem, and I am not here to fight it, and I am not preaching against it. But I want you to understand that in the New Testament church, there is no requirement to have a specific holy day because I will tell you what happens.

This is what our church tries to guard against. For years and years, I took the approach that I was just going to ignore Easter, and I used to preach something else. Then I thought to myself, why not take it and explain it for what it really is so people can really understand it? Here is what happens every time. Here is what happens when we take one time to focus on whether it is the resurrection of Christ, Easter, or we focus on the birth of Christ, which is Christmas. Human nature instinctively does this: we put all that emphasis on that day. Because we are human and because this is the way humans think, it is like every other holiday we have.

Memorial Day is a great holiday, not just because they have all the good war movies on all day long that you can watch. But Memorial Day is a day that we stop and pause and think about all the young men who, down through history, have given their life for our freedom. It is a somber day. They have all kinds of ceremonies. They have all kinds of this and all kinds of that. You know what happens with human nature? You think about it that day.

I just do not want to think about the young men who have paid the price for my freedom just on one day a year. I want to think of them every day because, you know what? They are suffering every day. They are going through the battles over in the Middle East. They fought in Bastogne and they went ashore at Normandy and Utah. They fought in World War I at Belleau Wood and Chateau Thierry. They fought all those great battles. All that I have around me, all that I have in my life in a human sense, living in America, the greatest country in the world for having our freedoms, I hope in my life it just does not go back and my thankfulness for that just does not go back to one day a year. But that is what we do. We forget about the sacrifices that were made, and when Memorial Day comes and they put all the flags on the grave, that is when we stop.

We do the same thing with the things of God. I do not want to have just one day that I remember the fact that He died for me on the cross. I want to remember it every day of my life. Every day of my life, when I get up and I see that sun coming up and the darkness fleeing, I want to think of Him coming out of that tomb, and the darkness fleeing because of the fact that He brought the sunlight into my life. I do not want to have one day that I just do that. But, as human beings, that is what we do. We do the same thing with Christmas. Christmas is a time where we celebrate the birth of Christ.

I understand where they come from. I realize that Constantine in 325 brought Easter and Christmas into Christianity. I realize that no church had celebrated it before. I get it. I am not here to fight it. I am not here to preach against it. I am just telling you, if you have the whole

counsel of God and you have a balance in your life of understanding these things, then you realize that as Christians, we never want to just set one day aside. I want to think every day of the day that Jesus Christ came into this world. Every time I open my Bible and read one of those passages in the Old Testament that prophetically talk about Christ coming, I want to stop and think about it.

I want to think about it when I look at everything out there that God has given me. I want to be thankful that not only did He come into this world and was the only begotten Son, but I want to be thankful every day of my life that He died for me on the cross, that He walked out of that tomb with the keys of death and hell, because that is what our salvation depended on. To me, I cannot speak for you, but something that monumental, something that absolutely everybody's soul in this room and in the world was hanging on, I do not know, maybe it is just me, I just have a tough time relegating that to one day a year.

Now, I understand it, and I am okay. You do not see me out there. I mean, we are going to go down to restart. I understand the whole nine yards. Believe me, I understand where Santa Claus comes from. I understand where the Easter Bunny comes from and the colored eggs and all that Egyptian stuff that came in there. But you know what? I am not a prude. I love to have a good time. We have a Christmas tree at our house. We get presents, and we have Easter egg hunts. We are going to go down there to all those little kids, and Gonzo is going to dress up like a big, goofy Easter Bunny with his outfit, and he is going to get out there and run up and down. You do not want to fight everything in life and be a negative person about the way things are, but you want to understand why they are the way they are. The only reason why you can do that is for somebody to teach you the whole counsel of God, lay it out so you can get it in every way, shape, or form.

I say that to show you that there are no holy days designated for the church. If somebody wants to celebrate Christmas, or somebody does not want to, it is okay. It does not make them non-Christian. I have had people say, "Well, we do not celebrate Christmas. We celebrate Him every day." I am okay with that. I get it. You do not want any presents? That is your deal, not mine. I understand. I realize that every man has a liberty in that because for us in the church now, in the Old Testament, they had things they had to do on holy days. But we do not. It is your option. It is your choice. If you choose to go hard line with it, it is okay. If you choose to go middle of the road with it, it is okay. If you choose to go completely and not do it at all, it is okay.

#### IV. The Two Ordinances of the Church

I say all of that to show you that in the church, even though those things were not carried over to us, they are optional. There are two ordinances in the church which are not optional. This is what we got that Israel did not have. In 1 Corinthians 11:2, Paul says that there were ordinances that were delivered to the church, and as a church, we must keep them.

Both of these ordinances are connected with the day that we got saved, and they are connected with Christ's death on the cross. So they are very apropos for the time that we are here today, dealing with the resurrection of Christ and the crucifixion of Christ.

1. The ordinance of baptism.
2. The ordinance of the Lord's Supper, or sometimes called communion.

I am going to briefly show you these before we take the Lord's Supper, because I want you to understand why. I do not want you to be like ninety percent of God's people in the world, to just go to church and do whatever you are told and not really understand why you are doing what you are doing. That does not produce a balanced Christian life. I want to help you understand. That is my job. My job, as Paul said, is to teach you and declare unto you the whole counsel of God. I do not want to just teach you about the things that are the future or the historical things. I want you to understand why you are doing what you are doing and help you understand what it means in the Word of God.

When it comes to baptism and the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, let me emphasize this, and this is very important. When it comes to understanding baptism and understanding the Lord's Supper, I want to be very clear: there is absolutely no salvation in either one of these. You and I doing either one of these or doing both of these will not ever get you to heaven. There is no baptism for salvation. There is no salvation in the Lord's Supper. But both of them, found in the Bible, both of these ordinances, picture what happened to you the day you did get saved. That is the key.

When you got saved by the blood of Christ, when somebody sat down with you and opened up the Word of God and showed you that you were a sinner and showed you that you needed to be saved, showed you the process in Romans 3, Romans 6, and Romans 10, and you recognized the fact that you were lost without Christ, and you prayed that prayer, "God, come into my heart and save me, because I cannot save myself," that is when you got saved. Now, for the rest of your life, these two ordinances were given to the church that you might look back and remember what happened the day you got saved.

## V. The Ordinance of Baptism

Let me quickly run through baptism here. Baptism is a figure of what took place in your life. After you are saved, you get baptized, not to be saved, but because you have been saved. Baptism is a public profession of what has taken place inside you. When we baptize somebody, we take them down and we baptize by immersion. In the Bible, the first time you find anybody baptized was John the Baptist. You would be amazed at the people who think that John the Baptist was the first Baptist, hence he is called John the Baptist. That is not true. John the Baptist was not a Baptist. John was called John the Baptist because he was a baptizer. He baptized people, and he took them down in the River Jordan and he baptized them. When he took them down in the River Jordan, he put them down under the water and he brought them back up out of the water.

In Acts chapter 8, you have Philip when he was sent to the Ethiopian eunuch to tell him about the Lord Jesus Christ. When that Ethiopian eunuch trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as his own personal Savior, he stopped the chariot. The eunuch said, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" And Philip said to him, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." We covered that Thursday

night, did we not? So the Bible says they went down into the water, and he baptized him, and he came up out of the water. It has always been the mode in the Bible for baptism.

I have people all the time that think John the Baptist was the first Baptist. It goes along with Noah's wife, Joan of Arc. No, it was not at all. I had one guy think one time that apostles and pistols were husband and wife. That is not the way it works in the Bible. It is very clear when you start to come through the scriptures. When we baptize somebody by immersion, you go under the water and you come back up out of the water.

You remember reading in Colossians 2:12:

*Colossians 2:12*

*Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.*

That is not water baptism there. It is a picture of the spiritual baptism. When you got saved, when you simply asked Christ to save you, you got immersed in the Holy Spirit of God. So when we baptize people, we go down into the water. I told the person I always let them hold their own nose because people are always afraid you are going to take your finger off and they are going to drown. So when I baptize somebody, I simply say, "Buried in the likeness of His death, raised in the likeness of His resurrection."

You know what it pictures? It pictures the fact that inside you, you have accepted the fact that Jesus came down from heaven, died and went down into the center of the earth, and then rose again the third day. So that is what Easter is about. You see, "Up from the grave He rose." He came down from heaven. He died on the cross. He went into a tomb. The Bible says He went down in Abraham's bosom for three days, and then He came back up and He walked out of that tomb.

When you trust Christ as your own personal Savior, the ordinance of baptism is a public expression to the people around you of what you have already done internally. So when I baptize somebody, or somebody else baptizes somebody, "buried in the likeness of His death, raised in the likeness of His resurrection," you are signifying, as the first public act of expression, that I have been saved, that I have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ, that I believe that He came down and died, was buried, and rose again the third day. That is the gospel, 1 Corinthians 15. By you and I doing that, we picture the salvation that is already in our heart. We do not do it to be saved. We do it because we have been saved, and it is a public witness that I have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as my own personal Savior.

In the book of Acts, which is our model now, the church at Antioch and the early church, every person who got saved did two things, and you find it all the way through the book of Acts:

3. They got baptized.
4. They joined a New Testament local church.

It is because those are the two things that God set up that we are to be a part of. They recognized that baptism did not save them. They recognized that baptism just expressed outwardly what had already taken place inwardly.

## VI. The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper

Let me explain the second ordinance here. This will be the one we are going to partake of here in a few minutes, and I want you to understand this one. Let us come over to 1 Corinthians chapter 11. He says here in 1 Corinthians chapter 11, pick it up in verse 23:

*1 Corinthians 11:23-34*

*For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:*

*And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.*

*After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*

*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.*

*Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.*

*But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

*For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.*

*For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.*

*For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*

*But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*

*Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another.*

*And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.*

There is a problem in the church at Corinth. You know from our past studies that the church at Corinth is just plagued with issues. Paul, in the whole book of 1 Corinthians, is simply chapter by chapter, many times multiple subjects in the chapters, dealing with them on things they are doing wrong. In chapter 11, they are messed up on the Lord's Supper. They are having some real issues with it. We are not going to get into all the issues they are having with it, but let me just say this: this is the beauty of the Bible. The problems that they have, much like the rest of 1 Corinthians, by Paul dealing with them, telling us what the problems are, and then showing them

how to fix it and showing them what is wrong, it forms an invaluable base for you and me to learn how to do the thing the right way. It is a great form of instruction.

Here is the first thing that I want you to see about the Lord's Supper. I want you to understand.

### *The Lord's Supper is a Memorial*

*Verses 23 through 25, he says, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread." When we do the Lord's Supper, it is set up after a model that took place in Matthew 26, when the Lord had His last supper with the disciples right before He was betrayed. So there is a reason why we do it. You know that that last supper there is where, right after that, He gets betrayed by Judas, and then the events take place, and He gets crucified. So right out of the chute, we see that the Lord's Supper is a picture of something. Like baptism is a picture of what happened to you internally the day you got saved, and by publicly going down in the water and coming up, you are witnessing to that fact, the Lord's Supper is a picture of something. It is a memorial. It is a memorial that makes us think about what Christ did for us. It is a memorial that we stop and reflect about all that Christ did on the cross for us, and it is set up after the pattern of Christ and His disciples there at the Last Supper.*

### *The Bread*

*In verse 24, he talks about the bread. The bread is a picture of Christ's broken body. On the cross, His body was beaten. It was bruised. It is a picture of what He went through and His body being broken and beaten when He was on that cross.*

### *The Cup*

*The cup, verse 25, the Bible tells us in Matthew 26:29, that it is grape juice. It is the pure blood of the grape. It is the fruit of the vine. It pictures Christ's blood that was shed for you and for me. The Bible says in Hebrews 9:22: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." You know, in the Old Testament, here again, the difference: they had to bring bulls and goats and lamb and sheep, and something innocent had to die for their sin. But in the New Testament, we do not do that. You do not see any sheep out back. You do not see any herd of bulls that we bring in because Christ on the cross became the ultimate sacrifice, and where the blood of bulls and goats could never pay for sin, when Christ died on the cross, His blood paid for all of our sins. That is what it is all about. So He is saying that when you take that little piece of bread and you take that grape juice, it is us memorializing and taking a time where we are stopping and thinking about what God has done for us.*

### *No Set Pattern for Frequency*

*The next thing I want you to see is in verses 25 and 26. He says in verse 25, "as often as ye drink it," and again in verse 26, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup." There is no set pattern to the Lord's Supper. Some people do it every Sunday. Some people do it every other Sunday. Some people do it once a month. Some people do it three times, four times a year. There is no pattern to it. I will tell you why there is not. There is no greater meaningful time on this*

*earth when you and I should be as close to God as we can get than when we take the Lord's Supper.*

He says in verse 26, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." It is a memorial. God did not want it to be. God knows how we as human beings like to traditionalize things. He did not want the resurrection of His Son and His death on the cross to go the way of Easter and to go the way of Christmas, because I know that we celebrate Christmas at the birth of Christ. We celebrate Easter at the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. I get it. I understand it. But I also guarantee you, human nature is like this: there are people right now across this city who are in church services, and the preacher is up there preaching a really good sermon about the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and all they can think about is, "I hope he gets done quick because my roast is in the oven and it is going to burn."

He never wanted it to be that. He never wanted Christmas to be, "Oh, Christmas is on Sunday this year. Oh, man, that is going to screw up everybody coming over to eat." Really? But you see, this is what happens. This is what we do when we make it one time a year that we think about it. This is what we do when we do it in the Lord's Supper, when you do it over and over and over again, and it loses all of its special aspect. Pretty soon, it is relegated to just like everything else you do. Instead of the Lord's Supper being the center of that church service, it gets tagged on at the end after everybody else says what they really want to say, but because we have to do it. That is not the way it is supposed to work. It is the greatest, the holiest time that probably you and I can have as a human being, as a Christian, in our time with God. God did not want it to become a tradition. He did not want it to be worried about, "You know, well, we have to get out of here because we have to do this. And boy, you know, I hope he gets done. And boy, well, you know, everybody is going to be at my house at two o'clock for dinner, so let us move this thing along." How does that honor what Christ did on the cross for us? But this is what we do. God help us, this is what we do.

### *Self-Examination*

*Now, look at verses 27 and 30 here: "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." It simply says in that verse that when you come to take the Lord's Supper, this is the time where you want to confess everything in your life to God that you need to do. If there is anything in your life that is not right, anything that you have not taken care of, before you take the Lord's Supper, you just simply bow your head and ask God to forgive you for it. It does not take a show of repentance. It does not take something you have to go out and do. It just simply is something you go to the Lord with in your heart. Before we take the Lord's Supper here, there will be a time between each one where you can pause and have a time of personal prayer to ask God to take those things and do those things in your life.*

He says down there, in verses 29 and 30, that coming to the Lord's Supper or communion will be a problem for you if you do not examine yourself. He says, "But let a man examine himself." What does that mean? It means you simply look inside your own heart. I am certainly not going

to stand up here and say, "You can take it. You cannot. You can take it. You cannot." You have to look inside your own heart. You have to have that relationship with God. If it is not exactly right, you just simply make it right. You just simply say, "Lord, you know, I did this, or I said this, or I thought this, or I was not right with this, and I ask You to forgive me." You get it clean right before God. So when you come to this time that we are going to memorialize and talk about and think about when Christ died on the cross and His resurrection, everything between God and you and me is exactly as good as it can be. So there are some things that in some people's lives need to be addressed.

He says in verse 31, "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." That simply means that we, again, we look inside ourselves and we judge those things. We all go through the week and we have things in our life that knock us off our game, so to speak. You know, we are supposed to take care of those things on a daily, hourly basis, but you know, we all do not. There may be somebody here this morning who has kind of let things pile up on them, and you are not as clean as you need to be with the Lord in your own personal relationship with Him. You are saved, you know, but your fellowship is not exactly where it needs to be.

Old Harold Sietler was a great preacher. He was one of the last of the old boys. I have heard him preach probably. He has been dead now for thirty, forty years. But I heard him preach many, many times. Boy, you talk about somebody who could take the paint off the wall. He was down out of Greenville, South Carolina, and that was a wild place down there back in the sixties and seventies, and those guys were something else. I heard him preach one time about being right with God. He was up there, and he was preaching on a Sunday morning, and he said, "You know what?" He says, "I was coming to church this morning." And he said, "I got up early, and I was driving my car over to come to preach to you good folks." And he said, "I went into a gas station to get some gas." And he said, "I drove in there, and as I was putting gas in my car, two little guys came up on bicycles." And one little guy was just as dirty from head to toe as you. He had been playing in the dirt all morning long. "And I am looking at him there, and they were cute little guys." And he said, "I said to the little guy, 'Son, how did you get so dirty so early in the morning?'" His little brother perked up and said, "Oh, mister, he did not get that dirty this morning. He went to bed that way last night." Oh, Harold Sietler, boy, I looked down at that crowd, and he says, "You know what? I bet a lot of you went to bed that way last night." Oh, he nailed them, man. He was a great preacher. His voice sounded like two big gears grinding together. When he came at it from an angle, boy, it sounded like a clap of thunder coming through that place. But I bet a lot of God's people every night go to bed that way, unclean, not right with God. But all you have to do is get it right. That is what he is saying here. We judge ourselves. That is all we say. You look inside your own heart and your own life, and that is what you do.

## VII. Instructions for the Lord's Supper

When it comes to the Lord's Supper and the example we have now laid out for you, we are going to take the Lord's Supper today. I want to give you some instructions here. I have laid it out. You should understand it now. It is something that you needed to know. Now you will have it in your

memory bank for the rest of your life. You will have it all together. As we get ready to take the Lord's Supper here in about two minutes, let me give you some instruction that I want you to understand.

### *Who Should Partake?*

*The Lord's Supper is for people who have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior. I do not stand up here and make those judgments. You are your own witness with God. You know in your life if you have or you have not. I certainly do not. I do not sit up here and say, "Well, I do not think she should," or "I do not think he should." Man, that is not my deal. I just know for my own personal life, this is where I am at, and you have to know where you are at. It is just that simple.*

For the children who take it, parents, you know your own kids. You know where they are at. You know if they have been saved and all that follows through with that, so you have to deal with that on your own and your own personal deal with your children. I need to say this: the Lord's Supper should be taken by somebody who is not only saved but has been scripturally baptized. Now, that is a problem in some areas here, and this is where I want to explain it. Our church does not have a baptistery. We do not have a baptismal service every Sunday. We do it a couple of times a year. I have always told you this: if you are somebody that has been saved and you have not been baptized, but you are planning on getting baptized, that is not your fault. That is the way the situation is with us. So in a case like that, it is on your attitude of heart. If we are going to baptize, the next time we baptize is going to be an anniversary Sunday here coming up in July or June, whenever it is. Many of you will be baptized. I know when Justin came back from overseas, he came over and asked me, "I have not been baptized yet. Can I still go ahead and do that?" I told him, because you are going to get baptized, you are going to get this, because he is already talking about it, "You go ahead and do it." It is based on your attitude of heart. It is based on the fact of where you are at with the Lord. So if you have not been, but you are planning on it, you go ahead and feel free to do that. There is nothing wrong in that particular situation.

### *Open Communion*

*The next thing I want to tell you is we practice an open communion. Many churches do not. Many churches say if you are here visiting from another church, you cannot take communion with us. Here again, as I taught you on Thursday night a couple of weeks ago, "church militant versus the church triumphant." We all know that we practice an open communion. If you are saved and you are born again, then you are part of the body of Christ. You have every right to take communion with us, and we welcome you to do that.*

### *Process of Partaking*

*The way we do it here in just a few moments, the gentlemen are going to get ready now, and they are going to pass out the bread here in a second. We come up, we pass it out. We wait until everybody gets it. We have a word of prayer over it, and that is where you can take care of business with the Lord. At that point, then we will take the bread together. Then we will pass out the grape juice, and same thing with that. We will have a time of prayer together, and we will*

*take it in unison as a church family. That is how we always do it. The guys will pass this out here. Feel free to take one. If you are Skyping, you are welcome to take it with us. You can do that through your own home there, being part of the church service this morning.*

*1 Corinthians 11:23-24*

*For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:*

*And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.*

I would like to ask John Christensen to come up. He is going to lead us in prayer in a moment. He is going to talk about the broken body of Christ. John is one of our deacons in our church.

[John Christensen's Prayer for the Bread]

Father, thank you so much for the Lord Jesus and for His death on the cross. Lord, You had the power to save a man from sin. We just thank You so much for giving Yourself for our sins, Lord. I pray, Lord, that we take a minute now and just examine ourselves, look into those things that are not pleasing unto You, Lord. And we ask that You be with us as we do these things now.

He said, "Take, eat of this." And I invite you to take and eat of this right now with me.

Gentlemen, you will pass out the cups.

*1 Corinthians 11:25-26*

*After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*

*For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.*

I would like to ask Joe Christensen, another deacon in our church, to come up. He is going to offer the prayer for the cup and talk about the blood.

[Joe Christensen's Prayer for the Cup]

Not much more than I can add to what Bob said already today. But the three things that came to light with me when we talk about the blood is, number one, it is a memorial. It is a memorial to picture the covering that the blood did for our sins, and it did not just cover the sins in the past. It covers the sins past, present, and future. Do not forget this. I have to remember personally, and we all should remember, that it was not just the sins that they committed back when they crucified Him. When Christ was on the cross, He was thinking about the sins that I was going to commit two thousand years later and have blood sacrifice cover those sins for us. So when we think about that, think about the fact that Joe Christensen put Him on that cross, and Joe Christensen needs that blood sacrifice, that perfect, holy sacrifice, to cover my sins.

What we are about to do here in a few minutes for the drinking of this grape juice, like Bob said, there is nothing holy in what we are going to do. There is nothing that I am going to say or do

that is going to make this blood turn into the literal blood of Christ. That is not what it is about. It is a picture of that. It is a picture of the fact that nothing I can do can get me to heaven. Nothing I can do is going to cover those sins. It is what Christ did.

The second thing is, it is a memorial for the age-old question that Bob talks about all the time: "Is that yes or no?" That is it. It is going to be a memorial for me the day that I said yes to Christ. I took His blood offering and applied it to my sin debt.

The last thing, just quickly, is in 1 Corinthians 11:26: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." That is the thing that we need to remember until He comes. Someday He is coming back for us. This blood offering and the sacrifice that He did, one time, perfect and holy, is going to get us through all the way to the judgment seat of Christ. It is going to get us through to the millennium. It is going to get us through eternity. Everything that we do is based on that blood sacrifice that He gave for us on Calvary. So we have to remember those three things.

Let us pray. Dear God, thank you for this time. We can get together as a church, Lord, and just memorialize this time, Lord, that You paid the ultimate sacrifice on the cross, Lord. Do not ever let us forget, Lord, that there is nothing that we can do. Like it says in Hebrews chapter 10, Lord, that You paid the price once and for all, and there is nothing I can do. Lord, this is just a memorial. This is for me to remember that Your blood is the thing that cleanses us from all sin and keeps us out of hell, Lord, and keeps our soul clean. God, thank you so much for Your sacrifice that You made. Just help us to remember that year-round, not only today, Lord, but in everything that You do, like Bob talked about today. We love You and thank You for Your Son. In Jesus' name we pray.

In Matthew 26:27, it said, "Drink ye all of it."

The Bible says in Matthew 26 that they sang a hymn and then they went out together. Today, we as a church family, and we are a very close family, have come together to memorialize Christ's death on the cross on this day that we celebrate not only His death, but His resurrection. Today, you go home with the true meaning of Easter in your life, and you understand now, hopefully a little better, why we do what we do. That is our job here, to help you understand better every day why we do the things that we do.

[Closing Prayer]

Father, we do thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. Thank You for coming down and dying for us on the cross, shedding Your precious blood, and Lord, for giving us the salvation that we have. Thank You for these dear people here today, Lord, who love You and love Your Word. Thank You for the time that we have had today to look back and reflect and maybe better understand why we do what we do and what it means to You and what it should mean to us. Bless us now the rest of the day. It is a long day, Lord, but it is a good day for You. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.