

The Lord's Supper

Today we gather to celebrate the death of Jesus Christ. I always wonder why we celebrate? I have this vision of his bloody body which He received from the scourging and beating, I see the Crown upon His head and I see the nails being driven into His hands and feet and I see Him hanging there on that cross, suffering for me. Do you ever have that vision? How can we call this a celebration?

To properly observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, we need a spirit of seriousness and at the same time an attitude of joyful celebration.

Memorializing an event as significant as the death of Jesus Christ should fill us with a spirit of awe and deepest reverence.

Responding to the redemptive purpose in that event should cause us to celebrate the greatness of God's love for us.

Let us seek an attitude of both seriousness and celebration as we consider this sacred experience before us.

Paul, quoting the Lord, declares that we are to partake of the bread and cup in remembrance of our Lord.

As we do so, we are actually proclaiming the fact of his redemptive death on the cross. We need to do this for our own heart's good and for the salvation of others.

Let us consider why we should proclaim the death of our Lord as a great redemptive act that has significance for all people.

I. The death of Jesus reveals the awfulness of sin

"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3).

The Scriptures declare that our sins were the reason for the death of Jesus Christ.

This may seem strange to a person of the twenty-first century who hears this for the first time. The angel told Joseph that the son who would be born of Mary would save his people from their sins

"She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21).

John the Baptist announced at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry, *"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)*

Peter, who had first resisted the thought that Jesus must die, later interpreted that death in terms of its substitution significance for us. *"He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls." (1 Peter 2:24,25)*

At the cross we are confronted with the fact that each of us is a sinner in need of God's forgiveness.

This message is proclaimed as we partake of the Lord's Supper. The death of Jesus reveals the greatness of God's love for sinners *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3: 16).*

Paul declared to the Roman believers, *"but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8)*

Only with the help of the Holy Spirit can we begin to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth of the love of God that was revealed in Jesus Christ when he died on the cross for our sins.

In an age that dehumanizes the individual and discounts the value of a person, we come to Calvary to see how great God's love is for us.

It was divine love that conceived the plan by which we could be saved. It was divine love that brought God's plan down to earth.

It was divine love that carried out this plan of salvation on the cross. As we partake of the Lord's Supper, we are proclaiming the greatness of God's love for ourselves and others.

The death of Jesus reveals the value of a lost soul.

In the business world, the value of a person is often revealed by the price an employer is willing to pay for his or her services.

In some parts of the world, human life is considered very cheap.

If you really want to know the value of a soul in God's eyes, we need to consider Calvary and see the great price that was paid for our redemption. Jesus came and gave his life as a ransom and to redeem us from the slavery of sin.

It is here that God placed a price tag on the worth of the individual.

Do you have difficulty keeping a sense of personal value?

Do you suffer from a sense of low self-esteem?

Then go to Calvary and see the price that God has placed on you.

As we partake of the Lord's Supper, we proclaim in the death of Jesus Christ the value of a lost soul.

In proclaiming Jesus' death, we announce the only way of salvation. *"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men¹ by which we must be saved."* (Acts 4: 12).

There was no other way to pay the price of sin. Only Jesus could unlock the door of heaven and let us in.

Our Lord died because the wages of sin is death. Either we must die for our own sins or we must accept the perfect substitute that God has offered us in Jesus Christ.

"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." (1 Cor 11:26)

As we partake of the Lord's Supper, let us realize that in this proclamation of the death of Christ, we see the only way by which a lost and needy world can come to know the love of God and the way of salvation. Let us determine out of love for our Lord and out of concern for those around us that we will go forth to communicate God's love to those who have not yet come to experience it in Jesus Christ.