

Sermon for A Year with the Catechism The Lord's Supper: Where is this Written?

Date: March 6, 2022

Location: St. John's Lutheran Church, Austin, MN

Old Testament: Genesis 18:1-8

Epistle Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:17-27

Gospel Reading: John 6:48-51



Sermon Text: 1 Corinthians 11:17-27

Sermon Title: Where is This Written? What do we receive?

Introit: Psalm 1:2-6; Antiphon Psalm 1:1

Hymns:

LSB 576 – My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less
LSB 619 – Thy Body, Given for Me, O Savior
LSB 744 – Amazing Grace
LSB 631 – Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face
LSB 583 – God Has Spoken by His Prophets

Liturgy:

Divine Service I, p. 151

Songs:

In the House - Crowder
Rise up – Lazarus
Sanctus – For King and Country
Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)
Broken Things – Matthew West
Miracles – Colton Dixon

Liturgy:

Creative Worship



Pastor James Groleau
St. John's Lutheran Church
1200 13th Avenue NW
Austin, MN 55912
Office: (507) 433-2642
Shepherd@JamesPlace.net
StJohnsAustinLCMS.org
KAUS 1480 AM Sun. 9:00am



Text: 1 Corinthians 11:17-27

But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together it is not for the better but for the worse. For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. When you come together, it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal. One goes hungry, another gets drunk. 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.

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord.

NOTE: Copyright information.

Pronunciation for difficult words are contained in { }

© 2021 Pastor James Groleau.

Permission is granted to use these sermons for any non-profit purpose. I only ask that credit, as to their origination, be noted appropriately.

Grace to you, and Jesus' eternal peace, is my prayer for you in Jesus' holy name. Amen.

We have begun a series on the Lord's Supper. Last week we explored some of the antiquity of this Meal. We saw how this Meal goes back as much as 4,000 year. This Holy Meal is the Meal that: Moses ate, king David ate, Jesus ate with His disciples. It is a Meal that binds together all of the faithful from the time of the Passover to present day.

This Meal has many names but the one I want to focus on first is Holy Communion. Why is it called that? The word 'communion' means to come together, to share something or even to share intimately with another or others. It means we are joined together.

We don't call this Meal the Sacred Snack, as though individuals are coming to the altar to get some sustenance to make it through to the end of the service. We call it Holy Communion. It is a Meal through which we share an intimate and close bond with those with whom we dine. This includes: Moses, David, the apostles, your fellow believers and Jesus.

Jesus is the Host. There's a pun in that if your paying attention. The host of a meal is the one who invites and serves you. In Holy Communion the 'Host' is name for the bread. Jesus is: the Host who invites you to the Meal, the Host who serves the Meal, and He is the Host in the Meal.

So intimate is this Meal with Jesus that He proclaims:

Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will bring them back to life on the last day. My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood live in me, and I live in them.¹

When we start to contemplate the awesome closeness we have with God in this sacred act it should instill some awe and wonder. ...but isn't that part of the problem? The awe, the wonder, it fades after a while doesn't it? When we approach this Table, (and I'm not judging you because I'm just as guilty) ...but when we approach this Table how many of us are standing in holy fear, love and trust in God? Do we not all too often have our minds wandering to anything and everything else but this intimate Holy Meal with God, and the seriousness of the salvation it affords us?

1 John 6:54-56

This is something over which I as your pastor worry about a bit from time to time. It troubles me. How can I help instill in you the marvel, the magnitude, of what we are really doing?

I wish you would take the time this week to open your Bibles to John 6 and Luke 22, take the time to look at what comes to us through, and in, this Meal. Just look at the very special intimacy God bring to us through this gift as Jesus Himself stoops down to physically touch us.

John 6 is really a wonderful chapter in Scripture. It begins with Jesus feeding the 5000 after which He leaves them. Later the next day the people chase Him down because they want more food. They had eaten their fill and had left-overs besides. They want Jesus to lead them always and feed them always.

The people want to know if Jesus is the Messiah (though their understanding of who the Messiah would really be was confused). They wanted Jesus to do some miracle to prove He was the promised Messiah. Of course their suggestion is give more food. They suggest Jesus give them the bread-from-heaven the Children of Israel ate during their wandering in the wilderness. They ate a special bread called Manna.² The people wanted Jesus to give them some.

Jesus helps them see He is the Messiah, and corrects their confusion. He says, ‘you want bread from heaven. Those who ate that bread eventually died.’ Then He says, ‘I came from heaven. I am the true Bread from Heaven, but this Bread is My Flesh and Blood.’³

The people, in part, understand what He is saying, but not fully. They think He is saying if you’re hungry kill and eat Me. They hear cannibalism. They think He’s crazy and tell Him so.⁴ This teaching is so foreign to what they thought the Messiah should be they walk away from Jesus. 5,000 men and their families chased Jesus all the way around the Sea of Galilee and then just give up and go home. The only ones left are the disciples and Jesus says to them, “will you leave Me too?”⁵

It is Peter who says:

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have come to believe, and to know, that You are the Holy One of God.⁶

2 Exodus 16:31

3 John 6:51

4 John 6:60

5 John 6:67

6 John 6:68-69 (ESV)

Where is this written? Among other places right here prominently in John 6 and also in Luke 22. The other profoundly prominent place is 1 Corinthians 11. You know some of those words:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the same night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take eat; this is My Body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup, after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them saying, "Drink of it all of you; this cup is the new testament in My Blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."⁷

Why do we use those words in our service? Because they are the words that the Holy Christian Church has always used, since the New Testament, the New Contract, began. The Old Testament, the Old Contract, revolved around the Passover Seder reminding them of the freedom from slavery to Egypt. The New Testament revolves around Holy Communion, an extension and more fully revealed understanding of the same Meal, which reminds us of our freedom from slavery to sin.

You see in Corinth the Church was having problems. That's why the book of 1st Corinthians was written. There were divisions (or denominations if you will, for lack of a better term.) Some said, 'we are Paul Christians.' Other said, 'we are Apollos Christians.' A group said, 'we are Peter Christians,' and some said 'we are Christ Christians.'⁸

Paul is writing to the congregations in the city of Corinth to scold them a bit for not following what they were taught by: Apollos, Peter and Paul. In 1 Corinthians 11 Paul is reminding them what they were taught. They were taught a liturgy, an order of service. At the highest point in the service these are the words that are spoken. How do we know that? Here is why we study Church history, especially ancient Church history.

That liturgy we follow in the hymnal is rooted in the ancient liturgies of the Holy Christian Church. So we can look at what they did and model what we do after them. All of them use these words. How far back can we go? As far back as

7 1 Corinthian 11:23-26

8 1 Corinthians 1:12

10-20 years after John the Apostle died. A man named Justin Martyr wrote down the liturgy of the Church and explained each component in detail. So not only do we have the liturgy they used, but we know why and for what reason each piece was added.

You see Paul, in chastising the congregations in Corinth, is reminding them we must be one Church not many churches. We are not to be divided we are to be one. So his exact words are:

When you gather in the same place, you cannot possibly be eating the Lord's Supper.⁹

Remember at that time they are still using the full Passover Seder, or liturgy, for the Meal, so there are three cups of wine, along with a full meal. Paul says:

Each of you eats his own supper without waiting for each other. So one person goes hungry and another gets drunk. Don't you have homes in which to eat and drink? Do you despise God's Church and embarrass people who don't have anything to eat?

What can I say to you? Should I praise you? I will not praise you for this.

I passed on to you what I had received from the Lord...¹⁰

He is teaching them about Holy Communion; about coming together in Christ for our salvation. It is here Paul reminds them of the words we still use today:

Our Lord Jesus Christ on the same night that He was betrayed...

They are words of unity not division. At that Meal they all ate from one piece of bread. They all drank from one cup. So that is the Meal we celebrate and receive. What do we really receive?

We covered this some last week. You can read the words in the same chapters I recommend earlier: John 6, Luke 22, and 1 Corinthians 11. What did the ancient Church teach about these things? If we are going to follow their lead and instruction in what we do, we should also follow what they taught. So what did they teach?

9 1 Corinthians 11:20

10 1 Corinthians 11:21-23

The same thing I teach you. The same thing our Church teaches; what has always been taught by the faithful. Bread and wine are brought to the altar. The Words of Institution are spoken. Then through miraculous means we get what God says we get, whether you believe it or not. The bread and wine become the vehicle that conveys to us Jesus real Body and Blood. There is where we anchor our faith and our confidence in God's promises.

What give this Holy Meal its power to forgive and save? That is a far more important question than you might consider at first glance. What give this Holy Meal its power to forgive and save?

I've used this hypothetical example a couple times in various Bible studies. Here it is: Suppose the pastor of a church has fallen away from the faith and believes none of this in any way. He is just going through the motions because it's a job. When he serves the Lord's Supper, as Jesus taught it should be done, meaning he goes through all the proper motions and says all the proper words, do you receive Jesus' Body and Blood?

- Is it the Lord's Supper even if the pastor is an atheist?
- Is it the Lord's Supper even if the person receiving it is an atheist?

Good Lutherans probably know the answer if you think it through. What gives this Meal its power to forgive and save? Is it my faith? Is it your faith? No. You don't want your salvation based on me, or you. We put our faith in God alone.

So is it still the Lord's Supper? Yes, even if the pastor does not believe it. The power to forgive and save comes from God's Word. So where God's Word is spoken God's work is done. Scripture records:

My word, which comes from My mouth...
will accomplish whatever I want,
and achieve whatever I send it to do.¹¹

Is it the Lord's Supper if the person receiving it is an atheist? Yes it is! Which is why such a grave warning is given:

Whoever eats the Bread, or drinks from the Lord's Cup,
in an improper way will be held responsible for the
Lord's Body and Blood.¹²

The Father will hold you responsible for Jesus' murder.

The Bible says:

11 Isaiah 55:8-11

12 1 Corinthians 11:27

Anyone who eats and drinks is eating and drinking a judgment against himself when he does not recognize the Lord's body.¹³

We'll explore that more in the next two sermons, but for now understand it is God's work, God's Word, and God's forgiveness and salvation that come to the faithful through this Meal.

Where is this written? In Scripture.

What do we receive? Blessings or curses.

- For the faithful, the repentant, we receive Jesus' Body and Blood through which we receive eternal life and salvation.
- For the unfaithful, the unrepentant, also Jesus' Body and Blood through which they receive God's wrath and condemnation.

It is important to remember both. Yet for us, the faithful, here is where we anchor our peace and confidence that our sins are forgiven and our salvation is secured.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

**Proclaim God's Word,
Encourage one another in faith,
Witness to God's love and
Serve all people**

