

May Christ the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us and grant us His peace. Amen.

Maundy Thursday  
April 1, 2010

1 Corinthians 11:23-26  
385-315-309/135-588, vv. 1 & 7

We Preach Christ Crucified in Holy Communion

- I. We remember Christ crucified in Holy Communion.
- II. We receive Christ crucified in Holy Communion.
- III. We proclaim Christ crucified in Holy Communion.

Dear Christian friends,

**Somewhere** along the way I've gotten into the habit of WRITING myself notes. I **often** have notes posted on my computer monitor. I'll have notes stuck in my **shirt pocket**. If I REALLY WANT to make sure I **don't forget** something I'll even tape a note on the **door going out** of the house – or on the steering wheel. If I DON'T HAVE a note – well, forget it. **Sometimes** EVEN HAVING a note I still forget!

I **know** I'm not the only one who **needs** little reminders. How often in the OT don't we find the Israelites building a **"monument"** as a REMINDER of whatever. **Much** of OT worship was a "NOTE" from God – a reminder of what God HAD DONE for them – **and** of what He had promised them. **We humans** can have such trouble remembering things. What's WEIRD is that we can easily remember things really NOT ALL that important but just as easily forget what is really important. We **can remember** a Packer game – a scene from a movie – the lyrics of a song – but to remember a Bible passage or a **hymn verse** – that's too much.

Today we recall a night with SO MUCH **going on** – yet in all the busyness of that night we hear Jesus say, **"Do this in remembrance of Me."** Remembering that our Lenten theme this year has been, **"We Preach Christ Crucified"** we now consider this – "We Preach Christ Crucified IN HOLY COMMUNION." **In Holy Communion** 1)we remember Christ crucified, 2)we receive Christ crucified and 3)we proclaim Christ crucified.

**I. We remember Christ crucified.**

REMEMBER. That's what God wanted the Israelites to **do every spring as they celebrated** the Passover. God wanted them remembering the MISERY of **slavery** in Egypt – **remembering** their helplessness – **remembering** how all they could do was **"groan and cry out"** to the Lord their God for His help. God especially wanted them to **remember** how HE HAD COME to their rescue. God **wanted them remembering** the plagues that devastated Egypt – remembering the Passover lamb and the blood that had protected them from the plague of death. **God wanted** them remembering their PAST – **and** remembering His PROMISE. God **had promised** them an even greater deliverance from an even greater enemy. God **had promised** them an even greater Lamb whose blood would protect them from an even greater death. To HELP them remember God gave them that **special** OT MEAL called the Passover. In obedience to that command and to eat that OT **"Holy Supper"** – Jesus and the twelve apostles had gathered in an **"upper room"** somewhere in Jerusalem.

It was at the end of that OT meal that Jesus instituted His NT meal of Holy Communion. **"Do this in remembrance OF ME,"** Jesus bids us. In Holy Communion the focus is NOT ON US and what we've all done for God. **Holy Communion** – **"Christ crucified"** – is PURE GOSPEL – all God's

doing for us. WHAT GOSPEL – what **good news!** – is that message of **“Christ crucified”** – is that meal of Holy Communion.

In **Holy Communion** we remember Christ. Christ, the eternal Son of God who took on our human flesh and blood and was born our brother. Christ, the **“beloved Son”** of God who in our place – and TO OUR CREDIT – actually lived a **life perfect** in every way. Christ, filled with SUCH A LOVE for His heavenly Father - and for us! – that He willingly went that way of the cross. Christ, **“the Lamb of God”** who sacrificed His life and shed His blood all to **“take away the sin of the world.”** THAT Christ we remember in a VERY SPECIAL WAY in Holy Communion as...

## II. We receive Christ crucified.

Today remember how Jesus instituted this precious Sacrament. The Passover meal was finished. Jesus used some of the **leftover** bread and wine. Passover bread was unleavened – **made without yeast** – so it was flat – it **didn’t rise** like regular bread. The wine we’re told was **“the fruit of the vine”** – grape wine.

As Jesus instituted Holy Communion He didn’t do anything BIG or FANCY. **“He took bread and when He had given thanks, He broke it”** – broke the bread into pieces to **give** to His disciples. It was the SAME WAY with the wine. **“He took the cup, gave thanks and gave it”** to His disciples. AS Jesus then gave them the blessed bread and wine He didn’t use any BIG – HARD to **understand** words. Just the opposite is true! Jesus speaks CLEARLY – SIMPLY – UNMISTAKABLY. **“Take, eat; this is My body, given for you. Take, drink; this is My blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.”** Jesus **very** SIMPLY and CLEARLY declares that the bread we eat in Holy Communion **“is”** His body – the very same body that He **“gave”** for us into death on the cross to pay for all our sins. Jesus **very** SIMPLY and CLEARLY declares that the wine we drink in Holy Communion **“is”** His blood – the very same blood that He shed on the cross to establish God’s **“new covenant”** of FULL and FREE forgiveness of sins.

Jesus doesn’t explain HOW this can be – He just plainly states the FACT – the MIRACLE of Holy Communion. **“This IS My body. This IS My blood.”** We don’t try to explain it either – we simply take Jesus AT HIS WORD. Jesus is God almighty **“with whom nothing is impossible.”** Jesus is our faithful God who NEVER LIES to us. In a miraculous yet VERY REAL way Jesus with the bread **actually gives** us His body and with the wine He **actually gives** us His blood.

WHAT BLESSINGS we receive as we receive Jesus’ true body and blood with the bread and wine. Listen to Jesus! **“My body given for you; My blood poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.”** TREASURE – SAVOR this Holy Supper! **“Christ crucified”** – Holy Communion – are FOR SINNERS – for sinners guilty of ignoring and defying their Creator’s **clear will** for their lives – for sinners whose lives now should be a LIVING HELL followed by eternity in the **very real** hell.

We don’t come to **Holy Communion** – we don’t come to **“Christ crucified”** - with our LIVES all cleaned up and **straightened** out. We don’t come with a “Hey, Lord, look what I’ve DONE. Look how I’ve changed my life around.” We come to **“Christ crucified”** and His **Holy Supper** humbly confessing, “Lord, it’s ME AGAIN. I’m back – back with a whole pile of sin and guilt. Lord, I’m a sinner through and through – You know that and I have to FACE UP to it. I **have** a sinful nature that’s so stubborn and **strong** – and I can be SO WEAK and **foolish**. Lord, I’ve fallen – I’ve sinned. There are no excuses. Lord, I NEED You. I’m a MESS – a real WRECK. Lord, **please** don’t give up on me although I couldn’t blame you if You did.”

So we come to **“Christ crucified”** and His **Holy Communion**. We come and we hear and that priceless invitation, **“Take, eat; this is My body GIVEN FOR YOU. Take, drink; this is My blood SHED FOR YOU for the FORGIVENESS of sins.”** How our Jesus wants us to have NO DOUBTS whatsoever about His love and forgiveness. He not only TELLS us that again and again in His Word. Jesus actually PROVES it to us by PERSONALLY giving you and me the **very body** and **blood** He gave into death on the cross for our forgiveness. **“Do this,”** Jesus tells us and HOW WE WANT to **“do this”** and come again and again to so precious a Savior and His Supper. And as we **“do this”**...

### III. We proclaim Christ crucified.

**“For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.”** Coming to Holy Communion we are PUBLICLY **“proclaiming”** for **any and all** to hear, “I AM a sinner. I was born sinful and every day I sin by DOING things God has forbidden and by NOT DOING things God has ordered. **On my own** my relationship with God was a DISASTER. If God **‘treated me as my sins deserve’** – if God **‘kept a record of my sins and entered into judgment’** with me – I’d be in hell.”

Coming to Holy Communion we are PUBLICLY **“proclaiming”** for **any and all** to hear, “Jesus is MY Savior. He paid for all my sins by suffering and dying on the cross. Jesus washes me clean of all my sins with His holy blood. Jesus clothes me with His perfect life. BECAUSE OF JESUS I am forgiven – I have a whole new relationship with God – I am a beloved child of God – an heir of eternal life in heaven. HERE in Jesus – here in His body and blood – here is my peace – my comfort – my strength – my joy. MY LIFE is far from perfect but **Jesus** is the PERFECT SAVIOR. **This life** can be so hard at times but HEAVEN is my real home. I can have all kinds of troubles and hardships in life but Jesus loves me with SUCH A LOVE it’s unbelievable!”

Coming to Holy Communion we PUBLICLY **“proclaim”** for **any and all** to hear, “THIS JESUS is coming back to take me to be with Him forever in heaven.” In Hebrews we’re told, **“Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and He will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for Him.”** THAT WAIT can be awfully hard at times – we grow weary – we sin. PRAISE Jesus we have His Supper to SUSTAIN us as we wait! NOW we **“take eat, take drink”** – ONE DAY SOON we will be feasting with Jesus and all God’s redeemed people in that **“new heaven and new earth, where there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain.”** We can be absolutely sure of that – JESUS WANTS us to be absolutely sure of it – so He gave us this Holy Supper and said, **“This do in remembrance of Me.”** And this is SO MUCH BETTER than a note stuck in a pocket! Amen.

NICENE CREED