

Please turn with me in your copies of God's Word to 1 Corinthians chapter 11. This morning we are gathered together to worship the Triune God. One way in which we do this as the gathered corporate body of Christ is by partaking of the Lord's Supper. As we approach this Table today we must do so in accordance with the precepts of the Lord. Christ Jesus did not leave us without instruction concerning how we are to partake of the bread and the wine of this Supper, but He instructs us precisely in how to receive these elements rightly. Give your attention now to reading of the infallible Word of the Lord from 1 Corinthians chapter 11 beginning at verse 23.

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Pray

One thing I think we all understand is how feeble, how weak, our minds are. Because of our age, because of our limited abilities, because of certain circumstances that we face, we are all prone to forget things in this life. This is why we set up memorials or we set reminders. A couple of decades ago we would write ourselves reminders on sticky notes and leave them where we would easily see them, or we would write down things in a daily planner so as to not forget when something important is to take place. Today we set reminders on our phones; we put events and important dates in our Google calendars; we type things out in our notes on our phones or computers so that we don't forget them. We do this as a society as well. I'm sure you all recognize the phrase 'never forget' in reference to the terror attacks on September 11, 2001. We have erected a memorial at ground zero so that we would never forget this tragedy. There are statues and memorials placed all throughout this country, and even the world, which serve the same purpose to call to mind certain people or events from history. This is because without constant reminders, without established memorials, we are prone to forget the things of the past. This isn't some new phenomena either. It has been happening for millennia. In fact, if we

were to take a brief look at the Old Testament we would see that setting up memorials is scattered throughout.

The Biblical memorials are erected or established in order that the people of God would remember His work of redemption. In Joshua 4 we see a memorial erected to commemorate the safe passage of the people of God across the Jordan River, “And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of Jordan, and take you up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel: That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.” In Exodus 12 we see the institution of the Passover to remind the Israelites of their deliverance from the hand of the Egyptians and the Lord’s preserving them from death. In verse 14 the Lord says, “And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.” Our feeble and weak minds need reminders of even the most important of things, things we think we would never forget. It is this same idea of establishing a memorial for God’s people that Christ Jesus institutes the sacrament that is before us today. While this sacrament is not merely a memorial, the memorial aspect of it cannot be neglected. This is made evident in Christ’s words, “this do in remembrance of me.” So, dear saints, the exhortation to you this morning is to remember Christ as you come to His Table. We will consider this exhortation by calling to mind three aspects of Christ which must be remembered: first, remember Christ’s life; next, remember Christ’s death; and finally, remember Christ’s resurrection.

Let us focus our attention on the need to remember Christ’s life. Remember, that Christ Jesus, the second person of the Trinity,

came down from heaven to earth for your sake. He left the bosom and the glory of the Father, to be clothed in the rags of humanity for your sake. Remember that Christ Jesus voluntarily condescended to take on human flesh and dwell among mere men. And in that dwelling among mere men He lived a perfect life, showing us the perfection of the Law of God, giving us the example by which we are to pattern our lives. Remember Christ's public teaching, which encompassed three years of His life. Remember His instruction in how to live according to the Law of God in His sermon on the Mount. Remember His miracles: how He brought sight to the blind, how He caused the lame to leap, how He healed those plagued by infirmities, how He brought the dead to life. These were all so as to attest to you that He truly is the Son of God, the promised Messiah, the holy one of Israel. Remember that it is Christ's active obedience throughout His life which is credited to you as your own righteousness. It is His obedience which has clothed you in robes of righteousness which grants you the ability to come before the absolute holiness of Jehovah. Remember His instruction in prayer and His example in it as you enter into your prayer closet crying out the Lord. Remember His plea to His Father that we may be one even as He and the Father are one.

Brothers and sisters, if there is one thing in regards to remembering Christ that we are more apt to forget it is His life. We oftentimes fail to look upon these things in remembrance, which in turn causes us to forget glorious nature of the person and work of Christ. Without what we see in His life we cannot have what is found in His death or resurrection. This sacrament is yours, then, to remember the Lord Jesus that you may follow him. In sickness, remember Him in His patience. When you are persecuted, remember Him in His gentleness. In holy service, remember Him with His burning zeal. In your times of solitude, remember Him and His midnight prayers; and when you are in public, and have to bear witness, remember Him and His lion-like declarations of the Gospel. Remember Him so that He becomes your pattern, and you are the reproduction of Himself, and so the best memorial of Him. Christ

Jesus is your model, your example, your perfection, your righteousness, your holiness, your strength, your creator, your sustainer, your shepherd, your friend. Never lose sight of that. Never let the things of this world distract you so that you cause the life of Christ to slip from your mind.

As you come to the Table today it is Christ is put on display before you. In the words of institution you are reminded of the fact that Christ Jesus sups with sinners. In this Supper you are reminded that Christ Jesus is the bread of life which fills the hunger of the soul. In this sacrament you are reminded that the cup which we bless is the cup of our Lord, the cup of the new testament, which unites us through that blessed covenant which can never be divided. I plead with you today, remember Christ. Let this remembrance be not a simple recollection of thought, but instead let it be an active remembrance of the person and work of our Lord. In the fourth commandment we are commanded to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. It is not a mere mental recollection that is in view there but an actual active remembrance which drives you to fulfill this good work. So too it is with the remembrance of Christ when coming to the table. Let this remembrance mold you, shape you, change you, encourage you, strengthen you, drive you unto all good works, looking to Christ's life as your perfect example by which to live. Friends, as you come to the table today remember Christ's life.

That life was lived for a very specific purpose and led to a very specific event. Let us now turn to consider the need to remember Christ's death. Perhaps this is the most obvious remembrance that is to take place when coming to the Table, because it is Christ's death which is most readily signified in the sacrament itself. The bread which we break is the body of Christ which was broken for you. In partaking of the break you are feasting upon Christ whose back was scourged, whose brow was pricked, whose hands and feet were pierced. Hear the words of the prophet Isaiah in chapter 53, "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for

our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." The cup which we bless is the cup of the new testament in His blood which is poured out for the remission of sins. Hear the words of the Apostle Paul in Hebrews chapter 9, "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Remember the grace and love of God the Father in sending Christ, in setting Him forth, and proposing Him to us. We are minded of this in Scripture, whenever we are called to thoughts of the death of Christ:—John 3:16, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son;" Rom. 3:25, "God set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood;" Rom. 5:8, "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Remember the unspeakable grace and love of God in sending, giving, and setting forth Jesus Christ to be the propitiation. Remember sufferings in His soul, when He was made sin and a curse for us, and had a sense of the wrath and anger of God on His soul. This is seen in the expressions concerning Him and from Him: "He began to be sore amazed, and said. My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." He was "in an agony." Let us never blasphemously hold to the view that Christ died only as a martyr, to confirm the truth He had preached. We must remember that courage, resolution, and cheerfulness, are the principal virtues and graces in him who dies only as a martyr; but for Christ who had the weight of the wrath of God and the curse of the law upon His soul, it became him to be in an agony,—to sweat great drops of blood,—to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken

me?” Christ was not merely a martyr but the one who bore the sins of the world on His shoulders.

Remember Christ adored by angels, worshipped by all the host of heaven, the comfort of Paradise, the joy of seraphim, the terror of devils, the Lord of life, the eternal Son of God, the brightness of His Father’s glory, and the express image of His Person. Remember that He died for you; He died for men miserable and wretched, for men that were sinners, for men that were proper objects of His justice, for men that were haters of God, acted like enemies, had affronted their Maker, crucified their Redeemer, came out against Him, as against a thief, who took pleasure in trampling on His laws, rejoiced in their disobedience. Remember that it is for such that Christ died, and this makes His death miraculous and astonishing. This Supper is a memorial appointed as a help to our weakness; for if we were sufficiently mindful of the death of Christ, this help would be unnecessary. Matthew Henry writes, “This ordinance was intended ‘to stir up our pure minds’ by way of remembrance, that, giving such an earnest heed to the things that belong to the great salvation, as the solemnity of this ordinance calls for, we may not at any time let them slip; or if we do, we may, in the use thereof, speedily recover them.” Dear saints, you partake of this sacrament in remembrance of Christ when you experience the death of Christ killing sin in you, mortifying the flesh, weaning you from this present life, weakening vicious habits and dispositions in you, and the power of Christ’s cross “crucifying us to the world, and the world to us,” when, in “touching the hem of his garment,” you find, like that good woman, virtue comes out of Him to heal your souls. Friends, as you come to feast upon your Savior today you must remember Christ’s death.

But Christ Jesus did not stay dead. If that were the case, if all we had were the life and death of Christ, then our entire faith would be of no effect, and we should be pitted most of all among men. But praise God that Christ Jesus did not stay dead, but He is alive forevermore. This leads us now to consider the need to remember Christ’s resurrection. It is in Christ’s resurrection that He is the

mediatorial God-man, the one who rules and reigns over nations, the one to whom all authority in heaven and on earth has been given. And it is in this resurrected state that He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of the Father ruling and reigning over all things, ever living to make intercession on your behalf before the Father. 1 John 2:1 says, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” This ought to bring you peace when your heart is troubled by your sins and you feel too ashamed to even enter into the presence of the Lord to plead for forgiveness. Remember Christ Jesus is your Advocate. If you are a believer, you have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous, your best friend who you call on to come alongside to help you. Hebrews 7:25 says, “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Charles Spurgeon writes, “Remember him, too, beloved, as your great representative before the throne of God. O believer, at this very moment heaven is yours! Jesus, your forerunner, has taken possession of eternal glory in your name. The throne of God has in the midst of it the glorified Man, the everlasting Son of God, who is the Covenant Head and Redeemer of his people. Never forget him, but keep your eye fixedly upon him, even as he keeps his eye upon you. He lives! The great Redeemer lives! It is the living Christ that we believe in, the ascended Christ we are trusting in, the Christ to come that we are hoping for. There, where he pleadeth with all authority, is our grand hope, for ‘He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.’”

Also, remember Christ’s resurrection by looking forward to that great day when this earth shall pass away and the Lord will come in glory to establish the new heavens and new earth. Yes, King Jesus came into this world to purchase our salvation. Yes, King Jesus is ruling and reigning as mediator over all things. Yes, the kingdom is advancing to all peoples as the Gospel goes forth and covers the earth. But our faith hinges on the final act, the closing of

this age and the start of the eternal age. And because of that, because we must fix our eyes on the reward set before us. Do not lose sight of the return of Christ; keep it ever at the forefront of your minds. His return will be when the effects of the fall come to an end, when all things are put in subjection under His feet, when this world passes away and the new comes. This is the consummation of the eternal state of blessedness in Christ Jesus. Everything that we pray for, everything that we long for, everything that we hope for, will be fulfilled in His return. This will be the fulfillment of our prayer, “Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” We have a hope that is greater than anything that this world could ever offer. We know that the King is coming, and when He does He will strike down His enemies in the day of His wrath. Those who have sought the destruction of Christ’s Church, those who have sought the slaughter of Christ’s lambs, they will reap what they have sown. Then this earth will pass away, along with the things therein, and all things will be made new.

And it is in that age which is to come that the fulfillment of this meal will be found. This sacramental meal which we partake of today is but a precursor of that great meal which we will partake of in glory. Christ Jesus makes this clear in Luke 22:14-18, “And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.” Christ Jesus is calling you to take this bread and this wine in anticipation of the marriage supper of the Lamb which you will enjoy in glory. Remember as you commune today that there will be a day in which your communing with Christ Jesus will not be just a spiritual communion but will be an actual communion in the physical presence of the Lord. What a glorious day that will be! And what a glorious thing it is that we get a foretaste of it here in this meal.

Seeing that this is a feast of remembrance, ask yourselves a question—Do you know the Lord? “This do in remembrance of me.” If you know nothing of Christ; if you have had no acquaintance with Him, you cannot remember Him. This is the division which separates us today. This is the fencing of the Table which must be done. Whether or not you may come to the Lord’s Table must depend upon whether you know the Lord Jesus, or do not know him. If you are a stranger to him, you may not come, lest you eat and drink damnation upon yourself. If you do not know Christ Jesus, if His Spirit has not removed your heart of stone and given you a heart of flesh, if you are still in bondage to sin, then this Table is not for you. The call to you is not ‘come to the Table,’ but instead ‘come unto Christ.’ See the wickedness of your sin and the gloriousness of the Savior. Come unto Him today. “Repent ye, and believe the Gospel.” But if you do know Christ, if you have been washed clean by the blood of the Lamb, then this Table is set before you today for you to come and feast upon the Lord. Come, eat this bread, drink this wine, commune with your Savior. Heed His words this day, “This do in remembrance of me.”