

Unity by Design – the Lord’s Supper 9/28/2019

The front of our communion table reminds us of the purpose of partaking of communion. It simply says, **“In Remembrance of Me.”** This reflects back to Jesus’ words in the Upper Room with his disciples a few hours before he was arrested and eventually he voluntarily gave his life up on a cross for you and my sins. This morning I want to dive a little deeper into the significance of these words for us this morning and every Lord’s Day.

Just like everything else God does, the timing of Jesus’ death was precisely timed out. It was no accident that it occurred during the Jewish celebration of **Passover**. Jesus had instructed Peter and John to go make preparations for them to celebrate the Passover, which they did.

The Jewish observance of the Passover is really a **celebration of freedom**. As they take of the Passover meal they are reminded of the events, many years earlier, when their physical freedom was obtained through God’s miraculous display of power. They remember that they were slaves in the land of Egypt and cried out to God and He heard their cry and sent Moses and Aaron to deliver them. And through **nine plagues** God displayed His power over many of the various gods that the Egyptians worshipped. But it was the final plague that finally convinced Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. And this plague was the **death of the first born of all the animals the people**. However, in order for the death angel to skip over the Israelites home that evening, they were instructed to take a lamb and kill it and use it’s blood to apply it to the top and both sides of the doors on their homes. And as the death angel came through the land that evening, every home that had that marking of blood on it, he would pass over. God had instructed the Israelites to forever remember this event by celebrating the Passover yearly with their families.

So, Jesus and his disciples are in this Upper Room celebrating their physical freedom and Matthew records what happens next.

Matthew 26:26-29 (NIV) *While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”*

27 Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you.

28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body.”

The bread Jesus took would have been **unleavened bread**, because that’s what God first required of the Israelites that night they prepared to observe the very first Passover. And as God commanded, Passover was one night, but the observance of the **Feast of Unleavened Bread** lasted for 10 additional days..

1. **Leaven in the Bible represented sin** and so the Jews, in preparation for the Passover observance were to search their house and remove any leaven they found. For us it can remind us that **Jesus, was the Lamb without sin**, who gave his life up on the cross for us and it can also cause us, as we partake of the Lord’s Supper, to reflect on any sin in our lives and remove it immediately by asking God for forgiveness and then praising him for His continual forgiveness.

27 Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

I believe not only is the Passover, with all of its significance, being observed this night but there's also another deeper meaning that I believe the disciples would have understood from Jesus' words. Throughout Scripture, God's people are referred to as his bride and he is the **bridegroom**. **Baptism** could be considered the **engagement ceremony** when we commit our lives to Jesus. Now in the Jewish culture, an engagement was as official as the actual wedding. If you were to break off the engagement it was like getting a divorce.

Carrying that thought forward, the observance of the Lord's Supper could be considered our **anniversary celebration** when we take time to remember the price Christ paid to obtain our spiritual freedom from sin and our uniting with Him through baptism. It's a time to be overwhelmed anew with Christ's tremendous love for you. But as Christ's bride we're awaiting his return when we'll be united with him forever.

There were 4 cups that the Jews will drink during their observance of the Passover. This cup was likely the 3rd cup. **The third cup was the cup of redemption**. This is very significant. When a bridegroom got engaged to his bride, they would celebrate it by drinking out of a cup together. This was referred to as "**The Betrothal Cup**" and drinking from it would seal their engagement. And the bridegroom would not drink from that cup again until their actual wedding day. And Jesus tells his disciples that he wouldn't drink from this cup again until they are together in his Father's kingdom.

After drinking of the cup of redemption, the bridegroom would pay the dowry price agreed upon with her father. And Jesus paid the price for our sins when he died on the cross.

1 Peter 1:18-19 (NIV) *For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

When Jesus died on the cross he yelled out "*It is Finished*" which can mean that **the price has been paid**. After the drinking of the Betrothal Cup and the payment of the Dowry, the bridegroom would leave and go back to his Father's house and add a room onto it or build a house on his father's property and that's where him and his bride would go live temporarily after their wedding. Similarly Jesus told his disciples while in the Upper Room,

John 14:2-3 (NIV) *"2 My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.*

While the bride is waiting for the bridegroom to return **she drinks from that betrothal cup every Friday** evening at the beginning of the Sabbath. Likewise, the early church observed the Lord's Supper weekly as church to **remember** what Christ did for us on the cross as well as **look ahead to his return**.

J.J. will be speaking about that in a few minutes leading into our partaking of the Lord's Supper.

In preparation for that let's join together in worship.

**Unity by Design – the Lord’s Supper
9/28/2019**

The Lord’s Supper occurred during _____
Passover represented the celebration of _____
God’s people are His _____ and Jesus is the _____
Baptism could be considered the _____
The Lord’s Supper could be considered our _____
Leaven represented _____ in Scripture.
The Israelites were to observe the Passover with _____
bread
During the Lord’s Supper Jesus drank from the cup of
_____ or the “ _____ cup”
The bridegroom would pay the wife’s _____
How did Jesus pay for our sins? (see 1 Peter 1:18-19)
What would the groom do during his engagement period?
(Jn 14:2-3)
What is our hope for the future in the Lord’s Supper?
What is God applying to your life from the teachings today?

**Unity by Design – the Lord’s Supper
9/28/2019**

The Lord’s Supper occurred during _____
Passover represented the celebration of _____
God’s people are His _____ and Jesus is the _____
Baptism could be considered the _____
The Lord’s Supper could be considered our _____
Leaven represented _____ in Scripture.
The Israelites were to observe the Passover with _____
bread
During the Lord’s Supper Jesus drank from the cup of
_____ or the “ _____ cup”
The bridegroom would pay the wife’s _____
How did Jesus pay for our sins? (see 1 Peter 1:18-19)
What would the groom do during his engagement period?
(Jn 14:2-3)
What is our hope for the future in the Lord’s Supper?
What is God applying to your life from the teachings today?