

Autumn 2025 Communion - Remembering Christ's Death

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[0 : 00] We're going to read a portion of God's Word, a brief portion of it in 1 Corinthians chapter 15. 1 Corinthians chapter 15. It's a chapter, as you know, dealing with the resurrection of Jesus and the resurrection of Christ's people in union with Him.

I'd like us to consider a couple of verses near the beginning of the chapter. We'll read from the beginning. Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved.

If you hold fast to the Word I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you, as of first importance, what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.

Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

[1 : 27] But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and His grace towards me was not in vain. I'd like us to consider especially these words in verse 3.

For I delivered to you, as of first importance, what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

The first part of the chapter, Paul is dealing with the gospel. And he takes us in these verses 3 and 4 to the core of the gospel.

Having said, I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and in which you stand, he now goes on to deal with what we can call the very core, the very heart of the gospel.

The death of Jesus, the burial of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus. And he's calling their minds to remember these things. You may recall that this is our theme throughout these communion services, the whole theme of remembering.

[2 : 40] And it's obviously appropriate, especially at a time of communion, when we come to remember the Lord's death until He comes. We looked at how God in Psalm 103 remembers that we are dust on Friday evening, that He remembers us in such a way as takes pity upon us.

And then the remembering we have today is a remembering in which we are reminded of these core issues of the gospel. Notice what he's saying.

In other words, he's saying, this is foundational to your life as Christians.

This is foundational to your faith, as he goes on to speak of throughout the chapter. He goes on to speak of how Christ, having died, was risen again, was raised again from the dead, providing for us a foundation for faith to rest upon.

And he's reminding them of these things, saying, this is what I delivered to you as of first importance. This first and foremost is what you must consider, what you must take with you, what you must build your lives upon.

[3 : 57] Faith has nowhere else to rest except in the person of Jesus, His death, His burial, His resurrection from the dead. And you see, he also says, I delivered to you, not only as of first importance, these things that Christ died and so on, but what I also received.

Paul received the gospel. The gospel, the core of which is the death, the burial, the resurrection of Jesus. He's saying, I delivered that to you as of first importance, but before I delivered it to you, I received it myself.

I received it from the Lord. It's God's gospel. He gave it to the apostle, and he delivered it, he passed it on to those who heard him preaching of these things.

In other words, this is the origin of the gospel, the origin of that good news in Christ Jesus that you find in the gospel today.

It's Paul's way of saying, I haven't invented this. The church hasn't made this up. It's not something over the course of many hundreds of years that came finally to be gathered together, that people saw as a good idea to relate that to the person of Jesus who died at Calvary.

[5 : 19] And he says, this is something I received. I didn't make it up. The church didn't invent it. It's not a creation of human beings.

However cultured, however able they might have been, this is what he received from God. This is God's own work. It's foundational to our life, but the foundation of the gospel is the fact that it's the gospel of Christ, the gospel of God in Jesus Christ.

And the core of it is Jesus Christ himself. We're not saved because of our faith. We're saved through faith.

Faith is the means by which we come to obtain salvation in Christ. Faith, if you like, is the hand that reaches out and receives or takes Christ to yourself.

But faith itself is not the reason why we're saved. We're saved because Jesus died and was buried and rose again for our salvation.

[6 : 28] And so these three great facts are very closely related together in these verses where the apostle sets this out for us.

He died for our sins according to the Scriptures. He was buried. And thirdly, he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

And these are three links, if you like, in this wonderful theological, spiritual chain that the apostle is setting out for us.

The first link is death. The second link is burial. The third link is resurrection from the dead. Each of these is important, but so is the connection between them.

And if one of them can be broken, the other two are ineffective. Whichever one you'd say, I don't believe in that. I believe in Jesus that he came.

[7 : 24] As some people will tell you today, I believe in the person of Jesus that he lived. I believe that he died on the cross. I don't believe that he actually rose from the dead. Well, the other two are of no use if you discount the resurrection, and that's what follows in the rest of the chapter.

You imagine a great weight being lifted up to a height held by three links in a strong chain, and a crane is lifting up this huge weight with these three links holding it above a ground all the way up into its height.

One of these links breaks. The whole thing falls to the ground. And so it does with these three links that form this wonderful gospel of God.

death, burial, resurrection of Christ. We have to maintain them completely, wonderfully tied together and believe that the three of them are essential to our salvation.

Well, let's look at them in turn. He's saying here, we believe, I delivered to you what I first received, as of first importance, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.

[8 : 43] What we're remembering in the Lord's Supper is the death of Jesus. You cannot detach the death of Jesus from the life that He lived or even from His resurrection which followed, but it is especially the death of Jesus that we remember in the Lord's Supper.

That's what He Himself instituted for us. That's what He Himself taught the disciples. Do this in remembrance of me, in remembrance of my death, or of me in my death.

And what He says here, of course, what Paul is saying is that He was, that He was, He died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.

Why did He die? What is the underlying cause of His death? What is the procuring cause of Christ's death? Well, in a sense, you can say there are different ways of answering that question.

The reason Jesus died is that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whoever believes in Him should not die, but have everlasting life.

[9 : 53] That's the overarching purpose and reason for the death of Christ. It's the provision of God, of Jesus as a Savior to us who are sinners.

But Paul is looking at the more proximate or procuring cause, and He's reminding us of that as we come to take communion today, that this death of Jesus was caused by, or made necessary by, our sins being laid upon Him.

Remember Isaiah chapter 53, where hundreds of years before it happened, Isaiah was led by the Holy Spirit to write these wonderful details in his prophecy, the Lord has laid upon Him the iniquity of us all.

God laid the sins of His people on Jesus His Son, so that He might bear them and bear the penalty that's due to us for them, bear and experience that death which you and I deserve for our sins.

He died for our sins. He had no sins of His own. He did not deserve Himself to die, but He took our sins. He took the sins of His people.

[11 : 18] He made these sins His own, so that we might be set free, as I was illustrating for the children with the sheep that was caught in the barbed wire, having taken the barbed wire apart, and the sheep escaping, running off, bounding off, glad to be free.

This is how it is for ourselves. Jesus took our sins to Himself, and the suffering and the death associated with these sins. He suffered this so that you and I might be free.

He took the wounds, as Isaiah 53 again puts it, with His stripes, with His wound. He was wounded for our transgression. He was bruised for our iniquities.

The chastisement that brought us peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. We have the freedom, because He took our death to Himself, the death we deserved for our sins.

I deliver to you, as of first importance, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures. And that means that He took the punishment due to us for our sins.

[12 : 34] And the punishment due to us for our sins, theologically, actually, what we deserve is the death of hell. The lost eternity that is hell is what we deserved.

And Jesus took that, and Jesus experienced that, and Jesus suffered that in His own soul, as we read there in the Gospels, the four Gospels, as they record the words of Jesus on the cross, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And as an old minister once said, when a younger minister was going out to preach on a communion Sunday, the older man asked him, What are you going to preach on?

Well, he said, I'm taking this text, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? And the old minister said, Well, I hope you remember that it's not so much a question at the end of that, but an exclamation mark.

It's not so much a question, but an exclamation mark. Because there is Jesus experiencing and exclaiming out of the depth of His sufferings what separation from God has meant for Him.

[13 : 54] The separation that is hell, that is the penalty due to us for our sins. He took that. But He didn't just die it.

He overcame it. He paid the price. Nothing left to pay after. Jesus had died the death we deserved. He died for our sins on the cross.

Can you imagine King Charles or the previous queen, the late queen, hearing that somebody was accused of a serious crime that had committed murder, let's say, and was in the dock about to be sentenced, and the judge had pronounced or asked the jury, How do you find it?

And the jury had unanimously said, Guilty. Guilty as charged. And then King Charles saying, Send this message quickly to that judge.

And the message, as the judge read it, was, I'm going to come and take this man's place. He's going to go free.

[15 : 04] You can set him free because I'll take the punishment. I'll take what was due to him for his crime. Well, you can't imagine that happening, really, can you?

You can't imagine ordinarily! In human life, in terms of what we know ordinarily would or would not have happened, that's simply not going to happen.

Charles is not going to say, I'm going to take the place of that condemned criminal, and I'll pay the penalty for his crime. But Jesus did. A far greater crime of our sin against God.

A far greater penalty than just being put in prison. He died for our sins. He took to himself our sins and everything attached to our sins.

Which is why the gospel's offer of salvation is, Here is Jesus. Here is a Savior for you, a sinner. Here is a Savior provided by God.

[16:09] Here is sin dealt with categorically and finally and definitively. Here is sin punished as nowhere else can be. Here is God saying, I have laid the sin of my people on my Son.

And he has died in their place the death they deserved. He died for our sins according to the Scriptures. And isn't that for you today?

The most precious, isn't that for you and for me today? That which is of first importance. That he died for you. That's why you're remembering, all of you who are coming to the Lord's table today, you're going to be remembering this.

You're reminded of this. It's a memorial of this. That he died for our sins. And he did so in accordance with the Scriptures.

You go to Romans chapter 3, verse 21, and you'll find a reference there that stands alongside this, where Paul is dealing there again with the death of Jesus on the cross or the importance of righteousness and the death of Jesus in relation to that.

[17:22] Chapter 3, 21, the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it. The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe.

Now he's saying there, this is what was manifested by the law and the prophets. By the whole of the Old Testament, this death of Jesus was manifested. Paul is saying here to Corinthians, I deliver to you of first importance that he died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures.

What is that saying? Well, it's not just saying to us it's something that the Scripture referred to before it actually happened. It is that. It was there prophesied of.

But when he says he died in accordance with the Scriptures, it means that the Scriptures themselves previously, they're more than a prediction of this. They're an exact correspondence to what happened.

When you go to the Old Testament and you read there of Abraham going up Mount Moriah with his son Isaac with the wood for the sacrifice, but no lamb, no animal to be sacrificed, and Isaac turns to his father and says, My father, here is the wood for the burnt off.

[18:35] Where is the lamb? And his father said, My son, God will for himself provide a lamb for a burnt offering.

God himself will do it. Or you go to the Day of Atonement, Leviticus chapter 16, these two goats that came to be used and sacrificed, one of them sacrificed, another let go into the wilderness and led away by someone into the depths of the wilderness never to appear again.

Well, they both represent Jesus in his death because one goat would not do it. The goat that died, that was put to death, that was sacrificed, certainly there is an image there of the Scriptures portraying or giving you a picture of the death of Jesus.

The high priest laying his hand on the head of the goat, transferring sin significantly or ceremonially of the people to the goat.

But one is put to death. There is a death leading to their redemption. The other one is led into the wilderness. Having had the sin of his people ceremony applied to it, it's led away.

[19:57] What does that signify? It signifies that before Jesus died, long before he died, the Scripture spoke of God taking away the sin of his people.

Where does he take it away to? He takes it away in forgiveness. He takes it away in atonement in Jesus to the far distant land where it will never meet with you again. He takes it away so as to put righteousness in the place of your condemnation.

That's what you remember today. He died for our sins according to the Scriptures. All the way through the Old Testament where you find symbolism or types of Jesus, where you find representations of Christ's death on the cross, he died in accordance with the Scriptures in an exact correspondence to what God had previously revealed, and that's how it worked through in his death on the cross.

That's the first thing, he died for our sins according to the Scripture. Secondly, more briefly, he was buried. Now, isn't it interesting that that is mentioned?

Why is he mentioning that along with his death and resurrection? What is important about his being buried? And you'll find the catechisms as they actually refer to this as well we refer to the humiliation of Jesus as including his burial.

[21 : 29] He didn't die on the cross without then coming to have his body buried in the sepulcher. He was buried indicating that this aspect of death, the separation of our soul from our body, leaving our body as a dead corpse to be laid into the ground, into the tomb, into the sepulcher.

He actually entered that for us. He wasn't taking body and soul up to heaven without being buried. And there's a lot of wonderful, comforting teaching in relation to the fact that Christ was buried, that his body was laid in the tomb. He experienced himself through his body being buried, through the separation of his soul and body, that aspect of death as well.

Of first importance, that he died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried. The burial, of course, was necessary as something which was then followed by resurrection. You could not have a resurrection actually without having a burial previously. The burial is real. His body was indeed laid in the sepulcher as a dead body and that was followed, as we'll see in a minute, by his resurrection from the dead.

[23 : 01] His rising from the dead is coming out from the tomb. And many times, as I've had the privilege of officiating at funeral services, and burials over the years.

I've often stood at a graveside when the coffin has been laid down into the grave and for these moments which ought to be very, very still reflective moments for us, not talking about the weather or this, that and the other.

We should be able to stand there looking into that tomb and thinking for ourselves, what is this about? And the thought that often comes to me or came to me and comes to me still when I officiate at a graveside is this.

The Son of God has been here. Christ has been here. My Savior has actually been here. His body was buried in the sepulcher.

He was laid into the depths of the earth as an indication that he was truly dead, but also that there was no aspect of death that he did not actually experience for us as our Savior from our sins.

[24 : 18] well, the next time you find yourself at a graveside, let that thought dwell in your mind.

Someone's been here before me. Jesus has occupied a tomb. The Son of God was buried in terms of his body.

And for the Lord's people, that is an aspect of their comfort. Because when you think ahead to your own death and my death, when you think ahead if we die before Christ comes again, that's what's going to happen.

Our body is going to be laid to rest to the tomb. And for all of God's people, there is, I'm sure, an element of some sort of fear associated with being buried.

But as you come to anticipate your body being laid into a tomb, you can think of this. I see the footsteps of my Lord in that tomb before me.

[25 : 26] It bears his imprint. He's gone into that for me. He's prepared the grave for my body because his own was laid there first.

That which is of first importance I deliver to you, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried. His body was buried in the tomb.

And we think of that too as we take the bread and the wine and the communion, that it represents the whole death of Christ. Spiritually, actually, physically, everything to do with death he has experienced.

He took to himself. He did so in accordance with the Scriptures. Thirdly, not only did he die for our sins according to the Scriptures, he was buried, he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

Now, as we said, Paul's great treatment of the resurrection of Jesus and the resurrection of his people in union with him is what's dealt with in the rest of this great chapter. And one of the things he makes clear, as we said in mentioning the three unbreakable links, is that if Jesus, in fact, is not raised from the dead, then we are yet in our sins.

[26 : 52] Our faith is futile. There is no invention of the church. This was not the disciples of Jesus feeling sorry after he had died and left this world and somehow trying to cobble together an account of how they could keep his teaching going, how they could keep people conscious that Jesus had lived a perfect life and so on.

This is Paul saying, unless he has indeed been raised from the dead, there's no point in believing. If you break the third link in the chain, the other two just don't mean anything for us.

But he says, now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. He was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures.

Again, the Scriptures had this in prophetic form set before us in different ways. In fact, the sparing of Isaac on Mount Moriah when Isaac was replaced by the ram caught in the thicket by its horns. You can see there's the principle of substitution. Instead of Isaac dying, the ram comes to be placed as a sacrifice in his stead.

[28 : 11] That's God providing for Himself a lamb for a burnt offering. And when Isaac is delivered alive, it's in a sense an anticipation of resurrection in a real way.

In fact, Hebrews chapter 11 puts it that way. That his father was not unbelieving, that he gave Isaac to be put to death and he was about to put him to death, but in his heart he was already dead. From which he also received him in parable or in a figure, to Abraham, the sparing of Isaac was actually a resurrection for him.

He gave him in his heart to God in obedience to what God demanded. He was dead in Abraham's heart, but because he was spared by the ram being given instead of him for Abraham, that was equivalent to a resurrection.

resurrection. And here is Paul saying, he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. Now, when you go to the likes of Hebrews, just in a word, let me just point out this reference in Hebrews, chapter 13 and verse 20.

[29 : 31] Again, it speaks there about Jesus being raised from the dead, chapter 13 and verse 20 of the epistle to the Hebrews. So, he's talking here about a sacrifice of praise, but he's saying in verse 20, Now may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ to whom be glory forever and ever.

How many sermons would you need to bring out the teaching of these verses? This is what he's saying. The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus.

In other words, God the Father brought him back from the dead, the God of peace, the creating of peace for his people, included, very much based upon, not just the death of Jesus, the burial of Jesus, he brought him again from the dead.

And the words there in that verse in Hebrews, are really quite special because it really means that God the Father had an obligation to bring Jesus back from the dead.

It wasn't something you could choose not to do. Speaking with all reverence of God, because the death of Jesus was the perfect atonement for sin.

[31 : 07] God the Father receiving that instead of laying the punishment on his people because Christ's death had accomplished that perfectly fully.

He was obliged, he was under obligation to raise Jesus from the dead according to the Scriptures. and that's why it's followed by saying he appeared to all of these people that are mentioned.

He appeared to Cephas, to the twelve, to more than five hundred brothers at once and so on. Why does he add that? Because Paul is saying this is proof in these days that the apostles lived when Paul was writing this to the Corinthian church.

There were many, many people that could be asked, did you see Jesus alive? Yes, I was one of the five hundred that saw him alive after he rose from the dead. I saw him for myself.

He appeared to me. So don't go along with the present day idea that resurrection in the teaching of Paul or in the teaching of the Bible is just a spiritual thing.

[32 : 22] It doesn't actually mean the physical resurrection of Jesus from the dead. That's a lie. That won't save you. That's not of first importance.

But this is, that God brought him back again, was obliged to do so because of the death he died being his provision for sin.

And it was verified in that he appeared to all of these. And people will say to you today, there's no evidence for Christ actually rising from the dead.

No evidence that Jesus rose out of the tomb. You can't prove to me in any way. Well, if you believe the Scriptures, you can. And the only way to deny it is to deny the Scriptures themselves.

But he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. The disciples in the early church didn't invent resurrection as an idea to keep alive the memory of Jesus for themselves.

[33 : 33] It's not resurrection so as to keep Jesus alive in their thoughts. It's the other way about. But Jesus' resurrection actually transformed the thinking and the boldness of these disciples.

Who would have thought that that small number in that upper room in the early point of Acts of the Apostles, who would have thought that they'd go out into the world with the gospel and that that would result in such huge blessing?

The gospel blessed to thousands. Why? Because of the power of God who raised Jesus from the dead. The fact that he was alive, actually alive, gave massive impetus to the thinking and to the work of these apostles.

They went out with the gospel knowing that this was of first importance, this was fundamental, that he died, that he was buried, that he rose from the dead.

And when you come to think today and take communion or to see communion being taken by those who partake of the supper, when you see that for yourselves, you see the death of Jesus represented.

[34 : 57] But you're coming to the Lord's table today not to meet with a dead Jesus, though you remember a dead Jesus. you're coming to meet with the living Jesus, who through the Holy Spirit still blesses his people.

And as you pray that God, that Jesus will meet with you, that by his Spirit you will truly know his power in your heart, so you can actually come to this text and say, I believe this of first importance, that Christ died for my sins according to the Scripture.

Turn with me to Hebrews chapter 8. Hebrews chapter 8. And just as we anticipate coming to the Lord's table to take communion, we can dwell our minds for a few moments on verse 12 of chapter 8.

For I will be merciful towards their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more. Well, these are words that are taken from the Old Testament and are anticipatory of God's forgiveness of our sins through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sometimes you hear people saying, well, I'm prepared to forgive you if there's been a dispute between people and they come to be sort of reconciled to each other. You might find some people saying, well, I will forgive you, but I won't forget.

[36 : 28] I'll forgive what you've done, but I won't forget what you've done. Now, forgiveness means you don't hold and store something that you then don't forget.

Forgiveness means, as God says here, not remembering the sin of His people anymore. God's forgiveness is total.

God's forgiveness of sin is not something where He says, I forgive I forgive your sin, but I'll hold in remembrance just in case what you've done, in case I have to bring it back once again to accuse you of it.

That is not going to happen. God forgives our sins, that sin is forgiven totally. And that forgiveness is the basis of our friendship with God.

We come to the Lord's table as God's friends, and He describes us as His friends in the Gospels, in the Bible itself.

[37 : 33] Jesus said to the disciples, as He taught them prior to His own death on the cross, You are my friends. From now on I don't call you servants, I call you friends.

You are my friends, if you do what I command you. Greater love has no man than this, that He lays down His life, that He lays down His life for His friends.

And the Lord's Supper is for Jesus' friends. You come to the Lord's Supper because you know that friendship with the Lord, which you know is not perfect on your part, but which you know is real, and which you know Jesus has actually accomplished for you.

That friendship is yours in Him. Repentance from sin, which is necessary on our part, brings us into that relationship with God where we come to be His friends and where He enters into the bond of friendship with us.

So as we come and ask the question, who is the Lord's table for? Who should take communion? There are so many ways in which you can answer that, but this really lies at the bottom of our coming to take communion.

[38 : 55] We do so because we value friendship with God, with Christ, with God and Christ. How do you know then, you might ask, if I've truly repented?

How do I know if my repentance has been real? How do I know if my repentance has actually brought me into friendship with God? Well, there was an old lady one time, an experienced Christian, and a minister visiting her asked her that question.

Do you know for sure that you've repented? Yes, she said. How do you know for sure that you have repented of your sins? Well, she said, I think I can say I have for sure because I was able to tell himself all about them.

You think of that. Would you go to God and tell himself all that you know of yourself as a sinner and express it regretfully and prayerfully if it wasn't really repentance?

Repentance is coming to God with a due knowledge of your sin and coming to express your sorrow over sin and coming to ask his forgiveness.

[40 : 15] You don't come to God and express perfect repentance when you part. You come to God and you say, Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.

And his mercy in Christ is something he assures you of and the basis on which you come. Now to take communion in remembrance of him, that friendship that he has actually brought about through Jesus and especially through his death.

So he is saying to all today who are friends of God through faith in Christ, who have repented of sin and who acknowledge that they are undeserving of the friendship they have and nevertheless are able to say, I'm so thankful to the Lord that he's received me as a friend, that he continues in friendship with me despite all he still sees in me.

And I do this in remembrance of him who has done so much to bring me into that bond of friendship with him for his own sake.

I will be merciful towards their iniquities and I will remember their sins no more. May God bless these thoughts to us.

[41 : 39] Now as we sing some verses in Psalm 118 in the Scottish Psalter, any who are communicants and have not yet taken their place at the table are invited to come during the singing of these verses and come to take their place at the Lord's table.

And that invitation is extended to any belonging to other denominations or churches here today who are in full communion with their own church and who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. they're asked also to, if they wish, to come and take communion with Christians here. So Psalm 118 and from verse 15, that's on page 398.

In dwellings of the righteous is heard the melody of joy and health. The Lord's right hand doth ever valiantly. The right hand of the mighty Lord exalted is on high.

The right hand of the mighty Lord doth ever valiantly. also while we're singing, the elders will come and place the elements on the table in remembrance of the Lord's death.

[42 : 44] So we'll sing on until the elders have finished putting the elements on the table and preparing the table. In dwellings of the righteous is heard the melody of joy and health.

Amen. In dwellings of the righteousness heard the melody of joy and health.

The Lord's right hand doth ever valiantly.

The right hand of the mighty Lord exalted is on on high.

The right hand of the mighty Lord doth ever valiantly.

[44 : 11] I shall not die but live and shall the works of God discover the Lord the Lord me just I said sore but not to death give no war.

! O set ye open unto me the gates of righteousness!

O set Lord O Lord Lord will bless!

Thank you.

We will read our warrant now if you can please be seated. It warrant for our Lord's We take from 1 Corinthians and chapter 11 from verse 23.

[45 : 50] For I received from the Lord that 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 till he comes.

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

Let a person examine himself then and see and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. And so on through to the end of the chapter. We read there that the Lord Jesus gave thanks on that night that he instituted the Lord's supper.

So we'll now follow that pattern and give thanks. Let's pray. Our gracious and eternal God, Father of your people, creator of life, savior and friend.

[47 : 01] We come before you now, Lord, to ask your blessing and to seek that you would manifest yourself to us through your Holy Spirit as we come with word and sacrament to continue in your worship.

We thank you, Lord, for all that this table represents of your own sufferings and death for your people. And we bless you for the teaching of your word in regard to it, that it is of fundamental importance to your people.

We thank you that we have a place to rest, a place upon which our faith itself rests. And we have that in the death, resurrection of our Lord.

We thank you today, Lord, that you came into this world. We thank you for the perfect life you lived. We thank you for the death you died, for your willingness to die that death.

We thank you for your obedience unto death. We thank you that your death was followed by that actual physical entombment and burial of your body.

[48 : 08] We thank you that you live forever more, having been raised to life again. And we thank you that you live forever more. And so we pray today, Lord, that you would manifest yourself to us in the power of that risen life, and through the Holy Spirit that we may know today that we have met with our Saviour.

And as we would take delight, Lord, in you, in fellowship with you, so, Lord, we pray that you would once again take delight in us. We ask that you would sanctify now these elements of bread and of wine, so that they may be sanctified to a holy use, apart from their ordinary use in this life.

And we ask that as they are sanctified by you, they may be sanctified to us too. Hear us, we pray now, as we confess our sin and seek your pardon, for Jesus' sake.

We've been thinking of the theme of remembrance all the way through the services, remembering the death of Jesus as we now do as we turn to take communion as well.

I have a picture, or we have a picture, in our lounge at home, on our lounge wall. It's a painting, actually, taken from a photograph or a picture that was taken of Donna's late brother, It was taken when he was a boy, taken and then given to an artist who produced this wonderful representation as a painting of Ian.

[49 : 45] Ian died as a very young man, and so this was precious to her and to her mother as well. But the reason I'm saying that is when you look at that on the wall, people quite often ask, who is the boy in the painting?

And we tell them, and we tell them something of the history of how he came to die. And we remember, as we look at that painting, conversations, events, things that happened in our association with him, things that happened during the life he lived on earth.

We associate him with certain things that brought back to our memories. We hold them precious.

And the Lord's Supper is in many ways like that for the Lord's people as well.

Your mind goes back to what this represents, to the death that Jesus died, to the love he showed in dying that death for us.

That portrait of Jesus, if you like, in the Lord's Supper, where you see his characteristics, where you remember who he is, the Son of God, that he is your Savior, that he is your friend.

[51 : 04] As you look at these elements and take them, this is what comes to mind. You reflect, you remember, you have it as a memorial to who he is.

You remember his love. You remember his love being the love that extended even to the point of giving himself greater love greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, and you are my friends, To the furthest extremity he loved his people.

That extremity including the death, as we saw earlier, that we deserved. and you remember his love, and you remember especially his death.

because this is such a special moment always. There are so many other aspects of Christ's person and work that we remember throughout the course of our life as Christians.

But this is unique because while it is certainly attached to every other aspect of his person and of his life and of his work, it's unique now because it is especially the death he died that we remember.

[52 : 17] You do this in remembrance of me, Remembering the death he died. Remember his willingness to die.

Remember the love behind his willingness to die for you. It's God's reconciling death.

In his son he provided this reconciling death for us. That we might be set free. And no righteousness instead of condemnation. And no friendship instead of enmity.

And relish and taste again and see that God is good. And so as we read, In the night he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread.

When he had given thanks, which we've done in his name, he said, Take, eat this, this my body, which is for you. This do in remembrance of me. In like manner after the supper, he took the cup when he had said, This cup is the new covenant in my blood.

[53 : 29] This do as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you do show forth the Lord's death until he come.

We read in the first letter, in the letter of Paul to the Philippians in the first chapter, I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making my prayer with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

Remembrance of you all, Paul is saying. We remember the Lord's death, as we've done in the Lord's Supper. We remember the Lord's grace to his people. We remember how he, as we've seen already, remembers us to bring life to us.

But it's important also that we follow the directions given us here in this passage to remember each other. Paul is saying, I give thanks to God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you, making my prayer with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day till now.

We take communion together. The Reformers insisted that private communion was not in keeping with the emphasis of God's Word and God's people coming together to share together, to have fellowship together with each other and with Jesus in the Lord's Supper.

[55 : 13] We take and took the communion together. And as we do so, we're reminded here by Paul of the importance of three things. He was giving thanks. I give thanks to God in my remembrance of you all.

Thanks for their partnership in the gospel. The word literally is fellowship. He was giving thanks for the fellowship they had with him in the gospel. And we come together for the Lord's Supper.

We come together to worship God. We do so thankful for the partnership, the fellowship we have in the gospel. It's not something for the individual. It's for all of God's people to share in and to share out together.

And he was also praying for them, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making my request or prayer with joy. Such an important facet of the fellowship, praying together.

Praying individually, yes, important. Praying together here, praying for each other. And he says, praying it with joy. Matthew Henry says, Holy joy is the heart of thankful praise.

[56 : 26] And thankful praise is the language of holy joy. Holy joy. Holy joy is the heart of thankful praise. And thankful praise is the language of holy joy.

Together, as we experience the benefits of the Lord's love, together we share in that holy joy that is ours as Christians. And we do so thankful that we are with others, bound together in Christ to form a people for himself, who pray, who give thanks, and thirdly, who have fellowship also in their reaching out with the gospel.

He went on in that passage in Philippians, in verse 27, to say, Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come to see you or else I'm absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel.

Again, he's mentioning together, striving together for the faith of the gospel. You're leaving this place today thankful, prayerful, that you've remembered the Lord's death again, thankful being here with his people.

And you leave this place saying, Lord, I go forth as a witness to you, as witnesses together of your love and of your salvation, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel.

[58 : 08] My friends, the world we're living in, the communities we live in, need the faith of the gospel. And the faith of the gospel is made visible to them, with the Lord's people united in striving together for the faith of the gospel, for the truth of the gospel, communicating the gospel, being known as the Lord's people, and being known as the Lord's people who love to be together to share

as partners in the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So may God bless to us his word today and our observance of the Lord's Supper. And we now conclude by singing in Psalm 72. Psalm 72. Psalm 72 and page 314, verses 17 to 19.

His name forever shall endure, last like the sun it shall. Men shall be blessed in him, and blessed all nations shall him call. Now blessed be the Lord our God, the God of Israel, for he alone doth wondrous works and glory that excel.

And blessed be his glorious name to all eternity. The whole earth let his glory fill. So let it be. Singing these verses in conclusion, his name forever shall endure.

His name forever shall endure, last like the sun it shall.

[59 : 50] And blessed shall men shall be blessed, and blessed all nations shall him call.

And blessed all nations shall him call. Now blessed be the Lord our God, the God of Israel. Israel. For he alone doth wondrous works and glory that excel.

glory that excel. And blessed be his glorious name. And blessed be his glorious name.

To all eternity. To all eternity. To all eternity. The whole earth let his glory fill.

[61 : 24] Amen. So let it be. Before I pronounce the benediction, let me just make one or two points.

You are asked today, please, if you use both of these side doors to vacate the building rather than the main door, just so that we don't interfere with any medical people that are actually on site still. And children in the Sunday school can be uplifted by parents if they go to, I think it's that side near the hall, to uplift the children and take the children home with you.

Please continue to remember Effie! As she continues to receive attention from the medical folks.

And we trust and pray that the Lord will be with her and that he will lay his hand upon her for her healing at this time.

And so let's include her in her prayer as we pronounce the benediction. Lord our God, we give thanks for the way in which you continue to provide for us even through times of emergency.

[62 : 34] We thank you, O Lord, for the grace of your Spirit to uphold us at all times. We pray for Effie at this time. Lord, you know her condition. We commit her to your care.

And we ask that the great physician, the Lord Jesus himself will look after her and take care of her. We know, Lord, that she may well be anxious and feeling embarrassed over having taken a turn in church.

But we pray that you would calm her mind and especially that your healing touch will be upon her life. So continue with us now, we pray, through the rest of the day. And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Spirit be with you all now and evermore.

Amen.