

He Voluntarily Suffered: Be Grateful
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Luke 22

Happy Mothers Day to all our Moms! When our lesson is about being GRATEFUL for SACRIFICE, it's appropriate that it's Mothers' Day. We're indeed grateful for the sacrifice made by all our Moms.

Opening question: Has there ever been someone in your life who did something for you SO SACRIFICIAL that you'll never be able to FORGET IT and will FOREVER be GRATEFUL? (Discussion)

This morning we're talking about the ULTIMATE SACRIFICE of Jesus for US!

- What do we mean by the old saying: "stop and smell the roses"?
- Slow down and appreciate the beauty of life around you.
- Be grateful for the wonderful things you may just be rushing by.
- That's a good rule for living...but, here's where we're headed in Luke 22...

When it comes to our life in Christ, I'd say we should add another saying: "Stop and SEE the SACRIFICE!" Slow down and appreciate what Jesus willingly went through so that you and I could AVOID HELL and ATTAIN HEAVEN.

- The setting is a private dining room. We know it as the "Upper Room".
- Look at verses 10-13 and you see Jesus had a METICULOUS PLAN for this night.
- This PASSOVER MEAL with the TWELVE was unlike any other.
- They needed privacy. They needed quiet. This was more than just fellowship...it was a TEACHING moment. It was a BONDING moment. It was a time of WARNING. It was a setting for BETRAYAL. As DaVinci named his painting, it was the LAST supper.

Luke 22:14-20

14 When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. 15 And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. 16 For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."

17 After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. 18 For I tell you I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

19 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

20 In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."

- Verse 14 reminds us of the manner of dining in that day. A low table and the diners reclining on cushions on the floor on one elbow.

- Verse 15: Question - Why do you think Jesus so 'eagerly desired' to eat this Passover with them? The last three words of the verse are a clue: "...before I suffer." These men were closer to him than his own earthly family. In His humanness Jesus knew he'd be physically separated from them soon. He also had more TEACHING and PREPARING to do with them.
- Question: Why was the Passover meal so significant for Jews and for THIS TEACHABLE MOMENT? It was a symbol of God's deliverance of the Jews from Egypt and from the DEATH ANGEL. Jesus was about to become the ULTIMATE PASSOVER LAMB for all time and eternity.
- Verse 16: Jesus said He would never eat the Passover meal again while on earth. Instead He points to a GREAT BANQUET in the future when He returns...a wedding feast.
- Verse 17: He takes the cup...gives thanks...and has them pass it. This is the first of four cups of wine in the Passover meal...tradition tells us it was diluted with water to avoid intoxication during the feast.
- Verse 18: Again He reminds them this is His LAST CUP until the Kingdom of God comes.
- Then in Verse 19 He says something INTERESTING, something UNUSUAL.
- What does He say about the bread? "This is my body given for you;"
- Can you imagine what the disciples thought! Scripture doesn't tell us their reaction. But can you imagine? "He said, 'this is my body'!"
- Then Jesus utters the words familiar to any young child who has sat in a traditional church staring at the front of communion table: "Do This In Remembrance of Me".
- As John MacArthur put it, "*Jesus thus transformed the last Passover into the first observance of the Lord's Supper.*"
- Verse 20: Jesus also took another cup of wine and made another JOLTING statement: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you."
- By the way, there is no indication in this text that any thing miraculous took place. "The bread remained bread and the wine remained wine." (Wiersbe)
- Let's do a little sidebar for some additional theological knowledge:

Christians differ in our interpretation of the meaning of the commemoration of the Lord's Supper. There are three main views:

- 1 - The bread and wine actually become Christ's body and blood (Transubstantiation)
- 2 - The bread and wine remain unchanged, yet Christ is spiritually present by faith in and through them (Consubstantiation)
- 3- The bread and wine, which remain unchanged, are lasting memorials of Christ's sacrifice. (Southern Baptists believe: 'The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members ... memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.' (Baptist Faith and Message <http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/basicbeliefs.asp>)

One thing all Christians can agree on is the IMPORTANCE and SIGNIFICANCE of the Lord's Supper. This is MY BODY...a NEW COVENANT in MY BLOOD.

Turn to Isaiah 53:4-6 - A passage that should be highlighted in ALL our Bibles

4 Surely he took up our infirmities
 and carried our sorrows,
 yet we considered him stricken by God,
 smitten by him, and afflicted.

5 But he was pierced for our transgressions,
 he was crushed for our iniquities;
 the punishment that brought us peace was upon him,
 and by his wounds we are healed.

6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
 each of us has turned to his own way;
 and the Lord has laid on him
 the iniquity of us all.

- Question: Why do you think Jesus commanded believers to observe the Lord's Supper? What purposes should it serve in our lives as believers?
- I would propose to you that the Lord's Supper should cause us to LOOK INTENTLY in several directions:
- First, To LOOK BACK...
- Back in verse 19 Jesus stated one purpose of the Lord's Supper..."Rememberance".
"It is a memorial feast to remind the believer that Jesus Christ gave His body and blood for the redemption of the world." (Wiersbe)
- Secondly, I think the Lord's Supper calls us to LOOK FORWARD
- Paul also wrote about the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26...let's turn there.
- In verse 26 Paul writes: "26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."
- A third way to LOOK is to LOOK INTENTLY INWARD
- Still in 1 Corinthians 11 look at verses 27 and following
- Paul writes: "27 Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. 28 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. 30 That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep." (As in DEAD).

Warren Wiersbe writes:

The Supper encourages us to look back with love and adoration to what He did for us on the cross and to look forward with hope and anticipation to His coming again. Since we must be careful not to come to the Lord's table with known sin in our lives, the Supper should also be an occasion for looking within, examining our hearts, and confessing our sins (1 Cor. 11:27-32).

It's great to "stop and smell the roses" but we also need to "stop and see the sacrifice" Jesus made for us.

Turn back to Luke 22 and verse 21...Jesus is speaking:

21 “But the hand of him who is going to betray me is with mine on the table.22 The Son of Man will go as it has been decreed. But woe to that man who betrays him!”

- Not only would Jesus suffer pain, humiliation, and death...before that he would suffer the disappointment of being BETRAYED by one of the twelve, Judas.
- By the way, the Matthew account of this evening indicates that Judas had already left the house to betray Jesus when Jesus talked about the bread and wine.
- I don't want to spend much time on Judas, but here's a question.
- Jesus was God, so He had to have known how this would turn out.
- Question: Do you think Jesus made a mistake when He chose Judas as a disciple?
- Luke 6 tells us Jesus spent a whole night in prayer before He chose the twelve. We have to assume it was the Father's will for Judas to be chosen. It was also God's will for a friend to betray Jesus. However, Judas had a free will and made his own CHOICES.

The Passover supper is over, now comes a time of greater TRIAL and STRESS for Jesus and the ELEVEN remaining disciples.

Verse 39...

39 Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. 40 On reaching the place, he said to them, “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.” 41 He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, 42 “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.” 43 An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. 44 And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.[a]

45 When he rose from prayer and went back to the disciples, he found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. 46 “Why are you sleeping?” he asked them. “Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation.”

- Verse 39 says this olive grove was a “usual” place Jesus went to for privacy
- Verse 40: Jesus asked the disciples to “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.”
- Question: What TEMPTATION might they have been facing that Jesus was urging them to prepare for in PRAYER? To run away or deny their relationship with Him. To have their faith shaken between the crucifixion and resurrection.
- Thinking back on the verses we just read about the Last Supper, even though He knew He was facing great pain and agony, there is something surprising about Jesus' demeanor. How would you describe it? In control.
- As He heads to the garden of Gethsemane this begins to change.
- In Mark's account Jesus “began to be very distressed and troubled.”
- He said to Peter, James, and John: “My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death.”
- In these hours of AGONY we see the HUMANITY of Jesus. Though He was fully God, He was also fully man and He experienced DREAD, ANXIETY, and FEAR as we do.
- Verse 41: How did He deal with this OVERWHELMING STRESS? Prayer.
- Verse 42: What did He very HUMANLY ask His Father? Take this cup from me.

- Also in Verse 42: What did He model for you and me? Yet, not my will but THINE done.
- Humanly we may ask God to “let a cup pass” when we’re in a HEAVY TRIAL...but as Jesus showed us, we MUST pray “not my will but thine” and our LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER will respond to us as He did to Jesus in Verse 43.
- His AGONY was so deep the Father sent an angel to STRENGTHEN Him.
- Only Dr. Luke, a medical doctor, describes what happened NEXT. What does Verse 44 tell us? Jesus’ stress was so OVERWHELMING that His sweat became drops of blood.
- Some say it was just a description of how much sweat there was. But, medical information tells us of a rare condition called “hematidrosis” when the blood vessels rupture in the sweat glands and produce a mixture of sweat AND blood.
- Bottom line: We can’t imagine the STRESS Jesus was under!
- In verses 45 and 46 Jesus again finds His disciples sleeping. Clearly they are physically and emotionally exhausted, yet Jesus says again: “Get up and pray so you will not fall into temptation.
- Jesus had been strengthened by His time with The Father and He wanted them to be strengthened too.

Hollywood is not reality. However, I’d say two movies do a pretty good job of making us understand the HORRIBLE REALITY of sacrifice. One is SAVING PRIVATE RYAN and the other is THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST. You may or may not agree with that observation, but both films went a long way to force us to STOP AND SEE THE SUFFERING.

I would question whether we as Americans can really be as GRATEFUL as we should be UNLESS we are confronted with the price some have paid for our freedom. But, more importantly, we need to FOCUS ON the UNBELIEVABLE PRICE Jesus paid for our ETERNAL SALVATION.

So, What's The Takeaway?

Matthew Henry wrote:

Nothing can be more nourishing and satisfying to the soul, than the doctrine of Christ's making atonement for sin, and the assurance of an interest in that atonement.

- From this lesson I found myself asking these CONVICTING QUESTIONS:
 - Do I come to the Lord's table hungry for a spiritually sustaining meal? Or do I treat it like a "holy happy meal" that I rush through because it's something we do?
 - Do I come with anticipation or routine complacency?
 - What about the garden? My garden of prayer with God?
 - Do I come to the garden sleepy? Barely able to prop open my eyes, physically or spiritually?
 - Or, do I come to my garden of prayer, WIDE AWAKE to the suffering He voluntarily bore for my sins? Awake to the fact the in MY trials He will strengthen me.
 - Prepared for HIS WILL to be done.

- What about the cross where Jesus died?
- Has it become so routine to hang a cross on my wall or around my neck, that I forget what really HAPPENED on that cross?
- Yes, we should "stop and smell the roses" in life.
- However, when it comes to our life in Christ, we need to "Stop and see the sacrifice!" Slow down and appreciate what Jesus willingly went through so that you and I could avoid hell and obtain Heaven.