

His Broken Body, His Blood
Luke 22:19-20

As we continue with our consideration of these precious words of scripture that tell us about those last few hours in the life of the Lord Jesus before He began to suffer the sufferings He would endure to pay the penalty for sin, I confess to you that for myself, even after having been a devoted believer in the Lord Jesus for so many, many years, I fear that I still don't fully comprehend the real extent and the real impact of sinfulness, especially the sinfulness that resides within my own wretched soul.

Perhaps it's because I have lived with all the many remnants of my sinful nature for so long that I have come to accept its ways as being inevitable, not right in any way, but still inevitable. I know that I do that with my beloved children. I see their behaviors and my mind and my heart make excuses for them, forgiving them for the things they do.

But oh dear Christians, I'm really not allowed to do that. I really don't have the position or the authority to actually forgive sin, not the sin within my children and especially not the sin within my own soul.

Please, may we not be confused about this matter of forgiveness. Yes, yes, we can, and we must forgive the offenses that other people commit against us, but not the "sin" itself. "Sin" resides within a realm that is outside the authority of mankind. As the Psalmist David clearly reminded us in Psalm 51, it is against God and God alone that we commit our acts of sin.

God is the Holy and Just One who has given the "Law" and established the boundaries of real "right and wrong", and it is Him and Him alone who can forgive the sins that any of us commit.

And that is what these words of the Lord Jesus here at His final supper with His disciples are telling us about. It is His broken body and His blood alone that is able to make the necessary atonement, the "Propitiation" for our sins. Nothing else can do what His Body and His Blood is able to do. And He and He alone has the provision of eternal life.

Listen as we again read these words given to us here in Luke chapter 22.

¹⁴ And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. ¹⁵ And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. ¹⁶ For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves. ¹⁸ For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." ¹⁹ And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. (Luke 22:14-20)

How often has it been that you and I have read a particular scripture verse or a passage and immediately declared to ourselves, "These have to be the most important words of scripture in the whole of the bible?"

Dear Christian, once again, my mind declares those thoughts about these very words spoken here by the Lord Jesus, these words that speak of our Lord being the "Broken Bread" and the purest of "Wine", the "Body" and the "Blood" of the perfect Sacrificed "Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world". And these words do also represent the single, most important event that is spoken about in the whole of the bible.

Because . . . from those first moments of creation and especially from that first moment when God took Adam's face into His hands and breathed His breath of life into Adam's nostrils, this one thing that Jesus did, the breaking of His body and the shedding of His blood was no less than the most important thing that God could ever do for you and me.

May I take a moment to remind us that the God who created this earth, and especially the One who breathed that first breath of life into Adam's nostrils is the same God that we are reading about here, the very same, Jesus Christ.

And yes, there is but One God, but sometimes the mystery of the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son (Jesus) and God the Holy Spirit can be perplexing to our small minds.

May I take a moment and read those words from John chapter 1 and from Colossians chapter 1 once again as a reminder to us that it was Jesus whose hands created all things! Listen to these words given in John chapter 1.

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. (John 1:1-4)

And in Colossians chapter 1 we are told that

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. (Colossians 1:15-16)

And may I add just one more, this given in Hebrews chapter 1.

¹ Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. (Hebrews 1:1-3)

These words tell us that Jesus not only created the world, He actually holds it together moment by moment.

And no, fellow Christians, within our finite minds we are not able to comprehend how God in Three Persons is still "One God". And how all three members of His Trinity go about, as "One God", accomplishing all of His plans and His purposes. So, we will simply, by faith, accept these words that tell us here that it was the Lord Jesus Himself who was the One within the Trinity who created the earth and all there is within it, the One who was spoken about there in the Garden, the One who took Adam's face into His hands and breathed life into his nostrils. Listen! Genesis 2:7

⁷ Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (Genesis 2:7)

And praise be to God, this breath of life was not only the breath of humanity, it was also the same breath that would someday bring everlasting life into all those who would receive the Lord Jesus as Savior and Lord.

And it was also Jesus who walked and talked with Adam, the One who brought the animals to Adam so that he could name them and care for them.

And it was this same Jesus who knew that it was not good for Adam to be alone, and with great love and compassion gave Adam a wife, Eve, to be one with him.

And sadly, Jesus was also there to watch as Adam and Eve chose to abandon their relationship with Him in favor of a relationship with themselves, with the world around them and with satan.

And it was also Jesus who, because of their sin, removed His very special “breath of eternal life” from Adam and Eve and drove them from the Garden, else they might have eaten from the tree of life and then lived forever in their sinful condition.

And it has been this very same Jesus who, throughout all the many subsequent generations, has ministered to men and women in their sinful state, right up to and including this night as He shared His “Last Supper” with His disciples.

What a grievous people we have been to our gracious and loving Lord, so grievous that we would make this night and the next days ahead for the Lord Jesus be so very necessary, else all men and women, you and I, would surely die, and would remain eternally in our sinful condition.

But thankfully, He willingly condescended to come down to us from heaven to suffer the sufferings that were rightfully ours to bear . . . so that through His broken body and His shed blood we might be redeemed from our sins.

And here, as Jesus broke this bread for His disciples and shared this wine, it was a most excellent representation of what was about to take place with Himself, the broken bread a symbol of His broken Body and the wine a symbol of His shed Blood!

And I do love to see these mysteries written about the Lord Jesus as they unfold. In several places within these scriptures, He is spoken about as being, the “Bread of Life”. And He was!

He was the “true bread” given by God the Father to give life and to sustain life within His beloved children. Listen to these words of Jesus as He spoke one day to some that were following after Him. These words given to us in John chapter 6,

³⁰ So they said to Him, "What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?" ³¹ "Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'HE GAVE THEM BREAD OUT OF HEAVEN TO EAT.'" ³² Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. ³³ "For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." ³⁴ Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread." ³⁵ Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. (John 6:30-35)

Jesus really was, and is, the “true bread” from God. And He is also the “True Wine”, the most excellent Wine. Recall the first miracle of Jesus as He turned the water into wine. It was the very best, most excellent in its taste.

But recall also, that to have the most excellent of wine, the grapes must first be broken and crushed, and not just a little, but to the uttermost.

And so it was with the Lord Jesus. His body had to be broken and crushed to produce the most excellent of wine, His Blood.

And that is another mystery that God has woven into these words, the mystery of how the very essence of life itself resides within the blood. Listen to the words of Leviticus chapter 17 verse 11.

¹¹ For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life. (Leviticus 17:11)

While you and I might not be able to fully comprehend the significance of the blood as it makes atonement for our sin, the shedding of it is nonetheless the most essential part for the forgiveness of our sins.

Under the Old Covenant of the law, without the shedding of blood, there could be no remission of sin.

And so also it would be with the Lord Jesus. Under the New Covenant that God has made with us, it would be the shedding of the Blood of the Lord Jesus that would atone for and bring remission for our sins.

And so then, we find the Lord Jesus setting forth this new sacrament, the sharing of the bread and the wine to symbolize His Body that would be broken and His Blood that would be shed to atone for our sins.

As John The Baptist declared when He saw the Lord Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world". And because Jesus was the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, Jesus would also be the last Lamb that would need to be sacrificed for the sins of men.

This bespoke the New Covenant, the New Testament of God, that whosoever would "Sup" with Him in His Body and His Blood would have everlasting life.

Unfortunately, many people in the modern Christian Church who partake of the Lord's Supper do so without truly understanding its significance. And although we are warned not to partake of it in an "unworthy" manner, many still do, and to their own detriment.

Listen to those words given through the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians chapter 11,
²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

²⁷ Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and

drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. (1 Corinthians 11:23-29)

We must be warned by these words to always first examine ourselves carefully before we partake of the Sacrament of Communion. It is a very solemn and serious thing that we do and there are extreme consequences for partaking of it unworthily.

But may I say also that it is a very dangerous thing to refuse to take part in it. To some, perhaps many, the very thought of eating the Flesh and drinking the Blood of the Lord Jesus is repulsive to them. Jesus told us about that in John chapter 6. There in verse 47 He said,

⁴⁷ Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.

⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. ⁵⁰ This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

But listen,

⁵² The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" ⁵³ So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever." (John 6:47-58)

Yes dear Christian, these truly are mysterious words! And over these many years of my being a Christian, I have heard so many preachers and teachers try to explain how God uses "allegories" and "metaphors" and other forms of "analogy" to define many of the acts of God and many of the other occurrences that are given within these scriptures, saying that one thing or another that they are reading within these scriptures is simply and only an example, an "allegory" or a "metaphor". And sometimes that might be true.

But oh dear Christian, there are other occasions when these words of our Lord, though fashioned in the form of an “analogy” or an “allegory” or a “metaphor” are really real, absolutely real. And such is the case with these mysterious words of the Lord Jesus as He explains to us how He is the “True Bread from heaven” that is “broken” for us, that the “wine” is truly His Blood”.

And no, the bread of communion and the wine are not transformed into His flesh and blood, but His “analogy”, His “allegory”, His “metaphor” is nonetheless true and absolutely real. And I must believe and trust His truth as he gives it regarding the blessed “Sacrament of Communion.”

And dear Christian, if my words are confusing to you, I’ll ask that as you read our Lord’s words, that the Holy Spirit explain them to you.

So then again, yes, these words of our Lord are very mysterious and perhaps at first very confusing. And they were even confusing and repulsive for most of those who were present that day. But again, while they may be confusing, they do convey absolute truth. And it is only by the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit abiding within us that we will be able to comprehend His profound truth. Listen further!

⁵³ So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶ Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.” ⁶⁰ When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” ⁶¹ But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this? ⁶² Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? ⁶³ It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. ⁶⁴ But there are some of you who do not believe.” (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) ⁶⁵ And he said, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”

And listen,

⁶⁶ After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. (John 6:60-66)

Note carefully from those words that Jesus said that our fleshly minds cannot comprehend such truths, that it is only His Holy Spirit who can explain it to us.

So then, may I ask you and me today . . . Is the thought of eating the Flesh and drinking the Blood of the Lord Jesus repulsive to you? It can very easily be, especially if you do not have the Holy Spirit dwelling within you.

To understand and to accept such otherwise repulsive words, one must first have the Holy Spirit within them. But once we do have God's Spirit within us, we can readily and eagerly partake of and enjoy every part of the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper. And we can join with Peter and the others in their response . . . Listen,

⁶⁷ So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, ⁶⁹ and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God. (John 6:67-69)

Peter and the other disciples were still very childlike in their faith, and they could not discern much. But with what they had, they held on tightly to the Lord Jesus. They knew that it was only the Lord Jesus who could give them eternal life. And thankfully, in the years to come, their sharing of the Lord's Supper would become most precious to them.

And so also, it should be most precious to you and to me. May I encourage each of us, as we, in our future times of partaking in the Sacrament of Communion, that we let our minds dwell upon the true meaning of these words that we have encountered here today, that we regard the bread and the wine not as mere symbols, but rather that they would have the truly spiritual meaning and nature that God intends for them, because Jesus really is the "True Bread" from heaven that brings us everlasting life, and His shed blood is powerful to atone for, to cleanse, and to redeem us from all our sins.

May I close with these words beginning in verse 19.

¹⁹ And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of

Me." ²⁰ Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you. (Luke 22:19-20)

Pray with me.