

## The Glorious Feast

1 Cor 5:7,8 For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. *Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

To day, Sept. 11, 2011, America is remembering September 11, 2001 when on that dark day of history high-jacked airliners were flown into the twin towers of the World Trade Center. I have heard it referred to as “the darkest day of history”. It was indeed a dark day in the history of man, especially the history of this United States of America, but it is not the “darkest day of history”, because it pales in the shadow of the darkest day of history. For without question the remembrance of this table is in memory of the darkest day in the history of mankind. For today we are remembering that day when evil men with mockery and great hatred crucified the Lord of glory; for I would remind you that even the sun grew dark on that infamous day in the history of man.

This morning we are keeping a feast in remembrance of that day. I am sure when we call this a “feast” the world may well think of it as something ridiculous to describe it as a feast. When you think of a feast what comes to your mind? You may well think of a thanksgiving dinner with turkey and all its trimmings, with side dishes galore topped off with pumpkin pie. But just a piece of bread and a cup of wine, why would you call that a feast?

The Greek word used here is the same word the translators of the LXX used to translate the same word from the Hebrew, for they use this word to speak of the “Passover Feast” The reason for the use of this word “feast” is because it speaks of a feast of celebration. Under the Old Covenant it was a lamb, without blemish and without spot that was, as it were, the main course.

Ex 12:13-14 Now **the blood** shall be a sign, for you on the houses where you are. And **when I see the blood, I will pass over you;** and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. 'So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord throughout your generations. You shall keep it **as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.**

Now it was not the meat itself, nor the animal, no not even the blood of the animal itself that would have been the object of celebration, the object of remembrance, but what the lamb, the blood represented. Even as this morning the object of our worship is not the bread and the wine as in the Roman Catholic tradition. The bread – thrown away, the wine dumped – its meaning will be lost when the benediction is pronounced.

It is not the bread, but what the bread represents that is of importance, it is not the wine, but what the wine represents that is of great value. As at the Passover Feast under the Old Covenant, the lamb spoke of remembrance of the deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, of salvation from the very threat of death, even now we understand that that lamb without spot or blemish really pointed to Christ our Passover Lamb who was sacrificed for us, providing for God’s elect deliverance from the bondage of sin, and the condemnation of death that had passed upon all men. This morning our cause of rejoicing is not the bread and the wine, but our rejoicing is in our Savior who shed His blood to redeem us from our sins.

This is why it is most proper for the Apostle Paul to refer to the Lord’s Table as the Communion **feast**. Dear flock there is no greater feast than the feast of this table. There is no more glorious feast than the feast before us this morning. No greater cause for remembrance, nor greater cause for a feast of rejoicing, for our Savior has by His precious blood redeemed us from the penalty due us.

As we remember by partaking of the Communion feast this morning, from the passage before us I want to consider, the bread of this feast. What it represents and the grace that it proclaims.

A. The element of the bread and what it says to us about Jesus the Christ - *Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the **unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.***

1. For us this morning it is indeed a feast of celebration,
  - a. A Feast of remembrance
  - b. A Feast of great meaning
2. For it is, for us, a feast that is to us a “means of grace” in that it strengthens our faith because it reveals to us our Savior
3. It speaks to us of that bread that came down from heaven

John 6:32-33 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did **not give you the bread from heaven**, but My Father gives **you the true bread** from heaven. For the bread of God **is He** who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

4. It speaks of God great love for His people
5. It tells us that God sent His Only Begotten Son into the world to redeem us from our sins - Jn 3:16
  - a. It speaks to us of our Savior's love –
  - b. It tells us about the person and work of our Savior
6. What does it tell us about Jesus
  - a. It tells us that Jesus came down from heaven
  - b. It tells us that Jesus left the glory that was His from eternity
  - c. It tells us that Jesus humbled Himself
  - d. It tells us that Jesus was obedient unto death
  - e. It tells us that Jesus became flesh
  - f. It tells us that Jesus was God manifest in the flesh –
7. The bread tells us that our Lord became flesh making it possible that The Father could choose "*... us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, **to the praise of the glory of His grace**, by which He made us **accepted in the Beloved**."* Eph 1:4-6
8. This bread also tell us that "*... Christ **has loved us and gave Himself for us**, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.* Eph 5:2

B. What does our Lord mean when He says of the bread, "This is my body"?

1. We understand by this that the bread this morning is no longer ordinary bread but now it is unique for it has been set apart for a holy use
  - a. Not to infer as Rome or the Lutheran doctrines say that it carnally becomes the body and blood of Christ or has within it the actual body and blood of Christ
  - b. Rather we understand by his words the wine truly represents the blood of Christ
  - c. The bread now represents the body of Christ
2. For as often as we eat and drink of this feast we show forth the Lord's death – 1 Cor 11:26
3. Thus we approach the table with great care and reverence knowing that if we eat and drink in an unworthy manner we eat and drink damnation to ourselves. 1 Cor 11:27
  - a. Why we have a guarded table
  - b. We desire to protect any who would wrongly receive of the table
  - c. We desire to keep by a means of holy reverence

C. Why is the bread broken?

1. Bread broken speaks of His suffering – This is my body which is broken for you

*1 Peter 3:18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit*

2. It brings to us scenes from Gethsemane – sweat great drops of blood
  - a. Why? He was about to take upon Himself the sin of the world
  - b. He was about to suffer the wrath of God that our sins deserve
  - c. We cannot know the depth of His suffer
  - d. But because of grace alone, by faith alone, in Christ alone, we will **never** know the depth of His suffering
3. The dark day of 9-11 cannot compare to what took place – darkest of all days –outside the north wall of Jerusalem.
4. He was beaten and whipped so greatly that we read:

*Isa 52:13 His visage (countenance, form, appearance) was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men.*

5. The broken bread tells us that He suffered in our place

- a. That He was smitten by God and afflicted
- b. That He bore our griefs and carried our sorrows

*Isa 53:4-6 Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities*

6. Let this be your food this morning – Jesus suffered in your place
  - a. Jesus suffered the agonies of death in your place
  - b. Jesus suffered the agonies of hell itself in your place

CONCLUSION: The bread proclaims this unique truth – Jesus truly man, and truly God The bread tells us that He had a sinless body that he was without sin The Gnostics tell us He could not be for flesh itself is sinful

But we we know that the first Adam was sinless flesh until he disobeyed God We are sinful flesh because we are fallen in Adam's sinful rebellion

Jesus had a real body but there was nothing in Him capable of sinning. It is true He was tempted – but sinless – He was not able to sin, because He was not willing to sin. When we are tempted we are able to sin because we are too often willing to sin.

Thus the bread tells us that He who knew no sin suffered God's wrath in our place - The Just for the unjust