

Breaking of Bread

Overview

For there has been promised long ago, I believe that Israel is going to start to call upon the Lord. I am really convinced of that. They're going to start to cry out. And little bits of news are coming out of that country these days. It's indicating that has already begun. The people who are of the Word, the children of Abraham, know their place in history. They know they're trying to discover their place in the world. All they want is a little postage stamp piece of property. But the whole world is saying, no, you need to die. That is the push. Even our own Prime Minister is lecturing the Prime Minister of Israel. I find that rude and arrogant. These people are up against it.

There are people running through the streets carrying weapons. They're out to kill, to maim, and to destroy. And these people are saying, it's enough. Bring our children home. Bring our people home. And when they say, bring them home, they're calling Canadian Jewish people. We need you home. They're calling all over the world, come home. But the big call, of course, is to set our people free. Set our people free who are being held in caves and whatever. So, Heavenly Father, we know that the world is turning against Israel. But at this moment, I boldly declare, that I stand with God's people. Your Word said, that whoever curses Abraham is in trouble with God. But whoever blesses Abraham is going to be blessed of the Lord.

And so, Father God, I pray this morning for the peace of Israel. I pray for the people who are languishing. I pray for wherever a mother is. Her little baby's been in a cave or wherever. I think it's because the child is in its eighth month or whatever. Missing its mommy. Lord Jesus, I pray that you will work some glorious miracles. Lord, we're not in a position to say who should do what. I just pray that you'll give the President of that country and the people who surround him and give him counsel. Lord, I pray that wisdom beyond their understanding, wisdom beyond anything that is ever they've ever encountered before. Give them your wisdom. Lord, I pray that there will be men around him like the men of his car, for it says the men of his car were men who understood the moment, they understood the times, and they knew what Israel should do.

Lord, God, I pray that that kind of wisdom will prevail in that country even now. And amen. This morning we're going to be commencing a communion service from the beginning, and I want to hasten to say that you are welcome. There are restrictions as to who can come to the table. I can't compel who can and who cannot. It's the Lord's table. It's not our table. The Word of God says, let each person examine themselves and determine, with the help of the Lord, is this my time to receive communion? I encourage you to think about that. There's a warning about participating in communion when your heart is not in the right place. And we say, well, with that actually be carried out, remember the night that Judas set at the table with Jesus. It was the very first communion service.

And the Word of God says that the devil entered into Judas that night. He partook of the emblems of the coming Messiah's death and sacrifice, and he paid for the same of his own life. I'm not trying to frighten anyone, not at all, but it's imperative that I share with you what the Word of God says. God bless you. So I don't intend to have any dull moments during this service. It's just going to continuously flow. And so the Word of God says that you don't read of Jesus taking bread without, first of all, blessing it and then breaking it. I'll say a little more about the blessing of the bread in a few months. This morning, the topic that I wish to speak on is the broken bread, or breaking the bread. And so before Jesus broke the bread, he would speak a blessing over it, and I discover the wording of that blessing, and I'll share it with you at an appropriate time.

But I think it's good for us this morning to just take this moment and pause in this service and to give thanks to the Lord. Give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his Son. Give thanks to the great whole heart. Give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his Son. And now let the weak say I am strong. Let the poor say I am rich because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks with a grateful heart. Give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his Son.

Give thanks. Give thanks with a grateful heart. Give thanks to the Holy One. Give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his Son. And now let the weak say I am strong. Let the poor say I am rich because of what the Lord has done for us. And now let the weak say I am strong. Let the poor say I am rich because of what the Lord has done for us. And now let the weak say I am strong. Let the poor say I am rich because of what the Lord has done for us. Give thanks with all your heart. Give thanks. Give thanks to you Father God for the richness of salvation. It's the most glorious miracle of anything that we've read in scripture.

And this miracle is for each and every one of us. To know beyond a shadow of a doubt. I am redeemed and how I love to proclaim it. So Father God we take this moment as we're about to enter into this time. We've taken this moment to give thanks to you in Jesus' name. Amen. So we're about to engage in a discussion. It's a one-way discussion. It's about the communion service, but at the time that it was recorded for us in the Gospels, it wasn't known as the communion service. That's our English rendition and it works for us. But at the time it was the Passover. Passover was something that happened once a year. It was always the same month, it was always the same day.

And it was celebrating a time when God's people were trapped in Egypt. They'd gone down to Egypt for a good reason. There was a dearth in the land, there was famine. You know the story well. And Joseph had been betrayed by his brothers. Joseph was in Egypt and the Lord had put Joseph in a very prominent place. And he was over the entire Egyptian kingdom. And the Lord had shown him what was going to happen throughout the land. And well in advance, he made plans to store food. So the sons of Abraham learned that there was food available in Egypt. The word had got around. And so they made their way down. And the story comes about that God's people ended up living in Egypt. And it was a very happy moment.

But 400 years took place. And during that 400 years, of course, the leadership of the country, the pharaohs, changed several times. By the time the 400th year had arrived, the pharaoh that was overseeing the land, and Joseph was well passed, he was gone, he passed away. This was a pharaoh who did not know even the history. If he knew anything about it, he chose to forget it. And there's an indication that he actually was fearful. He was worried about the number of Jewish people in the land. And the harsh treatment that they were getting, he was afraid of an insurrection. He was afraid of trouble. So he really started putting the pressure on them. And so Moses came along, as we know, and the Lord gave him wisdom. Finally gave him wisdom.

He got a little carried away. He got a little ahead of what the Lord would plan. And he killed an Egyptian. Later on, he saw a bush that burned with God's fire, but that bush was not consumed. So he learned that the fire of God is more than adequate to take care of what God's calling it to do. But if you get ahead of the Lord, you the bush, you'll get consumed. He saw a fire that was properly controlled. And so it was Moses' ministry to see the release of God's people. You know the story well of how he went to the Pharaoh and said, God says, let my people go. And finally, plague, after plague, and the resistance of the Pharaoh, it came where the Lord said through Moses, tell the people tomorrow night. I don't know the timing, but it was tomorrow night or whatever evening.

I want you every home to have a lamb. It has to be spotless. It has to be perfect. And that lamb will be slain, one lamb for every household. Paint the doorposts of your house with the blood of that lamb. And when the angel of death comes, he will pass over you. Pass over. So when the people in Jesus' time were getting together and celebrating the Pass over, they were going not only with what God had instituted through the original Passover supper, but by the time Jesus was there, and especially even now, many other items had been added to the process. I drink gallons, and sometimes it helps. And so it was called the Passover. So now we have Jesus gathering the disciples together because it's the Passover and every faithful Jewish person, every faithful Jewish believer at that time, would not be found wandering the streets anywhere in all of Israel on the night of the Passover.

You were to be gathered together with friends or with family or whatever method you could find, but you should honor the Lord in the Passover. So Jesus orchestrated and brought his disciples together. And so we have the process recorded for us in Matthew 26, where the Lord took bread, he broke it after he blessed it, and then he said to the disciples, take eat, this is my body which is broken for you. And so as the disciples were receiving this bread, this would have been a unique seder supper for them. That's the terminology that's used by the Jewish even to this day. They call it the Seder meal, the Seder supper. It's an interesting thing to watch. If you ever get invited to go and watch a seder meal performed for you, April and I went on one occasion.

It's a most instructive evening to watch and to hear from someone who's theologically inclined, who knows the Jewish tradition and knows the story of salvation, how they bring together the seder Passover meal together with what Jesus showed his disciples that very night. And so the Passover was a time for Israel to remember how the Lord set them free. And what was included in that meal was bitter herbs. Speaking of the bitterness that the Jewish people had suffered under the harmful ways of Egypt, a lamb for every household, and in the slaying of that lamb, not

a bone was to be broken. This was all prophetic in that Jesus was about to become some centuries later through the line of Abraham. He would be the lamb of God that would take away the sins of the whole world and no bone of him was broken and that was a prophecy, that was a prediction that even when the soldiers came to kill him on the occasion of the cross.

I might have mentioned recently that when a sufferer was on a cross, the cross by the way was a Roman means of persecution. And so what they would do is they would hang that person on the cross, fashioning their hands and their feet to the cross, usually by nails or some other method, but Jesus, it was nails. And so what the sufferer would do is all their weight would be upon their arms. And this would make breathing very, very difficult. And so they were starting to feel asphyxiated. And so they would press with their feet, pushing themselves up against those rugged nails, trying to gain some breathing possibilities. The soldiers to end this endurance contest on behalf of the sufferer, the soldiers would always come with a spear and poke them in the side and cause their heart to bleed out.

And when the soldier came to Jesus on that occasion, he noticed that Jesus was already dead, but to fulfill Scripture and to make the way for you and I and for a perfect redemptive plan, the soldier went ahead and stabbed him in the side and out flowed blood and water. And so here was Jesus with the disciples saying to them that night, this is my body. As he took the bread, he spoke a blessing over it. And I said, I would tell you what the blessing was and I just looked at my notes and I can't find it. So next time, he would speak a blessing over it. It was a traditional prayer. Even to this day, the Jewish people have prayer. They have a prayer that they pray in the morning. Then they have another prayer that they pray at night. They're very methodical in a lot of their prayer life. It's very ritualistic, but they are so sincere and so passionate about it.

So they have prayers like over a meal. And there was always a prayer and I would suggest probably it's the same prayer that they would pray if they're going to break bread. You know that that terminology is used all over the world. The breaking of bread, the breaking of bread. You've heard that. They broke bread and they're not speaking of a religious situation. The terminology, well, we got together and we broke bread together. It literally comes out of a tradition from way back at that time. That when you broke bread with others, it was a sign of friendship. When you sat down to eat with another person, it was a sign of friendship. It was an affirmation that this person that you're eating with is not your enemy. And so it was a way of building trust. I saw this, I saw this acted out in Ethiopia.

I went over there frequently. I spent a lot of time in Ethiopia ministering out in the bush area. I would go as far as we could with a four-way vehicle. Then we'd get out, put loads on our back, and then we would hike way back into the interior. And then there's one occasion we climbed up what was not a huge mountain. I got to the top. There were two mud houses. One was for David. And I still got eaten alive that night. There were more bugs in my house underneath me than there were anywhere else. I got up in the morning. It looked like I had the measles. These guys had a feast.

They love my juice. In my time with them, I saw the most unique cultural things. So when we had finished ministering up on that mountain, by the way, I got one glass of water. A little more that

is in this little bottle left right now. I got one glass of water per day. You can either bathe with it or you can drink it, buddy. And that's how much water I received today. Because they had to carry it up from a stream down at the bottom. And so it was a trial thing. And then when we left that interior place, walked back, I got through a vehicle, we stopped in this little remote town and went in. So the brothers, the Ethiopian brothers, the leadership that I'd gone with, they ordered food.

And it came on this great big platter, a big flat, like a big pizza pan. And what was on there was what's called injera. And so it's a pickled bread. It tastes like dill pickles. And the stronger the taste would be for men. If it's a weak taste, that's for children. It's got to be. And what they do is they, with the flour and whatever, they mix it up and they put it with something to make it ferment. And the richer it gets, the better they like it. So now there's this great big thing on this pan that looks like a big pizza, but it's very soft and spongy and it's limp. And you would tear a piece of this off for your hand. So now this becomes your fork or your spoon, that piece of bread.

Now you plunge that piece of bread into some potato or maybe pick up a little morsel of meat. And you'd pop the whole thing into your mouth. And you'd tear another piece of injera off the bread and you'd poke some more food. And then I saw something I'd never seen in the world. The man who was beside me reached out and took a piece of bread. He turned to me and kind of gave me a high sign as though to say, watch this. So he took his injera, plunged it into a little bit of food, and turned to the man beside him. And it was when you were a daddy, did you ever play the game with the airplane? Here comes the plane, and go open the hanger door, and then you would put the food in the child's mouth, usually a spoon. And if a child has teeth, you get your hand out as quickly as you can. So but what you do is these men would pluck this food and you would put it toward this brother's mouth.

And that guy's mouth over there, it opened up automatically like it was an autonomic response, his mouth opened and the food went in. Moments later the man who was beside me, I'll say I'm turned his head and a brother put food in his mouth. I inquired later, and I said, that's the most unique thing that I've ever seen. What's that indicative of? He said, when we sit and we break bread together, when a brother puts food in my mouth, instead of putting it in his mouth, I know I can trust him. He took a piece and he put it in his mouth and he's showing me there's no poison in it. And then when he puts it in my mouth, I am saying to him, yes, we have a covenant. Yes, we are friends. No, I'm not your enemy. If I receive food from my brother and then I bite him in some way, shape, or form, stab him in the back, hurt his person. I have done a serious wrong to our whole cultural setup. And never betray a man who puts food in his mouth, breaking bread. So that night Jesus took bread and he blessed it. He was thanking God, the Creator, for the provision of all bread, all things to our sustenance. Men shall not live by bread alone but by every word of the word of God. And so it's all-inclusive that when he blessed the bread, he was thanking God not just for that portion of bread, but for all of God's supply. He was also thanking God. You look in the book of Hebrews and there's a quote in Hebrews from the Psalms. In the book of Hebrews, you hear this quote, you prepared a body for me. When you go back to the Psalms, it's there. And what does that wording mean? Lord, the Holy Spirit came to that little

lady down in Nazareth and said that the holy thing which shall be of you shall be of the Holy Spirit.

It's going to be divine. It's going to be holy. And so the Lord prepared a body, the Lord prepared a body for Jesus that he might suffer just like you and I. He didn't show up like a gaseous ghost. He didn't show up like a Superman. He showed up as human flesh. It's called the incarnation in the flesh. A body you have prepared for me. As Jesus took the bread in his hands, he was thanking the Lord for the divine eternal plan of redemption. For the world was founded, he had you on his mind. Jesus, the Word of God says, was slain before the foundation of the earth.

It was as good as done. You see, God in the future saw the fall of man, but he saw the redemptive plan of Jesus dying on the cross. And listen to this, what God sees is what God's going to provide. And whenever God has been provided for you today, he already sees it. And if God sees it, it's as good as done. Hey, man. So as he was taking the bread and he blessed, he was thanking the Lord, not only for this bread. He said, take this bread and eat it. There's something glorious there, folks. Don't miss it. Don't miss it. Don't miss it.

He took the bread and he said, this is my body about to be broken for you. And then it says that he took pieces and he passed it all around the circle. He said I want each one of you to eat my flesh. Eat this bread which speaks of my broken body for you. He didn't, there's no record of this, but if I'd been there like I would have, I'm a radical, you know, I do nutty thing. You already know that. I'm, if Jesus hadn't have said it, I would want to learn it out and say, hey, hey, hey, hey, he said, this is my body. Now every one of you consume. So I ate some, Peter ate some, John. We all ate some. Where's the body of Christ now? It's within me.

And what do we call in the Pauline Epistles, we're called the body of Christ. It was foreseen and it was foretold as Jesus said, this is my body broken for you, but the body of Christ is no longer broken. And he arose again from the dead. His body was renewed gloriously just like yours will be at the resurrection morning. His body is no longer broken. It was parted out to us, the broken bread in its broken form. But now it's the calling of the Lord for the body to come together and live together. I typed out a report that I will give to you shortly. It's a pastor's report of our activities for the last year and a half. And in there I started, April said, what do you do? And I said, well, I'm just reporting. This is what we as a congregation have done in the last 18 or so much. It's just my report to you.

And I was amazed as I was reading over. And I said, we have through our ministry, I mentioned somebody by name who thank God, she's back here this morning, she had pneumonia, but she's back, the lady who goes by their name, church. And so we have commissioned her to lead the way with helping hands ministry. And I outlined in there what we've done through helping hands. And I actually went so far as to say, we assisted a Catholic church downtown St. Catharines. We assisted a Baptist church in Niagara Falls. This is the body of Christ functioning together. And somebody says, but they're not our stripe, they're not our piece of it. That's not yours to decide, honey. Jesus said I have other sheep in other places. We don't judge people of a denomination by what goes on in their headquarters.

Northside people judge us as a local congregation by things that they've heard in the past. And so none of that matters. So we've helped the Catholic people minister to the Ukrainian Catholics. We help the Ukrainian people all the time. I pile up on the platform right here, our nicks and not nickers. Thank you, socks. Okay. This was supposed to be a very sober service. Here's to you. We collect socks and tukes and they go to the people on the streets. We're endeavoring to invite them to come and be a part of the body of Christ. It's an act of love. It's an act of devotion to Jesus as we reach out and we touch other people's eyes. If we're not willing to do that, why are we here?

We're not here just for us, beloved. We're here to get our gas tank filled up so we can go out and touch the world and be a messenger of good peace and good joy. It's the flavor of the gospel. It's the flavor. And so I was indicating the various things that we as a congregation have done. Some of you weren't here. You wouldn't know this. But this auditorium was turned into an assembly line where we had how many, three, four, Erica, help me. Well, 400 backpacks. I don't know how many we had. And some people from here and there all over the place helped us. And so we planned backpacks and we gave them to Ukrainian refugee children so that on their very first day of school in this weird country, they left a terrible place. But now they were in a strange place. So at least they had a backpack that when they went to school, all the kids would have a backpack, but they'd have a backpack too. And then there was a tube of toothpaste and a toothbrush and a little bit, you know, some scribblers and some markers and all this kind of stuff. And those things from this very auditorium ended up in London and in Brantford and Cambridge and in Niagara Falls, they went all over the place as we had connections here there, and all over. This is what the body of Christ does. But when we're all broken up, when we're all torn up and we can't get our act together, we become wasted bread. We become wasted bread. Just like now, this piece is here.

Pastor, we're going to eat this this morning. You're not, but I'm not afraid of my own germs, but you've got your cup and we'll be sharing out of these little cups a little bit later. But bread spoils when it's mishandled. We all know that. And so Jesus is the bread of life, he said, but now he is in us and we are in him. And now we are to be the bread of life that can be shared with the people of the world. So this was the glory of this moment when he said, this is my body, broken for you. Take and eat. And so they did so. And then of course hours later, the betrayal thing took place and he ended up on the cross and he perished there, but it was the will and the plan of God. The Word of God says in Isaiah 53, that it pleased the Lord to bruise him. And the Lord was pleased with his sacrifice.

And the Lord has rewarded him and will reward him again and again and again for the glorious sacrifice that makes it possible for us to experience the redemptive plan. So it says, while they were eating, Jesus took the bread and when he had given thanks, he broke it and he gave it to his disciples and he said, take and eat, this is my body. And he took the cup and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I just dropped this little note to you. You've heard that there is a very large church in this world that believes, taking from this passage of Scripture, that when we eat the bread, they literally believe this, that as they put the

bread in their mouth, it turns to flesh. They believe that as they drink the cup, they believe that it's called transubstantiation and they believe it becomes the blood of Christ.

There's no scripture to back that up. Jesus did not, when they were drinking the wine, they weren't drinking blood. They weren't drinking blood. It was symbolic. It was symbolic. Like going down in the waters of baptism, we don't drown you. Well when I baptize people, I quit baptizing people a long time ago and the deacon said, what do you want us to do? I said I like it too much. They said, what do you mean? We used to be baptizing at least 50 people every month in our church back in those days. And I said it's so much fun. Like, I'm serious about this. Going down in the water is symbolic of you being dead to your sin, dead to the old life.

And then when you come up out of the water, it's symbolic of new life. You're all wet, but you're in new life in Him. But you see when I put the people down, you'd remember this maybe back in church, back in Hamilton days, I only baptized there once, only one time that I do it. Otherwise I got other people to do so. Because I have this thing, when I get them down, I want to make sure they're dead. And so I hold them down until I see bubbles. And but you see, the going down in the water, the going down to the, they're not dying. It's symbolic. It's speaking of their complete, not relaxation, but complete submission to the Lord. And the only way that we can come back from the dead is to surrender and be dead. And the Apostle Paul says, now we are dead in Christ, yet we live, but not us, but Christ who lives through us. So you see, the communion service speaks of all of this stuff.

Good thing there's only one in the front row. I'm spitting like a soldier. So on that night, when they were celebrating the Passover, Jesus actually moved it over to become the final supper with His disciples. And within hours, of course, He was tied and being led away. And so when we come together for communion, it's a time of remembering. Jesus said, do this. I don't know which side of the table is pointing out. I think it has it on, maybe not on this table, on a lot of communion tables. Is it written there? This do and remembrance of me. Where's that come from? Jesus said, this as often as you do it. You do it to remember me.

Don't forget what I've done for you and rehearse it and rehearse it and rehearse it again. So coming together for communion is a time of remembrance. It's also a time of fellowship because in breaking bread with one another, think about what I learned in Ethiopia. Think of what I believe that Jesus was communicating to His friends. You've got to participate in me. This is my body. You've got to participate with me. And so the picture is that we've got to be together. And so when you think back on what I saw and experienced back in Ethiopia when they put food in each other's mouths, it's a confirmation. It's you and me. If our backs ever get to the wall, we link our arms. We never give up for anything.

I love that statement that I hear about U. S. Marines. Nobody left behind. We need that in the body of Christ. When somebody in our midst, should they fail, we don't kick them out to the side of the road or deliver them to the ash heap. The Bible says to restore them with love and with kindness and be generous as God is gracious to the failing people so also we should be. No one left behind. Fellowship brings that together. Fellowship is the glue that holds us together. It's a time of thanksgiving. Give thanks with a grateful heart.

It's a time Jesus said, that as often as you eat the bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. Can I give you a little marker right here? It all reminds us that we are to celebrate the communion service as often as we do it. And Jesus said Paul said, until He comes, the communion service is temporary. It's temporary. We only take the communion service until He comes. What's the purpose of all that? Why wouldn't we celebrate when we get to heaven as a communion service? No, we're going to. You see right now in the communion service, the primary focus is the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the focus. When we get to heaven, we're not focused on His death.

Remember the stories that I've given you about the groom and the bride. The groom would go off and prepare a house for his spoken bride. He had a whole year that he could prepare for her. She would spend that year preparing for him to ensure that when he comes for her, she has prepared herself to do as much as she can to perfection. And when they arrive at the house, that the Father has said, it's so interesting, when the Son is building a place for His future daughter-in-law, when the Son is preparing a place for His future bride, the Father gets to judge what's going on because He's got a lot at stake. And the Jewish tradition will tell you very clearly that the groom back in those days was not allowed to go and fetch His bride until the Father checked out the house and said, yep, this meets with my approval. This is up to the standard of the forest, the Joneses or whatever you're in. We won't be ashamed of this.

Yes, son, I'm proud of what you've done. Go and get your bride. And so on the occasion that he would go and get his bride, the bridal party would also be excited. So the groom would come with his trail of people who were celebrating, blowing horns, and acting like idiots. And then the ladies would come out so debonair and so beautiful and they'd carry their level. They've got to be the wise virgins and they'd be carrying their little amps of oil. And so the men were singing and carrying on, maybe the ladies did a little dozy dole, but they're on their way up to the house prepared. Hello, this is exciting. They're on their way to the house that the groom prepared. When they arrive, the bridal party can go into another room and just sit there and be patient because the marriage will now, after 12 months of preparation, the marriage

will now be consummated. Some people are standing outside the door. I don't want to talk about that. But when it's all complete and when the door opens, the grooming merges and his bride has her face covered, but now he in a very beautiful, generous demonstration wants to show off his bride. She comes out with his veil. He lifts the veil so that all the people can see her and they go into singing and shouting and you know the next thing that happens? It's party time in heaven they celebrate the marriage supper of the lamb. So you see the celebration of the communion is remembering and commemorating the price that Jesus paid if celebrating the death. But when we come to the marriage supper of the lamb, the focus in that house, the father's house who said to his son, yes, we're ready.

Jesus said, no man knows when the son is going to come. Only the father knows, not even the son knows. But when the father says go get him, he goes and gets him. And when they arrive there, the marriage is consummated. And then they gather and they have a great celebration. And who is the primary person at the marriage supper of the lamb? The groom is showing off

his bride. The angels are going to be singing. The word of God says in Luke 15 that when one person gives her heart to Christ, what happens? Heaven comes unhinged. They go bananas. It says all heaven rejoices over one getting saved.

And from the moment Peter you gave your heart to Christ, that old Dutch stubbornness gave into the cross. And when you gave your heart to Peter, no, Peter gave his heart to the Lord. Do you know what happened? It says in Luke 15 that the angels began to rejoice. They're still rejoicing over you. They're still rejoicing over every one of us, but suddenly the father is going to say to the son, bring them all home. And so they're all going to be rising from the graves and we're going to be going up to meet him in the air. And there we will celebrate the marriage supper of the lamb. So this is a foretaste as we come together. But there's a need for all of us together, together in the house of the Lord, that house. Somebody last Sunday morning, a young person, when I gave the invitation, who wants to make a reservation in heaven?

A hand went up. I never got to speak to that person, but I happen to know. I said at the conclusion of that service now, the one who said, yes, I want to give my heart to Jesus. I said it's important that you would speak it to somebody because the Bible says if you confess with your mouth, having believed in your heart, then you'll be saved. I said you need to confess it to somebody. I called somebody that afternoon because I was figuring something out. I called somebody and I said, I have some news for you. And the reply came back, we already know. So what we already know then is there was a new name written down in glory. And it's mine. Oh, yes, it's mine. With the white robe, angels tell the story, a sinner has come home.

There's a new name written down in glory. And it's mine. Oh, yes, it's mine. With my sins forgiven, I am bound for heaven. Nevermore to Rome. For those who are sitting watching this on the computer, forgive my horrendous voice. You couldn't hear all this. We put the Mormon Tabernacle choir to shame here this morning. Well, I just got an email from the Lord just now. So all over Israel and to this day, people celebrate the Passover. It's a sad scenario, could we say? And we say so with dignity and with respect. Millions of people gather together to celebrate and commemorate the Passover. And it hasn't occurred to them yet.

The real lamb has been slain, but everyone must eat. You know, if anyone that evening, if a wayward teenager of a Jewish home had failed to make it home that night and to be under the protective covering of the blood, you just don't want to think about it. You just don't want to think. Everybody has to be included. Each and every one of us has to be included under the blood, the protective covering of the blood of the lamb. And so when Jesus got together with the disciples that evening, they assembled in a room, maybe the very upper room that we're familiar with from Acts chapter 2. I did a little research. This is important stuff, but I love the little details that the table that they would have sat at would have been a very low-sitting table. And they would be sitting on cushions all around that table so that it would be very,

very easy to lean over to one another and to be close to one another because this was a covenanting time. This was a time when Jesus was trying to remind them, that each one of you has partaken of me. Now, you've got to stick together and don't mess it up. But of course, Jews broke over the line even that night. So we ought not to be surprised when we know of someone having given their life to Christ and they're not serving the Lord anymore. Judas was a chosen

one and we know what happened to him. So they gathered that night and Jesus broke bread with them. Something else happened that night that was unique, and not typical of the Passover Supper, Jesus had arranged for some water to be prepared and he washed their feet. I don't have to go into a long dissertation on what this was symbolic of. When Peter said, oh, no, Lord, this is below you, you mustn't wash my feet. When Jesus explained what was going on, Peter said that then my feet were not enough for he felt so desperately unworthy. This was included in this particular meeting. I was in a service some years ago when I was just a young buck. I was not married. That was my first year of college. I went down to Akron, Ohio and I wanted to take in a service that Rex Humbard was running. And so I went, that was a glorious time. That was incredible. And then after that, I went and I visited a particular church, a Pentecostal strain, and they sang some and then there was a little something out of the word. And then the pastor said, no, we're all going to retire downstairs. We're all going to take off our footwear and we're going to have a foot washing service. I found the keys to my car on my way. So you don't have to worry about me.

What's wrong with it? Nothing's wrong with it, but you don't want to see my feet. So, Jesus took upon him the task of a servant. And remember, I've been sharing with you what it means to bless. My prayer is that God would kneel where you are the lowest place that you could find yourself. When the disciples were sitting there, they were all wearing open-toed sandals. The roads weren't that much paved. Some of the roads of Jerusalem would have been paved, but lots of the back streets were just dirty. A donkey or a camel would pass through and their habits were not, they weren't trained to go outside. Well, they were trained to go outside. They were always outside.

So when you're walking through the streets, you are walking through things that are not pleasant. You got a little bit of stuff between your toes. And so it was a normal thing when somebody arrived as a guest in a home, the servant of that house would immediately prepare water and some kind of a towel, a cloth, and they would wash the guest's feet. It was a normal cultural thing, but it would be a servant that would do it. The master of the house would never say to Ralph, his servant, oh no, you go and eat yourself a date cookie and have yourself a Tim's coffee. I'll take care of this. No, no, no, no. It would be below the dignity of this person of great stature. King of kings and Lord of lords, gird himself with a towel. And he stepped down.

He knelt down to the filthiest, the dirtiest, the scummiest, the smellyiest. And there with his own hands, he washed the disciples' feet. What was he saying? If you want to be a follower of me, if you really want to enjoy being a participator, I've told you to eat the parts of my body and recognize the body of Christ. You've got to be prepared to minister to people that you find not so nice, not so nice. I could tell you some stories about some things that I've come across in churches. I think it would discourage some of you. I'll tell you one little thing. I hope it's okay to tell you this. But the Lord impressed upon me to reach out to some people in our city who were not of good means. They were pretty poor. We knew so, we had ways of knowing the same.

So I sent buses into that community. And on Sunday nights, we had buses rolling into the church. And so we had people that we said to them, don't worry about what you wear. When you come, you're going to see people in very expensive dresses and coats. You're going to see them

wearing special jewelry. That's us. That's how we live. That's who we are. But you just come just the way you are. It was long before I was chairing a board meeting and somebody on the board said, we've been talking, meaning the circle of my supporters, the trustees, the leadership. When you get over this, Pastor Dave, they're not our kind. They don't belong here. What you're doing is an embarrassment to us.

I said they're poor. I said, John, the Baptist sent word to Jesus. Said, are you the Messiah? Jesus said, go back to John and tell them. I'm sharing the true bread of life with those people who are starving spiritually. I'm reaching out to the poor and my board was strong. I said, no. If you want to bring them in here, you can rope off the section of the auditorium. Let them stay on their own. I just said I don't know how many people you're listening to this out there. People need to know the church is not a perfect place. If we're going to be like Jesus, we used to sing a song. Do you know this one? To be like Jesus, to be like Jesus.

Watch these words. All I ask is to be like Him, all through life's journey from earth to glory. All I ask. Lord, I've got a simple little request. I don't want a lot of fanfare. I just have one little. I just want to be just like Jesus. I always had trouble singing that song. All I ask is, I just want this simple little. I'm not asking for a mansion. I'm not asking for applause. I just want to be like Jesus. And that means I'm willing to wash feet. Well, maybe. Sorry to make fun of that. Just telling you, I do have my over-sensibility. All I ask is to be like Him. Now, I want to hasten. I've used so much of my time, but I've got to move on quickly. The morning, when Jesus rose, some ladies went and found the tomb empty. Mary Magdalene among them. She was the one that Jesus had delivered from many demons. And she actually got a chance to meet with the Lord Himself. He appeared to her. She thought He was just the gardener. She was weeping profusely. He said, what's your problem, young woman? She said, they've taken my Lord, and I don't know what they've done with Him.

And He said one word, Mary. It's you, Master, it's you. He gave her some instructions and said, now you go. And you tell them, I'm back. It's so interesting that when she got to the room where the disciples were, she said, you'll never guess what's happened. I just met Him. I just met Jesus. The Word of God says they didn't believe her. I don't know if they thought she was hysterical. I don't know how they wrote this off. The disciples were dismissive. They were dismissive. I don't want to be judgmental of them. I don't know how I would have reacted. Some of us need to check everything out. I'm sure, you know, every side of it. I want to see the real. Give me some proof here. One of the disciples whose name was Thomas said, I won't believe it until I can touch. I want to put my fingers in the nail holes. I want to put my hand in his eye. Then I believe. And Jesus later on said, blessed is the one who having not seen yet believes. I'm not dismissive of the disciples, but I'm just observing something. They were challenged. He had told them exactly what was going to happen.

Angels appeared to the women who came that morning. He said, hey, why are you looking for somebody who is alive? Why are you looking in the grave? Why are you looking in the sepulcher? He's not here. He's risen. Now go and spread the good news. They had trouble going and spreading the good. They met with angels. They met with angels and they still struggled. Think about this. Don't write them off. Don't write these disciples off. Israel had been delivered through

a series of miraculous interventions by God and finally the Passover night. When they got out in the wilderness in the desert, Moses struck the rock and water came. They cried out for meat, God sent ten plump chickens flying over. The chickens all had heart attacks and dropped all around. Some of the people that day probably got hit by a chicken and had whiplash. All the birds that fell. They had meat forever. They had everything, everything. And they are still disappointed with God. They still messed up. They still sinned. They still went off the rail. The Lord knows that we're just dust, we're prone to failure. I got three A-men's and one ouch.

This is great. My computer died. That's okay. I have to rely on the anointing. The Word of God says that two were of that company. So they heard the testimony of some women who said we met with angels. The testimony of Mary of Magdalene. They heard that testimony. He's not here. He's Risen. And the angels even recounted and said, don't you remember back in Galilee that the Master said this would all take place? So why are you surprised? Jesus said this is exactly how it would be.

It's all playing out. It's a drama that God planned all out. Now go and tell your friend. They went back. They told these disciples, this other group, and they didn't believe it. Now go on in that passage it says, but two of them, so two of the ones that heard the stories from the women. Two of them headed off on a seven-mile journey to a town called Amayas. And as they're walking, you know the story. I don't have to tell you that, but I want to bring you a little nugget. I think it is. So they're walking along this road and all of a sudden this person appears. It's Jesus. And they don't recognize Him.

Why didn't they recognize Him? Because they weren't looking for Him. They weren't looking for Him. Do you know what the word of God says about the second coming, the rapture? He's coming for those who love His appearing. Are you watching? Are you expecting? Are you anticipating they're going to show up at any moment? Are you anticipating? The two on the road to Amayas couldn't even get to that point of anticipating. So when Jesus comes along, He finds Him having a discussion and the discussion is negative. And so they start, as they're going on, Jesus said, well, what are you talking about here? They said you must be the only one in all Jerusalem that hasn't heard all this story. You heard all of the things that are going on. And what are they talking about? They're not talking about two angels talking to the women in the tomb. That was a very quiet little secret thing that was only passed on. That wasn't spread abroad. When they said to this person who was walking along with them, when they said, you must be the only one who doesn't know what's going on. When He said to them, what's the focus of your conversation? They did not say, He's risen and we're going to head down to the next town here. Maybe He's there. We've got to find Jesus. He's up to something. No, no, no, no. They were remembering for this fellow who appears to be unlearned about these things. Oh, heaven you heard?

He did such wonderful miracles. But all sad day, they took them and they crucified the Lord. And of all things, His body has gone missing. That's their testimony. So then Jesus recounts for them, dating back to Moses, it says, and He related to them prophetic things about the coming Messiah with the Messiah. You know what He quoted Isaiah 53. You've got to know that was included. And other passages as well. So Jesus is talking to them and they're listening, but

they're not catching on. The scribes had listened to this Jesus teaching and said, wow, we've never heard anybody open the scriptures to us like this. Here are these two guys. Watch this.

They are in such a depth of mourning. Their hearts were so low. They were so desperate. They were so, they were like a plowed field. They were torn up. They were ripped to shreds. Their hopes were doused. Their ship had gone down and there were no life preservers for them. It was all over. He's dead and not even a body it's gone. And as Jesus is opening up the scriptures to them, a brand new Bible and I just baptized it. That a boy, Dave. It's usually coffee.

He's made to these marvelous things. They never caught on. But they did. And I want you to watch this. I've never seen this before. How many times have I read the wet papers of a book like this and seen such beautiful truth? How many times have I read the story about the two on the road to Emmaus? How many times have I even thought about it? And I maybe spoke about how they were sitting with Jesus. While, he, he spoke like he was just going to keep on going. He said, no, no, no, no, it's late in the, you keep on this dark road. You're going to get hit by robbers. You know, you could, you could be killed out there.

No, they were insistent. Come on into our house. We'll have some supper together. We'll find a straw tick for you. You can spend the night and you could be gone in the morning. You'll be fine, fine, fine, fine. So, oh, okay. Well, then he agreed. Then they sat down at the table. I just had this picture when they got in the house. They said, look, it's getting dark. It's getting dark. So when they got in the house, what was the first thing they did? They lit some kind of a torch.

They lit some kind of a kerosene lantern. They've walked with Jesus for upwards of seven miles listening to his voice and hearing scriptures that should have riveted them and caused their brains to catch fire. They did speak later and said, how did you feel when he was talking? The guy said I thought my heart was on fire. Did not our hearts burn within us? We heard glorious things, but not enough to convert them. Not enough to move them to the other side. They did not take the moment to say, say, we left out one little part. Maybe he didn't get stolen. They didn't add this. They could not have added, well, the angels. They couldn't have added the story from the women. They left that out because the Word of God says that the men, sorry men, the ladies love this, it says that the men considered in the NIV. They consider their words to be idle, gossip, and silliness. They didn't even include that. They were so low. Morning is a natural thing, but not like that, honey. Morning to the place of oblivion. So they sat down and he was a guest. Watch it. He's the guest. He reaches out, takes hold of the bread, and says, do you guys mind if I say the ritual prayer? Oh no, it would be normal for the host to do so. It would be an honor. Oh, like an honor, like a high honor.

High honor. And Jesus asked for that honor. Or maybe he just went ahead. Doesn't matter. I want to bless the bread. He blessed it. This is my body broken for you. He blessed it and he broke it. And the moment he broke it, their eyes opened. The moment he broke the bread, the breaking of bread is an affirmation. The breaking of bread is a message of peace. When the one put food in the other guy's mouth, he was saying to my friend, trust me. Please trust me. I'm not your enemy.

We were enemies in the past. There are still tribes there that kill each other for no reason at all. I've ministered among the tribes. This man is he's tearing some in jure and he puts it towards that guy's mouth. Trust me, as Jesus is taking bread, it's not a magical moment, but it's a revelation moment. The breaking of bread in that moment was a divine revelation. God at that moment pulled back the drapes and they looked at Jesus and they realized one more move and they were going to break everything on the table. When they looked at him now in that glorious moment, he had a divine revelation. It's Jesus and he was gone. Jesus. I suggest to you as you take this cup and these things are senior proof. I didn't want to use these, but you know what?

There's another outbreak of trouble. You know that. The homes are being sealed, the protection walls are going up. It's not good. And so it's not proper for us to handle bread. You know, it's just as improper. It isn't even proper to put it underneath your nose in an open cup. We just need to be careful and we don't want to be careless. So that's the reason for doing what I've chosen to do this morning. He sent out and picked up a package of these knowing how much you love this little. I'm not sure it's real food. But Jesus that night and he knew he was to be betrayed took bread and he broke it and said, this is my body broken for you. And Calvary's hill of sorrow where sins, demands were paid and rays of hope for tomorrow across our path was laid. I see a crimson stream of blood. It flows from Calvary. It's way hard, sweet, big. I just had a memory moment sitting in a church service. The pastor started leading this song, probably a communion service. And when the congregation sang that song, it's waves which reached the throne of God, waves of the cleansing blood which reached the throne of God, sweeping over me in that moment in that service. I became overwhelmed. I became reduced to tears, I was swept with the redemptive thought. His blood has cleansed me. His blood has redeemed me. Hallelujah for the Lamb.

We've read the scripture and we've prayed. Let's partake together. Thank you, Jesus. I'm from a church tradition where we don't eat anything in the church except communion. But when I became a pastor in such limited facilities, we found it necessary by times to use the place where we do our worship to also have a sandwich and a cup of coffee we're doing a seminar and people couldn't handle that. We're eating in this sacred place and I had to say, that's when I came up with this line. This place isn't sacred. This is a sheep shed. That's a barn. This is the sanctuary. No, you're not. You're the temple of the Holy Spirit.

You're the temple. You're the temple. So it was a night that he was betrayed. They're having supper and they sang some Psalm-type hymns. And in the middle of the supper, in the middle of the worship service, because it was a whole evening of the seder's supper. They would eat and then they would sing and then they would pray and then they'd, you know, the whole time was the seder. Jesus took the bread and broke it. He also passed one cup around, they all drank from the same cup. Except Jesus did not drink of that cup. He was going to drink of it in reality in a few hours. He did not eat the bread. Now he said, this is my body for you.

I don't eat this. You eat this. He was saying it wasn't broken for his sake. For God so loved the world he gave, don't get lost in that scripture. Don't get lost there. He so loved us that he gave because he craved our fellowship. He craved a love relationship with us. But remember, it's all about us. When he went to the cross it wasn't about him, it was about us. He suffered for us. So

he didn't eat the bread, he didn't drink the cup. But he said, you drink, you drink. Everything that he did was a picture. It was a pattern to teach.

So Lord Jesus, I trust, they were still being taught and we're still understanding and still receiving. Amen? Let us partake. I've asked El to help us because we're about to conclude. And the way that I like to conclude in a service as you're getting to know, I can't conceive that there's a service like this and there isn't somebody that needs prayer. I've got some issues in my body. Do you know how many times I've been prayed for for those issues? Mega times. And I still keep on asking for prayer. Never give up. Never give up. And so as we're all going to stand together just now and we're about to conclude and you're

about to head on your way to celebrate the last few hours that you have, whatever's left of this year, and prepare for a new journey according to the calendar. But I'm going to remain here for a few minutes because I love to pray with people. I love to be a source of encouragement. And I hope somebody comes. Not for me. I hope you come for you. Don't come for me. But I dearly want to pray with you. I want to pray with you. Will you let me? And will you let my friends that I've alerted when I do this come and help me? So Al's going to do some music and I'm going to say my prayer is that the Lord will bless you. He'll keep you. He'll satisfy you. He'll cause the radiance of his face to cause you to be transfixed by that very vision. My prayer is that God will give you his peace, his peace. That's my prayer for you. As you're going, there's a little bucket just at the door as you're going out a place for you to make a wonderful deposit. But if some people are going that way, I want to pray with some people who ever come.