

Holy Thursday Sermon—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN 4/8/04

Text: 1 Corinthians 11: 23-26

Title: “Do this to remember me.”

Introduction: Ills.: Memorial crash victim crosses along the road

Theme: Jesus’ invitation to celebrate the meal in remembrance of him is designed to focus our faith and to cause our faith expression to speak loudly to who he is and what he has caused us to become.

Remembering that focuses our faith

- Our Christian faith and the practice of the Lord’s Supper is all about Jesus
 1. Unfortunately, much of what passes as church and faith, today, is me-focused
 1. All about “feeling” and “happiness” rather than “confession” and “other-service”
 2. The impact of this on our relationship w/Jesus is that it becomes nothing more than cheap pious entertainment
 - *“To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.” Mat 11:16-17*
 - **Ills.: If Jesus were here today**
 2. “Do this in remembrance of me” puts the attention on Jesus not on you and me
 1. Participating in the Lord’s Supper we gather to receive his body and blood, given and shed for me
 - *Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? 1 Cor 10: 16*
 - No more room for self-bragging but to boast in Christ’s cross alone
 2. Moved by the memory of this sacrifice, we live because of him and for him
 - *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” John 13: 34-35*
- Our Christian faith and the practice of the Lord’s Supper is all about God’s action on our behalf
 1. Because it takes a miracle of God acting on our behalf to initiate and complete our salvation
 - **Ills.: God always defies the odds**
 - It took a *miracle of God in Jesus’ death* to do the *one for many* exchange
 - *Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings. Rom 5: 18*
 2. Because it takes the *miracle of God to take bread/wine* and bring *forgiveness & life in Jesus’ body and blood*
 - *Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. . .just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. John 6:54,57*

Remembering as a statement of faith

- By our participation in the meal we remember and affirm that Jesus’ death is God’s only way to save the world
 1. In a pluralistic world, diminishing exclusive belief, thru the Lord’s Supper we confidently proclaim he is the Way
 2. *“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” Act 4:12*
- By our participation in the meal we remember and affirm that Jesus’ death is, individually, our sole hope of salvation
 1. **Ills.: “I am an American” commercials — a personal statement of conviction**
 2. Jesus did not just die for the sins of the whole world but died for my sins so that I could go to heaven
 3. An encouragement to you and others as we witness one another attending and confessing our faith in Jesus

If Jesus were here today

If Jesus Christ were to come today, people would not even crucify him. They would ask him to dinner, and hear what he had to say, and make fun of it. **Citation: Thomas Carlyle, quoted by D.A. Wilson in *Carlyle at His Zenith*. *Christianity Today*, Vol. 34, no. 13.**

God always defies the odds

A certain archaeologist was digging in the Negev Desert in Israel and came upon a sarcophagus containing a mummy. After examining it, he called the curator of a prestigious natural-history museum.

"I've just discovered the 3,000-year-old mummy of a man who died of heart failure!" the excited archaeologist exclaimed.

The curator replied, "Bring him in. We'll check it out."

A week later, the amazed curator called the archaeologist. "You were right about the mummy's age and cause of death. How in the world did you know?" he asked.

The archaeologist replied, "Easy. There was a piece of paper in his hand that read, '10,000 shekels on Goliath.'"

1 Corinthians 11: 23-26

²³For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.