

The Lesson of the Table
1 Corinthians 11:26

June 7, 2015

A. Object Lessons

1. A Favourite for Children

2. God Used Them in the OT

3. Jesus Used Them in His teaching

4. The Last Supper

B. The Bread

1. His Body

2. Accepting Christ ^A.

C. The Wine

1. His Blood ^B.

2. Being Redeemed ^C.

D. The Lesson

1. Our Text

2. The Fact of Christ's Death ^D.

3. The Purpose of Christ's Death ^E.

4. The Personal Importance of Christ's Death ^F.

^A John 6:32-35; Luke 22:19

^B Luke 22:18

^C Luke 22:20

^D 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

^E Acts 2:23; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 5:19; Hebrews 9:22

^F 1 Timothy 1:15, Romans 5:8

A. Object Lessons

1. A Favourite for Children

- a. when I was a child, an object lesson was one of the most interesting parts of a Sunday service or children’s meeting
- b. the pastor, teacher or leader would take some object – sometimes a most uncommon object, sometimes a very common object – then tell a story about that object and teach us a lesson
- c. an object lesson is a parable in material form: something you see that reminds you of an invisible, heavenly truth; or, looking at it another way, it is something visible to help us remember the invisible God
- d. at our Awana Grand Prix, our speakers have brought a number of such object lessons
 - (A) Dave Kinsey with the different size balls in a bottle, that taught that life has to be lived in God’s order to make it fit
 - (B) Ryan Wettlaufer made a pendulum device that showed there are certain rules God has made and that we need to follow
 - (C) and our brother Gord Struve, who is great at using object lessons, made a car out of cardboard cartons to bring a gospel message
- e. these objects should capture our attention (even as adults) so that we can learn spiritual truth

2. God Used them in the OT

- a. when the Israelites crossed into the land of promise on the dried up Jordan, God had them take 12 rocks from the river bed onto the shore so that when the children asked about that pile of rocks, they could be told about God’s miraculous bringing them into the land
- b. when He had Jeremiah take a bottle made of pottery and break it before the leaders of Israel to show His right to punish them
- c. when He gave Moses the plans to make the tabernacle, the place of worship, God put in many objects to remind Israel of Himself

3. Jesus Used Them in His Teaching

- a. in His parables, He related things that could be seen daily – perhaps to be seen even as He spoke: a man sowing seed, a boat out fishing

- b. to illustrate how important it is to find the lost, He told of a woman who lost a coin sweeping out her entire house until she found it
- c. to show God's love as the great shepherd, He told how a shepherd went out to find one lost sheep

4. The Last Supper

- a. was actually filled with a number of object lessons
- b. there was the washing of the disciples feet by the Lord Himself
- c. there was the eating of the Passover meal whose picture of salvation would shortly be fulfilled by Christ on the cross
- d. at one point He blessed a cup and told the disciples to share it among themselves, which I believe was His way of telling them all that they would share in His suffering (Luke 22:17, Mark 10:39)
- e. but when the supper was nearly over, Jesus took two simple objects that had been part of the Passover supper to be used as a continuing object lesson, a memorial of Himself and the death He was facing:
 - (A) a piece of bread
 - (B) a cup of wine
- f. two very simple things as a perpetual reminder to us

There is a green hill far away,
Outside a city wall,
Where the dear Lord was crucified,
Who died to save us all.

Chorus

*O dearly, dearly has He loved!
And we must love Him too,
And trust in His redeeming blood,
And try His works to do. —{2}.*

B. The Bread

1. His Body

- a. this is part of a loaf of bread
- b. there are many lessons that we can learn from this bread which represents the body of the Lord Jesus

- (A) there is the reminder that the Son of God left His Glory in Heaven
- (B) that many Christmases ago He came to earth to live in a human body, a body just like your's and mine
- (C) a body that could feel pain and hunger and tiredness
- (D) a body that could be broken, torn apart on the cruel cross

2. Accepting Christ

- a. yet that dying, bruised body represents life for us
 - (A) "32 Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, ..., 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." ... 35 ... "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, ..." (John 6:32-35)
 - (B) not merely life, but fulfilling life, abundant life, satisfying life
 - (C) and of this bread – representing His body – we are invited to eat
- b. you and I take of this bread
 - (A) we cut or break a piece off of it
 - (B) we put it into our mouths, chew and swallow
 - (C) it becomes part of us, nourishment, life
- c. that is a picture of our accepting Christ as their Saviour
 - (A) eating this bread doesn't bring us salvation
 - (B) rather those who know Jesus as their own personal Saviour take this bread and eat it
 - (C) by this act they are saying "Thank you God for sending your Son into the world to live with us to be my Saviour; I have received Him; He has given me life; He is my Life."
- d. 'And when He had taken some bread and 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.'" (Luke 22:19)
 - (A) let us give thanks
 - (B) and let us who know the Lord as our Saviour partake of this bread

We may not know, we cannot tell,
 What pains He had to bear;
 But we believe it was for us
 He hung and suffered there.

...

C. The Wine

1. His Blood

- a. we made reference to Jesus' earlier sharing the cup with His disciples and afterwards He said, "for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes." (Luke 22:18)
- b. this is a little cup of grape juice – the fruit of the vine
 - (A) what colour is it? ... yes, purple or red
 - (B) by its colour and form it resembles blood
 - (C) do you know what is going around your body all the time? ... Yes, it is blood.
 - (D) do you know why? ... it is to keep us alive
 - (E) blood represents life, and this cup of juice is to remind us of Christ's life that He gave up when He died on the cross

2. Being Redeemed

- a. why was that necessary?
- b. it is because, as we learned this morning in our Bible class, that we are all sinful, and because of that we deserve to die
 - (A) but the Lord Jesus Christ died in our place and for our sins; he took our punishment for sin on himself
 - (B) a cup of wine or fruit of the grape in Scripture represented life given up, suffering and punishment
- c. so, those drinking this cup are saying, "Thank you, Lord Jesus, for dying for my sin; I am accepting what you did for me and saying so to everyone who sees me drink this."
- d. "And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.'" (Luke 22:20)
 - (A) let us give thanks
 - (B) and let us who know the Lord as our Saviour partake of this cup

He died that we might be forgiv'n,
He died to make us good,
That we might go at last to heav'n,
Saved by His precious blood.

...

D. The Lesson

1. Our Text

- a. is one with which we often conclude after we have gathered at the Lord's table: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." (1 Corinthians 11:26)
- b. the word "proclaim" here includes preaching, showing forth (or publishing), explaining, and applying Christ's death to others
- c. but there only remains a very limited time for this to continue – one day Christ will return, and then it will be too late for any preaching

2. The Fact of Christ's Death

- a. there are many tombs
 - (A) in most cases they identify ordinary people such as you and I
 - (B) but most military graveyards have a memorial to the unknown soldier, those who died unidentified whose bones may be within, or strewn across some battlefield or at the bottom of the ocean
 - (C) in any old cemetery you will find many old graves from whose memorials the names have disappeared: the bones are still there
- b. then there are some special tombs
 - (A) around the tomb containing Confucius' bones are the graves containing 100,000 of his descendants
 - (B) Muhammed's bones are to be found in the Mosque of the Prophet
 - (C) Buddha's body was cremated and the ashes distributed to various stupas or monuments around the Indian sub-continent
 - (D) Jesus died, was placed in a tomb, but His bones are not there
- c. the lesson of the table, when we partake of this bread (representing His body) and this cup (representing His blood shed for us), is this
 - (A) that the Son of God really came from heaven to live among us as the man Jesus Christ of Nazareth
 - (B) this man Jesus really died on the cross
 - (C) this man Jesus was really placed in the tomb
 - (D) and, this man Jesus really rose from the dead and shall return one day to earth
 - (E) "3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures," (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

- (F) so with this bread and with this cup we show forth to all observers that our faith is based on solid historical fact

3. The Purpose of Christ's Death

- a. there are some false ideas around about Jesus Christ's death
 - (A) that He was dying for an ideal, as an illustration that we should be ready to give up our lives for other's good – well He did that, but His death transcends that reason
 - (B) that His death was a mistake because He was caught up in the politics of the day; just another human tragedy
 - (C) that He was simply another martyr for a cause
- b. but it was not these; it was God's plan and purpose
 - (A) "this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross ..." (Acts 2:23)
 - (B) "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Corinthians 5:21)
 - (C) Christ's death was to deal with sin
- c. the lesson of the table is to explain that purpose
 - (A) the bread, speaking of His human nature, dealt with the sin that is part of human nature, Romans 5:19 (NAS): "For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous."
 - (B) and the cup, speaking of Christ's shed blood, dealt with the penalty of sin, Hebrews 9:22 (NIV): "In fact, the law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."
 - (C) so, with this bread and with this cup we shew forth to all observers that our salvation is based on Christ's death for us

4. The Personal Importance of Christ's Death

- a. there is a third lesson of the table
 - (A) the first was telling the fact that Jesus has died (and is risen)
 - (B) the second was telling the truth that Jesus died for our sins
 - (C) but, when we eat of this bread; when we drink of this cup, we take them into our body and they become part of us

- (D) then we tell everyone, "I have accepted these truths; but more than that, I have received this gift of life coming from His dying for my sin; I have make it my very own"
- b. Taking part in this communion service is a silent testimony that we have made its truth personal to ourselves:
- (A) we declare along with Paul: "It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.", (1 Timothy 1:15)
- (B) we make Romans 5:8 personal: "But God demonstrated His own love toward ME, in that while I was yet a sinner, Christ died for ME."

There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin;
He only could unlock the gate
Of heav'n and let us in.
Chorus
O dearly, dearly has He loved!
And we must love Him too,
And trust in His redeeming blood,
And try His works to do.

Pastoral Prayer

"20 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, 21 equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen." (Hebrews 13:20-21)

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2. '*There Is a Green Hill*' by Cecil Frances Humphreys Alexander (1818-1895)