

# Communion: Table Manners?

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 30 August 2015

Preacher: Tobin Miller

[ 0 : 00 ] Something about teaching through scripture verse by verse kind of keeps you honest, doesn't it? Sometimes there's some of these passages and you're like, oh my gosh, I don't know if I want, that's not a fun one to teach.

And God has called us to teach and instruct from all of his word. You know, my name is Tobin and I'm one of the pastors here. If you're new here, we want to welcome you to Watermark Community Church.

We're a family going on a journey to meet the Lord, to know him more deeply, to love him, and to introduce him to those who do not yet know him.

When we, in October 10th, we'll be five years old. And when we started praying about did God want us to start a church, we prayed a lot of different things.

And we had about 30 people together and we started praying about what kind of church does God want us to start and what would be the values and what would be things that we'd want to be known for. And almost all of us, actually all of us, said one of the first things is we wanted to be a church that never forgot what it was like before we knew Christ.

[ 1 : 05 ] I mean, sometimes we just feel like you can become a Christian and then all of a sudden, before you know it, all your friends are Christians and you're doing Christian things. And you're just not a part of what you used to be like before you came to know Christ. And we believed that God wanted us to be a church that never forgot that, that when we walked in darkness and when we were alone and we felt helplessness, we wanted to remember those feelings and how Christ came in and healed those things and changed those things and made all things new.

And we wanted to be about sharing those with people. We said that we believed that this church exists for the glory of God and for people not in church on Sunday. And that was one of the things we keep talking about.

We realized that there's a lot of problems in our world and it's just craziness when you read the news and there's just everything. There's lack of justice and war and ignorance and hunger and not enough water and not everybody speaks Texan.

There's a lot of just craziness in it, but we, that's a joke, okay? If you're not here, this is your first time. But we realized there's all this craziness in it, but we believe with all of our heart that the greatest problem in the world is sin.

It's the brokenness between us and God, our creator. And we realized that we could fix all these other things and we should fix all these other things as Christians. As Christians, we are compelled to go into the brokenness and that's why this church is here.

[ 2 : 26 ] But ultimately, we realized that if we don't fix our heart, if we don't deal with the human heart and the brokenness in our broken relationship with God, that nothing else matters. We prayed about a church that would be kind of like a lifeboat, that would go out into the world and it would go out into Hong Kong, into Asia, and it would save people.

And I think, you know, honestly, sometimes churches, we, we struggle with these things. Because sometimes as a church grows, it changes from a lifeboat and it becomes a cruise ship.

And there's a lot of things that you do to entertain each other and have different programs. And sometimes we struggle with these things. I think all churches struggle with these things. And some of them remain true to what God's called them to do.

And some of them get taken over by the culture and society around them. And those programs and things are great things. And they are neat things. But we wanted to make sure that whatever we did at this church equipped you and helped you walk a lifetime with the Lord.

And it gave you the tools to do that. And we didn't want to distract you from why God has you here and why the church has you here. You know, when we started, we brought out this stretcher. [ 3 : 36 ] And probably the first week. And we put this out there because we told the story in the Gospels of Jesus preaching and teaching. And we asked people to come up here and to write down people's names that they were trusting that God would allow them to bring to know the Lord.

And then we committed to pray for these people in here. And it's amazing because even, I carry this and I look at it and I pray through these names. And it's in our house. It's not on the wall, but it's in our house.

My wife wouldn't let me put it on the wall. But as I look at this, I see right here, that's KK. That's my youngest daughter. And so four years ago, we put her name in the center.

And we started praying for her that God would open her eyes to know Jesus. And last March, he did. And we were able to pray with her and talk about why we do communion. And there's a lot of names on there.

And maybe some of your names are on there. And people have been praying for you. And they brought you here. And you heard the good news of the Gospel. And our desire was as a church that we wouldn't forget this.

[ 4 : 41 ] We wouldn't forget our DNA. We wouldn't forget who we are. We wouldn't lose focus. Because if we're honest, sometimes we do things over and over and over. And we say things over and over and over. And as we do them and we say them, we lose focus.

We lose the meaning and the purpose of why we are even here. That's why we're coming to communion today. And we're going to talk about that. Because the church in Corinth, they really, really struggle with this idea of living out their life in a world that was out of control. And the more that they've been living it, and we've seen it through like ten chapters, the more they've been living out their life in a world that's out of control, the worse things got. I mean, there were divisions in their church.

Their church was dividing along lines on who was the best teacher and who was the best community group leader. And what they believed in certain things. And as the church grew, it became even more selfish.

I mean, the church actually became self-centered and selfish and prideful and arrogant. And as they did that, even more and more divisions happened. And Paul gets to them in chapter 11.

[ 5 : 44 ] And you can read. I mean, if you're reading in the Greek, he is not happy. I mean, this is not a happy passage to read and to translate. He is very intense.

And he's worried about us as a church because he's worried that sometimes we're going to lose our foundation. We're going to lose our way. We're going to lose why we're here.

And the church in Corinth was doing that, and all their actions were destroying the gospel. And people were forgetting why they gathered together. And Paul was saying, if you keep doing this, you're not going to be able to fix this.

The church is going to die. And you need to know that in the early days, the Christians, when they came to Christ, they met in the synagogues. But it wasn't too long before the Jews realized that the Jews and Christians, Christianity isn't a sect of Jews.

It's something totally different. And so the Jews just kicked the Christians out of the synagogue. And now the Christians were looking for a place to meet. And so what we see is they started meeting in people's homes. And they started meeting in wealthy people's homes.

[ 6 : 49 ] They were called patrons. And so this patron would come to Christ, and he would have this massive home, and then he would invite people to his home, and they would do church there. The first person we know who's a patron is this guy named Gaius.

We read about him in Romans. He was a wealthy guy. He came to Christ, and he opened his house up for church. And Paul is in there writing. And so people are coming, and they're worshiping in the Lord. You know, it's one of the things I pray that we have somebody in our congregation that comes to know the Lord, and they have an old warehouse they want to give up, and then we can just move in there as a church, you know, or something like that.

So it's just a dream, right? But that's, you got to keep it real, that we could worship with the Lord. And when they came to worship, what usually happened was this. They had a potluck dinner. So everybody came, and they brought a meal.

They brought their favorite food. They brought their favorite drink. And they put it in the center of this table, and everything would be shared. The meal was called a love feast. And in this time that they gathered, and we don't know exactly how they gathered every day.

They gathered every week. I mean, there's no set rule of how often you have to gather, but they gathered a lot. And they had this love feast. And as they ate, they did worship. They sang songs, and they did teaching, and they had words of encouragement.

[ 7 : 57 ] They were prophesizing in front of each other. We talked about that last week. And then at the end, everybody would take communion. And actually, communion was probably like the center of what they did. The bread and the wine was kind of like the main focus, because as they came to the bread and wine, like you're going to do in a couple minutes, they wanted their focus to be on Christ, and His sacrifice on the cross, and everything He's done for us.

But what happened, which is crazy, because you read it, and you kind of laugh, and it's like you cannot believe it. That's kind of like we talked about last week. The wealthy patrons had come to Christ, and they opened up their house.

But what happened was that they, just like they had done before they came to Christ, they had these parties, and so they would invite all their friends. And so all their friends would come early. So the patron who didn't work because he was so wealthy, and all his wealthy friends came early, and they came into the house, and they just sat down in a small room, and everybody sat down really quickly.

And then what they did is ate. They ate all the food. I mean, they ate all the good wine. They ate all the good food. They ate it all up. And sometimes they would get drunk, and sometimes they would just do crazy things in the church.

I mean, it's more crazy than wearing biking shorts like we talked about last week. It was just craziness happening in a church, and you couldn't believe it. If you were to walk in there, you'd be like, this can't be a church. This is more like a pagan temple, because that's how they used to worship in their houses when they were pagans.

[ 9 : 19 ] They would do the exact same thing. They would have food. They would get drunk. They would have an orgy, and it would be out of control. And so that's what was happening in this church. And so by the time the other people came, the average person, the person who had to work every day of the week for the rest of their life, because usually people just earned their wage one day at a time.

By the time they came, it was late in the day, and they didn't have time to cook. They didn't have any money to buy food, or they had a little money to buy food, so they could just buy a little food. And so when they entered into the church service, there was no room.

I mean, all the good room was taken up. And so in the middle of all the Roman and Greek houses, there would be a big courtyard. And so if you were a Christian, and you were just the average person, you would come in, and you just have to stand in the courtyard.

And you stood there, and it was pretty humiliating, because that's what they did to the slaves and to the people who weren't worthy before the house came to know the Lord. And so you came in there, and you stood there, and you watched everybody else drinking and eating and getting drunk and fornicating, doing all this craziness there.

And it was supposed to be a church. And so what happened was that people usually ended up, the average person usually ended up coming late to church.

[ 10 : 33 ] Does that sound familiar? Hint, hint. Okay. The average person ended up coming late to church. And then they just stood there, and they remained hungry, because there was nothing to eat.

And all of a sudden, this communion, this meal that was supposed to celebrate what Christ has done, and his life, and his death, and his resurrection, it was just a disaster. And we're told by many authors, and even some secular ones that are watching all these things going on, and they go, I cannot believe that this is happening.

I mean, you have to understand that in a Middle Eastern culture, hospitality was everything. I mean, the thought of having someone come into your home, and you just let them stand in front of you, and you ate a meal without feeding them, and they just stayed hungry.

I mean, no one could even fathom that, because the significance of feeding people, and being together, and eating, and fellowship, and then taking care of each other was massive. And the idea that a community, or a town would do that, that they would push somebody out who was hungry, or

they needed clothes, or they needed help, because they couldn't take care of themselves, even the idea that a town, or a village would do that, and that's what makes the nativity story so incredible, because they didn't let Mary come in and lay down, because she's about to have a baby. And the fact that the guy wouldn't do that, that was just, that was shameful. And so no one could ever even imagine that someone would be so self-centered and selfish.

[12:01] But the church was. The church was self-centered and selfish. And in the middle of their biggest ceremony, the ceremony that celebrated equality, and unity, and love, and grace, and just massive amounts of God's blessing on us, in the middle of this ceremony that was supposed to celebrate all these things, what the church at Corinth was doing is they were celebrating selfishness.

And they were celebrating self-centeredness. And they had no self-control. And they turned this amazing meal, which is all about sacrificing, giving, and putting forth to others, they turned it into this meal of terrible.

I mean, Paul says it was better for people not to even go to church, because they were coming to church, and they were worse off than when they went before. And so Paul looks at them in this passage, and he describes to them what's going on, and he shares how they can fix it, how they can change it.

And so in our time remaining, I want us to look at this before we come up and we take communion together, because I think it's important, because sometimes we can do things over and over and over, and we just forget why we're doing them.

So in verse 23, what Paul says is to handle communion right, and to do it well, and do it in a way that honors the Lord, that when you come to the table, when you come to the table in a couple minutes, one of the things that we should do is we should focus back.

[13:35] We should focus back on our spiritual heritage. And he says it in verse 23, for I received from the Lord that which I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread.

And what we're seeing here is 2,000 years ago, Jesus is coming together with his Passover meal with his disciples, and they're coming together, and they're celebrating something incredible. Now, Jesus was celebrating something that happened 1,800 years before him.

So 3,800 years ago, so when you come here today, and we take communion, you're taking a snapshot, and you're participating in things for people for 3,800 years have been doing as God's people.

You're talking about traditions, I love traditions. This is an amazing tradition, because for 3,800 years, people have been coming here, and they've been celebrating what's going on here. And so when Jesus had his disciples in his passage, because if you had your Bible, it's probably in red letters there, this is my body, which is for you.

What they're describing is, they're describing the Passover meal. So Jesus would have had his disciples together in this upper room, if you go with Israel with us next year, you'll be able to see what people think this room is, or one of two of them.

[14:47] And they're talking, and they're telling the story about how God's people were in bondage in Egypt. And they cried out to God for help, and God sends a deliverer.

And as they're celebrating this meal, this Passover meal, what they're actually celebrating is the last plague. And so God sends Moses there, and Moses sends out these plagues that God gives him to send out there.

And this last plague that Jesus is celebrating, the Passover meal, is the plague of the angel of death. And so after all of these miracles, we're told that on the final night, the angel of death is going to come throughout all of the land, and it's going to destroy all the firstborn.

It's going to pass judgment on sin. It's going to pass judgment on selfishness. It's going to pass judgment on self-centeredness. And as the Israelites were there in Exodus, and they were hearing these things, they realized that they were also guilty.

They realized that if God didn't do something awesome, that when that angel came, they're going to get wiped out. Because even though they were God's people, they still were guilty of sin and selfishness and unrighteousness.

[16:03] And so they needed help. They needed somebody to help them. They needed a Savior. And what we're told is that God gave them a help. And each house took a lamb, a young lamb, a perfect lamb, an unblemished lamb.

Last time we talked about it, we called the lamb fluffy or fifi or whatever. But the lamb comes into the family for three days, and they take care of this lamb. And all of a sudden, on the third day, at the same time, at night, and they kill the lamb.

And they take the blood of this lamb, and they put it all over the house, all over the doorpost. And what Jesus is celebrating with his disciples, and what we're going to celebrate when we come up here, is that night when the angel of death comes, a lamb dies.

This is of everybody in that house. Everybody who's in the house is protected. They're delivered from God's judgment and God's wrath. If your house wasn't covered by that blood of that lamb, you would be dead.

So now 2,000 years ago, Jesus is celebrating this disciples, this communion Passover meal. But what he's going to do is he's going to do something different. And in this meal, he's going to take a loaf of bread.

[17:15] Because in this meal, there's no sheep. Jesus is a sheep. Jesus is a sheep. And he's going to take this loaf of bread, and he says, this bread represents my body that I give to you.

And then a little while later, we're told that he takes a cup of wine, and he says, this wine represents my blood. Now, if Jesus were doing this Passover meal, this would have been the third cup.

And when the Father does this to the Jewish people, he would have taken this cup out, and he would have said, I redeem you. I pay for your sins. I cover your sins.

So Jesus takes this communion, and he says, this is a new covenant I give to you. And he reminds us, as we come today, that this is a memorial.

That it's looking back throughout all this time of what Jesus has done. It reminds us that when you come to the table today, that Jesus took God's wrath and judgment that you and I deserve.

[18:22] He took it upon himself so that you and I could live. When you come to the communion today, what today you're saying is, I was once far off from God, now I've been brought close to God.

God, now I'm going to be brought to you. Because somebody else did that. Because I couldn't do it. If you read the Old Testament, over and over and over in the Old Testament, it's been telling us that our sins can't be taken care of by blood of animals.

That the blood of animals cannot forgive our sin. So in this communion meal, Jesus takes this cup, and he says, I redeem you.

I redeem you. I redeem you. I redeem you. I redeem you. So when you come up here today and you celebrate this communion, you realize that we're celebrating Christ's actions in our life.

You see, the church at Corinth didn't understand that. They had forgotten all these things because they'd been doing this over and over and over and over again. And so when they thought about Christ's sacrifice, they thought about Christ's death, they thought about why they did all these things.

[19:36] It wasn't important in their life at all. It had no meaning in their life. It wasn't central to who they were. They just did it. So the question we have to ask ourselves is, is it important to us?

When you come up here and you take the communion, are you saying that the gospel and Christ and the cross is central to your whole being and your life? That when you think of communion and the cross and Christ dying on, that it affects you.

It affects all of you. It affects how you do business. It affects how you treat your friends. It affects how you treat your spouses. It affects how you treat your kids. You have to ask yourself, is this changing me?

Because the church of Corinth, it wasn't changing them because they weren't living it out in their lives. It just had been something they just did. Does that make sense? Again, he says, when you come to this cup and this wine and the bread, you have to help focus not just on the past, but you have to focus on the present, where we're at right now.

And so he says that when you take this bread and you eat it, he says basically what we're saying again is that we were once far off from God. We were once enemies with God. And now we're one with God.

[20:56] That God has done everything necessary to bring us back and to make us once. That God is in us. And we are in God. That God died for us.

That he never forsakes us. That he's always for us. That he is always near us.

You see, the church of Corinth, they forgot that. They forgot that God was near to them. And so they were just living their life and living life as most people live their life.

And they didn't think about God's authority in their life and how they should live. And so all they were worried about is what they're going to eat and what they're going to drink and are they going to eat enough food and are they going to get to the right place. And they had just become callous. And there were people around them that were hungry and trying to learn about Christ.

And they couldn't get into that inner circle because people were just thinking of themselves. And they had no sense of unity. They had no sense of family. There was just these divisions and selfishness and the church was being destroyed.

[ 22 : 05 ] Paul says also that when we come to this bread and we take it, it also symbolizes that we are one body with God's people. Did you know that? That you're one body with God's people.

That when you come up today and you take communion, what you're saying is you're proclaiming to everybody that, hey, this is my family. That Watermark is my family and these people are my community. And so communion was meant to be this really intimate example of God's grace and God bringing us together and God loving on us.

And what the bread says is that we're all equal. There's no one more saved and there's no one less saved. But grace and Christ's blood saves us all exactly the same.

And the reason that Paul was freaking out with this church is that the church was destroying the very thing that Christianity and Christ and the gospel was all about. Because in Paul's day, there was no place you could go where there weren't barriers between people.

I mean, there were barriers everywhere and clubs and every place. Romans and Greeks and Jews, they never came together. Poor and rich, they never came together. Barbarians and educated people, they never came together.

[ 23 : 15 ] Slaves and free men, they never came together. But when the church came and Christ died and he set his blood for us, then it just broke down all those barriers.

And the church was the only place in the world where free people and slaves and rich and poor and the barbarians and the Greeks and Australians, South Africans, Texans.

They were the only place that they could come together and be one and be the same and be on equal footing. And because of the way that the church was reacting, they were destroying this precious, incredible thing.

And it was causing confusion everywhere. So the Corinthians were just attacking grace and they were attacking the gospel and they were putting up barriers. And because of this, this sacrament, this most holy thing, instead of becoming a symbol of what Christ has done for everybody, instead of becoming a symbol that we're all together, we're all same, instead of becoming a symbol of God's love and mercy and how he poured out everything on us, instead of becoming a symbol of those that became a symbol of division, became a symbol of the haves and the have-nots.

And the church was being destroyed and the reputation of the church was being destroyed. And Paul was acting like a madman because he was just like, you don't even realize what you're doing.

[ 24 : 41 ] And at the end, he says something really strong here. I don't know if he caught it while he read it. Verse 30, he says, because you're doing this, some of you are weak. And in the Greek, it means a lot of people. Maybe in your Bible it says many, but it means a lot.

It means because we're mishandling God's communion table and because we're mishandling the gospel and because we're mishandling grace, he says some of you are weak. And he says some of you are actually sick. And he says some of you are actually dead.

You've died prematurely. You've missed out on the blessing of the Lord. Now, we're not talking about salvation. If you're God's people, your salvation is always there. But he's talking about the blessings that God is living out in our lives.

And because they were mishandling grace in the communion in the very center of the cross, because they were doing that, God was not happy and things were not good. So when you come today, realize that we're celebrating the past.

We're celebrating the now. We're one body with God. We're one body with each other. We're all a family. And realize that we're celebrating the future. What Jesus says here, he says, you celebrate this until I come again.

[ 25 : 50 ] And what he's saying is there's a part of our salvation that is not yet realized. That you and I are sitting here as God's people.

And there's a part of our salvation that's not yet realized. And it won't be realized until Christ comes again or we see him in heaven. And so what he's saying is that when you come to the table today,

what you're saying is that I'm God's first child.

I'm part of this family. And that God has my hand. He's taking me down this path. He's never going to let go. He's going to take me to the very end. No matter what happens in work tomorrow. No matter what happens in my family.

No matter what happens with my health. No matter all the craziness that's going to happen in my world. What he's saying is when you take communion, that God is for you. And he's never going to let you go.

So when we come to the table today to celebrate the past. Celebrate the now. Celebrate the future.

[ 26 : 51 ] All these things are true. And that's why we're called to continually come about communion. To do it as a family. I have three thoughts or questions that I've been struggling with.

And then we're going to take communion as a family. Okay? So maybe we can think of these together. The first one. There are times, and I'm being very honest.

Okay? So you can run out of here because your pastor's broken. And he's in trouble. But there's times that when I come to the table. I feel totally unworthy.

There's times I don't want to take it. So I realize the depth of the blech in my life.

That's what worship is. When you come before the Holy Lord. It's like a knife is opened up into your chest. You see the junk there.

[ 28 : 03 ] And you got to deal with it. And the amazing thing is that when we deal with it, he heals us and he changes and he makes us different. But sometimes worship is not comfortable. But listen to me.

There's a big difference between being unworthy when you come to this table and taking this table in an unworthy way. There's a big difference between being unworthy when you come to this table and taking this table in an unworthy way.

The Bible is going to say that none of us in here are worthy. No one. None of us are worthy to come to communion.

What it says is communion is for broken people. It's for sinful people. For people who don't have their act altogether.

For people on a journey. For people being changed. That's why in verse 28 he asks us to examine our hearts, to look at our lives. What he's basically saying there is what's your relationship with God like?

[ 29 : 16 ] What's your relationship with people in your community like? What's your business relationship like? Do you treat people differently?

Do you understand the cross? These are all questions that we have to ask ourselves before we come up. That's why sometimes when we do communion, I'm worried for some of us guys.

Because some of us just get up right away and we just go and we're just doing it. I know some of it's because of the craziness and some of it's because of our kids. But have we had a chance to look at our lives and ask these questions?

Does the cross in this meal motivate you differently this week? Do you act differently this week at work because of everything that Jesus has done for you? Do you have self-control? And what we see, the church of Corinth, they didn't have self-control.

They were out of control and things are not good. Second thing I've been struggling with. If you were, I'm going to get in trouble for this, I know.

[ 30 : 20 ] If you were to ask the church at Corinth, was worship good today? They would go, oh man, it was awesome. It was the greatest worship I've ever had.

I was so moved. I felt so good afterwards. I don't remember what the pastor said, but I had a little headache afterwards. But it was just awesome. It was so good. But what the passage seems to say here is that we need to be careful in how we evaluate our worship.

I mean, he seems to be saying that worship is meant to be a giving experience. Because if we're copying the life of Christ, he worshiped the Lord by submitting, by obeying, and by giving.

And so when we come to a holy God, it should change us. And the Corinthians were really excited about the love feast and what they were getting out of it and how it was so cool and I felt so good.

And it was awesome. But the question is, did they really meet God? Or did they just have their own needs met?

[ 31 : 36 ] I think it would be great if you guys could leave here every day and say, after Sunday, I met God. I was a young pastor. I'm not going to share where I was. And I was in a meeting of other

pastors.

I didn't have a lot of courage. I'm just learning things, right? And in this meeting, the pastors were talking about what other churches in town were known for. And one guy said, yeah, my church, you know, everybody wants to come here because they want to get married because it's great.

No, we're not talking about Hong Kong, but it's a great church and it's where you get married. And one guy was saying, yeah, they come to my church because it's worship and the worship is out of control and people are jumping up and down. And it was just crazy.

And they're having all these gifts, which are not bad things, but, you know, they're doing all these things. And another guy said, yeah, if you're a single person, you want to come to my church because that's where you get married because that's where all the singles go. And I'm sitting there and I'm listening to it.

I'm like, wow, wouldn't it? And again, I was just so young. I have no courage. And it's probably good that God just shut my mouth up. And I just said, I wanted to say, wouldn't it be great to be known as a church where people met God?

[ 32 : 36 ] Wouldn't it be great to be known as a church where people fell in love with the Lord? Wouldn't it be great to be a church where people fell in love with each other and served each other?

One last thing. In Paul's day, the patron, the rich person, would invite people to his home and he'd have these extravagant meals. And these meals were always to show favoritism to their closest friends.

I mean, they were a stranger. They did it to do business. But most of the time, they just did it for favoritism to their closest friends. And they were known to just shun strangers. But what Paul tells us in his passage is that we have a real patron.

And that true patron is Jesus Christ. And today, when you come take communion, it's Christ who's given you the invitation.

He's asking you to come be with him, to be a part of him, to trust him, to allow him to take care of you. And the amazing thing about Jesus as our patron is Jesus doesn't have favorites.

[ 33 : 57 ] It doesn't matter where you are in life and what you've done. We're all the same. And the amazing thing about Jesus as a patron is that he doesn't withhold anything from his children. He gives us all, everything that we need.

And the amazing thing about Jesus as a patron is he doesn't give up on us, even when we make mistakes. I mean, he's always there. So when you come to the table today, remember that we're coming to worship our true patron, that Jesus is the master, and that we're the slaves.

I don't know how you feel about that, but that's what the Bible says. That's the message of this passage. That's the message of all the Bible. Jesus is the patron. He's the master. We're the slaves. Slaves come into the master.

And the master feeds them. The master takes care of them. The master loves them. They're the children of the master. And what Jesus is saying today is when you come to this table, that give you an invitation to my kingdom.

Will you trust me? Because I'm a good patron. I'm a good patron. I'm going to ask the community group to come up as we get ready for communion.

[ 35 : 21 ] So come on up, guys. Jeremy's going to come up, and he's going to play some music for us. As you prepare for communion, my prayer, maybe for the first time ever in your life, is that you would see Christ differently, that you would see God differently, that you would see God differently, that you would see the people next to you differently.

As you come up, when you're ready, you grab the elements, and you grab the bread, they're going to say, this is my body, which is broken for you.

You take the wine, they're going to say, this is my blood, which is poured out for you, a new covenant. And in that moment, you're holding 3,800 years of history in your hands.

It all comes down to a cross where the final lamb was killed for you so that you and I can come into his family.

Don't forget that. Don't forget that. When you're ready, you can come take communion. And after we've all received it, I'll come up, and we'll take it together as a family.

[ 37 : 04 ] 3,800 years of an awesome tradition which changed everything, changed history in our lives.

On the night that Christ was betrayed, because there was no lamb, he was the lamb, he took a loaf of bread, and he broke it, just like his body was going to happen on the cross the next day.

And he gave it to you, his people, to symbolize that you're now with him, and that you're now a part of him, and that he will never forsake you or let you go, that now you're a family.

He gave him peace, and he said, this is my body, which is broken for you. Take and eat. A little while later, in the Gospels, and in this passage, Jesus takes the third cup that the Father would have said in Passover, I redeem you, and he makes a new covenant in his blood, and he shares it with all of us, and he says, I redeem you.

The blood of Christ poured for you. So when we come to communion table, we look back, we look now, we look forward, but I think there's one other thing we do.

[ 39 : 02 ] We look outward. That's why I brought this treacher up. Because you have to realize that we, as God's people, have the only thing that will save the people around you.

My prayer, our prayer has always been this watermark that we'd be a generous church, we've been an outwardly focused church, that we'd be a church that never forgot what it was like before we knew Christ, that we invite our friends to community groups, and to lunches, and to church, to share with them this story, and how it changed everything in our lives.

Father, we thank you for this day. We come before you, the true patron of our souls, and we just confess our brokenness. Even as we teach this passage, we realize how far off we are from you, the perfect, holy, just creator of all things.

And we realize that all of us are unworthy, and you're not calling us to be perfect, or to have our act together, because if that were the call, then we would never come.

But you're calling us to trust you, to submit our lives to you, to allow your son to heal us, and to change us, and to make a way back for us, and to your supper.

[ 40 : 40 ] I don't think it's any coincidence that people who say, no, I don't want Christ in my life, and the Bible is told of them that they chose not to attend the supper of the Lamb.

So Lord, as we come to you and we attend to this communion meal, we thank you. We're in awe and humbled by all that you've done for us.

Thank you that you've considered us, and that you pursue us, and that you don't give up on us. And Lord, I pray that we would be different, and we would be changed, and that looking at the cross, and looking at your body, and looking at the blood, and looking at grace, would make us different people this week, that we become more like your son.

Lord, we need you, because we're a mess. Just like your church in Corinth was a mess. Lord, I pray for those of us in here who don't yet know you, and they're on this journey of seeking, I pray that they would find somebody who would come up and ask me, they would ask somebody, what's this all about, and why is it so important that I have someone who's my patron?

Lord, I pray that we would get a chance to share with them. We all have patrons. The only question is, is it a good and true one? Or is it a selfish one?

[ 42 : 07 ] So Lord, we come before you this day, and we just worship you. We love you, and we thank you. We pray these things in your son Jesus' name. Amen.