

Easter Sunday

“A New Covenant, a New Life”

Introduction:

I want to talk to you about 2 religious ordinances that we have before you today.

On the tables are the elements of communion. Behind me is a tank filled with Water.

The Tables:

1 Corinthians 11: 23-28 “For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup.”

A covenant is a binding relationship between God and Man with certain conditions in which God releases power, provisions, and authority to His people.

This is the ongoing renewal of the new covenant. Passover was the renewal of the old covenant now in the church we renew our covenant when we take communion.

The Bible makes this connection in 1 Corinthians 5: 7, where Paul wrote: “Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.” Passover was the meal the Jews ate in Egypt the night the death angel came and killed the firstborn sons in all the homes of Egypt (see Exodus 12).

God’s people always prosper under the covering of kingdom covenants.

God’s covenants always involve relationship... unlike a contract.

Communion symbolizes an event called the Passover

- 1) Jesus consciously connected Passover with communion when He told the disciples at the beginning of the Last Supper, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer” (Luke 22: 15).
- 2) God’s people avoided the plague of the death angel by killing a lamb and putting its blood on the doorposts of their homes, because God had said, “When I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you” (Exodus 12: 13).
- 3) The blood of the lamb was a symbol of the blood that Christ would shed on the cross to save us from the eternal spiritual death of eternal separation from God.
 - a) So Paul could refer to Christ as our Passover lamb.

- b) Jesus knew that the time had come for Him to become the final sacrifice for sins, which had been pictured and symbolized for so long through Israel's annual Passover observances in which a lamb was killed to represent God's covering of the people's sins. Jesus came not to cover sins, but to take them away.

The symbol of Lord's Supper

- 1) Communion is also referred to as the Lord's Supper.
- 2) It may also be called the Lord's Table, a reference to 1 Corinthians 10: 21: "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons." That's an amazing statement. Paul had just said in verse 20: "The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God."

Communion is all about identification with Jesus our Passover Lamb.

The Tank:

Identification

The primary meaning of the Greek word for baptism is "identification." This was a very picturesque word in New Testament days. It was used of dipping a cloth into a dye so that the cloth became completely identified with the dye by absorbing its color. The cloth underwent a complete identity change. This is the picture of water baptism.

When we put our trust in Christ, we became so completely identified with Him that that His death and resurrection to new life became our death and resurrection. When we immerse believers in the waters of baptism, we are picturing their death to the old life and resurrection to a new way of life. That happened the moment they trusted Christ, but the ordinance of water baptism speaks - it preaches the message of the resurrection loud and clear.

Identity

Many Christians struggle in their daily lives because they don't understand their new identity. They don't know who they are in Christ. We have to realize that being "in Christ" is such a radically new way of life that whatever happens to Christ happens to us. That's why the Bible says that when Christ died we died, and when Christ arose from the dead we arose.

Stamped and Sealed

It's like putting a letter in an envelope and sealing it shut. When I do that, I don't have to ask where the letter is because the letter is safely sealed inside the envelope. So wherever the envelope goes, the letter will go too— and it's against the law for anyone but the recipient of that sealed envelope to break that seal. Christ is the envelope, and we are the letter. We are in Christ. The Bible says that when you believed in Jesus Christ "you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise" (Ephesians 1: 13). I am linked with Christ forever by virtue of His grace in saving, sealing, and keeping me.

The ceremony of baptism is the point at which you go public with your testimony that you belong to Christ, and are committed to become a visible, verbal, victorious disciple of His.

Romans 6:3-8 “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized **into** Christ Jesus were baptized *into* his death? 4 We were buried therefore **with him** by baptism **into** death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been **united with him** in a death like his, we shall certainly be **united with him** in a resurrection like his. 6 We know that our old self was **crucified with him** in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. 7 For one who has died has been set free from sin. 8 Now if we have **died with Christ**, we believe that we will also **live with him**.”

In the New Covenant

We are:

1) Identified with Him through baptism.

- a) Your old self was crucified with Him
- b) Your old past is buried with Him.
- c) Your new self is united with him just like the resurrection

2) Hidden in Him through baptism.

Colossians 3:2,3 “Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

- a) Hidden in Him
 - i) When a person dies they bury the body and try to keep the memories alive. When a person dies to his old life they bury the deeds and memories and the spirit man stays alive.
 - ii) Romans 6:4 “We were buried therefore **with him** by baptism **into** death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.”

b) You are new, now put on Christ

Gal. 3:26,27 “in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

- i) This uniting with Jesus through baptism means you have been **clothed with Christ**.
- ii) Visualize the baptized people taking off their old wet clothes and putting on new dry clothes that represent a new covering... clothed with Jesus. Hidden underneath a new garment.

3) Live a new life through Him by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 3:26,27 NIV "So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."

a) The new life is not impossible, it can be lived through him.

1 John 4:9 "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him."

b) The new life is possible because we are "more than conquerors through him" - Romans 8:37

i) What does it mean to be more than a conqueror? A conqueror fights, the bloody battle, takes the hits, feels the pain, and slays the enemy.

ii) A person who is more than a conqueror is a person who knows he could never win the battle, he would succumb to the strength of the enemy, but He is someone who will fight the battle for him.

We are more than conquerors because Jesus triumphed over the enemy on our behalf! We conquered sin, death, hell and the grave because our champion fought our battle!

"When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him." (Colossians 2: 13–15)

c) And now I live victorious because the blood is on the door post of my heart.

i) And, now the new man hidden in Christ, clothed with the power of the resurrection gives me a new identity!

ii) And now, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13