

Hanging Out With Jesus: Remembering and Proclaiming Jesus

Unedited Transcript

Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:17-20, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Good morning, men! Welcome to Man in the Mirror's Men's Bible Study, where we always have room for one more man! Let's go ahead and begin this morning with a shout out to the Williamston Church of Christ. There's a group of men that have been meeting in Williamston, NC and they say that they are a small church in a small town right in the center, but they really have a passion and see an opportunity for evangelism. They're made up of both younger and older guys, their leader is Archie Gilmer and they're using the online Bible Studies with us. So I just want to welcome you guys, and would you join me in giving them a warm shout out from Man in the Mirror's Men's Bible Study? One, two, three, hoorah! Glad to have you guys with us!

The series we're in is called Hanging Out With Jesus, stories about Jesus from the Gospels, and this morning we're going to talk about the subject of remembering and claiming Jesus. Here's the deal: I don't know what your situation is, but a lot of men are in difficult situations or will find themselves in such. It might be a problem with debt, being deeply in debt and not knowing how to get out of that, and the anxiety that comes with it. Or it might be underemployment or unemployment, or a problem in a relationship, but you see this and you just feel abandoned by God. You just feel like, where is he? If he really loved me, then why isn't he intervening in my life?

There is this great quote by Hudson Taylor, it's one of my favorites, and he said that, "Many Christians estimate difficulties in light of their own resources and thus attempt little and often fail at the little they do attempt. All God's giants have been weak men who have done great things for God because they reckoned on his power and presence to be with them." What I want to do today is I want to show you one of the ways that God has provided for you to appropriate his power and his presence into your life. The title again is Remembering and Proclaiming Jesus.

The Lord's Supper

The first thing we're going to talk about here is the Lord's Supper, which is this institution he has given us. Just to review, last week we did John 13 and we talked about the new command, the new command I give to you that you love one another. All men will know you are my disciples if you love one another. The Big Idea last week was that we are never more irresistible in this world than when we love others without reservation. Just think dog, okay? So Jesus is instructing the disciples in the upper room and in Matthew 26:26 the next thing that happens, and by the way I am using Stan Gundry's *Harmony of the Gospels* to put these stories together. As you may or may not know, while these different testaments are generally in chronological order, they're not actually in chronological order all the time. Different scholars have made different attempts to harmonize these Gospels and put them in chronological order, so I'm using Gundry's method.

We didn't actually cover the prediction of Peter's first denial last week in John 13. The reason I did that is I'm going to loop back in on that when we get to the actual denial. So what's happened now in the upper room is that Jesus has told them love one another, and then Peter has asked Jesus where are you going? Jesus has said, look, you're actually going to deny three times that you even know me. Then, they begin to finish up this meal. So in Matthew 26:26:

²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."

²⁷ Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you." ²⁸ This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ²⁹ I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Now there is a lot going on in this text! I want you to keep your finger here, but turn with me to 1 Corinthians 11. So Jesus in the text we just read institutes the Lord's Supper. Paul attests to that and shows that this Lord's Supper was institutionalized as a practice. Some people call it a sacrament, some people call it an ordinance, people call it different things. But this sacred practice was institutionalized and we see in 1 Corinthians 11 beginning at verse 23 Paul says:

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, ²⁴ 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." ²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant (Notice that Paul has added the word new from the previous text) in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me (o there is the implied repetition or reenactment of this Lord's Supper that we see here)". ²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Again, there's a lot in this text. Keep your finger there, too, and flip back to Matthew 26. One thing we see is that Jesus says this bread is my body, it represents my body. It is a symbol of my body. Different traditions, and we have all those different traditions represented here. We have transubstantiation, consubstantiation, we have sacramental union, we have all kinds of different traditions here. Some of your traditions actually say that the bread and the wine actually become the body of Christ, which is two miracles. It becomes the body and blood of Christ and it still looks like bread and wine. Others would see the symbolic, sacred union, that it is the real presence of Christ. They are conjoined together, the bread and the body of Jesus are conjoined together. So, it's still bread in it's properties but the real presence of Jesus is there in that bread. The point here is that it doesn't make a difference, those are intramural debates. The point is that Jesus said in John 6 unless you eat my body and drink my blood, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. However you want to interpret that, that's fine.

Verse 27 says then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. So this communion is for all the believers, all the saints, all the time. Then in the next verse it says this blood of the covenant, this new covenant in blood, without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, it's poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. This is a bit like Churchill's riddle wrapped in an enigma buried in a mystery, whatever it is. This whole thing of the Lord's Supper is a little like that, but the two things that become very clear out of this are that Jesus has given us this so we will remember him. So that we will remember that in him is this forgiveness of sins. That's what the text says there in Matthew 26. In verse 28, my blood is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins, that's one

thing he wants us to remember. Then in the 1 Corinthians 11 passage, it says drink this in remembrance of me, eat this in remembrance of me, eat this in remembrance of me. So Jesus is giving us this sacred practice, this new institution, so that we will have a way of remembering him better. When you take your communion, in whatever tradition you do it in; some do it daily, some weekly, some monthly and some quarterly. But whatever your tradition, however often you take it, whenever you take it, one thing to keep in mind is that the reason you're doing this is that Jesus has given this practice to help you remember that he has given you the forgiveness of sins!

The second reason that he has given us that's pretty clear in the text in 1 Corinthians 11:26, it says for whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. This kind of proclamation, it's announcing, and so when you take the Lord's Supper, when you take your communion, when you take the Eucharist, when you do that, what you are doing is not only are you remembering that he has died for the forgiveness of your sins, but you're also announcing his death. You're announcing it to yourself, you're announcing it to your children, you're announcing it to your wife, you're announcing it to those around you, you're announcing it to your church, and through your church, you're announcing it to the world! You are proclaiming and remembering, that's what the Lord's Supper is all about.

Now, is it blood or is it wine? You go with your own traditions on this, but I want to show you what the Bible says. In Matthew 26:29 Jesus says after saying this is my blood poured out for you, he says I tell you I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until the day when I drink it anew...

So in the mind of Jesus, even though he has called this his blood, he knows it's wine, because he says drink my blood and I am not going to drink of this fruit of the vine until I drink it in the kingdom. Again, go with your own tradition on this, but also go with this verse right here. Notice he says here, too, that he will not drink it again until he drinks it anew with you in my Father's kingdom. So another thing we are remembering here is that we are going to be in the kingdom. We're remembering the forgiveness of sins, but we're also remembering that we're going to be with Jesus in his kingdom. So there's a lot going on! I don't know if you've been taught this in your different churches or not, but when you take your communion, remember that forgiveness of sins has come through the death of Jesus. Remember that because of his death there was also a resurrection and there will be for you a kingdom. And then announce, we're proclaiming by taking this his death until he comes. That's what's going on in the Lord's Supper.

What's obvious to me here is that we are a strange people. We find our strength in meditating on the death of our leader. How many groups find the power and presence to do what God wants them to do, to do what they feel called to do by meditating on the death of their leader? That's what communion is, it's a practice that was instituted by Jesus and attested to by Paul in which we remember the death of Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins and to join him later in the kingdom, and to proclaim or announce his death until he comes. That's what communion is all about. The Big Idea for the day then is going to be this: **Only Christians would think to find strength by meditating on the death of their leader.** Romans 8:35, who can separate us from the love of Christ? Well, you know who can separate you from the love of Christ? There's no power, there's no authority, but you know who can separate you from the love of Christ? There's only one person that can separate you from the love of Christ, you. And because God knows that, he has given this sacred practice of the Lord's Supper, but he has also given many sacred practices and many spiritual disciplines, many touch points, and many ways for us to find strength. The one we're talking about today is meditating on his death.

Why Should We Care?

Next, let's talk about why we should care, what's the point in all this? What's so special about this Lord's Supper? What's the main thing that's always happening in the world? God is sovereignly orchestrating all human events to bring us into right relationship with God and each other. That's the main thing that's always going on, that's the backdrop behind everything. God is sovereignly orchestrating all human events, even the seemingly random circumstances of our lives to bring us in a right relationship with him and each other. That's what's going on! So this relationship with Jesus, it's the foundation of discipleship. Everything keys off this relationship with Jesus.

You remember the story of Mary and Martha? The series *Hanging Out With Jesus* is based on the story of Mary and Martha. Jesus said Martha, Martha. You're upset and worried about many things but only one thing is needed and Mary has chosen it and it will not be taken from her. Martha had this spirit of service, which is good, but Mary had this spirit of relationship, which is even better! She was focused on her relationship with Jesus because she understood that that's the foundation of everything.

So we need sacred times that we can work on this relationship. That's why we need to care, because we need a sacred connection. We need communion, we need an outlet to reverence God, we need an outlet for worship, we need an outlet to experience awe and his power and his presence. When I do my prayers in the morning, I begin with my hellos to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but then I say Lord, I worship you. I come to worship you and to give you the praise, the honor, the worship, the reverence, the awe, the majesty, the power, the dominion, the authority, the wisdom, the wealth, the blessing, the thanksgiving that you alone are worthy to receive. And so I worship you in the beauty of your holiness, in the majesty of your creation, in the generosity of your salvation. I do that because, like all men, our similarities (when compared to a cow or a chicken versus another man) outweigh our differences. We all have this instinct, this divinitatus sensum, this sense of the divine, this desire for sacred things. We need that, it's the foundation, and coming into the presence of Jesus through this sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a way we get in touch with this part of our identity. It's the foundation of discipleship. The Lord's Supper is something that disciples do. All disciples do communion because of this connection that it gives us to that sacred instinct we all have. The Big Idea today: **Only Christians would think to find strength by meditating on the death of their leader.** What other group can you think of that would find their strength by meditating on the death of their leader?

How Should We Respond?

Finally, how should we respond to this? The first thing to do is to make sure you have the right mindset so that you can participate in sacred practices. When you withdraw from the things that Jesus has said are worthwhile for you, what are you doing? You're missing the means of grace. This is one of the means by which he gives us his grace. You should participate not only in the Lord's Supper, but all kinds of sacred practices. I wrote down some sacred things that had to be. Here are a few sacred things that God had to have put in place. He had to! He had to put in place a Bible! He had to put a written down record of the history of our faith and explanation of our doctrine in place. He had to do that! If there was not a written word, every one of us would just be thinking what we wanted to think, doing what we wanted to do, doing what seemed right in our own eyes. There had to be a Bible! That's a sacred thing. He's given us this Bible as something like the Lord's Supper that we can meditate on.

Something else he had to give us; he had to give us a savior. He had to give us a flesh and blood savior. He had to give a sacrifice for our sins. He had to give us a church. He had to give us the body of Christ.

He had to give us relationships with each other because you can't do this on your own. I don't know why it is, and I've said this before, but when women have problems they tend to move toward relationships. But guys, when you and I have problems, what do we do? We tend to move towards isolation. The number one most effective strategy of Satan is isolation! Satan knows if he can isolate you from the community, from the church, then you will not experience this power and presence. You will lose strength. Your kryptonite is isolation. You get that?

Something else he had to give us, he had to give us the Holy Spirit. He had to give us himself in us so that we would have the power to do the things that without his Gospel we can't do. He had to give us some kind of baptism. Whether you sprinkle, dip, dunk or pour, it doesn't make a difference, but he had to give us some outward symbol of the inner change that took place in us because of the way human nature is made. He had to give us this Lord's Supper. Otherwise what? If we didn't have the Lord's Supper, we would not have a device, a practice by which we would remember. We would forget the forgiveness of sins. We would forget the eventual joy of the kingdom. We would not proclaim his death. We wouldn't be doing those things if we didn't have this device called the Lord's Supper. There are other things, too, but all these sacred practices are ways to remember and proclaim Jesus.

In racing, the more you know the more you enjoy it, because the better you do. In racing, it helps if you know the racing line, where the breakpoint is, the turn in, the apex, where you track out. It's helpful if you understand what the contact patch is, the four little places where the wheels, the tires actually touch the ground. If you understand the physics of traction, the traction circle, if you understand a little about aerodynamics, suspension, the physics of center of gravity setup. There are a lot of things that if you don't know them you will never be able to appreciate racing as much as someone who does understand those things. I think that's what Jesus has in mind by the repetition of his supper. That we will know more and more about the forgiveness of sins, about his kingdom, when we meditate on his death. We should respond because when we do meditate on the death of our leader, then we understand him more and more and appreciate him more and more.

Final thing I want to say is men, if you have a family, then you need to be in church with your family. You need to take the Lord's Supper, and explain it to your children. When you take the Lord's Supper in front of your family, you are demonstrating your humility before God. You are confessing your need for God, you are setting an example for them to follow. We have a man who has stopped coming to our Bible Study. I was talking to him last week, I asked him yesterday if I could tell his story, he said yeah go ahead. He stopped coming here about a year ago, and about the same time he pulled his family out of church. He's not been around sacred things. He did that because his business life was falling apart, some other things were going on, and a year later you would think that if someone was going to make a change, they would make that change, because they would think a year later they would be better off, right? I don't know if he thought he would be better off doing that or not, but let me tell you he is not better off. He is in deep weeds. He has a spouse, I'm not going to give the particular details, but he has a spouse who also no longer attends church and let me just say she is engaging in some habits now that are not going to be healthy for her long term. The intimacy in the marriage has gone away. He has a teenage son who now, basically, will not come out of his bedroom. His business is worse than it's ever been. He went to a Christian friend, I know him, a lot of people like him. I don't care for him that much, and I'll tell you why I don't care for him just so you understand. It's because this man enjoys having younger men come to him to seek his advice. That gives him a sense of worth and that's fine as it is, but when I relate to him, and I would be more of a peer to peer, he doesn't want anything to do with me because I won't give him the adulation that he wants. There's more to it than that, but anyway, you can have him. This friend gives the advice to the guy that used to come here. He says I want you to do three

things, exercise, read your Bible, and pray. Then everything will be okay. What's wrong with that picture? There's no community! Basically, he's given this man this advice which he's been following, and he's been this lone ranger Christian for going on a year now. I asked him how that's working out and he said, I'm playing basketball almost every day. I said good, what about the other two things? He said to tell you the truth, I just don't have the appetite to read the Bible very much and my prayer life is really in the tank. So this man is about to become my father. This is exactly what my father did. It's very possible that if this man doesn't turn around and renew his sacred practices in community, things like the Lord's Supper, it's very likely that he's going to end up like my father. Even though he's doing things for all the right reasons, his family is going to fall apart. We've sent out a rescue party, we'll see what happens.

Some of you may feel like God has abandoned you and you've been withdrawing. What I want to do with you is I want to show you something that you can use as a resource for yourself, the website <http://patrickmorley.com> We've retooled this whole website because my mission is to help you grow as a disciple and a disciple maker. What we've done is we've set this website up now where you can go or send men to find resources to help men become a better disciple and disciple maker. You can see at the top there's a place there you can sign up for the blog, and then if you scroll down and click on *How God Makes Men*, you'll see the book and description. Scroll down and you'll see where it says read chapter one, you can click on that and download chapter one of the book. The first chapter is about Abraham and nobody feels like their life has been more tested than Abraham! So if you feel like you're tested and you've been moving towards isolation, then I want to encourage you to go to this website and read this first chapter. Let's pray!

Closing Prayer

Our Father in heaven, you have given us these sacred practices, especially the Lord's Supper, as means by which we can experience your power and your presence. This Lord's Supper that you've given us, how odd that we would find our strength by meditating on the death of your leader, but that's exactly what happens. So Father I would just pray, and I probably never would have taught about the Lord's Supper in all my life, so I thank you that it's right here as the next passage to talk about and I suspect Lord that some of us would never have thought very deeply about the Lord's Supper had this not come up in your sovereignty this morning. So I pray that you would use this message to stimulate us to think rightly about this and to respond with this practice and others as may be appropriate for each of us. And Lord, don't let any of these men suffer the consequences of isolating themselves from your people. I ask this in Jesus' name, amen!