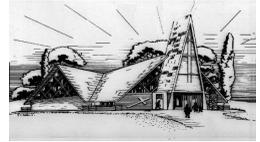




Sermon- Maundy Thursday Do this for My Remembrance!



The Word of God for this Sermon is written in Luke 22, 7-20:

- **ESV 7** Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed.
- **8** So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it."
- **9** They said to him, "Where will you have us prepare it?"
- **10** He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters
- **11** and tell the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'
- **12** And he will show you a large upper room furnished; prepare it there."
- **13** And they went and found it just as he had told them, and they prepared the Passover.
- **14** And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him.
- **15** And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.
- **16** For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."
- **17** And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves.
- **18** For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."
- **19** And he took bread, and when he had 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."
- **20** And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.
- Let us pray: *Come Holy Spirit, open our ears, remember us tonight as we assemble around Your Word and Sacrament. Amen.*

Dear Beloved in Christ!

• As promised, tonight we want to focus on the phrase Jesus says, namely [19] *"Do this in remembrance of Me"*! From the Gospels it is only the Gospel of Luke which records these words of Jesus. However, Paul also quotes these words coming from what he has received from the Lord.

• This phrase is often explained as only meaning remembering something that has happened in the past! Nothing substantial happens, while we eat and drink we

remember Jesus' death! This widespread understanding rests heavily on the ideas of Greek philosophy. So, rather than importing this understanding without thorough investigation, let us carefully consider the true textual context of these words!

• On the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. Jesus sat down to eat *this* Passover with His disciples! This was a special Passover meal, because within the former Passah Jesus installed the new Testament! *"This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of Me!"* So, what was He giving them? From the dialogue following afterwards it becomes clear that Jesus was serving them. And Jesus' betrayer was sitting with Him at table, so He would die. He would sacrifice Himself the next day. The plan to kill Him was already in action. But, what was He giving them in His Supper, when He gave them His own Body and Blood in, with and under the bread and wine? What would that do for them? What would that benefit them? The question of "how this can be", that they received His Body and Blood that evening, is never touched. That is why we don't go there either. With God all things are possible! What's really important is, what does Christ's Meal do with us, what do we receive that will benefit us?

• And as always the answer to right questions are to be found in the Word itself. Let us pick up on verse 28 ff: Jesus said to His disciples *"You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, ..."*. First of all we need to take note that the verb "assign" is in the present tense. Jesus assigns something to the disciples that evening, not only the next day, that evening already! The verb means "assign" as in "*designating His will, His testament to them*". The verb has a connotation with formerly handing over a testament to someone! So what is Jesus assigning to His disciples? Answer: A Kingdom! He gave them the Kingdom which Jesus had received from His Father! At that meal, the Lord's Passover, He assigned to them the Kingdom of God. They became the heirs of God's Kingdom by eating and drinking what Jesus was serving them!

• And it carries on [30] ^{NAU} *"that you may eat and drink at My table in My*

kingdom, ...”. The eating and drinking at Jesus’ table will continue. What Jesus had started, had initiated on the night when He was betrayed, the meal He gave, carries on. When we gather around His Word and table we may do so to eat and drink of His table in His Kingdom. That is we participate in the guaranteed future of Christ’s reign! He is our king, the true king of God’s Israel, and our Christ, our Saviour, who serves us with His own sacrifice in His Kingdom!

- This is an extraordinary gift, because Christ’s kingdom comes to us in the here and now already. The future is assigned to us in the present. We can say it like this, we become shareholders of Christ’s Kingdom! Of course hidden from our eyes, but that is how it is, because of Christ’s Word. His Word has the ability to speak into existence what is not.

- Dear congregation, that is the context of the words of Institution Jesus spoke when He initiated this wonderful Meal with His disciples.

- Now we want to come back to the words: *“Do this for my remembrance.”* From the context it is clear that Jesus is not saying with these words that we should do the Lord’s Supper, only as our act of remembering what He did for us in the past! This interpretation “remembrance” is based most heavily on Greek philosophy which happens to gel well with our modern understanding of remembrance as a purely cognitive exercise!

- The best way is always to find another Word of God, which gives some more light on what Jesus said. And we have such a word. You know this passage well, 1 Cor 11, 27. Paul cites the Words of Institution and then follows an explanation, a commentary of what Jesus meant with ‘do this for the remembrance of Me’ [27]: *“**For** as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.”* We proclaim the Lord’s death and this is doing it for His remembrance! To proclaim the death of the Lord means, that the death of the Lord counts for the now. It is not merely referring to a past event, but it proclaims the Lord’s death as the beginning of the New Testament which is continuously available for us, because of what Jesus did. The Lord’s death means Life for us.

- Now there is another detail we need to look at, namely, you proclaim the Lord’s death “until He may come”! So here we have the definite outlook of Jesus’ second

coming which is part of this remembrance act.

- So, by eating and drinking what the Lord provides and blesses we proclaim the Lord's death to God and in doing so we remind God of Jesus, what He did for us, of His covenant with us and that He promised that Jesus would come again! In this way God prepares us for the second coming of Christ by assigning the Kingdom to us and forgiving all our sins and strengthening our faith!

- What a magnificent gift, right here on earth! Here, where we need this certainty and guarantee so much, here where we battle with our own old Adam, the world and satan, who want to hold us back with all their might! Here He assigns His Kingdom to us in full reality, as we eat and drink what the Lord has provided!

Amen.

- *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.” **Amen.** Eph 1,3.*