



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Matthew 26:26–29

1 Corinthians

“Paul and the Lord’s Supper: Part III”

TRANSCRIPT

Well, I think it’s time. Let’s begin with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for Thy Word, and we thank Thee again for the privilege of studying it. We think of so many people over the face of this world who do not even have a Bible, some of whom do not even know there is such a thing as a Bible. And some who may know of a Bible but who do not know anything about its contents or have not come to understand any part of the gospel of Jesus Christ, do not know who he is, do not know what he has done for us.

We thank Thee for the privilege that we have. We ask, Lord, that Thou wilt be with us as we study together. May our minds and hearts be open to the Word of God and may we be responsive to the truth. We ask Thy blessing upon each one present, upon their families and their friends. We pray for the Chapel. We pray for this country and its leadership. We especially pray for those who have asked us to pray for them, some of whom are in very, very deep trials. We pray for them, and we ask that Thou will give encouragement and comfort and are released from the difficulties and the pain. We pray for each one of them, and we ask Thy blessings upon them. And for all who are here, we ask Thy blessing upon them as well. We ask that our meeting may glorify our Savior who has given himself for us.

We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

[Message] Well, it’s a little difficult this evening to give the message tonight, because I want to review something of what I said last Wednesday night and then go on from there and finish our study of the last Passover and the first Lord’s Supper in our series of 1 Corinthians. Because it’s necessary for us to do this I think to properly understand 1 Corinthians 11 which we will then launch into from verse 17, on to study what Paul has to say about the Lord’s Supper some years after our Lord ministered to the apostles and had instituted the Supper.

So I am going to read again Matthew 26 verse 26 through 29, and then we’ll go over what we looked at last time and finish up our study of this section. Matthew chapter 26 in verse 26, and we read these words from the apostle.

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body.’”

“Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.’”

Again, last time by making the suggestion which I know I have made a number of times to congregations in the past in Believers Chapel that the term “atonement,” a term that is derived from the English word ‘at’ plus the old Middle English word ‘onement’, and thus means bringing people to onement. Atonement may be the most important word in Christian theology. It refers to that which Christ did in restoring the shattered relationship between sinners and a holy God. We’re born in that shattered relationship. All of us are born sinners. We’re born out of fellowship with God, and it is the atoning work of Jesus Christ by which we are brought into onement again. Not complete onement—that comes when we enter the presence of the Lord—but onement in the sense of our sins having been forgiven, and we are established in the family of God as sons and daughters of him.

The Scriptures make it plain from the many passages that have to do with atonement that the price that was demanded for the accomplishment of atonement is the death of the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ.

I made reference—and I am going to repeat it again—to the fact that liberal Christianity has always resented the atoning work of Jesus Christ and has sought to undermine the teaching of it in the churches that are called Christian churches. In fact, they have sought to do this in a very tricky and deceptive way. They have sought to keep the term “Christianity,” which itself is an indication of the fact that the church with all of its failures in the world—generally, not always—but in the world generally has had a good reputation. They have felt it worthwhile to keep the term “Christianity,” and surprisingly they’ve thought it well to keep the term “redemptive” undefined, but at least kept that term.

So what they have sought to do is to eliminate the historic Christian conviction that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in his blood sacrifice on Calvary’s cross wrought the reconciliation of men with God. For faith in a crucified redeemer whose life is a ransom for sinners, they’ve substituted a Christ-like attitude or a religious feeling or even just membership in the redemptive community. There is a vast difference between a person who believes in that kind of Christianity and the orthodox Christianity found in the Word of God.

It has been said by outstanding Christian theologians—the one of whom I am speaking is Benjamin Breckenridge Warfield who was professor of systematic theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, the Presbyterian seminary, for many years—it has been said that liberal Christianity lacks the power to originate a church. In other words, they can only exist within the churches that have been originated by the preaching of the gospel, the gospel I just mentioned to you. “Liberal Christianity exists as a parasite growing upon some sturdy stock,” and, in fact, Dr. Warfield went on to say, I believe this to be true, but whether it is true or not, “There is no doubt that liberal Christianity is not Christianity at all.” It uses the terms that even refer to redemption, but in the final analysis, liberal Christianity is not Christianity at all. It is a different religion because its fundamentals

are different from the fundamentals that are taught by orthodox Christianity and have been for centuries found in the great creeds of the Christian churches.

It’s rather shocking—and all of you in the audience I think know this to be true—that there are great doctrinal statements. I will just mention one or two, the Westminster Confession of Faith or the Canons of the Synod of Dort. These are remarkable orthodox documents. They set forth the kind of Christianity found in the Bible. There are many churches that subscribe outwardly and officially to these documents, but they are not preached in the churches. If individuals are careful to examine the ministry, they will find that that is true.

The kind of atonement that rests upon the saving work of Christ, what he did on Calvary’s cross overthrows all of the kinds of atonement and the theories of atonement that have been popular in the last generation or two in this country, for example. It overthrows also called moral influence theories of the atonement, that Jesus Christ did not die to accomplish an atonement, but came simply to reveal to us the love of God in his sacrifice and influence us to good to that Christ-like attitude I was talking about by what he did on Calvary’s cross, eliminating the emphasis upon the fact that he paid the penalty for the sins of sinners and suffered the divine judgment for sin in his own life and ministry, that is, on the cross.

I also went to say—and I know this is a particular subject that upsets some people, but in my mind what has happened when Jesus Christ dies upon Calvary’s cross and what is signified ultimately by that is a particularism in the intent of his atoning work. The Christians we know are a people apart. They are different. I said last time that the person who rests his eternal future on the fact that Christ accomplished a ransoming death on Calvary’s cross are a different kind of people from those who think of Christianity as simply a redemptive community that’s in favor of Christ-like attitudes. They are entirely different. The person who knows that he has been delivered from eternal death by what Christ suffered and now is free is a different person. There is a different aura about it. Genuine Christians can tell it.

You talk with someone who has that sense of Christianity, and it’s not too long before you sense they are one of us or we’re one with them. There is a difference. We celebrate what Christ did and we acknowledge that everything ultimately depends upon him. This means that a particularism is established, because Jesus Christ, the Bible says, offered a substitutionary atonement for sinners. In other words, he paid the penalty for a certain people. If he had paid the penalty for all people, there would be no way by which heaven could bring judgment events against any people. But he paid the penalty for his people. I mentioned last time, he was called Jesus because he would come and save his people from their sins. But it was his people he would save. So it is particularism. Augustus Toplady wrote the little lines, “Payment, God cannot twice demand first from my bleeding surety’s hand and then again at mine.” So if the penalty has been paid for us, then there isn’t any other penalty that we have to suffer. It’s impossible in the divine economy for individuals to suffer twice just as it is in the human economy. Double jeopardy, we call it in legal fashion, but, nevertheless, that’s true. So particularism.

Now, I took some time out to talk about particularism and spoke about the fact this is the problem that exists between two approaches to genuine Christianity.

There are two types of Christianity within the fold of genuine Christianity. There are those that are Arminians and there are those who are Calvinists. Those are names that have been attached to them, one coming from James Arminius, a Dutch theologian, and the other from John Calvin, a French-Swiss theologian, of French beginning, originally.

So those two types of atonement are different. Both of them honor Christ. Both of them acknowledge the deity of Christ, the atoning work of Christ. But the intent of the atonement is understood differently. Arminians believe—well, let me put it this way. The question in the debate between them is: Did Christ offer himself a sacrifice to God to make the salvation of all men possible, or did he offer himself to secure infallibly the salvation of his people? The Arminians affirm the former, that Christ offered himself a sacrifice to God to make the salvation of all men possible. And Calvinists affirm that he offered himself to secure infallibly the salvation of his people.

Now, you can see from this that if this is true, then Arminians believe, according to Calvinists, that it is possible for God to intend to do something and fail in the doing of it. Calvinists believe he had a definite intent, and he accomplished his intent perfectly; he infallibly secured the salvation of all of his people.

In other words, there is no general emancipation of man, but there is the creation of the people of God by what Christ suffered. Arminianism is a theological system of contingency or conditionalism. It’s a scheme, someone has said, for dividing, portioning the salvation of sinners between God and sinners themselves instead of ascribing it wholly, as I think the Bible does, to the sovereign grace of God, the perfect and all sufficient work of Jesus Christ and the efficacious and omnipotent operation of the Holy Spirit.

It is my feeling—and not just mine; this is the opinion of all men who follow Calvinistic approach to Scripture that the second viewpoint—that he came to offer himself securing infallibly the salvation of his people, glorifies our triune God in heaven in a way that the other does not. We do not have a God who can be frustrated as Arminians claim we have.

Our God is a sovereign God who cannot be frustrated in his purposes, and he came to save his people. And he does save his people. All of them will ultimately enter into heaven, acknowledging the sovereign efficaciousness of the work of Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, in this particular passage that we are looking at, our Lord is introducing the first Lord’s Supper. It came in the observance of the last Passover, for when this service was over, there were no more Passover services that had validity in the eyes of God because the Passover lamb has come. And in a few moments, after this particular celebration, the Passover lamb, God’s sacrificial lamb, will be sacrificed, and the liberty that he accomplishes will become the property of the children of Israel and all of the saints down through the years who have experienced deliverance by what Christ has done.

Remember, there were four cups of wine in the service, and at the third one, in the Jewish service of the Passover, it’s probably at that point that Jesus took a cup and he gave thanks and he

gave it to them saying, “Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. ”

I mentioned last time that our Lord, when he entered into this room that had been prepared sovereignly, incidentally, he told the men to go and he told them precisely what they would find, and they found exactly what they did find. It had all been prepared by the sovereign determination of the LORD God. So the time came for him to take the cup. And as he looked at the cup and took the cup, our Lord understood that this cup signifying the blood that would be shed, was actually a cup, from his standpoint, that condemned him. Because, in effect, as he understood it, as anyone does understand it now, as he understood it, it meant he was just that much closer to giving his life as a ransom for our sins, dying upon the shameful cross of Calvary.

So he, the Passover lamb, observes the cup with the wine in it, reflects in the fullness of divine omniscience, of course, the significance of the fact that the blood that he will shed is represented by the wine in the cups that they will drink. I mentioned also last time that this is a very significant meeting, this last Passover, first Lord’s Supper, because here the lines of biblical revelation meet. The line of the Old Testament program and the line of the New Testament program meet right here, and in a sense, as one of my friends from biblical literature said, the switch is thrown over. From this point on, everyone will look forward—or has been looking forward, I should say, and from this point on, men will look backward.

So, just as the Old Testament saints looked forward to the coming of the Redeemer that the prophets and others have promised, so now with our Lord’s last Passover, first Lord’s Supper representing his death, we move from the Old Testament revelation into the sense and the doctrines of the New Testament in the fulfillment of the Old Testament figures. So men looked forward, from now they look backward. An evidence of that is—and the truthfulness of that is when our Lord God died upon Calvary’s cross, remember, the veil of the temple is rent in twain from top to bottom, signifying the doing away of the Mosaic Law and the institution of a new covenant age. And incidentally, that veil of the temple was not rent from bottom to top, as if it were done by men. It’s

from top to bottom, representing the fact that it is God who sovereignly makes that significant miracle come to pass at a particular point in time.

Now, we read then here that at this last Passover, first Lord’s Supper, the Lord Jesus took bread and broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.” Now, the bread is taken first because the bread represents his body, the necessary means to the incarnation. To be the incarnate Son of God, he must take a body. And so he took to himself a body, a human body. He the divine Son, the second person of the eternal Trinity comes to earth, takes an additional nature. He already has divine nature, of course. He is the divine son. He takes an additional nature, still the divine son, but he takes the second nature.

Now, the God-man, as we call him theologically. He takes bread, the bread to the necessary means to incarnation. He breaks the bread, no doubt signifying the death that he would die. And he gave it to his disciples, we read. So our Lord, even in this service represents the act as it is undertaken in the eye of heaven. He takes it, and he delivers it to the apostles. It’s an evidence of the fact that we know from Scripture that in redemption God takes the initiative. Even many of our Arminian friends admit that. It seems difficult for them to do that, but nevertheless they do acknowledge the sovereign working of the Lord God in the affairs of men.

So our Lord takes the bread, he breaks the bread, and he gives it to them. It’s like the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews, who in the first chapter of his books speaks about the divine initiative, men speaking being—speaking as prophets and others to the men of old, and now God has finally spoken in his Son. So the same God who spoke in Old Testament times has now spoken in his Son. But he takes the initiative in it. We do not beg the Lord God to speak to us. We do not want him to speak to us. Almost everyone in this room who belongs to this company that we would call genuine Christianity—and I hope you all do—if you do, you smile within your heart because you know that you would not have asked him to save you until he had first worked in your heart. And so in the Garden of Eden, the Lord God came down into the Garden, announced the plan of redemption for them and was engaged in carrying it out. And now here our Lord, in the sovereign initiative that

belongs to the second person, gives the bread to the disciples and says, “This is my body.” I’m not going to say much about, this is my body, because we will save that for when we turn to Paul’s account of the Lord’s Supper when we have just a little more time.

But as you know, a large body of Christian churches, Roman Catholic Church speaks of this copula, “this is my body,” as identification and suggests that the bread and the wine are fully the Lord Jesus Christ. In my opinion, it’s very plain that this is the copula or the verb, ‘to be’, or what we would call symbolic relation. Like in chapter 13, verse 38 of Matthew, our Lord giving one of the parables makes the statement, “The field is the world.” It’s one of his ways of telling this parable and what he uses there in the is or the verb, ‘to be’, is the verb to be of symbolic relation. A large controversy within the Reformation has taken place over the significance of, “this is my body,” and, as I say, we’ll save that for next week, and I hope we are at least able to come to understand it.

I do want you to notice what follows next when he says, “Take, eat; this is my body.” Now, Matthew does not say what Luke says with reference to this. And Luke adds a point that the Apostle Paul also has in his account of it when he says in chapter 22, Luke chapter 22, verse 19, “He took the bread. He gave thanks. He broke it. He gave to them. This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Now, Paul lets us know in 1 Corinthians 11 that that was not something that was simply done historically. For Paul makes it very plain that the Christian churches are to continue to celebrate the Lord’s Supper as the ages unfold.

Now, I would like to spend a moment or two on this because I think it is exceedingly important to understand just exactly what this really means. Do this in remembrance of me. I would like to suggest, first of all, that this is a—what might be called an arrogant audacity on the part of some for the Lord Jesus to say. Do this in remembrance of me. What are they celebrating? Why they are celebrating the Passover service. What is stated in the Passover service? Why it is stated in the Passover service of the book of Exodus that they were to remember the Passover service forever? Those are the words “forever.”

Now, I’m not going to debate the meaning of the terms that have to do with forever except to say this; they are not everlasting in the sense in which we understand it, but a kind of everlastingness that issues into the far future but does not necessarily mean everlasting in the sense of forever. But now for literally centuries, the Jewish people had celebrated the Passover; maybe at this time as it appears from the New Testament it was only a ceremony to them much like today in our churches that say that they are Christian churches. They celebrate the Lord’s Supper, too, quarterly, monthly. Some pay practically no attention to it, do not understand really why it is celebrated. You know why I know that? Because I grew up in a church like that. I didn’t know. I grew up in the church, was in the Sunday school. But as far as the Lord’s Supper was concerned, I was not well taught in it. I don’t want to blame all of my teachers. Some of them were earnest individuals, and I think a few of them were Christians but who nevertheless did not really study the Word of God very deeply.

But now if you think about it for a moment here is our Lord saying to these Jewish men who had been given the Law of Moses which said the Passover service was to be celebrated from that time on. And down through the centuries they had celebrated and now he says to them, “Do this in remembrance”—not of Moses, not of the Exodus—“do this in remembrance of me.” Think of it, do this in remembrance of me. Push aside the Passover. Push aside Moses. Put in Moses’ place, put in the Passover’s place, me and the Lord’s Supper. And these are earnest Hebrew men.

What do you expect that they should do? Say no, that’s against the Scriptures. But there is no evidence of that. These men had been brought to the conviction that it was not arrogant audacity on the part of Galilean peasant, so to speak, to say, stop remembering the Passover and Moses but start remembering me. It was something about him that had convinced them that he spoke the words of God. Do this in remembrance of me. No arrogant audacity, my friend. This is the authoritative Word of God. And as our Lord said it, and it is evident from what they wrote afterwards, that they came to understand that he had told them that he—he was the true Passover lamb that they were eating, that he was the true sacrifice, that he was the one whose blood would provide the safety that would

deliver them as the children of Israel had been delivered from the Egyptians and that he would, by what he was doing, inaugurate a better deliverance of genuine Israel of God from a darker prison house and a sore of bondage than the bondage from Egypt. His followers were family. He was making them into a family, and this was the children’s bread, the sacrifice of the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when we gather together on the Lord’s Supper around the Lord’s Table we are there feeding upon what Christ has done on Calvary’s cross.

Now, [he] finished, and the evidence of the rightness of everything he was saying to them is found in the resurrection that followed his death. And in the history of the Christian church, we might also mention, this do in remembrance of me. He says, For this is the blood of the new covenant which is shed for many. That’s important I think. Shed. It’s not spilled. It’s shed. Sovereignly shed. He’s in control of things. The reference is to the shedding of the blood of the sacrifice. A violent death is again in the foreground because that’s what the shedding of blood signifies. It’s for them the blood that is to be shed for atonement.

Incidentally—universal redemption founders at this point, for ultimately if it does not “fall by crashing against,” as one Calvinist has said, “the Scilla of universalism, it’s swallowed up in the Charybdis of the doctrine of the frustrated deity”—either what he did saves all or it saves some. And the fact of the matter is from the teaching of Scripture that we cannot have a frustrated deity. We are not universalist. And not having a frustrated deity and not being universalists, it’s obvious that the ones for whom this atonement was accomplished is a specific set of people. I don’t know who they are. You don’t know who they are. We’re called to preach the gospel to everybody. And those in whose hearts the Holy Spirit works and are brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, they form that people of God for whom Jesus came to die. And every one of them ultimately will enter into the family of God.

And when the rolls are taken up there—we’ve often have sung that song. I don’t really like that song, “When the Roll is Called Up Yonder,” but I think there is something to it. And I know it means a lot to some people who have grown up in a church in which it has been often sung. When

the roll is called up yonder, everyone on the roll will be there. Everyone. Every single one will be there. The roll is already established. It’s already established. It’s already up there. It’s written. My name is there. If you are a believer, you’re name is there, too. It’s not going to be written in the future. It has been written in the past. As a matter of fact, the Apostle Paul tells us it was written in eternal times. He says in his letter to Timothy these wonderful words—He said,

“Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord nor of me his prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.”

That’s eternal election. Eternal election. It’s all there. This do in remembrance of me. And so around the Lord’s Table every Sunday evening we gather to remember what our Lord was asking the apostles to do, to remember him.

Now, the ceremony of the cup follows and in verse 27 and verse 28 he says, “Drink from it all of you.” The new and final covenant is grounded in the blood sacrifice of Calvary’s cross. The language that our Lord uses is derived from Exodus chapter 24 and the covenant of the Mosaic Law, this one, to do away with that. And there has been a great deal of discussion about the ceremony of the cup. This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Many of you know that in the Roman Catholic Church and let me say there are, I believe, true believers in—many true believers in the Roman Catholic Church who believe in Christ and who do not place much stock in the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church. Those who do, of course, are very, very much confused. But nevertheless in Christianity there’s been a great discussion over the Eucharist, which is one of the names for the Lord’s Supper. Eucharist is simply the English word derived from *{eucharistia}*, which means thanksgiving in Greek, and it is a time of thanksgiving. We give thanks for the bread. We give thanks for cup. We call it—it can be called the Eucharist.

The sacrifice of the Mass, however, in Roman Catholic doctrine is a propitiatory sacrifice; that is, it’s a sacrifice that makes propitiation that actually is designed to satisfy the claims of God. And our Lord, of course, is not speaking of anything like that. Roman Catholics like to say, since the New Testament tells us so often that Christ suffered once and for all—the Epistle of the Hebrews says a great deal about that—that in the Eucharist, Roman Catholic doctrine is that we are simply representing the cross at Calvary and it’s—is it not legitimate to represent the cross of Calvary, sometimes acknowledge that they are repeating the cross at Calvary. But it is often forgotten by those who hear that, that sounds very nice, represent the cross at Calvary. That seems very devoted to the truths of God, but unfortunately, according to the doctrine, the representation is forgiving of sins. It does actually forgive sins to sit at the Mass, take the elements is to have sins forgiven—it is a ceremony in which sins are forgiven.

For example, let me read you something from the Council of Trent, which is the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. The term, ‘Mass’, derived {missa}—it’s derived from the word {*misso*}, which in Latin means to sin, and at the conclusion of the ceremony, there’s a term for dismissal that comes from that verb. And that’s why Mass is a term referred to a ceremony. “The sacrifice of the mass is a propitiatory sacrifice continuing the sacrifice of Christ on the cross to his heavenly Father, on earth.” Another canon of the Council of Trent, “If anyone denyeth that in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist are contained truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently, the whole Christ, but sayeth that he is only therein in a sign or a figure or virgule, let him be an anathema.” That is, let him be lost of course, under the curse. The term that is used is the term “transubstantiation.”

In question 1217 out of the Catechism, the question and answer, Catholic Catechism, the question is asked: Is the Eucharist necessary for salvation? The answer is, the Eucharist is necessary for salvation. It is necessary to sustain the life of grace. So in other words, when we’re sitting at the Lord’s Table or at the Eucharist at the Roman Catholic Church, we are talking about the forgiveness

of sins. Well, what does that say? Well, that says that evidently our Lord Jesus Christ’s work did not form the basis or—let me say—did not form in itself the work by which all sin is forgiven.

In the Roman Catholic Church, the sacrifice of Christ is accomplished daily or often, but in the New Testament, it is described as once and for all. The Epistle of the Hebrews is the one that particularly refers to this. And I am just going to read a few verses. There are lots of things that I could say, but we don’t have time to do that.

In chapter 7 in verse 24 the writer of the Epistle of the Hebrews says, “But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood.”

In chapter 9 in verse 12 we read these words, “Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.” Once for all.

Chapter 10, verse 12—I skipped 9:22–28 because that would take us too long to read it in this particular hour. But chapter 10, verse 12, “But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand at the throne of God.” One sacrifice for sins forever.

Verse 14, “For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.” One offering has been responsible for the forgiving of sins forever. The payment has been made. So to claim that the sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church are sacraments by which we may be forgiven is to deny the once and for all sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one sacrifice. The one and only sacrifice.

In Roman Catholic theology, our Lord dies often. An unbloody sacrifice forgives the guilt of sin. Sin must be continually put away as the Mass is observed over and over again. One sacrifice for sin is insufficient for complete settling of the debt. Many offerings are needed. I think it should be clear to us that so far as the Word of God is concerned, we celebrate someone who has accomplished one sacrifice forever. Our Lord said, “This is my blood of the new covenant.” This may be the most important atonement statement referring to his violent death, broken bread, outpoured wine, red like blood. He’s saying, I must die sacrificially. The new covenant, based on a

new sacrifice, made with the true Israel of God. And I mean Israel of God not simply believing Israelites, but believing Israelites who are not led astray by the Mosaic Law and the requirement of the Judaizers, and I’m including also in it Gentiles who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, I don’t believe that that term Israel and God in context in Galatians 6 refers to Israelites. I’m just using that term to show that it includes believing Israelites who have not yielded to the Judaism of the Judaizers, but it is inclusive of the Gentiles who have believed who have formed part of the Christian church.

Now, this is the new covenant, the new covenant that Jeremiah talks about. I think I have time to turn back to Jeremiah. I have a brief intermission for those of you, who don’t know where Jeremiah is, finds it. Jeremiah 31, verse 31 through 34. Now, that’s what—this is the passage to which our Lord refers when says, “This is the blood of the new covenant.” They knew what it was. This is Jeremiah 31. Listen to how Jeremiah puts it. Verse 31 of Jeremiah 31,

“Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

Did you notice the “I wills”? I will. I will. I will. I will. I will. We are talking about a sovereign God who accomplishes his purposes. In time Jesus comes and says, This is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many for the remissions of sins. The unconditional nature of “I

will” reinforces the fact that we’re dealing with a God who accomplishes his purposes. He does not fail in any of them. He said it is shed, not spilled, for many. Not one drop wasted either. We have—as I mentioned, we either have particularism or we have a frustrated deity. And in my opinion, we must settle upon an unfrustratable deity.

One of the greatest evangelists who ever came to the United States, George Whitefield has something to say about this that I think is very important, a very practical matter. He was talking about the doctrine of election. Mr. Whitefield said this. I know there a lot of people—once you mention the term “election,” then in the minds of many, they’re turned off. This cannot possibly be the biblical doctrine. Some people just simply say they don’t believe in election when it is found all through the Bible. That’s a confession, unwitting, I know. That’s a confession; I don’t read the Bible because it is there. You cannot say, I do not believe in election. You have to believe in it if you believe the Bible. You may have a different interpretation, but you have to believe it.

George Whitefield, I think, one of the greatest evangelists that ever came to the United States said this, “This is one reason among many others why I admire the doctrine of election, and am convinced that it should have a place in gospel ministrations and should be assisted on with faithfulness and care. It has a natural tendency to rouse the soul out of carnal security.” Why? Well, God has made an election. There is a difference made. A difference made. I may not be in it. There has been a difference made. And so we preach a universal love of God, then we’re not forced to think, I may not be there. So he says it has a natural tendency to rouse the soil out of carnal security and, therefore, many carnal men crowd against it whereas universal redemption is a notion sadly adapted to keep the soul in its lethargic, sleepy condition and, therefore, so many natural men admire and applaud it. Whitefield may have been the greatest evangelist that ever came to the United States, involved in New England and the early evangelism of earlier part of the 18th century. A great man and a man who preached precisely what I’m preaching to you tonight, about the sovereign grace of God.

It is true. We talk about the universal love of God. It is a doctrine that is as he said designed—election is the doctrine that has the natural tendency to rouse the soul out of carnal security. Universal redemption leaves us in a lethargic, sleepy condition. So I’m not ashamed to teach and preach the doctrine of divine election. It ought to be preached more and more in our society, in my opinion. Shed for many for the remission of sins; that is, for the forgiveness of sins.

I’m going to tell you a story that I think is such a great story. Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse was the man that led me to the Lord, and I had the privilege later on in preaching in Tenth Presbyterian Church a number of times, supplying for him. And some of the trips I took east in the early days of my preaching ministry, so I empathized with that congregation. Jim Boyce is the preacher now the same place, but he said that he was preaching in the church in Philadelphia one time. It’s an old church and around the side there’s a balcony that does down. And the pulpit is on a platform about like this, but the balcony is over where that window is and goes down and goes all the way down the end. Incidentally, no choir. They did have a choir later on, but you couldn’t see the choir, put them in the back so you couldn’t see them.

Anyway, Dr. Barnhouse said he preached the message. He said he noticed, as he was preaching, there a little boy about twelve years old who was right on the right very close to him but sitting in the balcony. And so as was his custom, he had a single sentence that he often used in which he gathered together all of the expressions that had to do with the forgiveness of sins. And so he said he came to the conclusion of his message that morning, and he stated the statement that he often did to sum up everything. He put all the promises into a single sentence and he said—this is what he said: “Our sins are forgiven; they are forgotten, cleansed, pardoned, atoned for, remitted, covered. They’ve been cast into the depths of the sea. Blotted out as a thick cloud, removed as far as the east is from the west, cast behind God’s back.” He used to say that. He had memorized that statement so he said it. He said he finished his message. He went out front. And as he was standing out there greeting people who were coming out of the church, the little boy that he had noticed who had been listening intently at the right side of the platform came up to him and caught his sleeve and looked

up into his face and he said, “Good sermon, Doc,” and Dr. Barnhouse said, “I smiled.” And he continued, “Gee, we’re sure sitting pretty, aren’t we?”

Well, I want to tell you the person who has believed in our Lord Jesus Christ is sure sitting pretty. He may not realize everything that has happened to him, but he’s one of the elect of God that his sins are forgiven, that God has written his name in heaven from times immemorial, but he is sure sitting pretty. Now, if you’re in this audience and you have believed in Christ, you are sure sitting pretty. In fact, nothing could be better on the face of this earth now than to be elect and sitting in Believers Chapel. That’s about it. That may be a bracket statement, so blot that out of your mind.

Now, the final sentence—I want to just say about verse 29. He says, but I say unto you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my father’s kingdom. The memorial of what he would do on Calvary’s cross is now converted into a prophecy in which he says, I’m not going to drink this again with you until I drink it new with you in the kingdom of God. This of course is a statement of the exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ. He affirms confidently that the time will come when he will drink it new with them in the kingdom of God. It speaks of the consummation of the kingdom, the end of the purposes of God in the great festival of the kingdom of God upon the earth. And, further, there is going to be what we may call a great convention. We have the Ligonier convention here in Dallas. What a paltry convention in comparison with the convention of the future. Look. He is going to drink it with us. Then all the family of God gathered together, all—from over the face of this globe gathered together finally in the presence of the Lord, and our Lord observing the final ultimate communion of eternal fellowship. The cross, the communion of the Lord’s Supper, lead on to the coming as Good Friday via Easter leads on to Epiphany.

Well, let me say in conclusion. Written unmistakably on the supper is his desire that his death not his life be remembered. Isn’t that striking? On Sunday night in the Lord’s Supper. We take the bread. We take the wine. We don’t talk about his life. We don’t remember his life in its details. We don’t remember his parables. Of course you can do that, of course in the time around the Lord’s

Table. But we’re here not to hear the parables. We’re not here to hear the instruction. We’re here, as he says, to remember what he accomplished, the bread and the wine signifying that.

In other words, it’s his death, not his life; his death, not his miracles; his death, not his ethics that want to be, that are to be preeminent in our service. One aspect is preeminent. He’s the true Passover lamb under whose blood is eternal safety. Israel had safety when the blood was put on the two side posts and the upper post, but this is for eternal safety. What’s the duty? Why the duty is just exactly in reality what they did in figure and type. They took the blood of the lamb that they were eating, the various ones observing the Passover. They took the blood, put it on the two side posts and the upper part of the doorpost. That’s what they did, so they had to put their fingers in the blood, sprinkle on the doorpost. We, in the spiritual sense, by believing in him, giving ourselves to him in faith, we take the blood of the atoning sacrifice in our minds and in our hearts and sprinkle it upon the doorposts of our hearts as eternal safety by what he has done. His ministry was given to men who had found life in his blood to be shed in full atonement to be made. They had responded to the unconditional offer in faith, and they loved him for his love. I don’t have time to read something from Mr. Spurgeon. I will have to save that.

One last statement: To despise the supper is to despise the richness of the fellowship of communion with him, the Son of God. No Christian ought to despise the supper of our Lord. Let’s bow together in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are so grateful to Thee for all that Thou hast done for us. Who could ever offer to Thee the kind of thanks that we ought to offer. We thank Thee from the bottoms of our hearts for the redemption that has reached down to us who were born in sin, who lived in sin, but have been, like the children of Israel, delivered from the judgment of the destroying angel. We thank Thee for life and life forever. And not only life forever but life in the knowledge and fellowship of the son of God who loved us enough to do what he has done for us.

We pray in his name. Amen.