The Message of the Lord's Supper

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Preacher: Dr. Michael Staton

[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. You can be seated.

It's so good to see you this morning and what a blessing it's already been in being able to hear the testimonies of trust and of conversion of faith in baptism today.
It's great to see so many middle schoolers right down here at the front leading out with us. We've got such a great group of middle school students here, and it's a blessing to be able to see all of you here singing and with your Bibles open and engaging in worship.
So proud of our young people here. We've had a great week. We are thankful for the many ways that the Lord has blessed our church this week as we have kicked off our kids' choirs and youth choir that started last week.
We had, I think, 117 in our Passion Student Choir, and then a great group in kinder praise and kids' praise. On Tuesday night, we had our ladies' night of theology and had 400 or something ladies that were here for that, and so just an honor to be able to do that.
[1:24] And then, that was Tuesday. Then on Wednesday, the Lord blessed our family with Granny Marcy and I, another grandbaby as Rosie Mae Staten entered the world.

And she is doing great and proud to report that, and we are so thankful for her life. And so, it's just been a full week.
It has been great ministry. It has been a week of answers to prayer, and just thankful for the many ways the Lord continues to move among us.
There is a lot of joy as we gather together as a church, and every Lord's Day should be a time of joy. Because as God's people, we come here to recognize that Christ is our sufficient substitutionary sacrifice for us.
As the words we have just sung together, that our debt was paid in full. And the Lord has given to the church a reminder of that debt payment in a way of remembrance that we know as the Lord's Supper.
[2:41] As the Lord and His providence would have it, we have reached today in our study through Mark's Gospel, chapter 14, verses 22 to 25, where we read about the Lord's Supper being instituted.

As well, tonight, we have for months already had planned that this evening, as a part of our evening worship, we will be observing the Lord's Supper together.
And so, in a very real way, this morning is the teaching, and this evening is the application. Today is learning the theology and the details.
Tonight is experiencing and living out the joy of what the Lord's Supper is all about. This evening, we'll sing together, and we're studying through 1 Thessalonians.
We'll continue in that study. But as a highlight of our evening worship tonight, we'll be taking the Lord's Supper together. And so, with that in mind, I really want to encourage you to do two things.
[3:43] One is to listen very carefully this morning so that the doctrine and the theology and the details about the Lord's Supper are clear and fresh on your heart and mind.

And then secondly, I want to encourage you to be back this evening as we worship from 5 to 6, and then participate in the life of what we study about today through the Lord's Supper.
Our student choir, our passion choir will be here. They'll be in the loft tonight leading us in music and be a part of our evening service as well. And so, I want to just invite you to come back tonight as we do what today, this morning, we study.
This is really a fascinating passage because there's something happening. There's something that's in transition here in Mark 14, 22 to 25.

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Jesus, who is the perfect Passover lamb, is completing, fully fulfilling the old covenant and inaugurating this new covenant and giving us this gift known to us as the Lord's Supper.
[4:57] This is the final Passover and the first Lord's Supper. Both of them ultimately focus upon Christ. 1 Corinthians 5, 7 gives us the understanding of how the final Passover and the Lord's Supper merge together in this sense.

1 Corinthians 5, 7 calls Christ our Passover lamb. He's the fulfillment. He was what all of that was pointing toward. That's why today we need not sacrifice a lamb because Christ was that perfect fulfillment.
In Luke 22, verse 15, it says that he said to them, I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. This was a very important moment in the life of Jesus.
This was something that he longed to do. He wanted to have this final meal with his apostles to teach them, to instruct them, to serve them, to ready them, to prepare them for what was coming.
This celebration on his Passover at the time of Jesus has been going on for some 1,500 years. This was a shadow about to give way to the substance.
[6:34] The picture was about to give way to the real thing. I do fear that in many churches, the Lord's Supper is something that can be so common, so often experienced, that it may be that for many churches, we tend to lose sight of the significance of it.

It may also be that because some people hold to an aberrant view of what the Lord's Supper is, that in a pushback against what is false, some churches may fail to embrace the depth of what is true.
The Lord's Supper is a very significant thing in the life of the local church. It's not something that we just tag on at the end of a service.
It's not something you just kind of cram into the cracks of the calendar. This is a very significant part of our worship.
This is something given to us directly by the Lord Jesus himself, designed to help us understand the gospel, to communicate the gospel, to remember the gospel, and to build within the hearts of his people an anticipation and an eagerness for his return.
[8:13] As I mentioned a moment ago, in God's providence, this isn't something planned or organized. This is just something the Lord has chosen to bless us with, that on the same Sunday that we would arrive at Mark 14 to learn all about the Lord's Supper, where we gather back tonight at 5 o'clock to experience and respond in the Lord's Supper.

Look at verses 22 to 25 of Mark 14 with me. It says, And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it, broke it, and gave it to them.
And he said, Take, this is my body. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.
Truly I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.
There are a few words that I will often use when we gather around the Lord's table to take the Lord's Supper. I want to use the words that will be familiar to many of you to walk through this passage because I want these words to be on our mind as a congregation every time we take the Lord's Supper.
[9:40] I don't today desire to say something new in the sense of changing the way that we would normally put into words what the Lord's Supper does for us.

So I just want to borrow what I will often use when we take the Lord's Supper and use them as our outline this morning in walking through this passage. The first word I want you to make note of, and I hope this is often in your mind as we take the Lord's Supper, and it's the word identifies.
The Lord's Supper identifies something for us. Two specific things we see in the text that the Lord's Supper identifies.
First, His body, and second, His blood. Let's go back to verse 22. It says, and as they were eating.
Now let me just give you a quick rundown because history matters and context matters. So I want to take a few minutes and give you a little bit of background about what Passover was.
[10:44] If you had, if we could have been there on this night, what we would have remembered and experienced is that while the Lord's Supper is instituted, this is the occasion of the final Passover.

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And what would happen is the people would gather together to celebrate this meal, and there would be a prayer of thanksgiving. And after the prayer of thanksgiving, there would be the first cup that would be shared.
It was known as the cup of blessing. There would then be a ceremonial washing of hands that would be a picture for them of their need to repent and to rely upon the Lord.
As I mentioned last week, the strange thing here is it's right about this time that an argument breaks out among the disciples about which of them is the greatest.
And it's just amazing to me that they could be right there in the presence of the Lord as He's talking to them about sacrifice and atonement and salvation and repentance.
[12:07] And in the midst of that truth in their own hearts among the men there, they are still consumed with this competition of which sinner is greater than the other one.

I just share that to remind all of us in this room that that was not only true of them. If we're not careful, it can be true of us.
That we could gather for worship on the Lord's Day and while we sing songs about the cross and hear preaching about the sacrifice of Jesus, we can be filled with pride.
We can be consumed with our own opinions and preferences. We can be aware of things that we think we wish were our way or we can be aware of someone who has maybe hurt our feelings or disappointed us and that consumes us or we can be filled with pride by just demanding that people change their opinions to ours.
Pride is, pride is such a subtle thing. We have to constantly be on the lookout for it. Pride can be boasting.
[13:32] Pride can be thinking that you shouldn't suffer, that you're above suffering. Pride can be demanding everybody share your preference. Pride can mean that you don't think someone else should get a blessing that you don't.

Pride can manifest itself in so many ways. And if we're not careful, we will fall victim to it because the threat of pride never takes a day off.
It shows up right here at the last Passover, the first Lord's Supper, the disciples are distracted by their pride. Jesus will wash their feet and they will eat and they will then eat bitter herbs.
It was purposeful, it was to remind them of the bitterness of their time spent in slavery in Egypt.
They would sing Psalm 113.
They would sing Psalm 114. They would then drink the second cup. At that point, the father of the family or the host of the meal would explain to those who are gathered the meaning of Passover.
[14:47] For most, it wouldn't be new, but it would be significant. reminders of the faithfulness of God, of His saving power, of His grace, of the way that He had protected and preserved His people.

After that, they would eat the main meal. They would then drink the third cup. It's at this point of the third cup of the Passover meal that we get what we know as the Lord's Supper.
They would sing Psalm 115 and Psalm 116. In the end, they would end up singing through Psalm 118. They would drink the fourth cup together at the meal.
And as this is happening in Mark's Gospel in chapter 14, Jesus is reminding His apostles about what the sacrificial lamb presents knowing that in just a few hours, Christ Himself will be the very embodiment of that sacrificial lamb.
And it tells us in verse 22 that He took bread and after blessing it, broke it and gave it to them and said, take, this is my body.
[16:32] The bread in the Lord's Supper identifies something to us. It identifies the body of Christ. It identifies His sacrifice for our sin.

When we hold the bread and taste the bread, it's a reminder to us that He gave up His body. So, when we take the Lord's Supper this evening at five o'clock and the bread is served, it identifies to us His body as a sacrifice.
But there's a second thing that is identified. First is His, is the bread, which is His body, and the second is the cup, which represents His blood.
Verse 23, And He took a cup and when they had given thanks, He gave it to them and they all drank of it.
He said to them, this is my blood of the covenant. which is poured out for many. The Lord's Supper identifies.

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[17:41] It identifies His body. It identifies His blood. It identifies His sacrifice. It identifies His payment for our sin.

And when we gather back tonight to worship, after we sing and after we study God's Word together and then we observe the elements, when those elements are passed out this evening, I hope that you're back for that.
And what I hope that you'll understand when that happens is that this is not just merely a tradition or a ritual. This is something that Christ Himself has given to the church so that our hearts and our minds would understand His sacrifice.
For 1500 years, the people of God had celebrated the Passover. Now there were times because of sin and wickedness that they forgot that and it drifted away and then a righteous leader would come back and call them back to observe the Passover.
But for 1500 years, this had been something that people of God had known. And since the cross, 2000 years later, this is something that church has participated in as a way to remind ourselves that Christ is our only Savior.
[19:11] And I understand that in the course of the last seven days since we've been together, you've experienced some good things. You've likely experienced some challenges.

You've been sending your kids back to school, college students going back to school. By the way, I'm thankful for our college students here who live for Christ and make a difference.
And even those who may be college age that are in the workforce or in the military, I'm thankful for young people that live their faith out in public. You're making a big, big difference, students.
And as you go back to school, as you go back to college, there are days of great joy and days of great trial. And for the rest of us within any given week, there are moments where you are so excited and other moments you may be so stressed.
And when we come back for worship on the Lord's Day, it just reminds us of what matters most. Your jobs matter.
[20:13] Your family matters. Your health matters. Your friendships matter. Our nation matters.

But none of those things are the singular foundation foundation of everything. Only in Christ, only because of the cross, are we able to have a foundation that no matter what else we may experience, we can have joy and we can have peace because we can know our debt was paid.
And the Lord's Supper identifies that reality that as we take the bread, we remember His body. As we drink the cup, we remember His blood.
And in so doing, we rest in the finished work of Jesus. Amen? We rest. So the first thing we say about the Lord's Supper is it identifies.
It identifies His body and His blood. There's a second word that we often use that we see in this text, and that is that the Lord's Supper purifies. It identifies His body and His blood, and it purifies.
[21:39] It purifies us because one of the important aspects of the Lord's Supper is that we remind ourselves that we are sinners in need of grace.

Jesus does not die as a victim. He dies as a payment for our sin. And why do we need a payment? Because we have a sin debt that we cannot pay.
In Christ, on the cross, that debt is paid in full, and our hearts are covered by His grace. But as we take the Lord's Supper often and regularly, it's a time for the church to confess our sins individually before the Lord that our hearts would be purified.
Listen to 1 Corinthians 11, 27 through 32, speaking of the Lord's Supper. It says, 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. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.
[22:59] That is why many of you are weak and ill and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged.

But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world. Meaning, when the church takes the Lord's Supper, we ought never do so flippantly. This is no small thing. In fact, if there is one thing that I think most churches today just dramatically miss the weightiness of it, it would be the significance of our own hearts being purified and our sin being confessed as we approach the table of the Lord to take the Lord's Supper.

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This is one of the ways the local church remains pure is that we often, in receiving the element, stop and remind ourselves we are sinners in need of a Savior and Christ in grace has given His life for us and because He has, we want to walk in purity and in holiness before the Lord.
The Lord's Supper is a gift to the local church because it not only identifies His body and His blood, it purifies us because it's a time for us to confess our sin.
[24:32] And that's why the church ought to often come together to observe the Lord's Supper. It reminds us of the cross, but it also reminds us of our sin and our need for confession.

In the Lord's Supper, it identifies His body and His blood and it purifies as we take time to confess and repent. There's a third thing the Lord's Supper does and it unifies.
It unifies us. One little detail in this event in the life of Jesus, we looked last week when Jesus was beginning the first part of the Passover and He is speaking that one of the apostles is going to betray Him and all the apostles say, it's not I, it's not I, is it?
No one knew who it was. And the Lord says that it's the one that I dip the bread and give the bread to and He identifies that it's Judas Iscariot.
And He says to Judas, essentially, I'm paraphrasing here, but He says to Judas, look, I know what's in your heart. I know what you've planned and purposed to do.
[25:56] So go and do quickly. Judas gets up at that point to leave. It's before the third cup, what we would call the Lord's Supper.

Four cups, cup one and two were tied to the Passover. Passover, cup three and four that were part of the Passover is a part of what we refer to as the Lord's Supper. It's before you get to the elements of what we would call the Lord's Supper, before that, right before that, is when Judas leaves.
Now there's something very significant about that because Judas was not a believer. The other men were sinners, no doubt about that. But Judas was not a believer.
And when Jesus dismisses Judas to go do what his heart wants to do to betray him, one of the things that happens there is it dismisses the false pretender from observing what we know is the Lord's Supper.
That's why when we take the Lord's Supper together, we don't physically dismiss people, but we will say that if you're not a believer, if you don't know Christ as your Savior, when we pass the trays, we'll do this tonight, we'll say, if you're not a believer, to please don't take the elements and pass it to the person beside you.
[27:21] The reason for that is the Lord's Supper is not something just for everybody. The Lord's Supper uniquely is for the body of Christ, the people who are saved.

And the Lord's Supper in that sense, it identifies his body and his blood, it purifies us, but a third thing it does is it unifies us. It reminds us that we're not individual Christians only, though that's true, but we're a part of a family.
Acts 2.42 says they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship and to the breaking of bread and to prayer. The Lord's Supper reminds us that it's not just us, it's not just me and God.
Part of belonging to a church is it's we and God. Your faith is personal, yes, but it brings you into a family, into a congregation, into a body.
1 Corinthians 10 speaks of this in verse 16 and 17, says, the cup of blessing that we bless, is it not participation in the blood of Christ? And the bread that we break, is it not participation in the body of Christ?
[28:47] Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of one bread. We participate, koinonia, we fellowship together as the people of God.

And when we take the Lord's Supper together, it unifies us because it reminds us that we are a family.
We're a family. A spiritual family of men and women and children who have trusted in Christ as Savior, who have been redeemed by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and all who are in that spiritual family are unified.
togetherness. There's a togetherness. We see that physically in our lives as a way to understand the spiritual principle that we see in the Lord's Supper.
When our sweet granddaughter was born Wednesday this past week at 1244 p.m., we've already loved her. She's already alive.

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[30:09] before she's born, she has already been created and knit in her mother's womb. She's no more of a human the minute she's born, the minute before she's born. But it was the first day that we got to lay eyes on her.

And Rosie May, physically speaking, as a part of our family, she doesn't have to wait to be fully accepted. She's in. Fully in.
She's one of us. She's us. She's our family. She's an individual. But her life will never be just by herself.
Never. the Lord has given her great parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles and great grandparents and cousins and her life, she's an individual, but she'll never be by herself.
Never. that's a physical demonstration of the spiritual principle of what it means to be a part of the body of Christ. You're an individual and you're accountable to God for how you live and for what you do and your faith is personal, but it's never about being by yourself because as the Lord's Supper reminds us, we pass the bread, we pass the cup, and there's a reason for that.
[31:37] It reminds us that we're unified as a family. You don't, you don't just stay home and take the Lord's Supper by yourself on a Tuesday night.

That's not the way the New Testament reveals it. This is something we do collectively when the church gathers. Why? Because it unifies us. It reminds us that while our faith is personal, our lives are congregational, we're a family, we're a body, we're a church.
And so tonight, I'm going to take the trays and I'm going to hand them to our deacons, and as I hand them to the deacons, we're reminding ourselves we are connected, and our deacons will move all throughout the sanctuary, and they're going to pass those trays to you as church members, and as I hand them to you, it's a reminder we're unified.
And as you take the tray and you hand it to people beside you, it's a reminder that we're unified.
And even where there may be teenagers or adults or children who are not yet believers, we'll ask them to let the tray pass by them as a reminder and a gospel picture that it's not eating the food that saves you, it's a relationship with Christ that gives the meal its meaning.
We're together. We're unified. In Luke 22, verse 19, speaking of this same event, it says, 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.
[33:27] Do this in remembrance of me. We are to remember the Lord. Ephesians 4 speaks of being unified together with the Lord.

One Lord, one faith, one God and Father. We're unified. And one of the things the Lord's Supper does for us as it unifies us is it forces us to either live in rebellion to the Lord or to lay down our individualism.
One of the two. They cannot both be true at the same time. Life in the family is not about your preference, nor is it about my preference.
If I come to church or if you come to church and the filter through which we think is about that I get my parking place and did somebody greet me and did I get my seat in the sanctuary and did they sing the songs that I love and did somebody notice me and if we go through the Lord's day like that with our individual preferences and with our individualistic mindset, we've missed the whole picture of the Lord's supper which is a demonstration of our unity.
And so even this evening when we gather again to worship and to do what we're studying this morning, even as you see the picture physically of the passing of the trays from pastor to deacon, from deacon to church member, from church members to other church members, what you're seeing is a reminder that we are unified, that collectively we are one, that it's not about our individual preferences, it's about being unified as the people of God.
[35:36] So the Lord's supper identifies his body and his blood, it purifies as we confess our sin, it unifies as we remind ourselves that we are a family.

And then a fourth word, it signifies. Two specific things that are signified in the Lord's supper, his return and his reign.
His return and his reign. First Corinthians 11, 26 says, as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
We take the Lord's supper together and in so doing, all the things we've talked about take place and we do this until he comes, which reminds us he's coming again.

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He's coming again. And the Lord's supper, while it is a look back at the cross, it's also a reminder of looking ahead at the glorious truth that he is coming again.
[36:52] So when we take the Lord's supper together, yes, we are looking backwards, but we're also anticipating what is to come. He has come and he will come.

So as we take the Lord's supper, rightly understood, our minds are equally on the cross and on his glorious appearing again. It signifies his return.
The second thing it signifies is his reign. Go back to our text at the end, verse 25, truly I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it in the kingdom of God.
Jesus announces here with his apostles his ultimate triumph. He's going to suffer, he's going to be on the cross, but I want you to think about how hopeful this is for his apostles because Jesus in Mark's gospel in verses 32 to 42, he is going to be arrested.
He is going to go through his trials, and then in chapter 15, he's going to be crucified. The worst, the darkest moments for the apostles, the darkest of nights awaits them, but right before that, Jesus reminds them that he will reign, that what is about to happen is not the end of the story.
[38:28] So when we take the Lord's Supper, we remind ourselves not only that Christ died for us, but that he was raised back to life. not only that he came once to bear our sin, but that he's coming again to receive us unto himself.

So the Lord's Supper signifies, and it signifies for us his return and his reign.
So what we read about in Mark 14, 22 to 25, as they observe this final Passover, is the institution of this new understanding of the Lord's Supper, where he says to his apostles, and then by extension to his church, that includes us, that as we take the Lord's Supper together, that it identifies for us his body and his blood, that it purifies us as we confess our sin, it unifies us as we remind ourselves we are a family, and it signifies for us his return, and that he will reign.
And this is one of the ways that the Lord has given to his church to always be centered on the gospel, to always be focused on eternity, and to never outgrow your wonder of the cross.
peace. Psalm 133 verse 1 says, behold how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity.
[40:15] And it's at the Lord's table that ultimately is this picture of our unity. All sinners in need of grace, finding salvation in one perfect sacrifice, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was buried, raised, and coming again.

In God's good providence on this day, we have witnessed baptism, one of the ordinances he gave us to remind us of these things, and this evening, we take the Lord's Supper.
This day is a gift to our church, that what we could study and read and remember, we can also practice and experience.
I pray that we would never take the Lord's Supper the same again, and I pray that even tonight, you would make a priority to be here at five, as we live out the sweet truths that we have learned today, that in the elements, we see his body and his blood identified, our hearts are purified, collectively our spirits are unified, and together we will signify that our Savior rules, and our Savior will return.
Lord, we are thankful today for your word, we are thankful for the gift you have given to us. We pray that we would consider the gospel carefully, and even this evening, gather back together to live in the joy of what you have given to us to remember and to proclaim until you come again.
[42:19] In Christ's name. Amen. See you tonight at five o'clock. God bless you. Thank you.

Thank you.

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